Social Shopping Relationship Management on Social E-Commerce in Indonesia (Case Study: Online Food Consumers)

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SOCIAL SHOPPING RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT ON SOCIAL E-COMMERCE IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

Abstract: The phenomenon of online shopping and business start-ups are rising in Indonesia, and one of the results of this movement is a new form of e-commerce—social shopping—which combines two online activities: social networking and online shopping.

Manuscript type: Case Studies

Research Aims: The purpose of this paper is to improve academic understanding on social shopping websites and to research the impact of relationship quality and the ensuing effect on individuals’ online loyalty to social shopping websites.

Design/methodology/approach: This paper examines factors that may affect consumer behaviour in social shopping websites. This study proposes a conceptual framework which uses Google forms to gather information from members who have made at least one previous online food purchase. Data was collected from Kaskus.com, a social shopping website in Indonesia. The authors analyzed the model using the structural equation modelling approach.

Research Findings: The results show that members’ perceived social network, message source credibility, website stimuli, and argument quality are important factors that affect consumer e-loyalty. In addition, both consumer website value and relationship quality strengthened this loyalty.

Theoretical Contribution/Originality: This study provides a comprehensive framework to better understand the influences on the development of relationship quality and the impact on member loyalty by addressing the role of information and content creation in the social shopping environment, especially on online food consumer behaviour.

Practitioner/Policy Implication: Websites should provide trusted information, attention to stimulus, facilitate user interactions, and strengthen the value of the community to increase the user’s shopping experience.

Research limitation/Implications: In this research, we were limited to one product category: food, and there are other factors that should be research such as cultural factors, lifestyle, level of technology adoption, and tradition to better understand the intentions of customer loyalty.

Keywords: social shopping, relationship quality, online food consumers.
INTRODUCTION

Social shopping is a new type of e-commerce that combines two online activities: social networking and shopping. Unlike usual e-commerce websites, which solely sell products, social shopping provides virtual communities of users a place to share their interests, shopping ideas, and exchange opinions and experiences about products, which they can later recommend to others. In addition to information content and recommendations, social interaction that is facilitated and upheld by technology is one of the deciding factors of success in virtual communities (Tang & Yang, 2005). These technologies include functional system and various atmospheric stimulus, or website design that is able to eliminate various forms of uncertainty and challenges that previously existed in the minds of consumers, which eventually raises the pleasure of shopping online and fulfills their needs and expectations (Floh & Madlberger, 2013). Relationship marketing and Communities Relationship Management (CoRM) are used as a theoretical framework to measure the success of a virtual community. In relationship marketing, the notions of relationship quality consists of trust, satisfaction, and commitment (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), which all play a major role in forming consumer loyalty (Chen & Ku, 2013). Therefore, the objective of this research is to empirically test a conceptual framework from previous studies and develop a social shopping model that incorporates the interrelationship of argument quality, message source credibility, website stimuli, perceived social networks, website values, and investigate the impact on relationship quality and member loyalty in a social shopping context. Understanding these issues is important since online shopping, internet usage, and business start-ups are rising in Indonesia. Kaskus.com was selected as our research subject because it is one of the most popular virtual communities in Indonesia. Moreover, Kaskus has its own consumer-to-consumer e-commerce platform, and one of the products that is frequently searched in Kaskus is food, so we decided to choose food as our product in the current research. In Indonesia, food and groceries have seen the slowest growth compared to other product categories, with just 11.78% between 2012–2017, but they still have a potential projected market share of US$ 394 million in 2017 (Canadean, 2014). Consequently, we thought online food was an interesting subject to be inspected in this research because it is one of popular search results in Kaskus and its phenomena in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Argument Quality

Argument quality implies the level of persuasive effect and value of arguments ingrained in the informational message received by users (Bhattacherjee & Sanford, 2006). The perceived quality of the information can be determined in the pattern of consumer purchasing decisions. Consequently, determining a customer’s perceived quality of information in an online environment is an important aspect to enhance their participation or potential buying behavior in virtual communities. In this current research, we concluded four aspects of argument quality based on previous studies, such as: relevance, timeliness, accuracy, and comprehensiveness (Cheung et al., 2008). The greater argument quality and value is perceived and received by members because members can gain useful and helpful information with less time and effort. As a result, members can have a higher relationship quality that is reflected by their fulfilled expectations, faith, and trust on other parties. Once their mutual values and hobbies have been fortified, members willingly commit to a particular virtual community, in this manner reinforcing their positive attitude and loyalty to the virtual community. Thus, we hypothesized the following:

H1: Argument quality is significantly related to customer website value.
**H2:** Argument quality is significantly related to relationship quality.

