

Microenterprises Social Media Product Information and Its Impact on Consumer Information Adoption and Purchase Decision in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of microenterprises' social media product information on consumer information adoption and purchase intention in Malaysia. Drawing on the Information Adoption Model, the study proposes that information credibility, information quality, and information usefulness influence consumers' adoption of product information, which subsequently affects purchase intention. A quantitative research design was employed, and data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed to consumers in Malaysia who actively search for product information on microenterprises' social media platforms. A total of 388 valid responses were analysed using Structural Equation Modeling with AMOS. The findings reveal that information credibility, information quality, and information usefulness all have significant positive effects on information adoption. Among these factors, information usefulness emerged as the strongest predictor. The results further indicate that information adoption has a significant positive effect on purchase intention. The proposed model explained 81% of the variance in information adoption and 62% of the variance in purchase intention. This study contributes to the literature by extending the Information Adoption Model to the context of microenterprises and social media marketing in Malaysia. The findings also provide practical implications for microenterprises by highlighting the importance of providing credible, high-quality, and useful product information to enhance consumer engagement and purchase intention.

Keywords: microenterprises, information credibility, information quality, information usefulness, information adoption, purchase intention

INTRODUCTION

The process of making purchasing decisions can be difficult because they involve a variety of needs and wants, all of which are influenced by a number of external and internal factors. In this age of digitization, researchers and marketers need to pay closer attention to the influence that entrepreneurs have on the purchasing behaviours of consumers. Consumer behaviour has attracted significant attention from researchers, as knowledge in this area helps provide insights into how consumers think and predict the behaviours, they are likely to exhibit in the future (Ismail et al., 2021). Understanding how customers interact with businesses during the purchasing process can help entrepreneurs determine their marketing plans, establish their marketing strategies, and ensure their continued viability over the long term, it is helpful to have an understanding of how customers engage during the purchasing process (Bukhari et al., 2022). In addition to this, purchasing behaviour plays a significant part in product performance due to the complexities involved in purchasing behaviour (Ismail et al., 2021).

In the modern era of digital technology, business owners are actively engaged in and integrated with digital technologies. This has led to the creation of digital channels for digital infrastructure, which further encourages the growth of the entrepreneurial spirit (Chen et al., 2021). Social media offers an interactive environment where both parties can participate, in contrast to traditional media, which only offers a one-way experience. Business owners can take advantage of the opportunities that the Internet and social media can offer because of the richness of the medium to a large number of potential customers (Hashim et al., 2016). Individuals now have the capability

of communicating with thousands of people at once due to the proliferation of social media platforms that are accessible via the Internet. Due to the widespread use of social media, there has been a considerable increase in interest in exploiting this platform for commercial purposes, particularly among business owners. The business world has made extensive use of social media for a variety of purposes, including social networking, the promotion of products, and the acquisition of new customers (Kahar et al., 2012). In the same way that businesses in other parts of the world do, microenterprises in Malaysia frequently make use of social media as a platform that is both accessible and cost-effective for promoting their goods and services, connecting with their target audience, and developing their brand. They are able to communicate with potential clients and reach a large audience owing to the channels provided by social media.

The Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) estimates that 88.7% of Malaysia's population used the Internet in 2020, an increase of 1.3% from 87.4% in 2018. Additionally, 50 % of Internet users spend 5 to 12 hours each day online, up 13% from the 37% recorded in 2018. These users all primarily use the Internet for social activities including texting, calling, and browsing social networking sites. Additionally, social networking has risen from 85.6 % in 2018 to 93.3 % in 2020, ranking as the second most popular online activity among Internet users. In the meantime, the percentage of Instagram users increased from 57 % to 63.1 % in 2020 (MCMC, 2020). The use of social media presents opportunities to connect with potential customers, as well as to come up with innovative concepts for new businesses and for expanding existing ones. In order to uncover better chances and communicate information with one another, entrepreneurs frequently use social media platforms (Park et al., 2017). This is because cultivating good relationships is essential to business success. In a similar vein, small-scale entrepreneurs capitalize on the benefits of social media in marketing and operations by cultivating close and mutually beneficial relationships with their peers, partners, and consumers (Della Corte et al., 2015; Felix et al., 2017). Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are one of the most significant drivers of economic growth in Malaysia, and microenterprises make up 77 percent of the country's SMEs (Mamun et al., 2018). Microenterprise refers to any tiny business with a restricted number of employees, assets, and revenue. These companies are extremely important to the economy of Malaysia because of the jobs they create, the income they bring in, and the overall growth of the country's economy. A business is considered a microenterprise if it has less than five full-time employees or a sales turnover of less than RM300,000 (Aziz et al., 2017).

