

SOCIAL COMMERCE SUCCESS FACTORS : REVIEWS ON CUSTOMER-TO-CUSTOMER DIMENSION¹

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Abstract

In line with the rapid progress of social commerce (s-commerce), studies along this line appear to be progressing. However, most studies seem to concentrate on certain areas of s-commerce, while omitting several other crucial aspects. Although the concept of performance has garnered much attention from researchers within the field of s-commerce, elements related to customer-to-customer (C2C) success have been largely disregarded. As s-commerce is in its maturity phase, more attention should be paid to this domain. A systematic literature review (SLR) was conducted to identify the gaps in s-commerce success factors within the context of C2C. We found that, studies on C2C s-commerce success factors are still not comprehensive and we believe some variables from the offline business context may be relevant to be included in the s-commerce success model. We propose a model for C2C s-commerce success is proposed in this study. This study will contribute to the literature of C2C and s-commerce disciplines.

Keywords: s-commerce, customer-to-customer, entrepreneurs, performance, systematic literature review

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INTRODUCTION

Web 2.0, which has replaced Web 1.0, has changed the life of many in multiple ways, including their personal and professional lives. From the economic stance, the course of electronic commerce (e-commerce) has progressed to s-commerce (Wong, 2012). Various businesses have begun adopting s-commerce after recognising the potential and the significance of Social Networking Sites (SNSs) for marketing and communication, as well as for devising effective strategies and operations (Schultz, Schwepker, & Good, 2012).

Despite its recent initiation in the year 2010 (Busalim & Hussin, 2016; Lin et al., 2017), the number of studies related to s-commerce has escalated rapidly (Baethge, Klier, & Klier, 2016; Busalim & Hussin, 2016; Han, Xu, & Chen, 2018). Surprisingly, review of the literature indicates that scholars appear to be more interested in examining adoption issues, such as acceptance factors and web design, rather than post-adoption issues (Jones et al., 2015; Parveen et al., 2016; Rahayu & Day, 2017; Seborá et al., 2009). The literature on measuring s-commerce success is still in its infancy phase (Ainin et al., 2015; Bocconcelli et al., 2017; Hashim et al., 2016; Hettiarachchi et al., 2017; Lin et al., 2017; Odoom et al., 2017; Paniagua & Sapena, 2014; Park et al., 2016; Qu et al., 2013; Rodriguez et al., 2012; Tajvidi & Karami, 2017). One shortcoming in the academic work related to s-commerce performance is that only a handful of studies have identified the related success factors (Sukrat & Papisratorn, 2018; Vongsraluang & Bhatiasevi, 2017). Some studies have examined s-commerce success (see Ainin et al., 2015; Ferrer et al., 2013; Jones et al., 2015; Mohamed et al., 2009; Odoom et al., 2017; Parveen et al., 2016), at firm level.

In our previous work, we discovered the dearth of academic work linked with s-commerce performance within the context of C2C (i.e., online sole entrepreneur) that addressed the individual unit level of analysis (see Nor Asiah, Khalil, & Ahmad, 2021). This notable gap calls for further exploration of C2C performance in this the s-commerce context.

An SLR was conducted to gain better insight into current studies that examine in have C2C context, to explore the variables that may serve as effective success factors, and finally, to propose a model of s-commerce for C2C success. After reviewing more than 7,000 articles retrieved from a range of databases, only 1% of the articles were related to C2C in the s-commerce context. Several major findings were identified from the literature, primarily related to the identification of variables that may potentially function as success factors for s-commerce, particularly for C2C model.

In the next section, we present the literature on C2C in s-commerce field and success factors, SLR process and findings. We propose s-commerce success model for C2C as as outcome from discussion.

1. C2C in S-commerce Field

S-commerce refers to a type of commerce initiated by social media that unites offline and online settings (Wang & Zhang, 2012). S-commerce is an approach of commerce in both participative and cooperative ways that effectively connect all players of the value chain (Baghdadi, 2016). S-commerce has become a platform where people collaborate online, gain advice from trusted individuals, as well as find goods

and services for purchase (Beisel, 2006 cited in Wang & Zhang, 2012). Turning to this present study, s-commerce is viewed as a commercial application in the Internet platform by leveraging Web 2.0 technologies and social media, which support user-generated content and social communication as an effective way to facilitate consumers purchase within virtual communities and marketplaces (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013).

The evolution of s-commerce is ascribed to the emergence of online social media platform. Social media usage offers numerous advantages. For instance, marketing activities, such as advertising and promotional activities, may be extended to the global scale (Indrupati & Henari, 2012), while simultaneously managing and sustaining business bonds with internal and external parties virtually (Ferrer et al., 2013) without geographical boundary barrier.

Birkner (2011, cited in Kosiba, 2016) explained that social media may be used for any size of business. In comparison to other conventional communication tools, social media enable entrepreneurs to run their small businesses with higher efficiency, lower cost, better compatibility, and direct interaction with customers at the right time (Blackburn et al., 2013; Hassan et al., 2015). Social media are suitable for entrepreneurs and small businesses, regardless of in developed or developing countries (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Odoom, Anning-Dorson, & Acheampong, 2017). As small businesses need to survive tight financial resources (Mohamad Radzi et al., 2017; Parveen et al., 2015), social media are suitable to reach and expand their market abroad with minimum investment (Parveen et al., 2015). As depicted by McCann and Barlow (2015), the main implications of using social media for small businesses are as follows: (1) increase in brand awareness, (2) improvement in interaction and rapport with customers, (3) better delivery of messages and marketing tactics, (4) better ability in highlighting company expertise, (5) wider business contact, and (6) increased revenue.

