

Social Commerce Impact on Consumers' Purchase Intention among Generation-Z Consumers in Sri Lanka

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Abstract: The rapid development of web 2.0, as well as the growing use of social media networks by individuals and businesses, has resulted in a remarkable shift from e-commerce to social commerce. It is very much noticeable that Generation Z is the most active Generation, in the usage of social media platforms in a high-intensity manner. Accordingly, the present study investigates the impact of social commerce on consumers' purchase intention specially referring to Generation Z consumers in Sri Lanka. The motivation behind this study is due to the paucity of studies in such discipline in the Sri Lankan context. The present study is associated with four independent variables as social commerce constructs, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and perceived risk. The nature of the present study is quantitative. The researchers follows the purposive sampling technique and survey strategy, under that questionnaire is used to collect data from the 360 respondents who are using social media to purchase products among the Generation of Z in Sri Lanka. Data was analyzed using univariate and multivariate techniques. Based on the results of the multiple regression analysis, social commerce constructs, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use have significant and positive impacts while perceived risk has a significant and negative impact on purchase intention among Generation Z consumers in Sri Lanka. Thus, it was determined that social commerce has an impact on Generation Z consumers' purchase intention in Sri Lanka. As a result, marketers can carefully plan and execute their marketing programs and policies by focusing on Generation Z consumers to grab the maximum benefits from social commerce.

Keywords- Social Commerce, Purchase Intention, Survey Study, Generation- Z Consumers, Sri Lanka

I. INTRODUCTION

With the rapid development of Web 2.0, online shopping has emerged as an essential component of modern life (Fagerstrom & Ghinea, 2010). In general, social commerce enables the delivery of e-commerce activities and transactions via the social media environment, primarily via social networks and Web 2.0 software. As a result, social commerce may be seen as a subset of e-commerce that includes the use of social media to assist e-commerce transactions and activities. In addition, social commerce refers to the use of Web 2.0 apps to enable people's interactions in an online context where the user's participation may aid in the purchase of items and services (Liang & Turban, 2011). Even social media is the future of commerce since it provides an easy way to connect millions of people to purchase and sell items in a

fraction of a second (Wickramasinghe, 2020). According to that, social commerce is the latest trend of commerce not only in Sri Lanka but also in globe now. Therefore, today, social commerce is replacing e-commerce by creating a huge opportunity globally. When it comes to social media usage in Sri Lanka in the year 2020, 10.1 million of the population has internet access, out of them, 98% of internet users have access to social media and the internet through their mobiles. Today 6.4million active social media users in Sri Lanka and active social media users have increased by 8.3% between 2019 and 2020. The social media penetration ratio is stands at 30% now. Furthermore, Facebook.com & Youtube.com as social media networks are in the 2nd and 4th places among the most visited websites in Sri Lanka (Digital Global Overview, 2020). In Sri Lanka, average internet users check social media notifications at least seven times per hour, with users in the 19-24 age group checking social media notifications eight times per hour. And, also 26% of social media users report they have actually purchased a product or service more than once after seeing an advertisement on social media, with the majority of them being in the 19-24 age category and the top two brands trending in social media are Daraz and Dialog in Sri Lanka now (APIDM, 2020).

As per the statistics (the year 2020), out of 7.81 billion of the total world population 4.14 billion people engage with social media, so more than half of the world now uses social media. The average time spent by a user with social media was 2H 29M & Facebook is the most popular social media with 2.14 billion users in the world. Among the FB users, most are in the 18-24 age category and most of those users are under the 16-24 age category use social media for brand research Digital Global Overview, 2020). When reviewing the recent trends of social commerce in the world now, The ODM Report has stated social networks influence 74% of consumers' purchase decisions. According to Technavio, the global social commerce market is expected to develop at compound annual growth rate 34% of the by 2021. Also social media referral traffic to ecommerce stores has noticed a 100% increase year on year from 2018 and the Instagram notated that, one-third of Instagram users purchased something from Instagram now and then (Lazar, 2020).