These days, a growing number of entrepreneurs in Sarawak are opting to conduct their business activities online as a result of the country's overall development and economic advancement. By conducting their businesses online, entrepreneurs can promote or advertise their products, and at the same time can help to lower their operational costs. The rapid growth of social media applications has increased the market for small, medium-sized, and large organizations. Several enterprises are operating across social media applications such as Twitter, Facebook, and many Malaysian small and microenterprises use social media websites daily (Hassan & Shahzad, 2022). It is important to understand users' sustainable behaviour, given that accumulating sustainable marketing assets is critical to business growth rather than short-term performance (Lee et al., 2021). The advent of social media platforms has revolutionized the dynamics of information dissemination, particularly for microenterprises seeking to engage consumers in Sarawak. In an era where digital connectivity intertwines with consumer decision-making processes, the influence of microenterprises' social media product information on consumer behavior has emerged as a pivotal area of interest. A substantial amount of entrepreneurial marketing studies take place in microenterprises. However, very few studies focus on microenterprises content information shared on social media and this theoretical lens allows the generation of new insights to emerge. The question of whether social media product information adoption can indeed have an impact on consumer purchase decision remains unanswered. In light of this, this study aims to investigate the intricate relationship between microenterprises' social media product information, consumer information adoption, and subsequent purchase decisions within the context of Malaysia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Information Quality

In this day and age of advanced digital technology, consumer information needs through the media are becoming increasingly difficult to satisfy without the use of the internet in this age of digital technology. The amount of

information that is available online has seen a rise in popularity in recent years as a direct result of the rapid expansion of both information technology and the Internet (Xu et al., 2016). The significance of the internet and other forms of social media, which are among the most significant sources of information, has grown in recent years. Customers who are interested in learning more about a particular product or service could look into utilizing the Internet and various social media platforms. Information quality plays a crucial role in the adoption of information, better information minimizes the need for user perception diagnostics and boosts information confidence, making it easier to utilize (Jiang et al., 2021). When competing in an online market that is becoming increasingly competitive, the quality of the information that microenterprises offer on social media is absolutely essential to their success. Building trust, attracting customers, and improving brand image can all be helped by providing high-quality information. High-quality information increases consumer trust, influencing their willingness to adopt information and make purchases (Zanjabila et al., 2023). The final behavioral outcome of information quality is often reflected in purchase intention and decision. In addition, the quality of information influences buying behavior among consumers engaging with small business content on social media (Wibowo et al., 2023).

Information Credibility

The proliferation of social media in the modern day has brought about a change in the manner in which microenterprises communicate with their target audience, sell their products, and build their brand identities. The credibility of the information that is provided is of the utmost significance, despite the fact that these platforms offer a dynamic area in which information can be shared. The credibility of the information determines whether it may be considered persuasive at the beginning of the persuasion process. One way to evaluate something's ability to convince others is to consider how credible the information is (Erkan & Evans, 2018). If the information provided about a product is not credible and cannot be relied upon, then customers are not going to be prepared to accept the risk of acquiring that product or service. The credibility or accuracy of the information plays a significant role in the ability to successfully convince customers that particular information should be believed (Filiari, 2015). Customers place their trust in the information that is offered by credible sources, and they have the expectation that the sources that have the highest level of credibility will present the most persuasive arguments regarding the products or services (Mohamed et al., 2023). Customer trust is increased by credible information. Customers are more likely to adopt information and make purchases when they think the information being offered by a microenterprise is credible. If the information provided about a product is not credible and cannot be relied upon, then customers are not going to be prepared to accept the risk of acquiring that product or service (Daowd et al., 2020).