The most preferred online social media deployed by all e-commerce models is SNSs (Chen et al., 2016; Franco et al., 2016; Parveen et al., 2015; Shahizan et al., 2012; Stelzner, 2016). Consistent with the main features embedded in Web 2.0, SNSs serve as a channel for interaction, apart from creating and disseminating just anything online (Boyd & Ellison, 2008).

Essentially, SNSs provide an economical and supportive platform for C2C model that is effective for maximising profit. With low accessibility cost, most SNSs are free and easy-to-use with minimum time spent to learn (Ainin et al., 2015; Ferrer et al., 2013; Indrupati & Henari, 2012). The greatest aspect of SNSs is their simultaneous feature that supports users with real-time interaction. This feature enables businesses to be more proactive and responsive (Ferrer et al., 2013). As for the internal environment, SNSs help businesses to enhance financial growth and competitive advantages, while for the external environment, they increase consumer fulfillment and reputation (Orzan et al., 2013).

2. Studies on success factors for C2C

The SNSs have crucial roles in the emergence of s-commerce, particularly among small businesses within the C2C context (MyNewsHub, 2015; Wong, 2012). The presence of entrepreneurs in C2C business model within the s-commerce context has overwhelmingly superseded the other types of e-commerce models (Zalatar, 2012). Income generated from C2C model is 5-fold higher than that recorded

for B2C model (WeiWei & Yue, 2015); thus signifying the significance of online entrepreneurs in terms of their contribution to the economy. Additionally, the presence of C2C entrepreneur has further escalated due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic, which is bound to change the business landscape in the long run (Bernama, 2020).

In spite of its clear progress, the contributions of SNSs to businesses remain untapped (Samuel et al., 2014). Past studies revealed that most entrepreneurs simply adopted s-commerce because other businesses did so; identifying neither the success factors nor the outcomes (see Ahmad et al., 2018; Grizane & Jurgelane, 2017; Hassan et al., 2015; McCann & Barlow, 2015; Stelzner, 2016). It is important to determine the success factors of s-commerce so that C2C entrepreneur can focus on them to attain greater heights in their business endeavour (Madu & Madu, 2002; Mohamed, et al., 2009; Pansiri & Temtime, 2010; Turban, et al., 2015). Additionally, it is integral to link the success factors to s-commerce performance (Öztamur & Karakadılar, 2014), which is often dismissed by many entrepreneurs (Grizane & Jurgelane, 2017; Hassan et al., 2015; McCann & Barlow, 2015), so that they can make accurate decisions and effectively strategize their businesses for greater performance. This highlights a setback from the practical aspect, which demands scholarly attention.

Theoretically, only recent studies have begun focusing on the contributions of s-commerce in terms of value creation to business (Ahmad et al., 2018; Hopkins, 2012). Several scholars have investigated s-commerce success at the firm level (see Ainin et al., 2015; Ferrer et al., 2013; Jones et al., 2015; Mohamed et al., 2009; Odoom et al., 2017; Parveen et al., 2016). Besides, studies on s-commerce success are more related to marketing and communication (Ainin & Noorismawati, 2003; Roteh, 2014). Interestingly, our previous work revealed that no study on s-commerce has addressed C2C in the current literature (Nor Asiah et al., 2021). The absence of s-commerce studies on C2C indicates a limited model for C2C in determining success factors (Kraus, Palmer, Kailer, Kallinger, & Spitzer, 2019; Sukrat & Papasratorn, 2018; Vongsraluang & Bhatiasavi, 2017). It is vital to determine success factors and the related framework, as these serve as guidelines for C2C entrepreneur on deploying online business fruitfully (Madu & Madu, 2002; Mohamed, Govindan, Mohd Daud, & Siong Choy, 2009; Pansiri & Temtime, 2010).

Despite the various success factors that work as variables for small-scale business performance and e-commerce (Benzing, Chu, & Kara, 2009; Laosethakul, 2005; Ng & Kee, 2012; Stefanovic, Prokic, & Rankovic, 2010; Watson et al., 1998), they are neither extensively studied nor conclusively accepted among practitioners and the academia (Hui et al., 2005; Rogoff et al., 2004; Simpson et al., 2012; Watson et al., 1998). Moreover, not all success factors apply to each business model due to the specific traits of business, industry, and geographic location (Carland et al., 1984; Carlos Pinho & Sampaio de Sá, 2014; Dobbs & Hamilton, 2007; McClelland, 1986; Kaloo, 2010; Simpson et al., 2012). The determinants of business success are varied due to multiple unit levels of analysis, in which the outcomes of a unit level of analysis may not be applicable to another unit of analysis (Rauch & Frese, 2000; Molla & Licker, 2001). As businesses always face scarcity in resources, entrepreneurs are advised to determine and focus on success factors in order to overcome various challenges, to keep growing, and to survive (Choshin & Ghaffari, 2017; Ng & Kee, 2012; Simpson et al., 2012). Notably, success factors refer to a limited set of key areas where things must go right for business owners to achieve their goals or to achieve favourable outcomes (Rockart, 1986).