**H3:** Argument quality is significantly related to e-loyalty.

**Message Source Credibility**
Message source credibility is meant by the degree to which a source of information is considered reliable and competent for the recipient of the message (Cheung et al., 2008). With a credible source of information, the consumers will accept and trust the contents of the message because it has a high persuasive effect, and is capable of triggering intentions to directly change consumer’s attitudes. Based on previous studies, we considered the message source credibility as a two-dimensional construct, including expertise and trustworthiness (Ohanian, 1990). Expertise refers to the professional knowledge and capability that the message sender has about a product or service so that it has valid and relevant information. Trustworthiness refers to the degree of the receiver’s confidence and acceptance towards the message sender in providing information (Ohanian, 1990). In online marketplaces, message source credibility is important because buyers rely on reviews and recommendations to make their purchasing decision (Wu et al., 2015). Thanks to a huge amount of text-based information provided by numerous contributors in online forums, the members of the virtual community as consumers will face a dilemma whether to adopt or reject the information provided. Previous research proves that relationship quality responds positively to a higher level of message source credibility characterized by reputation, seniority, or authority, whether in social interactions or product recommendations (Bhattacharjee & Sanford, 2006; Chen & Ku, 2013), which means that members tend to be loyal to the virtual community. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

**H5:** Message source credibility is significantly related to relationship quality.

**H6:** Message source credibility is significantly related to e-loyalty.

**Perceived Social Network**
Perceived Social Network is the consumer’s perception of the social networking service. Based on previous studies, the perceived social network consists of perceived ability, perceived benevolence/integrity and perceived critical mass (Hsiao et al., 2010). Perceived ability is one’s perception of another’s capabilities and expected behavior. Perceived benevolence/integrity is the confidence in another’s intention to treat the subject well, regardless of the other’s own profit. Perceived critical mass shows that consumers tend to have a higher degree of trust in the recommendations from the quantities of individuals (Mayer et al., 1995). In context of social networking, members focus on mutual interests, events, or hobbies, and the ability to talk in forum discussions. Positive interactions among members, and the number of members who give advice or recommendations, will collaborate to increase positive perceptions in the relationship between quality and user participation in the future. Consequently, we hypothesized that:

**H7:** Perceived social network is significantly related to customer website value.

**H8:** Perceived social network is significantly related to relationship quality.

**H9:** Perceived social network is significantly related to e-loyalty.

**Website Stimuli**
Online store atmospherics, just like the store atmosphere in an offline environment, include all the elements used to design the website and its layout, such as fonts, color pallets, icons, and hyperlink (Eroglu et al., 2003) in order to achieve an effective and efficient online shopping experience. To understand
participation and purchasing patterns as online consumer behavior in a social shopping website, we investigated the antecedents of relationship quality on website stimuli in three dimensions: perceived reputation, perceived site quality, and structural assurance of the web (McKnight & Chervany, 2001). Perceived reputation is the degree of the website’s reputation, image, and popularity perceived by members, which can build a member’s confidence in the website and internet shopping (Hsiao et al., 2010). Perceived site quality is the degree to which a customer sees that the website’s features and components address their issues and needs, so that they can create more effective and efficient shopping activities (Hsiao et al., 2010). Perceived assurance is a degree to which a customer sees the web’s protective legal or technological structures that guarantee online exchange security (Hsiao et al., 2010). These indicators will be able to facilitate a strong relationship between service providers and the user, because good quality website stimulus will be able to reduce the uncertainty and extra efforts in the exchange process, which is an important driver in the quality of the relationship between consumers and the website (Crosby et al., 1990), so that the member will have a better online experience and positive attitude towards the website, thus making sure that their loyalty has been secured. Hence, we hypothesize the following:

H10: Website stimuli is significantly related to customer website value.
H11: Website stimuli is significantly related to relationship quality.
H12: Website stimuli is significantly related to e-loyalty.