In the Asian context, with the largest increase in Facebook audience, India is at the top of the Facebook reach rankings

(Digital Global Overview, 2020). Out of the total population of 21.37 million in Sri Lanka in the year 2020, it has been observed that 6.4 million of people have actively used social media. And, Facebook is the most popular social media in Sri Lanka. Among the internet users, 87% of the Internet users are using Facebook once a month while 81% of them are daily users. Apart from the social media usage statistics, it is identified that 26% of Sri Lanka internet users actually purchase a product or service after being influenced by the advertisement on social media and the users fall under the age group 19-24 (APIDM, 2020). As per the above world real-time data, it is obvious in the Asian (specifically Sri Lankan) context, social media plays a major role in people's lives and the growing trend of social commerce will make a major influence on consumers' purchase intention.

A demographic cohort is known as Generation Z, who are born between 1995 and 2010 (Dolot, 2018) and Gen-Z people are identified as having internet access since a young age and they are strongly affected by social media and recognize and use the power of technology (Williams, Page, Petrosky, & Hernandez, 2010). Generation Z has high intensity to engage with social commerce now and in the future. Despite the fact that numerous researches have been conducted worldwide to investigate the influence of social commerce on customers' purchase intentions, it is clear that generation based findings in this area is inadequate. Accordingly, the study intends to study the impact of social commerce on consumers' purchase intention by giving special emphasis to generation Z consumers in Sri Lanka. The present study is important for researchers and academics to conduct more studies expanding and validating the knowledge in social commerce and consumers' purchase intention among the different generations in their future researches keeping in view the wide opportunities marketers are provided with by using social commerce. Therefore, this study is very helpful for marketers to plan, create strategies and conduct their marketing programs and policies effectively and efficiently.

Pavlou (2003), stated that the final stage of an online transaction is an intention to use a website and purchase a product. Therefore, Purchase intention plays a major role in online consumer behavior (Athapaththu & Kulathunga, 2018). The researcher uses four independent variables in three different perspectives to identify the impact of social commerce on consumers' purchase intention and they are as follows: Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use under the technology perspective, Social Commerce Constructs (SCCS) under the social perspective, and Perceived Risk under the risk perspective. Based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which was introduced by Fred Davis in 1989, perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use are the major two variables that determined a person's behavioral intention (Davis, 1989). Under the social commerce constructs, as recommendations and referrals, forums, communities & ratings, and reviews are identified as factors that facilitates the social commerce (Hajli, 2015). Perceived risk can play a significant role in consumers'

purchasing decisions (Dowling, 1986) and Social commerce is a new and rising field where consumers expect a high level of perceived risk (Park, Babicheva, & Lee, 2018). The present study intends to develop a new model by using the perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, social commerce constructs, and perceived risk to investigate the impact of social commerce on Gen Z consumers' purchase intention in Sri Lanka.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Social Commerce*

The fusion of numerous fields resulted in social commerce. Such as web2.0, social media, e-commerce, and social media marketing (Turban, Whiteside, King, & Outland, 2017). Wang and Sang (2012) mentioned social commerce involved multiple fields and they were marketing, computer science, sociology, and psychology. So they identified social commerce as a combination of informational, technological, business, and social aspects. (Friedrich, 2015). By looking at the history of social commerce, which can be identified in 2005, Yahoo! Introduced the term social commerce to characterize a new collaborative shopping tool on their shopping platform that allowed customers to create, share and comment on product lists (Friedrich, 2015). The growing popularity of social networking sites like LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, and Instagram have paved the way for a new e-commerce business model called social commerce (Liang & Turban, 2011). So social commerce is rapidly developing and the most famous business model now. Liang and Turban (2011) defined social commerce as a subset of e-commerce that involved using social media to assist in e-commerce transactions and activities (Friedrich, 2015). According to Shanmugam (2016), social commerce was a form of new business internet transaction based social media that allow the community to interact with users and platforms (Makmora & Alam, 2017). Stephen and Toubia (2010) defined social commerce as a new platform that allows consumers in selling and buying activities of products or services that offers in an online marketplace (Makmora & Alam, 2017). For this research, the researcher uses Liang and Turban's (2011) definition to define social commerce. So social commerce is a subset of e-commerce that involved using social media to assist in e-commerce transactions and activities.

