

CONSTRUCTING A MODEL SYNTHESIZING THE FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER ADOPTION OF NEW PRODUCTS LAUNCHED THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA: THE CASE OF MILLENNIALS IN CAMEROON

**Faustine Mimosette Mbiadjo Fandio,
Hyacinthe Mengue Meva'a**

(1, 2) Marketing Department, University of Ngaoundéré, Ngaoundéré, Cameroon

Faustine Mimosette Mbiadjo Fandio
Marketing Department, University of Ngaoundéré, Ngaoundéré, Cameroon
faustinembiadjo@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Purpose. *The main objective of our research is to determine the factors that affect the adoption of new products launched via social media among millennials in Cameroon.*

Design/Methodology/Approach. *The study is characterized as exploratory, descriptive research, operationalized through a survey, and applied to 350 millennials using various social media. The research involves a qualitative analysis to identify potential variables influencing millennials' adoption of new products through social media, followed by a quantitative analysis, including data collection procedures, validation, and data analysis.*

Findings and implications. *We identified trust and social commerce components as the most influencing millennials' adoption of new products. Other factors also contribute to adoption: product curiosity, information quality, and ease of use. On the other hand, some factors tend to harm adoption, notably perceived novelty and perceived risk, reflecting an aversion to innovative products that increase perceived risk. These findings are of great importance within the scope of new technology adoption and marketing innovation because they provide managers with useful tools to define a strategy targeting millennials.*

Limitations. *As a limitation, we highlight the reduced number of interviews conducted during the qualitative stage, which may have left out some relevant analysis factors.*

Originality. *Social media platforms are promising tools for marketing campaigns, but more knowledge is needed on the factors influencing social media campaigns for new product introduction (Baum et al., 2019) and adoption. Moreover, there is a need for research concerning the adoption of new products launched through social media, targeting millennials in Cameroon. Thus, the originality of our research is based on the proposition of factors and characteristics taken into consideration by millennials when adopting new product launches through social media. These findings add to the growing body of knowledge on social commerce, marketing innovation and product management. Moreover, the study provides new insights regarding factors that can lead to adopting new products using social media. Such studies can lead to stimulating marketing innovation in emerging and developing countries regarding the use of social media.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, economies are marked by fierce competition at both physical and virtual levels, forcing companies to develop strategies to stand out. Therefore, applying a policy of differentiation and valuable innovation for asserting oneself in the market and conquering a rare and very demanding clientele has become the central element of any marketing strategy. As a result, developing new products has become essential for companies due to the evolution of consumer habits and competitive initiatives. However, to ensure the success of these new products, it is essential to adopt an adequate launch strategy (Robert and Candi, 2014) and choose the proper communication channels to reach the intended target (Di Benedetto, 1999).

In parallel to the evolution of consumer needs, since the beginning of the decade, we have witnessed an explosion in digital tools, mainly social media, which are a global success due to the ever-increasing number of subscribers. According to the Digital Report 2022, published by Hootsuite and We Are Social, there are 4.95 billion Internet users globally, of which 4.62 billion are social network users. Companies are increasingly attempting to navigate the social media landscape and use social media as a business tool to enhance their performance. Social media communication consists of social sharing platforms (e.g., video-sharing on YouTube) and an active social network presence (e.g., brand communities on Facebook) (Gruner et al., 2018).

Given this vast audience, social commerce has been understood as part of the growing use of social networks and many other social media sites for commercial purposes (Gonçalves Curty and Zhang, 2013). Thus, social commerce has been created with the popularity of social networking sites (Hajli, 2015). Therefore, it is not surprising to see its massive use by companies to present their new products, as illustrated by the following examples. First, we have the case of the Kalenji Black Running Hijab, a sporty veil for Arab or Muslim women that is getting rave reviews on the YouTube page of Decathlon, its inventor. Similarly, the Facebook campaign for Ballantine's whiskey has enabled this brand to become a market leader in the wine and spirits market. Finally, the company Kikuu Cameroon uses Facebook and WhatsApp to offer a wide range of items at low prices delivered to homes, mainly in Douala and Yaoundé.