Customer Website Value
In an online environment, perceived value is distinguished when a consumer can obtain goods or services in a way that is easier and more convenient, so that the website will bring a better shopping experience. This research website value consists of two types: functional value and emotional value (Yen et al., 2014). Functional value is the utility derived from the perceived quality and expected performance of the product, such as the consideration of the time, cost, and various items to choose from on the website (Sweeney et al., 2012). Meanwhile, emotional value is defined as the utility derived from the feelings or the affective states that the product generates, such as visual appeal, entertainment, and the level of interactivity when online shopping (Sweeney et al., 2012). If consumers perceive higher value from a website, they re-evaluate previous shopping or participation experiences of satisfaction, and then tend to be loyal. Therefore, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H13: Customer website value is significantly related to relationship quality.
H14: Customer website value is significantly related to e-loyalty.

Relationship Quality
Relationship quality level is defined as the perception of how well a relationship is able to meet the needs, desires, and expectations of consumers (Chang & Wang, 2011). Most previous studies underlined three important indicators in relationship quality. First, when the perceived benefit or performance received by consumers is equal to or higher than their expectations (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Second, trust as the capacity to dependably anticipate the actions of the other party in the relationship, or the belief that the other partner will only perform actions that result in positive outcomes, and not behave opportunistically (Zhou, 2011). Third, the commitment and the willingness to develop and maintain a stable and valued relationship (Lin et al., 2008). From the perspectives of online communities, we found that users were satisfied and believed that either other members, recommendations, or
Online exchange channels would commit to induce positive behavior into the community, which can be seen from the higher frequency of their visits, helping other members, the average time to participate in discussion forums, and repurchasing. In consequence, we hypothesize the following:

**H15**: Relationship quality is significantly related to e-loyalty.

**E-Loyalty**

Consumer loyalty is defined as a deep commitment to the product, service, brand, or organization, despite the influence of a particular situation and marketing efforts capable of triggering behavioral changes (Yim et al., 2008). Loyalty in an online environment context is called e-loyalty, and is described as a consumer’s willingness and intention to use or buy from the website that will not be changed to alternatives (Flavian et al., 2006). E-loyalty has become a key requirement in good relationship marketing, and has been instrumental in the development of e-commerce (Griffin, 1996).

**RESEARCH METHOD**

The population of respondents in this study were active members of Kaskus.com and then the selected of a group of respondent are measured only once in a certain period of time (cross-sectional design) between June and July 2015. Sample data was collected using google forms based on the non-probability judgmental sampling technique using the members of Kaskus who actively participated in discussion forums, and had made at least one food purchase.

The questionnaires consist of two sections. In the first section, respondents were given demographic questions. The second section tried to measure seven latent variables: argument quality, message source credibility, website stimuli, perceived social network, customer website value, relationship quality, and e-loyalty. This section of structured questions were adapted from several previous studies, such as “The impact of electronic word of mouth: the adoption of online opinions in online customer communities” Cheung et al. (2008) for argument quality and message source credibility, “Antecedents and consequences of trust in online product recommendations an empirical study in social shopping “ Hsiao et al. (2010) for perceived social network and website stimuli, and “Repurchase in online shopping: contingent effects of utilitarian value and hedonic value“ Yen et al. (2014). The collected data was then processed by Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to analyze the proposed model and the hypothesized relations between the construct variables.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