B. *Purchase Intention*

The term "purchase intention" is derived from the word "intention". Fishbein (1975), defined as the intention is the subjective probability that a person will perform a specific activity (Kian, Boon, Fong, & Ai, 2017) According to Keller (2001), Purchase intention can be described as a key indicator to predict consumer behavior (Phan & Mai, 2016). According to Diallo (2012), purchase intention is defined as the consumer's desire to buy a product (Arifani & Haryanto, 2018). Keller (2001), defined that purchase intention is a shopper's desire to purchase an item or service since the shopper has an intention to find a specific item or benefit or a

positive mind towards, even view of the product or service (Athapaththu & Kulathunga, 2018). Hajli et al. (2016), definition of purchase intention in social commerce refers to consumers who are willing to engage and do online purchase from the online network (Makmora & Alam, 2017). For this research purpose, purchase intention can be defined as consumers that are willing to engage and do online purchases from the online network.

C. *Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)*

The technology acceptance model (TAM) originally introduced by Fred Davis in 1989, is one of the most popular models for explaining user acceptance behavior (Davis, 1989). So, TAM, the most significant research model studies the determinants of information technology systems' acceptance to predict individuals' intention to use and accept information technology systems (Chen, Han Li, & Yi Li, 2011). TAM was an adaptation of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), which was introduced by Fishbein and Ajzen in 1975 (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1989). According to TRA, a person's behavioral intention to perform a particular behavior determines the person's performance of that behavior, and the person's attitude and subjective norm about the behavior cooperate to determine a person's behavioral intention (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1989). When developing the TAM, Davis has done two changes to the TRA. They are, the researcher did not take subjective norms to predict a person's behavioral intention and he used PEOU and PU as the only two belief factors to predict person's behavioral intention (Sin, Nor, & Al-Agaga, 2012), (Chuttur, 2009). TAM is more appropriate to use in online contexts. Because TAM specified information system usage, TAM was more parsimonious and it was more powerful in various information system applications (Chen, Han Li, & Yi Li, 2011). By adding additional variables to TAM, it extended the applicability and validity of TAM in more research contexts including e-commerce and social commerce contexts other than in the information system adoption (Hajli, Wang, Tajvidi, & Hajli, 2017). The researcher uses Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) with Social commerce constructs and perceived risk variables to develop the research model for this research.

1) *Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) :*

PU and PEOU are the major two variables in the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989). PU is defined as the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance (Davis, 1989). PEOU is defined as the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort (Davis, 1989). According to Chen and Ching (2013) PU in the e-commerce context is defined as the extent to how an online store provides helpful information to their customers and how that information helps their transaction (Dachyar & Banjarnahor, 2017).). Chen and Ching (2013) defined PEOU in an e-commerce context as to the extent of user experience of a particular website to be easy to operate and effortless to

learn (Dachyar & Banjarnahor, 2017). For this research purpose, PU in social commerce context can be defined as the degree to which a social media site provides consumers with useful information and how that knowledge supports their transactions. And, PEOU in the social commerce context can be defined as the degree to which a consumer perceives a social media website to be easy to use and easy to learn how to utilize.

2) *Social Commerce Constructs (SCCs) :*

SCCs originate from the advancement of social commerce. Do-Hyung et al. (2007) mentioned that consumers' experience in an online environment facilitated by social media is different from those consumers have offline, because consumers have social interactions with other individuals (Hajli, 2015). SCCs were identified in this study under the three components. Such as recommendations and referrals, forums and communities and, ratings and reviews. Recommendations and referrals are forms of user-generated content that deliver favorable or unfavorable information about vendors, products, or services and that are disseminated and shared through social media networks (Hajli, Wang, Tajvidi, & Hajli, 2017). Forums and communities were platforms where users can share their opinions with others who are looking for new information and ratings and reviews provide potential customers with detailed information about the products' features and the products' benefits (Hajli, 2015).

3) *Perceived Risk :*

The concept of perceived risk is introduced by Bauer in 1960. Bauer (1960), defined perceived risk under a two-dimensional structure, which consisted of uncertainty and adverse or negative consequences (Dowling, 1986). According to Bauer (1960), perceived risk was the degree to which an individual believes that purchasing goods and services from online retailers could have unwanted consequences (Dillon, Buchanan, & Al-Otaibi, 2014). Social commerce is a new and rising field where consumers expect a high level of perceived risk (Park, Babicheva, & Lee, 2018). So investigating consumers' perceptions of risk in social commerce is very important. Several factors under consumers' perceived risk have been identified and used by previous researchers. There were multi-dimensional factors used to identify the concept of perceived risk. But a past study indicated that the most influential risks are product, financial, and security risks in the consumers' perceived risk (Almoussa, 2011). According to Zhou et al. (2008) customers may also be concerned about transaction security and privacy as a consequence of their risk that their personal information would be misused by other irresponsible parties while purchasing a product (Ashoer & Said, 2016). Yu et al. (2007) and Zhang et al. (2012) stated that another consumer concern is that even if consumers can purchase social media, they are unable to address a complaint about broken products, service guarantees, or promotional frauds (Ashoer & Said, 2016). By considering those previous research findings, this study uses consumers' perceived risks under product, financial, security and privacy, and after-sale