3. Systematic Literature Review Process and Findings

Due to the limited studies on s-commerce, particularly on its success factors (Nor Asiah et al., 2021), an SLR was conducted to explore the current research area of C2C and to identify the relevant variables that determine s-commerce success. Hence, the set of domains and the combination of keywords prescribed by Baker (2004) and Bandara et al., (2011) were employed to start the process of SLR. Articles published from 2010 to end of 2019 in Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), Emerald, Sage, JSTOR, and Science Direct databases were reviewed to identify relevant articles. The selected time frame is appropriate because it reflects the period when s-commerce had hit popularity as Facebook allowed firms to create pages for businesses in the year 2008 (Kwok & Yu, 2016), which officially began with the opening of the first Facebook store by 1-800- Flowers.com on 29th July 2009 (Stuth & Mancuso, 2010). The chosen databases were considered relevant because they provide high-impact factor publications.

Articles related to the study domain were retrieved using several terms, including “performance”, “success”, and “growth”, as they represent the theme of firm performance. The selected articles were re-filtered using several keywords, such as entrepreneur, small business, as well as small and medium enterprise. The articles selected for review were not limited to online business but also conventional business (offline setting). This is because; it is possible for success factors of offline entrepreneurs to also have important roles in the online setting as the platform has shifted from brick-and-mortar to click-and-brick (Kraus et al., 2019). By doing so, the success factors of either online or offline business may be identified to illustrate C2C s-commerce success.

7,797 papers were reviewed in this study. Articles that highlighted “success” from customers’ perspectives, such as “purchase decision” and “purchase intention”, were excluded as the focus of this review is on the stance of business owners. In total, 78 studies published between the mid-1980s and end 2019 were extracted featuring over 90 independent variables of success factors. Out of the 78 articles, 17 concentrated on online businesses. Interestingly, out of the 17 papers that had investigated the online business segment, only two studies had explored entrepreneurship in light of B2C e-commerce (see Phonthanakitithaworn et al., 2019; Seborá et al., 2009). Both articles focused on B2C entrepreneurship within the context of Thailand, a developing country. The study by Seborá et al., (2009) appears to be the pioneer in the online entrepreneur research area, while the work by Phonthanakitithaworn et al., (2019) was grounded on Seborá et al.,’s (2009) model.

The framework developed by Seborá et al., (2009) served as the underlying foundation in this present study to develop the s-commerce success framework within the C2C context for two reasons. First, the C2C model is nearly similar to the B2C (Dehua et al., 2008), in which customers are the end-users. Second, since s-commerce emerged from e-commerce, the former has inherited many e-commerce features.

Notably, most of the available entrepreneur success models are generally composed of three interrelated dimensions, namely individual, firm, and external or environment setting (Benzing et al., 2009; Gartner, 1985). These dimensions have been widely applied in small business and entrepreneurship fields of studies (see Akin, 2012; Gartner, 1985; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Satar & John, 2016; Simpson et al., 2012; Watson et al., 1998). Seborá et al., (2009) built a generic framework for entrepreneur and small

business success based on these three dimensions. Seborá et al., (2009) proposed a framework for B2C entrepreneur e-commerce success that comprised of founder characteristics (achievement orientation, risk-taking propensity, locus of control, & networking), e-service factors (reliability, responsiveness, ease of use, & self-service), and governmental support.

Nonetheless, the framework proposed by Seborá et al., (2009) excluded some variables of s-commerce success detailed in other studies, such as information quality, social support, and marketing strategy, which have been highlighted by other scholars in their research work (see Hassan et al., 2015; Hou et al., 2017; Liang et al., 2012; Vongsraluang & Bhatiasevi, 2017). This signifies an incomprehensive framework to measure online entrepreneur success (Vongsraluang & Bhatiasevi, 2017). It is also reasonable to assume that there are variables from the domains of e-commerce and offline entrepreneurs which apply to the s-commerce setting since both fields are similar to a certain point, such as dealing with end-consumers and running businesses solely on small scales.

Apart from Seborá et al.,'s (2009) work, other scholarly work was referred to as well. The emphasis was on the variables frequently used by scholars and the assessment of the suitability with C2C within the s-commerce segment. The success factors that appeared in 78 articles were later grouped into three main dimensions: individual, organisation, and external levels (note: the 78 articles have variables in one, two or all three dimensions).

Out of the 78 studies, 63 revealed success factors at the individual level with 36 variables identified based on frequency. These variables were grouped into three categories, namely traits (20 variables), demographic (14 variables), and others (2 variables) (Figure 1). In the trait category, need for achievement, risk propensity, innovativeness, and proactiveness variables, are among the most popular variables used by previous scholars. As for the demographic aspect, only two variables were cited in online business; knowledge and technical skill, while experience and education were frequently used in the studies. For the others categories, networking and position in the society/political involvement were the two variables studied in offline business context, where networking is highly applied in past studies.