Information Usefulness

Nowadays, with the rapid development of the Internet, individuals increasingly rely on online information due to its convenience and accessibility. Information shared on social media platforms is valued not only for its presence but also for its usefulness and relevance to consumers. Individuals may respond differently to the usefulness of information or suggestions available online, particularly in how such information helps them make better decisions (Hussain et al., 2017). Consequently, perceived information usefulness influences the likelihood that individuals will adopt the information in their decision-making process. With the widespread use of social media, consumers are exposed to a large amount of user-generated content, making information usefulness an important factor influencing information adoption (Cheung et al., 2008). The relationship between information usefulness and information adoption reflects a rational decision-making process in which consumers selectively incorporate information that improves their decision quality. Studies on online consumer reviews have found that perceived information usefulness significantly predicts information adoption across different levels of consumer involvement (Filiari & McLeay, 2013). Similarly, research on social media electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) shows that information usefulness mediates the relationship between information characteristics and information adoption, highlighting its central role in the adoption process (Silaban et al., 2023). Information usefulness is therefore considered a key construct in understanding how individuals evaluate and use information in decision-making contexts. Rooted in information systems and consumer behavior research, information usefulness refers to the extent to which individuals believe that certain information enhances their decision-

making effectiveness. Consumers who perceive information as useful are more likely to accept its validity and incorporate it into their purchase decisions (Khoa, 2021; Widodo & Salamah, 2023).

Information Adoption

Information adoption represents the ultimate dependent variable in the Information Adoption Model (IAM) and refers to the cognitive and behavioral process through which individuals accept, internalize, and utilize information to influence their attitudes, intentions, or behaviors (Shrafat et al., 2021). It reflects the stage at which individuals move beyond mere exposure to information and begin integrating it into their decision-making process. In this context, information adoption can be understood as the act of accepting and using information to influence a particular behavioral outcome (Pillay, 2021). This perspective highlights two key dimensions of the adoption process, the cognitive acceptance of information and the behavioral utilization of that information. Information adoption has also been conceptualized as a process involving the objective selection, evaluation, acceptance, and utilization of information, which ultimately shapes subsequent behavioral outcomes (Zhou & Li, 2017). This process-oriented view emphasizes that individuals do not passively receive information but actively assess its relevance and credibility before incorporating it into their decision-making. Furthermore, information adoption may also refer to the extent to which individuals perceive the content they encounter as meaningful and worthy of acceptance, thereby highlighting the cognitive evaluation aspect of the adoption process (Cheung & Lee, 2007). Within the Information Adoption Model framework, information adoption functions as a proximal predictor of various downstream outcomes, including behavioral intentions, actual behavior, and decision-making results (Song et al., 2021). This concept has become increasingly important in computer-mediated communication environments, where consumers are continuously exposed to large volumes of online information and must evaluate and adopt relevant content to support their consumption decisions (Chih et al., 2020). In the context of microenterprises' social media product information, consumers often rely on digital content to evaluate product attributes, assess credibility, and determine whether the information is sufficiently convincing to influence their purchase decisions.

Purchase Decision

Consumer purchase decision-making has changed significantly with the growth of digital technologies and social media as major sources of product information. Unlike traditional retail settings, consumers can now access reviews, recommendations, product demonstrations, and user-generated content through social media platforms before making a purchase. Consequently, traditional consumer behavior models developed for offline contexts are being adapted to explain purchasing behavior in today's information-rich digital environment. Social media is no longer only a communication platform, but also an important marketplace where information sharing and commercial activities occur simultaneously. The integration of social networking, content sharing, and commerce creates a unique environment that influences consumers' attitudes and purchasing behavior (Ngo et al., 2024; Rahaman et al., 2022). Purchase decision refers to the stage at which consumers decide to buy a particular product or brand after evaluating the available information and alternatives. In the context of social media, purchase decisions are influenced by the extent to which consumers perceive product information as useful, credible, and relevant to their needs (Kanagal, 2016).

Framework

The Information Adoption Model (IAM) has been widely used to explain how individuals adopt online information in computer-mediated environments (Bao & Zhu, 2025). IAM was developed by integrating the Technology Acceptance Model and the Elaboration Likelihood Model to better understand why people accept and use particular information, ideas, or technologies (Sussman & Siegal, 2003). The model also explains how individuals form expectations about using the information in their daily lives (Mohamed et al., 2023). According to Information Adoption Model, consumers are more likely to adopt information when they perceive it as high in quality, credible, and useful. Information quality refers to the accuracy and relevance of the information, information credibility reflects its trustworthiness and believability, while information usefulness refers to the extent to which the information helps consumers make decisions. Previous marketing studies have shown that

these factors influence information adoption and, subsequently, consumer purchase behaviour (Erkan & Evans, 2016). Based on Information Adoption Model, this study proposes that information quality, information credibility, and information usefulness influence consumers' information adoption, which subsequently affects their purchase decisions.