risks. According to Zheng et al. (2012) product risk refers to the possibility of a product failing to satisfy its original performance expectation. According to Featherman and Pavlou (2003) financial risk is defined as the probability that an internet shopper would lose money as a result of purchase if the product does not perform as expected or is not worth the price paid (Arifani & Haryanto, 2018). The possibility of personal data being abused or misused without the owner’s approval was defined as a security and privacy risk. And the after-sale risk is stated as the possibility of a consumer losing money after making a purchase, such as due to a faulty product, fraud, or a service guarantee claim (Ashoer & Said, 2016).

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is developed based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)’s variables of perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, social commerce constructs with perceived risk to investigate the impact of social commerce on consumers’ purchase intention among Generation Z in Sri Lanka as follows.

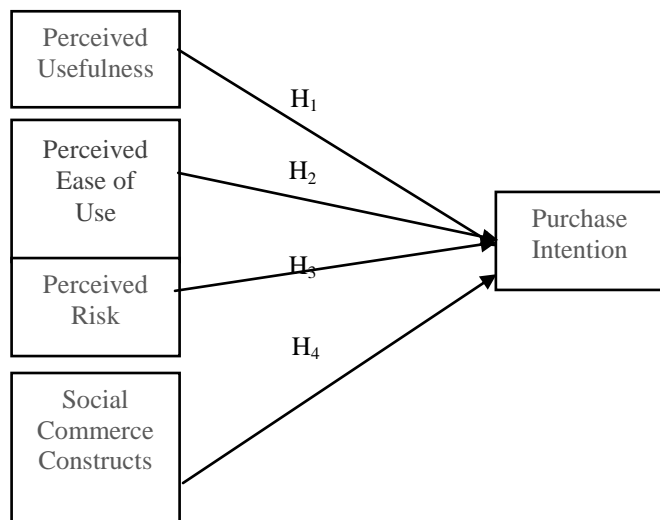


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework.

Based on the above conceptual understanding, four alternative hypotheses of the present study framed are as follows.

H₁: Perceived Usefulness (PU) has a significant and positive impact on consumer’s purchase intention among Generation Z in Sri Lanka.

H₂: Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) has a significant and positive impact on consumer’s purchase intention among Generation Z in Sri Lanka.

H₃: Social Commerce Constructs (SCCs) have a significant and positive impact on consumer’s purchase intention among Generation Z in Sri Lanka.

H₄: Perceived Risk has a significant and negative impact on consumer’s purchase intention among Generation Z in Sri Lanka.

A. Population, Sample and Sampling Technique

This study’s population is considered as all the consumers of Generation Z who were born between 1995 and 2010 (Dolot, 2018), who are using social media and engaging with social commerce in all nine provinces in Sri Lanka. The researcher selected purposive sampling technique and the size of the sample is 360 respondents that are determined based on Roscoe’s (1975) rules of thumb for determining the sample size due to the unknown size of the study’s population. (Hill, 1998).

B. Data Collection and Measurements

The questionnaire was used as the main means of collecting quantitative primary data (Roopa & Rani, 2012). The present study also aims to collect quantitative primary data by using the questionnaire and the researcher collected data from the selected sample online.