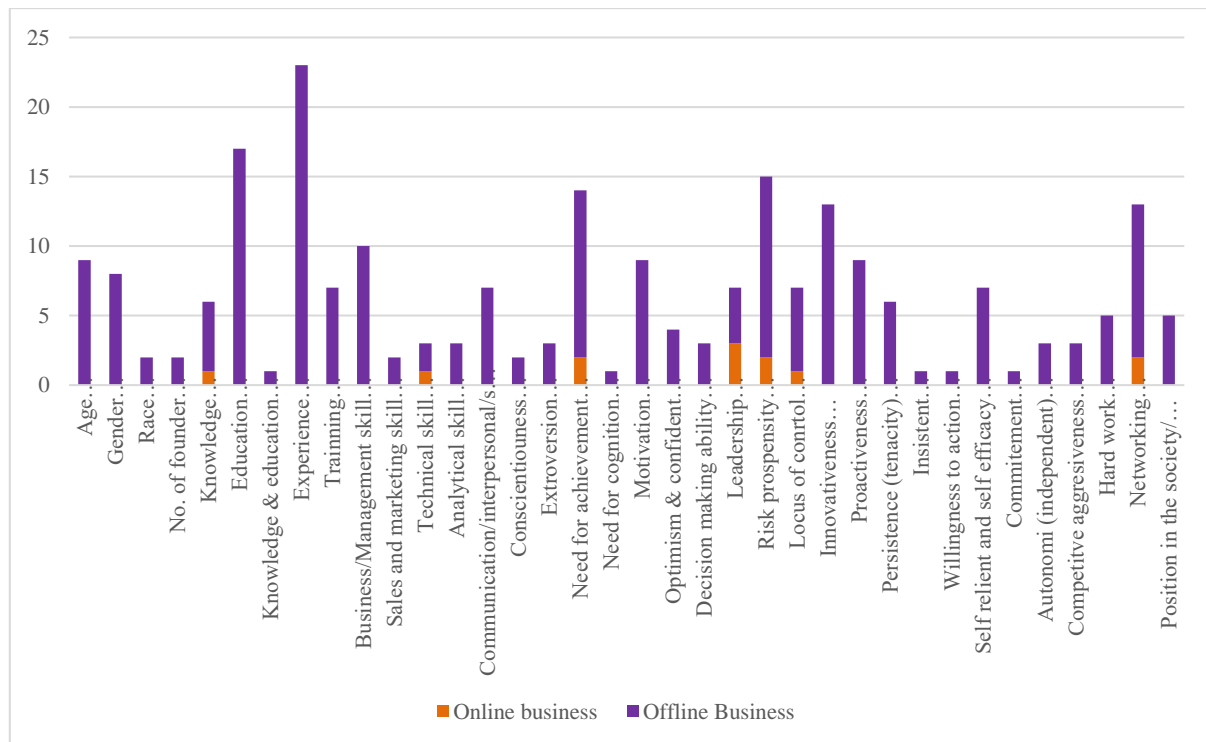


Figure 1: Frequency used of individual dimension variables from extracted articles

On organisational dimension, in total, 47 variables were identified from 56 articles (Refer Figure 3). These variables were analysed based on the frequency and were grouped in several general themes or factors, mainly according to the classification prescribed by Hui et al., (2005), Huang et al., (2007), and Kumar et al., (2004). The themes are leadership, organisation, management, strategy, technology, website, customers, and suppliers (Huang et al., 2007; Hui et al., 2005; Kumar et al., 2004). However, leadership is commonly grouped under the individual dimension, whereas suppliers and customers are external factors. Hence, the classifications were made based on the remaining five factors.

Management factors cover a wider span of variables when compared to other factors under the organisational dimension. Apparently, 24 variables were examined by scholars with human resources and funding/financial variables being the most used variables, but in offline business segment. For the second factor of organisation, three variables were examined by previous scholars mainly on innovation and training, but all of them were infrequently used. The third factor - strategy – was found mostly in online business studies for e-commerce, while business plan/strategy and marketing strategy for offline business studies. The fourth factor is the technology factor and its variables, namely technology, application, speed, and network, infrequently appeared in the studies. As for the fifth factor, which is a website, all the variables were deployed in studies related to the online business domain with information quality being the most popular among the other four variables. Overall, funding/financing and business plan/strategy variables were the most frequently applied by scholars within the organisational dimension.