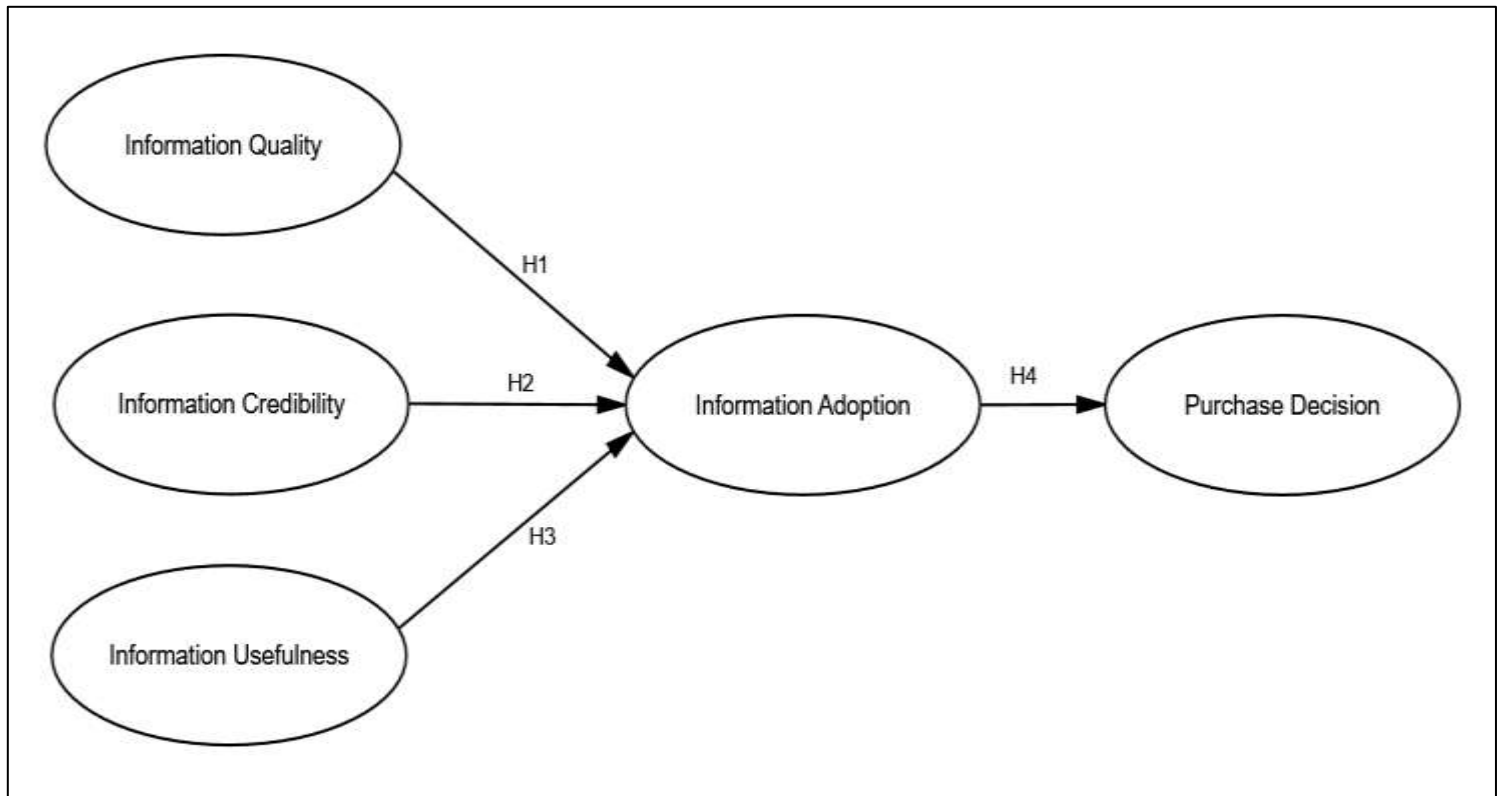


Figure 1: Framework and Hypothesis

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research design to examine consumers' responses to microenterprises' social media product information. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire distributed to consumers in Sarawak who actively search for product information through microenterprises' social media platforms. A convenience sampling technique was adopted, as the study specifically targeted consumers who were easily accessible and relevant to the research context. Convenience sampling was considered appropriate because it enabled the researcher to efficiently reach consumers who engage with microenterprises' social media content and are therefore able to provide relevant insights into information adoption and purchase decision behaviour. The questionnaire was administered online using Google Forms. Respondents completed the survey with minimal supervision from the researcher or enumerator. All items in the questionnaire were set as "required" to minimize missing data and improve the completeness of responses. A total of 388 responses were successfully collected. After data screening, all 388 responses were found to be usable and were included in the final analysis. First, the data were entered and screened using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. Descriptive analysis was conducted to summarize the respondents' demographic profile and the main characteristics of the data. Subsequently, the proposed research model and hypotheses were tested using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) version 24. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was first performed to assess the measurement model in terms of reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and model fit. After the adequacy of the measurement model was established, path analysis within the SEM framework was conducted to examine the direct and indirect relationships among the study variables and to test the proposed hypotheses.

Data Analysis

Normality Check