The dependent variable in this study is consumer’s purchase intention and the independent variables are perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, social commerce constructs, and perceived risk which are measured by using the five points Likert scale which was labeled as 1 for Strongly Disagree, 2 for Disagree, 3 for Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 for Agree and 5 for Strongly Agree

Table 1. Measurement Scale

Variable	Indicators	Items	Cronbach’s Alpha value
Social Commerce Constructs (SCCs)	Forums and communities Recommendations and referrals Ratings and Reviews	SCC1 SCC2, SCC5 SCC3, SCC4, SCC6	0.941
Perceived Usefulness (PU)	Useful Make easier Improve performance Work more quickly Productivity	PU1 PU2 PU3 PU4 PU5	0.935
Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)	Easy to use Easy to become skillful Easy to learn Flexible Clear and Understandable	PEOU1 PEOU2 PEOU3 PEOU4 PEOU5	0.942
Perceived Risk	Product risk(R) Financial risk(R) Security and Privacy risk (R) After-Sale risk (R)	PR1 PR2 PR3, PR4 PR5	0.909
Purchase Intention	Recognition Comfortable shopping Recommendation Future purchase behavior Purchase behavior	PI1 PI2 PI3 PI4 PI5, PI6	0.931

Note: In this, reverse scoring (R) is used to measure items under the Perceived Risk variable.

To check the validity of the questionnaire, construct validity has is used. Accordingly, KMO and Bartlett's Tests are used to analyze the construct validity of the questionnaire of the study. Kaiser (1974) stated that if the value for KMO is greater than the critical value of 0.6 implies the adequacy of the sample for the analysis (Young, 2015). Values for Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy of all variables of the study are between 0.8 and 0.9. The statistical significance of Bartlett's test of sphericity (<0.05) is important to determine the suitability of collected data to conduct exploratory factor analysis and to confirm construct validity (Yu & Richardson, 2015). All the variables tested for Bartlett's test of sphericity in the present study shows a is significant measure ($0.000 < 0.05$). To measure the reliability of the questionnaire of the present study, internal consistency is used by the researcher and internal consistency is measured by using the Cronbach's Alpha value. The Cronbach alpha value between 0.6 and 0.7 is accepted (Surucu & Maslakci, 2020). All the variables shown in the above table-1 confirm to the reliability. Due to that, the reliability of the present study's questionnaire is accepted.

IV. FINDINGS

A. Respondent Profile

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

	n	%
Gender of the Respondents		
Male	169	46.9
Female	191	53.1
Respondents' Province		
Central	54	15.0
Western	53	14.7
Southern	48	13.3
North Western	37	10.3
Uva	35	9.7
Sabaragamuwa	38	10.6
North Central	37	10.3
Northern	28	7.8
Eastern	30	8.3
Highest Education Qualification		
Degree	144	40.0
Diploma	44	12.2
G.C.E. (A/L)	118	32.8
G.C.E. (O/L)	39	10.8
Still Schooling	15	4.2
Respondents Income Level		
Bellow Rs. 20,000	66	18.3
Rs. 20,001 – Rs. 50,000	75	20.8
Rs. 50,001 – Rs. 100,000	33	9.2

Above Rs. 100,001	10	2.8
No income	176	48.9
Respondents' social media accounts		
Facebook	313	40.6
Instagram	226	29.4
Linkedin	129	16.8
Twitter	73	9.5
Pinterest	29	3.8
Average time spend on social media per day		
Less than 1 hour	51	14.2
1 – 5 hours	271	75.3
More than 5 hours	38	10.6

From the above table 2, it could be observed that among the total number of 360 respondents, most of the respondents are females. Frequency analysis about respondent's province showed that highest numbers of respondents are representing the provinces of Central, Western and Southern respectively. Among the 360 respondents, most of the respondents are holding a degree as their highest educational qualification and very few number of respondents are still schooling. Further, it can be understood that most of the respondents are not holding a job but a reasonable number of the respondents are having some income and the highest number of respondents fall under the income category Rs.20,001 and Rs.50,000. Considering the respondents' social media accounts, most of the respondents have accounts with Facebook. A total number of 323 respondents stated that they used social media sites to shop or to search for products or services. When looking at the respondent's average time spend on social media per day, the highest number of respondents are spending an average time between 1 hour and 5 hours per day. Therefore, it is concluded that most of the Gen-Z people are actively engaged with social commerce in Sri Lanka.

B. Descriptive Statistics

Among the descriptive statistics analysis results of the research variables, the mean values are as follows: social commerce constructs (4.08), perceived usefulness (4.13), and perceived ease of use (4.20), perceived risk (1.92), and purchase intention (4.24). The above values denote that a good number of the respondents "Agree" with the question statements of the variables of social commerce constructs of perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and purchase intention. And, few respondents are "Disagree" with the questions statements of the variable of perceived risk in the scale of measurement. In addition, the standard deviation values of each variable have described the variation of respondents' answers in the scale of measurement from the mean value of each variable in the scale of measurement.