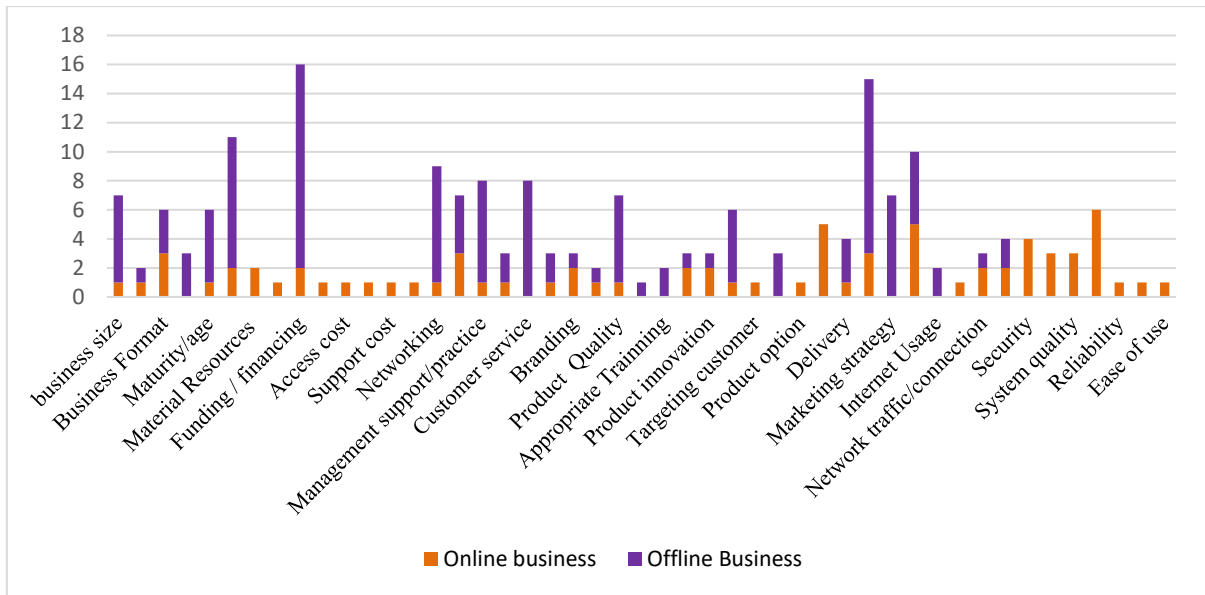


Figure 2: Frequency used of organizational variables from extracted articles

The third dimension of entrepreneur success framework refers to external environment. Out of 78 articles, 32 addressed external factors and 12 variables were identified from the studies (Refer Figure 3). These variables are grouped into five main categories, namely customer, government, social support, financial institution, and environment. The government support variable emerged as the most used variable in most studies for external dimension, followed by social support from family and friends. Meanwhile, the other variables were infrequently deployed.

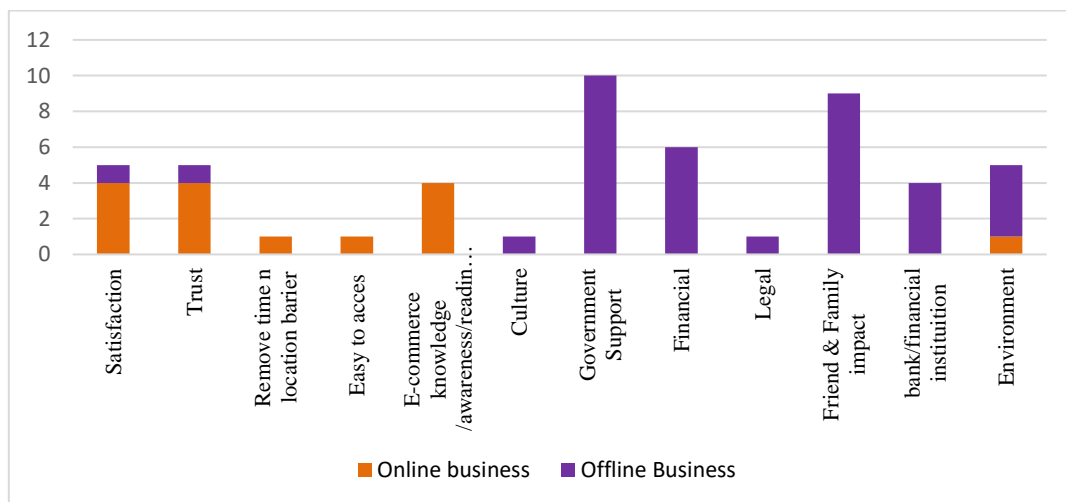


Figure 3: Frequency used of external variables from extracted articles

4. DISCUSSION

Based on the findings obtained from SLR, the following discussion is presented. First, for the individual dimension, among the most popular characteristics identified are the need for achievement, motivation, risk-taking propensity, education, and experience. In precise, under the trait category, the variables prescribed by Seborá et al., (2009), such as the need for achievement and locus of control, are crucial

for online business success as these two variables are also significant success factors for the conventional business segment (see Abdullah et al., 2009; Isaga, 2018; Lee & Tsang, 2001; Phonthanakitithaworn et al., 2019; Sidik, 2012; Zhao et al., 2010). As for the risk-taking propensity variable, Seborá et al., (2009) found it insignificant for e-entrepreneur success, thus may be omitted. Although Seborá et al., (2009) found e-networking an insignificant variable, there is an increasing number of citations in studies after the year 2009 on the networking variable 2009 (see Abdullah et al., 2009; Islam et al., 2011; Benzing et al., 2009; Coy et al., 2007; Eschker et al., 2017; Peltier & Naidu, 2012; Qu et al., 2013; Ramadani, 2015; Satar & John, 2016); displaying its importance in the s-commerce context that emphasised on human relationship. It was evidenced that entrepreneur traits (extroversion) influenced networking, which in turn, exerted a positive impact on entrepreneur success (Lee & Tsang, 2001). Hence, it is reasonable to expect that extroversion has a potential effect on the correlation between e-networking and online entrepreneur success.

Despite the wide use of innovativeness variable in offline studies, it is absent in online business studies. In the s-commerce context, C2C entrepreneur sell end product, without offering customization. This may explain why innovativeness is not significant. Since Seborá et al., (2009) focused on entrepreneur traits, it is reasonable to assume that they have taken careful consideration and examination on other entrepreneur traits, thus the variables highlighted in their studies are the best traits as variables that fit well in online entrepreneurs. As such, we conclude the insignificance of innovativeness in determining success among online entrepreneurs. As for the position in society/political variable, it is infrequently used in past studies and not critical in determining most business success.