Many companies perceive social networks as an unprecedented new opportunity to develop consumer relationships (Ángeles Oviedo-García et al., 2014; Ashley and Tuten, 2015; Yong et al., 2019). According to Baum et al. (2019), many retail and manufacturing companies apply social media campaigns to support the presentation of new products. Moreover, Baum et al. (2019) noted that social media platforms could be a promising tool for retailers' marketing campaigns. Especially for new product introductions, social media may facilitate social interaction and online word-

of-mouth, broaden the reach, and accelerate the diffusion of information about the new product. Furthermore, other authors, such as Nattamai *et al.* (2016), confirm that social media sites have a significant and active role in spreading information regarding the quality of products. Marketing practitioners and researchers agree that social network data facilitate targeted marketing and influence consumer behavior in new product adoption (Hinz *et al.*, 2014). However, despite its acknowledged importance, most companies face a challenge in using it effectively (Hanna *et al.*, 2011) when considering a new product.

Previous studies on social commerce have focused on several aspects. They start with the differentiation between social commerce and traditional commerce (Wang and Zhang, 2012), the identification of factors influencing user acceptance of social commerce based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) (Zhu and Chen, 2016; Wang *et al.*, 2019), and factors influencing user purchase in social commerce (Hajli, 2013; Friedrich, 2016; Maia *et al.*, 2018; Sheikh *et al.*, 2019). Because of its interest among researchers and the multitude of research on this topic, social commerce has been identified as a relevant research topic (Turban *et al.*, 2010). However, despite this extensive literature, there is a need to clearly understand the factors influencing consumers to participate in social commerce, as noted by Zhou *et al.* (2013) and Friedrich (2016), particularly in a new product. In addition, some studies show the effects of demographics on online shopping (Chiu *et al.*, 2005; Rohm and Swaminathan, 2004; Sorce *et al.*, 2005). Generational groups significantly impact shopping experiences; however, two of the youngest groups, millennials and Gen Z, are becoming increasingly prominent. Therefore, there is a need to invest in market segmentation and positioning (Kim, 2018) concerning social commerce that would uncover helpful information. Based on this gap and the scarcity of literature on social commerce and understanding the behavior of millennials in the Cameroonian context, we chose to focus on the latter. Thus, the main objective of our research is to determine the factors that affect the adoption of new products launched via social media among millennials in the Cameroonian context. In this sense, we will better highlight the role of social media in Cameroonian millennials' repeat purchase of a new product and the intention to recommend it. The resulting research questions are as follows:

- What role does social media play in millennials' purchase of new products?
- What are the key factors that affect millennials' adoption of new products presented through social media?

To attain this objective, we divide this article into four parts. The first part will focus on the literature review that led to the formulation of the research hypotheses, the second on the methodology adopted, and the third on the results of the hypothesis testing. Finally, the last part will highlight both the managerial implications and limitations of this research.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Social Commerce

Many consumers may be reached due to social media's broad penetration and thus receive information about the firm's (new) product (Hu et al., 2018). Social commerce has been a center of different research disciplines, such as information systems, sociology, and marketing, due to economic, social, and technological aspects (Zhou et al., 2013). However, there is not yet a clear definition of social commerce. Thus, its characteristics have allowed various scholars to define it according to the focus of their studies (Siddiqui, 2021). Social commerce is generally seen as the fusion of social media with e-commerce. From this point of view, several definitions have emerged. According to Marsden and Chaney (2012), social commerce is viewed as a subset of e-commerce using social media to facilitate social interactions and enhance the online shopping experience.

Similarly, Wang and Zhang (2012) defined social commerce as a form of commerce mediated by social media that converges online and offline environments. Along the same lines, Liang and Turban (2011) described social commerce as a category of e-commerce that uses Web 2.0 social media technologies to facilitate online interaction and the contributions of online users in acquiring products and services. Recent definitions introduce of the online environment of online environment and information sharing. Lu et al. (2016) refer to social commerce as social media platforms that deliver various transactions and e-commerce activities. Hajli (2015) described it as a development of e-commerce with the use of social media technologies that facilitate buyer interaction. That leads to creating dynamic content, such as reviews and recommendations, which guides other buyers in making their decisions. On the other hand, Hettiarachchi et al. (2017) define social commerce as an Internet-based social media that facilitates the active participation of people in selling and marketing services and products through online communities and marketplaces. Han and Trimi (2017) viewed social commerce as a new business model of e-commerce that uses Web 2.0 technologies and social media to support social-related exchange activities.