C. Preliminary Analyses

The assumption of univariate and bivariate normality was tested for the social commerce and customers' purchase

intention. The histogram was symmetrical, skewness (-.32) and kurtosis (-.21) were within +/- 1.00 tolerance (Meyers, Gamst, & Guarino, 2013). The Q-Q normality plot showed that plotted values did not depart significantly from a straight diagonal line, thereby indicating that the scores considered are normally distributed.

D. Results of Regression Analysis

Table 3. Model Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	R	RSquare	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.847 ^a	.717	.714	.388	1.974
a. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived Risk, Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, Social Commerce Constructs					
b. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention					

As per the Model Summary the correlation (R) is 0.847 whereas the coefficient of determination (R²) is 0.717. Accordingly, it was concluded that independent variables (social commerce) explain 71.7% of total variance in customers’ purchasing intention. At the same time, Durbin-Watson test statistic is 1.974 which falls in between 1.5 and 2.5, statistically proven that the residuals of the regression model are independent, so the model is agreeable.

Table 4. Coefficient of Multiple Regression Analysis

Variable	B	Std. error	t statistic	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
					Tolerance	VIF
Constant	2.189	.213	10.3	.00		
Social commerce constructs	.194	.042	4.6	.00	.364	2.7
Perceived usefulness	.128	.046	2.8	.00	.309	3.2
Perceived ease of use	.300	.041	7.2	.00	.373	2.7
Perceived risk	-.275	.037	-7.4	.00	.544	1.8
a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention						

As per the multiple regression analysis the following are the results, social commerce constructs (B=0.194, 0.000<0.05), perceived usefulness (B=0.128, 0.000<0.05), and perceived ease of use (B=0.300, 0.006<0.05). The results shows a significant and positive overall impact on the consumers’ purchase intention and perceived risk (B= -0.275, 0.000<0.05) has a significant and negative overall impact on consumers’ purchase intention among Gen Z in Sri Lanka. In addition, it can be identified that perceived ease of use is the most influential variable that has the highest positive overall impact on consumers’ purchase intention among Gen Z in Sri Lanka. As per the variance influencing factors (VIF), all are less than 10, indicating that all the independent variables are not highly correlated. The developed model does not have multi-collinearity problem and the model is appropriate.

V. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The present study attempts to investigate the impact of social commerce on consumers’ purchase intention among Generation Z consumers in Sri Lanka. According to that, the main research findings of the study are as follows.

According to the research results, it is clear that social commerce constructs (SCCs) have a significant and positive impact on consumers’ purchase intention among Generation Z in Sri Lanka. This finding is consistent with the findings of previous studies’ of Hajli (2015) and Makmora & Alam, (2017), indicating SCCs does have a positive effect on purchase intention of the consumers in the social commerce context. From the findings it has been observed that Gen-Z consumers intention to buy product via social media sites is influenced by the following: (1) recommendations and referrals made by the people in the social media about their shopping experiences (2) through views and information available in forums and communities about products and services sold via social media, and (3) ratings and review made by the people in social media about their purchased products’ performances. The social commerce constructs’ positive impact on Gen-Z consumer’s purchase intention in Sri Lanka implies that Gen-Z consumers have an intention to make more purchases through social media sites due to the positive impact of social commerce constructs in Sri Lanka.

Results also show that perceived usefulness holds a significant and positive impact on consumers’ purchase intention among Generation Z in Sri Lanka. The findings of this research is aligned with the findings of the previous studies’ of Samarasinghe & Maddumarala , (2019); Athapaththu & Kulathunga, (2018); Sin, Nor, & AI-Agaga, (2012) indicating perceived usefulness had a positive impact on online purchase intention. According to the above finding, Gen Z consumers in Sri Lanka have an intention to purchase through social media sites due to the perceived usefulness of social media sites. Therefore, it has been concluded that the social media sites provide useful information; the knowledge gained helps Gen Z consumers’ transactions and in turn increase the intention of GEN Z to purchase through social media sites in Sri Lanka.