As previously mentioned, apart from traits, many studies concerning owner factors have captured the demographic profile of entrepreneurs (Abdullah et al., 2009). On the contrary, Seborá et al., (2009) dismissed demographic factors as a crucial aspect. Nonetheless, entrepreneurs' demographic data, such as gender, age, race, marital status, education, experience, and training, have been found to affect business success (Hand et al., 1987 as cited in Boohene et al., 2008). Frequently deployed in studies related to offline business, experience and education mostly have a positive relationship with business success (see Bala & Feng, 2019; Benzing et al., 2009; Franco & Prata, 2019; Lee & Tsang, 2001; Pinho & Sampaio de Sá, 2014; Ramadani, 2015; Soomro et al., 2019; Stefanovic et al., 2010; Unger, Rauch, Frese, & Rosenbusch, 2011). However, these variables were frequently used for offline business studies, but non for an online business where C2C in s-commerce is concerned.

However, management skills and knowledge, which were used frequently in prior studies may be ignored because these variables are acquired through education (Isaga, 2018; Zamberi Ahmad, 2013) and are embedded in entrepreneurs who possess experience and education variables. Lastly, since the frequency for other traits, such as age, gender, race, and training, mentioned in past studies appear to be lower than the variables discussed above, they may be disregarded as success factors for most businesses. Several variables, such as the number of business owners, appear irrelevant for C2C context.

Based on the above discussion, we propose that achievement, locus of control, education, and experience variables should be embedded into the C2C s-commerce model. Besides, the inclusion of extroversion variable (entrepreneur traits) may shed light on the insignificant correlation between networking and online entrepreneur success, as described in Seborá et al., (2009).

In light of the organisation dimension, Seborá et al., (2009) proposed the e-service factor by incorporating several variables, such as reliability, responsiveness, ease of use, and self-service, for B2C success. They found that reliability and ease of use were positively linked to B2C success. These variables (i.e., reliability, responsiveness, ease of use, & self-service) are also classified as website factors within the e-commerce domain (Huang et al., 2007; Hui et al., 2005; Kumar et al., 2004) and as system quality in Information System (IS) Success Model (DeLone & McLean, 2004; Molla & Licker, 2001). There is no issue concerning system quality since s-commerce use SNSs, such as Facebook, which refers to ready-made systems and well-established social media platforms, where online entrepreneurs are merely users of SNSs. Therefore, all related variables, except for responsiveness may not significant in s-commerce context. Similarly, only the responsiveness variable was applied in past studies while omitting reliability, ease of use, and self-service.

The responsiveness variable was employed to measure system quality and service quality dimensions (DeLone & McLean, 2004). Responsiveness in system quality dimension measures the capabilities of e-commerce system to execute tasks, while responsiveness in the service quality dimension reflects the promptness of businesses to respond to customers (DeLone & McLean, 2004; Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Malhotra, 2002). Responsiveness may be significant in service quality. Hence, the responsiveness variable should be incorporated to measure the service quality dimension based on the following justification. In e-commerce, responsiveness measures the speed an entrepreneur responds to customer email (Zeithaml et al., 2002). However, time lag occurs during the interaction between customer and entrepreneur. Despite that, customers demand promptness in response from entrepreneurs (Korper & Ellis, 1999 as cited in Seborá et al., 2009). Considering the nature of s-commerce, which emphasises on high human interaction between entrepreneur and customer, the characteristics of SNSs that provide real time-based communication between users (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013) enable entrepreneurs to immediately respond to their customers. Consistent with the IS success model, responsiveness is a significant service quality measure (DeLone & Mclean, 2003).

Apart from service quality and system quality, the IS Success Model covers information quality dimension (DeLone & McLean, 2004; Vongsraluang & Bhatiasevi, 2017). It was noted that under the website factors, information quality was amongst the most cited by scholars for online business success, rather than for system quality (see DeLone & McLean, 2004; Laosethakul, 2005; Zeelie, 2002; Zhang, 2017). Both e-service quality (responsiveness) and information quality contribute to customers' e-satisfaction, which eventually leads to e-commerce success (Vongsraluang & Bhatiasevi, 2017). These two variables were, nonetheless, omitted from Seborá et al.,'s (2009) model.

Based on the above explanation and analysis on variables underlying e-service factors proposed by Seborá et al., (2009), this study suggests placing e-service factors under SNSs factor. If studies within the e-commerce segment have highlighted the website factor as a CSF (Huang et al., 2007; Hui et al., 2005; Kumar et al., 2004), it is reasonable to point out that SNS is also a CSF for s-commerce. In precise, information quality and responsiveness variables should be incorporated as success factors. This is primarily because; the functions available in SNS, such as Facebook, facilitate entrepreneurs to run an online business in an effective manner. For example, the use of the post function in Facebook enables online entrepreneurs to provide clear information about products by displaying product descriptions, images, and videos, apart from the ability to respond quickly to the customers' inquiries. Facebook supports responsiveness through comments and private message functions, thus allowing entrepreneurs

and customers to interact on real time basis. However, the reliability, ease of use, and self-service variables should be excluded, mainly because they do not fit with the s-commerce characteristics.