Prior to conducting Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the normality of the data was assessed using skewness and kurtosis values. For studies with a sample size greater than 200, skewness values within the range of -1.5 to $+1.5$ indicate acceptable univariate normality (Abdul-Rahim et al., 2022; Awang, 2015; Mohamed & Jaafar 2026). In addition, multivariate normality was assessed using the critical ratio (CR) of kurtosis. SEM using the maximum likelihood estimator is considered robust to violations of multivariate normality when the sample size exceeds 200 and the CR value for kurtosis is below 7.0 (Abdul-Rahim et al., 2022; Awang, 2015; Mohamed & Jaafar 2026). The results showed that the skewness values ranged from -0.509 to -0.947 , while the CR values for kurtosis ranged from -1.118 to 2.688. As all values fell within the recommended thresholds, the data were considered to be normally distributed and suitable for further SEM analysis.

Table 1: Skewness and Kurtosis

Variable	min	max	skew	c.r.	kurtosis	c.r.
Information Adoption 1	4	7	-0.776	-6.244	0.313	1.260
Information Adoption 2	4	7	-0.616	-4.956	-0.057	-0.228
Information Adoption 3	4	7	-0.751	-6.039	0.182	0.731
Information Adoption 4	4	7	-0.723	-5.812	0.391	1.571
Information Credibility 1	3	7	-0.838	-6.738	0.479	1.927
Information Credibility 2	2	7	-0.659	-5.302	0.196	0.786
Information Credibility 3	3	7	-0.739	-5.939	0.614	2.469
Information Credibility 4	2	7	-0.586	-4.712	0.437	1.757
Purchase Decision 1	3	7	-0.598	-4.812	0.098	0.394
Purchase Decision 2	3	7	-0.837	-6.73	0.409	1.645
Purchase Decision 3	3	7	-0.819	-6.585	0.621	2.495
Information Quality 1	3	7	-0.52	-4.183	0.012	0.048
Information Quality 2	3	7	-0.677	-5.445	-0.115	-0.463
Information Quality 3	3	7	-0.621	-4.995	-0.213	-0.858
Information Quality 4	3	7	-0.633	-5.091	-0.18	-0.724
Information Usefulness 1	4	7	-1.086	-8.735	1.009	4.057
Information Usefulness 2	4	7	-0.994	-7.990	0.393	1.582
Information Usefulness 3	3	7	-0.766	-6.157	0.163	0.656
Multivariate					95.79	35.159

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The findings presented in Figure 2 show that the proposed model possesses good explanatory ability. Information credibility, information quality, and information usefulness jointly accounted for 80% of the variance in information adoption ($R^2 = 0.80$). Furthermore, information adoption explained 60% of the variance in purchase intention ($R^2 = 0.60$). These results indicate that the model is able to explain a substantial proportion of consumers' information adoption and purchase intention.