260 valid responses were collected for data analysis. The majority of respondents were male (56%), between 25-30 years (50.7%), and employed (50%). Most of respondents know Kaskus from relatives or friends (72%), with the frequency of the respondents’ visits ranging from 6-10 times a week (47%), and the average visit per day 1-3 hours (61%). Activities that respondents did the most of in Kaskus is searching for useful information (84%), purchasing products (78%), and having a discussion in forums (73%). Most were motivated to join the community because of common interests and characteristics (80%), and sharing information to others (77%). The motivation to make a purchase online is because the price offered is better than offline retailers (86%), and the ease of shopping online anywhere and anytime (80%). E-commerce business models are often used or preferred by respondents in the trading forum/classifieds (44%). Respondents were motivated to shop for food online because of the saved money and time (80%), and to simplify the purchase of certain or sometimes unique food products (67%). The type of food most often bought by respondents was snacks (74%).
Table 1. Convergent Validity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct Variables</th>
<th>Number of Indicator</th>
<th>Construct Reliability</th>
<th>Variance Extract</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Social Network</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.629</td>
<td>0.362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument Quality</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.626</td>
<td>0.372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website Stimuli</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.605</td>
<td>0.343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Website Value</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.589</td>
<td>0.335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Quality</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.634</td>
<td>0.376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message Source</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.601</td>
<td>0.429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credibility e-Loyalty</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.594</td>
<td>0.345</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Discriminant Validity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct Variables</th>
<th>PSN</th>
<th>AQ</th>
<th>MSC</th>
<th>WS</th>
<th>CWV</th>
<th>RQ</th>
<th>EL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Social Network</td>
<td>0.721</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument Quality</td>
<td>0.658</td>
<td>0.732</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website Stimuli</td>
<td>0.649</td>
<td>0.708</td>
<td>0.786</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Website Value</td>
<td>0.706</td>
<td>0.734</td>
<td>0.778</td>
<td>0.702</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Quality</td>
<td>0.700</td>
<td>0.617</td>
<td>0.710</td>
<td>0.662</td>
<td>0.694</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message Source Credibility</td>
<td>0.705</td>
<td>0.715</td>
<td>0.782</td>
<td>0.670</td>
<td>0.651</td>
<td>0.735</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-Loyalty</td>
<td>0.719</td>
<td>0.705</td>
<td>0.785</td>
<td>0.692</td>
<td>0.690</td>
<td>0.717</td>
<td>0.704</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 1, Construct Realibility (CR) value ranges from 0.84 to 0.91, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) ranges from 0.48 to 0.61, which is what the value fulfills at the recommended levels. If convergent validity wants to explain how close each construct is related, discriminant validity did the opposite by examining how different each other construct related by compared correlations value between construct and the square root of AVE for each construct, if the square root of construct greater than the correlations value as shown in Table 2 then it was already met the recommended value. The measurement model conducted in this research demonstrates sufficient reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. We decided to eliminate variable PCM1 to get a better estimation model, since PCM1 has high residual covariance value.
Figure 1 demonstrates the overall result model with the standardized path regression coefficients that show the direct influences of the exogenous variables upon the endogenous variables for the research model. These results demonstrate the value of the chi-square (1885.5) and the probability (0.000) of poor results. However, the value of chi-squares are very sensitive to large sample sizes and numbers of indicators, so that testing with only chi-squares as indicator is considerably not suggested (Carvalho & Chima, 2014). However, based on the chi-square value adjusted by the degree of freedom, the normed chi-square has good fit result (1.569) (Hair et al., 2006). The remaining results of the goodness of fit index can be seen in Table 3.
As shown in Table 3, all the fit indices are within recommended thresholds. Therefore, the demonstrated structural model is a good fit. Table 4 demonstrates the significance test of the relationship among the variables in the conceptual research model. The results illustrate that the exogenous variables explain 73.6% of the variation in customer website value, 81% of the variation in relationship quality, and 91.7% of the variance in e-loyalty.

To test the hypothesis, we used a critical ratio and probability value (CR ± 1.96 and probability < 0.05), according to the results as shown on Table 4 H1, H2, and H3 (CR ± 1.96 and probability < 0.05). Although the results were supported, the argument quality had a significantly negative effect on both the website value and e-loyalty, while it had a positive effect on relationship quality. H4, H5, and H6 were all accepted, indicating that message source credibility has a positive and significant impact on customer website value, relationship quality, and e-loyalty. H7, H8, and H9 were supported, showing that the perceived social network has a positive and significant impact on customer website value, relationship quality, and e-loyalty. H10 and H12 were supported while H11 was not supported, indicating that website stimuli has a significant positive impact on customer website value and e-loyalty, but not on relationship quality. Moreover, H13 and H14 indicated a positive impact on relationship quality and e-loyalty. Finally H15 was accepted, indicating that relationship quality has a positive effect on the e-loyalty of members.

On Table 5, the total effect of the perceived social network is the highest value of e-loyalty (0.47), compared to other variables. This total...
Effect value has been enhanced by an indirect impact on e-loyalty through its impact on customer website value and relationship quality.