From another point of view, according to Yadav et al. (2013, p. 48), social commerce can be defined as the: "exchange-related activities that occur in, or are influenced by, an individual's social network in computer-mediated social environments, where the activities correspond to the need recognition, pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase stages of a focal exchange".

Han and Trimi (2017) found that most definitions refer to four components: social media (e.g., social networking sites), social activities like social interactions, word-of-mouth, and user-generated content, e-commerce, and Web 2.0.

In this study, we align ourselves with the first group of definitions and consider social commerce a form of e-commerce that combines commercial activities and

social media to enable consumers to actively participate, interact, and communicate in the sale and purchase of products and services online.

2.2. The growing interest of millennials in marketing research

Millennials, known as digital natives (Anaya-Sánchez et al., 2020; Bolton et al., 2013), were born in the digital world from 1980 to 2000 (Lee and Kotler, 2015), ranging from 24 to 44 years in 2024. They are the baby boomers' children (born between 1946 and 1964). Millennials have perpetually been considered an impressive generational group for marketers with the most purchasing power (Bolton et al., 2013; Moreno et al., 2017) and the highest use of social media (Chatzigeorgiou, 2017). Millennials have grown up in a time characterized by economic welfare, internationalization of company activities, and the development of the Internet and social networks (Parment, 2013). The birth of this generational cohort is due to the vital place it occupies within the different populations. Indeed, millennials became the largest generation in the United States in 2015 (over a quarter of the American population), as they did in Europe. Millennials also represent a significant part of the Cameroonian population, with an average of 20.8% of the total population in 2021 (Population Pyramid, 2021). Millennials are then considered a big and powerful generation coming into their own, with high standards and unique characteristics (Park et al., 2021). Young (2015), like Duh and Struwig (2015), noted that openness towards communication, digital competencies, and presence on numerous social networks are distinctive characteristics of millennials. In effect, millennials are heavy web users and are technologically and mobile-friendly because they have come into contact with digital technologies since they were young. Moreover, millennials are the generation that documents everything on social media (Lanier, 2017). Therefore, the rate of sharing and communicating information using mobile shopping and social networking sites (SNS) is high.

Millennials are considered the first digital natives (Moreno et al., 2017). Because these young people are moving away from conventional media and targeting newer and more interactive media, they are entering those media, perceiving a functional and enjoyable value (Rahman, 2015). Furthermore, as technology-savvy millennials regularly engage in the evolving world of social media, it is becoming increasingly important for companies to reach these groups. Thus, millennials are an essential ingredient in the development of e-commerce (Moreno et al., 2017).

2.3. Theoretical factors that influence the participation of millennials in social commerce

This research is based on the product innovation management literature in the area of new products and participation in social commerce. Because social commerce is closely related to e-commerce, the fundamental theories used to explain e-commerce adoption are also used to explain the participation of millennials in social commerce (Wang and Zhang, 2012). We also used social impact theory to develop the hypothesis.

2.3.1. Perceived ease of use of social networks and repeat online purchases

The ease of use of social networks is a crucial factor in adopting new products. Usability is defined as how effortless a user finds using a particular technology (Davis et al., 1989). The concept of usability is widely used in the literature on user acceptance of technology and user behavior. According to Raida and Néji (2013), this concept determines adoption of a technology.

According to Davis et al. (1989), ease of use reflects the degree of non-complexity and the use of a system without mental effort. It encompasses the judgments of the effort required to use the technology. Ease of use refers to the degree to which a product or service is perceived to be difficult to understand or use (Moore and Benbasat, 1991; Rogers, 1983). In other words, the perceived ease of use refers to the degree to which an individual believes that utilizing a specific technology will require minimal effort or be easy to use. Trang Thi et al. (2024) highlighted the fact that evaluation assesses the perceived level of simplicity and user-friendliness of the technology, taking into consideration aspects such as ease of learning and ease of navigation.

The comments collected during the qualitative study highlight the importance of social networks' ease of use, which plays a role in the process of adopting new products presented there, as illustrated by the following verbatim: "*Buying products via social networks is easy, and quick to appreciate, to carry out*" or "*Purchasing for me via social networks is flexible about the possibility of exchanging products if they are not suitable.*"

Technological terminals are simplified enough to press a button called (*buy*) or add to bag, and the product is acquired (case of the company Kikuu Cameroon). In the absence of this button, there is a link that can help the consumer reach the company's official sales site and choose.