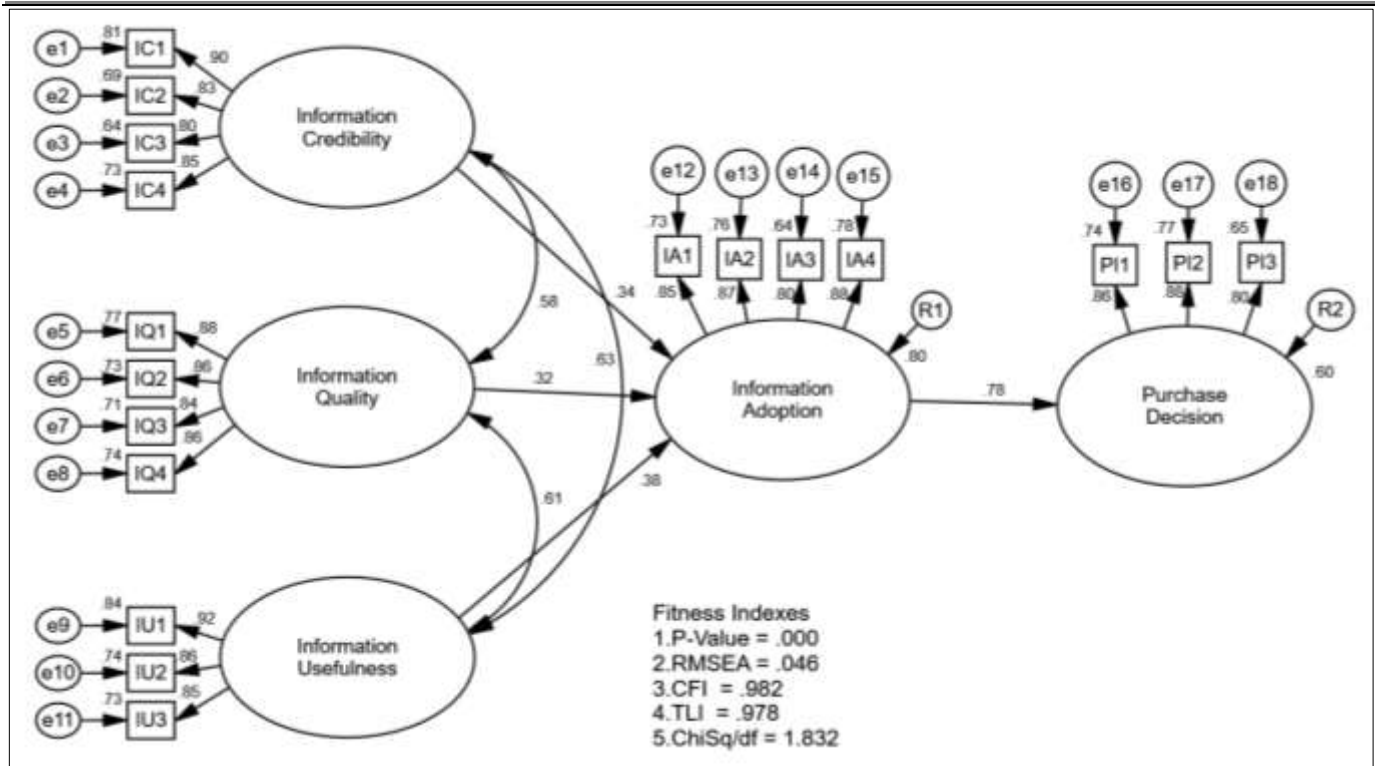


Figure 2: Standardized path coefficients between constructs in the structural model

In addition, the construct validity of the measurement model was found to be satisfactory. The model achieved an acceptable level of goodness-of-fit, as all fit indices met the recommended threshold values (Awang, 2015; Awang et al., 2018). The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) value was 0.051, which is below the recommended maximum value of 0.08, indicating a good absolute fit. The comparative fit index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) values were 0.950 and 0.945, respectively, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.90. Furthermore, the chi-square to degree of freedom ratio (χ^2/df) was 2.010, which is below the acceptable limit of 5.0. These results demonstrate that the measurement model provides a good fit to the data and supports the construct validity of the study.

Convergent Validity

To establish convergent validity, each indicator associated with a latent construct should achieve a factor loading greater than 0.60 (Awang, 2015). Convergent validity refers to the extent to which the items measuring the same construct are strongly related to one another. In this study, convergent validity was assessed using factor loadings, average variance extracted (AVE), and composite reliability (CR). The results presented in Table 3 show that all factor loadings exceeded the recommended value of 0.60. In addition, the AVE values for all constructs were greater than 0.50, while the CR values exceeded 0.60, satisfying the recommended thresholds (Abdul-Rahim et al., 2022; Awang, 2015). Therefore, all constructs demonstrated adequate convergent validity.