**Effect of Argument Quality**

First, we found that argument quality has a significantly positive effect on relationship quality (H2), but a negative effect on both customer website value (H1) and e-loyalty (H3). This is not consistent with previous studies that stated that argument quality has a significantly positive effect on website value and e-loyalty (Kim & Niehm, 2009; Yen, 2013). This can be explained by a variety of phenomena, which often occur in Kakus.com’s virtual community. There are many bots that interfere with the process of communication between users, posting various arguments that are often incompatible or irrelevant with the topics being discussed. Various activities in Kaskus’s trading forums are found, such as intentionally giving a product review some positive encouragement to attract purchases (ballot-stuffing), or deliberately writing a negative argument to attack competitors (bad-mouthing). Things like these demand that users undertake more in-depth assessments to decide whether to trust the information or not, either from post history, reputation, or asking several other members. This is what reduces the value obtained by the users, because users feel the extra effort generated in the search and assessment of information is greater than the benefits they received. But this negative effect could be reduced by improving the quality of the relationship, as it implies that even though users need the extra effort to search for a high quality argument or a more credible message source, they still could be satisfied, trust, and commit to Kaskus as a virtual community.

**Effect of Message Source Credibility**

Second, message source credibility has a positive and significant impact on customer website value (H4), relationship quality (H5), and e-loyalty (H6). This is in line with previous studies (Chen & Ku, 2013; Kim & Niehm, 2009; Wu et al., 2015), as it means that the higher the credibility of the message source in expertise and trustworthiness, then consumers, without thinking and careful thought, will receive the information as valid (Chu & Kamal, 2008). This will impact consumers’ perceived value on the information provided, which will lead to the higher persuasion, as well as good relationship quality, so that it will encourage users to be loyal and to contribute to the virtual community. This research also underlines that message source credibility is more influential than argument quality. It was stated in Table 5 by comparing the direct effect value between argument quality and message source credibility that information provided in discussion forums or by high-credibility message sources will have a greater persuasive effect on consumer. When confronted by huge amounts of qualified informational content provided by the community, members will search for a popular author’s name, a high seniority ranking, or a more skilled contributor to help them evaluate products and make decisions in the pre-purchase consumer stage (Bhattacherjee & Sanford, 2006).

**Effect of Perceived Social Network**

Third, the perceived social network has a positive and significant effect on customer website value (H7), relationship quality (H8), and e-loyalty (H9). Previous studies have shown similar results (Hsiao et al., 2010; Yen, 2013). The results imply that users prefer to interact with those who have similar interests, personalities, and the ability to interact about particular topics on a platform that is able to provide convenient online experience. These findings also show that the perceived social network has the highest value of influence on e-loyalty (0.47) rather than any other variables. These findings prove that the social aspect of the social networking site plays a very big role to the participation and satisfaction of members (Yen, 2013).
Effect of Website Stimuli

Fourth, a website stimulus has a significantly positive impact on customer website value (H10) and e-loyalty (H12). These results are consistent with several prior findings (Cyr et al., 2008; Keating et al., 2011; Lien et al., 2011), as the stimulus of website, such as reputation, assurance, and website quality will enhance the users’ value in social activities and online transactions. In addition to website quality, such as an excellent search engine, website features and layout will simplify consumer online shopping and social interaction activity, so that users will be willing to continue to contribute in the virtual community. Another interesting finding is that website stimuli has an insignificant positive effect on relationship quality (H11). Even though this result was not significant, past studies have recognized that the quality of the website has an insignificant effect on users’ satisfaction (Khristianto et al., 2012). Even with mediocre system qualities and not user-friendly systems, those who committed to the virtual community would still actively participated (Maloney & Preece, 2005). In conducting this study, a possible explanation for this insignificant effect is that most of the respondents are experienced and capable in the online environment and e-commerce (based on age, join date, and number of posts), so that they could minimize the uncertainty and threats that could happen and be able to match the expertise of other members in the discussion and developing online relationships even with just moderate system quality. Then, users would not be interested in the issue of website stimuli on the quality of the relationship. The capability of users will also result in the exchange of accurate and useful information so as to build confidence in their abilities, and able to increase its participation in the virtual community. In the end, the consumer tends to be loyal.

Effect of Customer Website Value

Fifth, customer website value has a positive and significant impact on relationship quality (H13) and e-loyalty (H14). This result was supported by previous studies (Gera, 2013; Yen et al., 2014), proving that the higher the customers’ perceived value of post-purchase stages, then the higher the quality of the relationship. With the growing of technology, customers’ perceived value plays a massive role, contributing to the loyalty in electronic businesses as it eases users looking for alternatives, a wide variety of products and services, price comparisons, and efficiency in making the purchase within an online environment. It is the nature of a consumer that they will always look for products or service providers that can give them better value, corresponding to the means-end chain theory in which consumer’s personal values will guide their evaluation of the relevant attributes and benefits of a product or services. Consumers will then evaluate it by considering the sacrifice they have to make, to be able to create goal-direct purchasing behavior. Other findings show that emotional values have a greater role than functional values. It was supported in the standardized regression weight that stated emotional value (question variable EV1: purchasing in this website can entertain and delight myself) has a higher effect on relationship quality and e-loyalty due to the fact that the virtual community is not only a place to look for an alternative choice or information, but also a place to play (Budiman, 2009).