Apart from those embedded in Seborá et al.,'s (2009) framework, other variables were considered as well. Funding/financial and business plan/strategy are the most frequently used variables by scholars in the retrieved 56 articles. Nevertheless, funding/financial variables may be excluded, mainly because entrepreneurs can run their business via SNSs at a minimal cost (Ainin et al., 2015; Gamboa & Gonçalves, 2014; Gibbs & Kraemer, 2004; Öztamur & Karakadılar, 2014). Hence, this factor is irrelevant to the s-commerce context. Strategies are suggested as success factors by most scholars, both in offline (see Benzing et al., 2009; Gartner, 1989; Lee & Tsang, 2001; Storey, 1994) and online business (see Hui et al., 2005; Kumar et al., 2004; Seborá et al., 2009). Strategy facilitates sales generation in social media (Lindsey-Mullikin & Norm, 2017). The strategy must be specific (Kumar et al., 2004) for C2C entrepreneur with limited resources (Franco et al., 2016; Kim et al., 2013; Markman & Baron, 2003). Notably, marketing strategy is vital for online entrepreneurs (see Phonthanukitithaworn et al., 2019) and it appeared to be the second most frequently used variable by scholars after the business plan/strategy variable (see Abdul-Kader, Mohamad, & Che-Ibrahim, 2009; Kim et al., 2018; Mandhachitara & Allapach, 2017; Mohamad Radzi et al., 2017; Tajvidi & Karami, 2017; Zhang & Okoroafo, 2013).

Inappropriate marketing strategy is among the top failure factors for small businesses (Theng & Boon, 1996). Marketing is crucial in businesses as it raises sales and business profit (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012), and this is no exception for the online business context. Marketing is a CSF for small businesses, especially in developing countries (Margolis, 1963; Stefanovic et al., 2010). The importance of marketing in s-commerce can be seen when e-commerce and e-marketing are reported as the two main activities in s-commerce (Busalim & Hussin, 2016; Turban, King, Lee, Liang, & Turban, 2015).

Phonthanukitithaworn et al., (2019) reported that several marketing variables, such as product price, product quality, and advertising, functioned as possible success factors for online entrepreneurs in Thailand. In marketing activities, promotion is crucial, while sales promotion was claimed as the most vital and effective tool to gain competitive advantage (Balaghar, Majidazar, & Niromand, 2012; Margolis, 1963; Theng & Boon, 1996). McDonald (1987 as cited in Abdul Jamak et al., 2014) reported that 80% of small businesses performed well due to the capability of the entrepreneurs to offer rigorous promotions. The importance of promotion is clearly emphasised in the third step of the Awareness, Interest, Desire and Interest (AIDA) model, which denotes that promotional tools should be used to inform and convince people to buy the product (Hassan et al., 2015; Ismail et al., 2009). This notion strongly justifies the need to assess other marketing activities, apart from those prescribed by Phonthanukitithaworn et al., (2019), which may establish better relevance to success factors for s-commerce.

Sales promotions refer to a collective of various temporary marketing efforts either to stimulate immediate purchase or to increase sales for a product (Blythe, 2005; Kotler, 1988). In short, sales promotions are provisional and "call-to-action" (Blattberg & Briesch, 2010). As promotions last only for a short period, people normally respond positively as they benefit from low-price offering (Jallow & Dastane, 2016; Stanforth, Lennon, & Shin, 2001). The contribution of sales promotions has been

empirically supported (see Balaghar et al., 2012). Brown (1974 as cited in Kotler, 1988) found sales promotion resulted in higher sales when compared to advertising (Margolis, 1963).

Each sales promotion tool brings different specific aims and target audience, thus entrepreneurs should wisely learn before deciding on which promotion tool(s) to be implemented especially with limited resources (Barringer & Ireland, 2008; Blattberg & Briesch, 2010; Kotler & Armstrong, 2012), apart from ascertaining its fruitfulness. Amongst the tools for sales promotion applied by s-commerce entrepreneurs are price discount and free gift (Chandon et al., 2000; Orzan et al., 2013). Hence, these two types of sales promotion should be investigated for their relationships with s-commerce success. The other variables may be omitted as their frequency of use by scholars appear to be low, while some others (e.g., business format, human resources, cost (access, technical, support, inside, & outside), culture, management support/practice, IT assets, software application, web design, & system quality) are unsuitable for the context of C2C.

Referring to the external dimension, Seborá et al., (2009) found that government support was insignificant for B2C success and most scholars also reported that the government factor was not critical in determining for entrepreneur success (see Benzing et al., 2009; Chong, 2012; Chu, Kara, Zhu, & Gok, 2011; Coy et al., 2007; Pinho & Sampaio de Sá, 2014; Stefanovic et al., 2010). Therefore, is reasonable to exclude this variable.

In light of the second external dimension, most offline studies cited internal support such as family support and friends. In s-commerce, social support may derive from external, such as society or the community in the web (Hajli, 2015; Liang et al., 2012). However, the social support dimension, i.e., social reviews, was not mentioned in the 78 extracted articles. This social support is the main construct in s-commerce (Hajli, 2015; Hettiarachchi et al., 2017). In s-commerce, the two types of social support are information support and emotional support, which are used to assist social interaction (Liang et al., 2012). Most studies on consumer behaviour revealed that information support, such as customer/social reviews, had a significant link with purchase intention and purchase decision (see Hajli, 2015; Park et al., 2007; Wang et al., 2017), thus displaying the importance of these variables to s-commerce success. Hence, this study proposes positive social reviews to represent external social support.

As a conclusion, the following s-commerce success framework is proposed as the C2C model. The framework is composed of three dimensions: individual, organisational, and external. The variables for individual level (business owners) are further divided into entrepreneur demographic and traits. As for the organisational dimension, the variables fall under two main categories, namely sales promotions (price discount & free gift) and SNSs (responsiveness, information quality, & customer e-satisfaction) factors. Lastly, for the external dimension, the positive social reviews variable is proposed to represent social support.