Table 3: Summary of Convergent Validity

Variable	Factor Loading	AVE	CR
Information Credibility		0.519	0.882
	0.81		
	0.69		
	0.64		
	0.73		

Information Quality		0.544	0.810
	0.77		
	0.73		
	0.71		
	0.74		
Information Usefulness		0.595	0.781
	0.84		
	0.74		
	0.73		
Information Adoption		0.532	0.846
	0.73		
	0.76		
	0.64		
	0.78		
Purchase Decision		0.521	0.861
	0.74		
	0.77		
	0.65		

Hypothesis Testing

Relationship	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
Information Adoption <-- Information Credibility	0.248	0.045	5.562	0.000	Significant
Information Adoption <-- Information Usefulness	0.344	0.058	5.913	0.000	Significant
Information Adoption <-- Information Quality	0.207	0.056	3.672	0.000	Significant
Purchase Decision <-- Information Adoption	0.882	0.057	15.443	0.000	Significant

The structural model was evaluated to examine the hypothesised relationships among the study constructs. The results indicate that all proposed hypotheses are supported. Information credibility was found to have a significant positive effect on information adoption ($\beta = 0.248$, C.R. = 5.562, $p < 0.000$). This result indicates that consumers are more likely to adopt product information from microenterprises' social media when they perceive the information as credible. Therefore, the hypothesis proposing a positive relationship between information credibility and information adoption is supported. Information usefulness also had a significant positive influence on information adoption ($\beta = 0.344$, C.R. = 5.913, $p < 0.000$). Among the three antecedents, information usefulness demonstrated the strongest effect on information adoption. This finding suggests that consumers are more likely to accept and use information when they perceive it as helpful and relevant to their decision-making process. Thus, the hypothesis relating information usefulness to information adoption is supported. Similarly, information quality was found to positively influence information adoption ($\beta = 0.207$, C.R. = 3.672, $p < 0.000$).

This indicates that accurate, complete, and relevant information increases consumers' likelihood of adopting the information. Hence, the hypothesis concerning the effect of information quality on information adoption is also supported. Finally, information adoption had a significant positive effect on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.882$, C.R. = 15.443, $p < 0.000$). This result demonstrates that consumers who adopt and accept the product information provided through microenterprises' social media are more likely to develop an intention to purchase the product. Therefore, the hypothesis proposing a positive relationship between information adoption and purchase intention is supported.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study extends the Information Adoption Model by demonstrating that information credibility, information quality, and information usefulness significantly influence consumers' adoption of microenterprises' social media product information, which subsequently affects purchase intention. Among these factors, information usefulness emerged as the strongest predictor of information adoption, suggesting that consumers are more likely to accept and use social media information when they perceive it as helpful, relevant, and beneficial to their decision-making. The findings further indicate that information adoption plays a critical role in shaping consumers' purchase intention. Consumers who accept and internalize the product information shared by microenterprises are more likely to develop a stronger intention to purchase. This highlights the importance of providing social media content that is accurate, credible, and useful. Microenterprises should therefore focus on producing clear product descriptions, reliable information, and relevant content that addresses consumers' needs and concerns.

This study contributes to the literature by focusing on the microenterprise sector, which represents an important component of the Malaysian economy. Understanding how consumers respond to product information shared by microenterprises on social media is essential for supporting entrepreneurship and stimulating economic growth in Malaysia. The study provides further evidence that consumers' purchase decisions are shaped not only by the presence of information, but also by the extent to which the information is perceived as credible, useful, and of high quality. The practical significance of this study extends beyond academic discussion. The findings offer useful guidance for microenterprises in Malaysia on how to develop more effective social media content that aligns with consumer preferences. In particular, the study identifies the importance of creating information that is trustworthy, relevant, and useful in encouraging consumers to adopt the information and proceed toward purchase. These insights may help microenterprises improve their marketing strategies, strengthen their brand reputation, and increase sales.

Furthermore, the study enhances understanding of how consumers interact with social media content and use such information to make informed purchase decisions. The results may assist business owners, marketers, and entrepreneurs in designing more effective digital marketing strategies that are suited to the Malaysian context and consumer behaviour. By identifying the types of product information that most strongly influence information adoption and purchase decision, this study provides practical recommendations that may contribute to stronger relationships between microenterprises and consumers, thereby supporting the continued growth of the microenterprise sector in Malaysia.

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