Effect of Relationship Quality and e-Loyalty

Finally, this study also demonstrated that relationship quality was positively related to members’ e-loyalty to virtual communities (H15), which are supported with discoveries in several related studies (Chen & Ku, 2013; Keating et al., 2011). Satisfaction, trust, and commitment have been conceptualized as the main notion and entity of relationship quality. When a
member has been satisfied, they trust and decide to make a commitment to the virtual community, and whether because of the quality of the community or the transaction that has been made, they willingly form a long-lasting relationship with the virtual community. In this way, the consumer will continuously expand their staying time, increasing their visits and recommendation frequencies. In the end, the consumer, as member of virtual community, will remain loyal to the particular virtual community even though the possibility of the members to have several favored virtual communities is high. This possibility happens because of the minimum switching cost between virtual communities, explaining the low total effect value towards e-loyalty.

Factors Influencing Online Food Purchase Behavior

We also underlined some findings about consumer’s behavior in online groceries. Most of their motivations to make purchases online are because of the ease of shopping and the better prices offered by online channels (Hansen, 2005), as well as a shopping experience that offers unique food products. Respondents have a busy and hectic life, therefore, they prefer to purchase food through online channels because of the efficiency in terms of cost, time, and selection. Food often purchased by respondents in the trading forum Kaskus are snacks (potato chips, banana chips, macaroni), processed meat and fish (rendang, kebabs, dumplings, sausages and shredded), dairy products or chocolate, and also vitamins or dietary supplements. This research adopts research models based on previous studies that were used on other categories of consumer products. Meanwhile, we developed a research model based on food consumers, and there is no difference when comparing these results to previous studies.

Managerial Implications

The results of this study are expected to be useful and beneficial to all parties, especially in allowing the managers of virtual communities to get a better understanding and recognize the diverse role of technology, information, and community in a social shopping context. First, because there are significantly negative effects from argument quality, Kaskus needs to improve its information performance and eliminate any obstacles which interrupts the communication process (junker and bot). Second, message source credibility has a more persuasive approach compared to argument quality in order to maintain members’ relationship quality. Therefore, it is necessary for a virtual community to provide assorted message sources in discussion contents, for example, a featured review or a success story. Third, website stimulus also plays important role in members’ online loyalty. A virtual community needs to maintain a good brand image and increase the overall quality of the website, as well as their protective legal or technological structures, to ensure members’ convenience (for example, using an escrow integrated system to increase website security and assurance). Website technology is always evolving over time, which has forced service providers to keep abreast of these developments, forcing the user to adapt and follow the learning process with the changes made to the website, even if that user has experience and good capability. The results of this study have shown that the perceived social network has a greater effect than the other variables, so that the virtual community could focus on facilitating user interactions and strengthening the value of the community with online activities such as competition, online auction and bazaar, or free shopping coupons. The virtual community could also focus on offline activities such as charity, seminars, or regional activities. It is crucial to provide the opportunity to develop better social relationships, so that members can improve their emotional bonds with other members through a variety of experiences and social existences (Koh et al., 2007).
CONCLUSION

The research model proposed in this study showed that social shopping websites need to have the ability to cultivate decent social interactions or provide solid virtual communities in accordance with the purpose or needs of users. In addition, the number of members users interact with facilitates the flow of reliable information. These features will enhance an online environment, increasing user experience value and making all the activities of the users more efficient in terms time and costs, while also reducing the risks incurred. All of these factors collaborate in the quality of relationships characterized by a degree of satisfaction, trust, and commitment to Kaskus users as a virtual communication media or e-commerce website. Social interactions in this well-facilitated community are able to generate users’ interest, while attracting and maintaining customer loyalty to purchase online or participate in virtual communities. This is in accordance with the phenomenon of social shopping, where users are affected in the evaluation of products, so that they can perform repetitive activities within social shopping platforms. These findings will provide another perspective in e-marketing, especially in e-commerce, that the community has a key role in shaping the relationship quality and online loyalty of a social shopping website.

REFERENCES