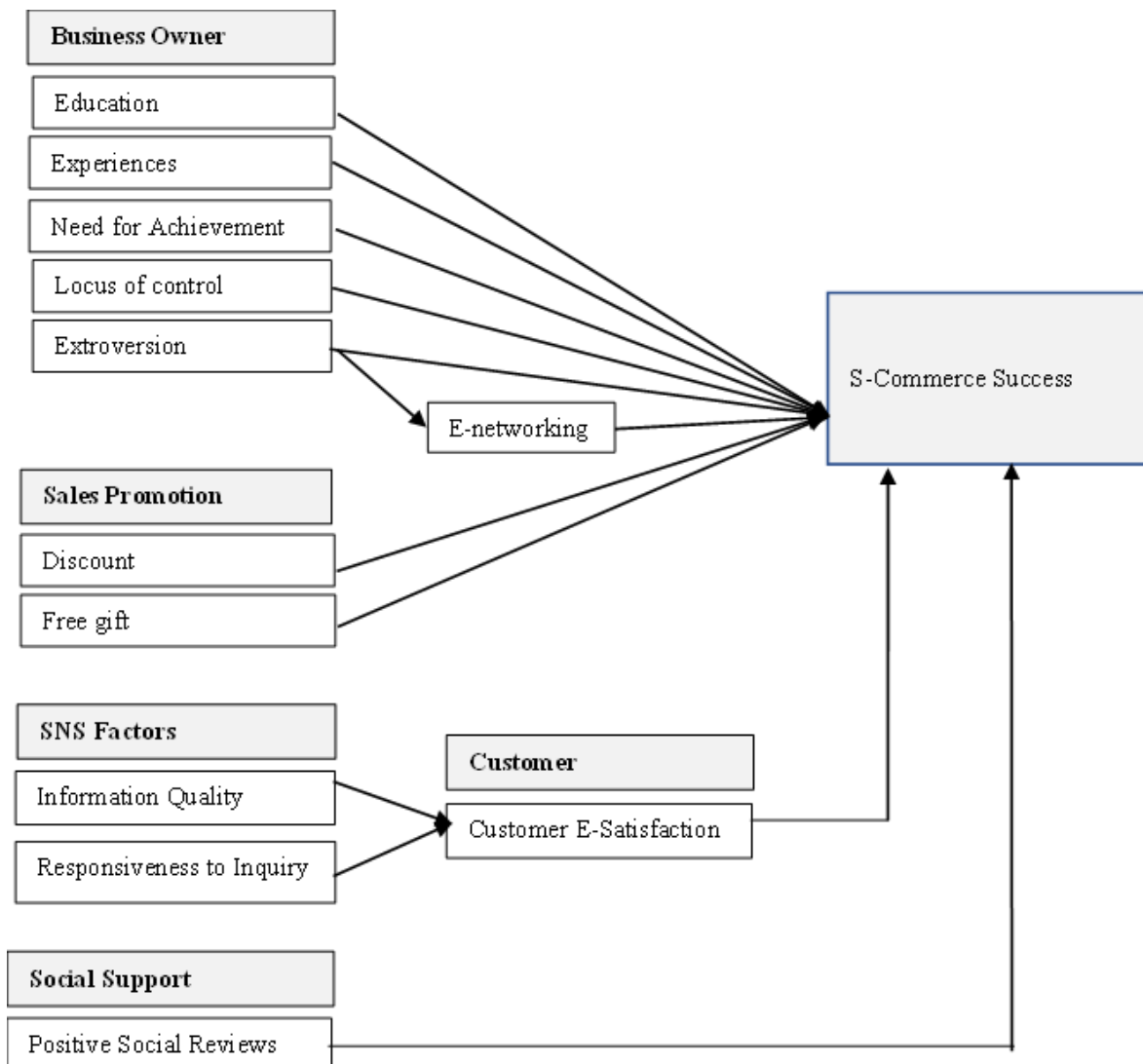


Figure 4 :Proposed Framework of C2C S-Commerce Success

CONCLUSION

This paper is an extension of our previous work, where we found that studies on s-commerce are indeed emerging but when compared to the overall study on s-commerce, business performance appeared as the least concerned theme among scholars. Furthermore, studies in this area are in scarcity.

We revealed more than 90 variables that may function as success factors from 78 articles published between the mid-1980s and end of 2019. Interestingly, out of the 17 articles that had investigated the online business segment, only two studies had explored entrepreneurship in light of B2C e-commerce. This indirectly shows that even though the success factors for traditional (offline) entrepreneurs are numerous and have been extensively researched, this cannot be said for specific online business establishment; C2C in s-commerce model.

Since s-commerce emerged from e-commerce and has inherited many e-commerce features, the

framework proposed by Sehora et al., (2009) may serve as C2C s-commerce model. In our proposed framework, two variables from offline business are incorporated, namely entrepreneur education and experience, which are untapped in online business context. Finally, we include other variables, such as information quality, customer satisfaction, price discount, and social reviews, which have been highlighted separately by scholars in s-commerce. The generic framework of success factors for entrepreneurs and small businesses is comprised of the following three dimensions; business owner, firm, and external aspects, for better illustration of our model. This proposed model will be empirically tested to verify the relationships among the assigned variables.

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