Further, it has been observed that the perceived ease of use has a significant and positive impact on consumers’ purchase intention of Generation Z in Sri Lanka. The findings of the past studies of Sin, Nor, and AI-Agaga, (2012); Samarasinghe and Maddumarala, (2019) are also compatible with the findings of the present study. According to the above findings, it can be concluded that Gen Z consumers perceive social media websites as easy to use and easy to learn. Therefore, Gen Z consumers’ purchase intention towards purchasing products or services through social media sites is positively influenced by social media sites’ perceived ease of use in Sri Lanka. Also, perceived ease of use of social media sites has the highest positive impact for Gen Z consumers’ purchase intention for social commerce in Sri Lanka compared with the

impacts of other variables on purchase intention of the present study as perceived usefulness and social commerce constructs.

Finally, it has been statistically confirmed that perceived risk has a significant and negative impact on consumers' purchase intention among Generation Z in Sri Lanka. This finding is already consistent with the findings of past studies' of Perera and Dilshani (2021); Ashoer & Said, 2016. As per the research finding of the present study, it can be identified that Generation Z consumers are discouraged to purchase through social media sites due to the perceived risk factor as it may include product, financial, after-sale, security and privacy risks when purchasing products or services through social media sites in Sri Lanka. Therefore, the uncertainty prevailing in the Gen Z consumers' experience of their intention to purchase on social media sites leads to reducing Gen Z consumer's purchase intention for making purchases through social media sites in Sri Lanka.

VI. CONCLUSION

All the objectives of the present study are satisfied and the researcher is able to identify the impact of social commerce on consumers' purchase intention among Gen Z consumers in Sri Lanka in three perspectives as social, technical, and risk perspectives. Due to the findings of social commerce constructs, which can be identified from the social perspective, social commerce has a positive impact on purchase intention among Gen Z consumers in Sri Lanka. According to the findings of perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use show, in the technical perspective, social commerce has a positive impact on the purchase intention of Gen Z consumers in Sri Lanka. And also based on the findings of perceived risk, in the risk perspective, social commerce has a negative impact on the purchase intention of Gen Z consumers in Sri Lanka.

VII. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

A. *Practical Implication*

The new knowledge created from this study on the impact of social commerce on Gen Z consumers' purchase intention in Sri Lanka will be helpful for marketers and policymakers to make policies and programs that are effective and efficient. Therefore, this research will be very useful for marketers in the present scenario, because most people and businesses in Sri Lanka are increasingly dependent on the social media platforms (APIDM, 2020), (Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka, 2018). In addition, there is a growing trend for social commerce in Sri Lanka and marketers have understood the greater opportunity offered by social commerce (Wickramasinghe, 2020). Also, past studies too have shown that among social media users, Gen Z tops in the usage of social media (Salpini, 2017), (Viens, 2019) and Gen Z consumers will be the major target market for marketers (Tunsakul, 2020). Therefore, knowledge about the impact of social commerce on Gen Z consumers' purchase intention in Sri Lanka will stand as a very useful information base for marketers to identify Gen Z consumers' reactions toward

social commerce and the effect on their purchase intention on their purchases from social media sites. Consumers' purchase intention to certain online shopping websites is a factor that predicts consumers' purchase decisions or the actual behavior (Dachyar & Banjarnahor, 2017). Purchase intention might be beneficial in determining the possibility of a consumer taking a purchasing action and the possibility of acquiring a certain product or service (Phan & Mai, 2016). Therefore, consumer's purchase intention is critical to determine the consumers' actual purchase behavior. Marketers can work on their policies and programs to grab the opportunity thrown open by social commerce in Sri Lanka and achieve maximum results by enhancing the purchase intention towards social commerce. Other than the marketers, national policymakers also can use this study to make policies effectively and efficiently. In addition, General Consumer Protection Legislation in Sri Lanka can take measures to reduce the consumer's risk associated with the social commerce context, especially the security and privacy risk factor in the social commerce context in Sri Lanka.

VIII. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The researcher has observed scope for further research in the same context. The future researchers can investigate the impact of social commerce on consumers' purchase intention of all consumers without limiting it to one generation. In addition, future researchers can add more independent variables like trust and social support and extend the present study's research model to investigate the impact of social commerce on consumer's purchase intention. Other than these, future researchers can investigate how consumer's demographics as consumer's age and gender influence on consumers' purchase intention in the social commerce context. The researcher can also suggest to future researchers to conduct the study to investigate the impact of social commerce on consumer's decision-making process among Generation Z consumers in their respective geographic locations.

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