Based on the above, we can formulate the following hypothesis:

H1: The perceived ease of use of social networks positively affects millennials' adoption of new products presented via this channel.

2.3.2. Social commerce components

Hajli (2015) defined social commerce components as the presence of comments, ratings, and reviews about products, which many authors refer to as word-of-mouth. Kelly et al. (2010) found that consumers believed that information provided by a friend is more credible than information received from a company about a product. There is a positive relationship between the positive views of peers and purchase intentions. Scholars claimed that the role of social platforms in providing referrals, reviews, ratings, online communities, and recommendations about products and services enhanced social commerce intentions (Yadav et al., 2013). Online social platforms, such as forums and communities, allow consumers to rate, review, recommend, and refer products and services to peer consumers and empower the consumers to communicate and negotiate with sellers. A study by Bazar Voice (2025) reveals that reviews and recommendations from strangers influence 96% of people who buy online. Similarly, Riegner (2007) notes the influence of online reviews on the purchase decision in the adoption phase as a sign of credibility. Furthermore, Sheikh et al. (2017) revealed that social commerce components positively influence behavioral intentions in a social commerce environment.

In general, information on the Internet is often subject to scams. So, consumers make sure that the information is genuine by going to the official website or page and carefully assessing the opinions of the various subscribers, especially those who have already tried the product (whether they know them or not).

Based on all these analyses, the following hypothesis H₂ is formulated

H₂: Social commerce components positively affect millennials' adoption of new products through social media.

2.3.3. Perceived risk as a barrier to the adoption of new products

Risk is an essential construct in social sciences. For example, Volle (1995) defines risk as the perception of uncertainty regarding the negative consequences of a choice alternative. In other words, the individual can suffer losses when buying or consuming a product or good.

The literature highlights the vital link between adopting a new product and a high level of perceived risk (Gatignon and Robertson, 1988; Rogers, 1983). A high perceived risk leads consumers to prefer familiar options over new ones. Uncertainty and product risk negatively correlate with adoption. The risk is even higher in the context of online shopping. Thus, according to Forsythe and Shi (2003), consumers consider online shopping risk higher than offline shopping because the Internet is open and complex, and technology is beyond the users' control. Bhatnagar et al. (2000) identified three dominant online shopping risks: financial, product, and information (security and privacy). In the social media domain, the willingness

and behavior of users to adopt information are driven by risks identified by self-perception (Guoyin et al., 2021). Therefore, we formulate the following hypothesis:

H3: The higher the perceived risk of millennials towards social networks, the less likely they are to adopt new products via these platforms.

2.3.4. The information quality

Information quality is another relevant factor in the literature on social commerce. For example, Hong and Yang (2009) noted that consumers are more likely to trust social commerce firms that provide accurate, useful, reliable, and sufficient information on products and services. On the other hand, Kim and Park (2013) suggest that the quality of the information on the website also determines consumers' trust in social commerce. The quality of a website, for example, can be related to the relevance, accuracy, comprehension, and utility of the information provided. Therefore, consumers tend to trust websites that provide precise and timely information, motivating them to participate in social commerce. Moreover, Guoyin et al. (2021) noted that if the information helps users fully understand products or services, the overall evaluation of information quality would be enhanced. The quality of information, therefore, emphasizes the usability of the new product, hence the formulation of the fourth hypothesis:

H4: Information quality positively affects millennials' adoption of new products presented on social media.

2.3.5. Trust

One of the factors that received greater attention in the literature about social commerce is trust. Kim and Park (2013) noted the importance of trust-building in social commerce. They identified the antecedents communication, word-of-mouth, economic feasibility, referrals, information quality, size, and security of transactions. In the same sense, Gefen and Pavlou (2012), as well as Indiani et al. (2015), have shown that trust plays a crucial role in shoppers' behavior when purchasing products and services online. Chang and Chen (2008) emphasized that a lack of trust is likely to be an obstacle or even a disincentive for consumers to purchase from websites once they acquire the knowledge to develop sufficient trust. Align in the same vein, Nguyen et al. (2024) noted that trust is related to safety and security. Thus, people who trust companies proposing new products are more likely to use and share them as long as they feel safe and secure. Considering the importance of trust in the context of purchasing new products and even more through social media, we formulated the following research hypothesis:

H5: Trust positively affects the adoption of new products presented through social media by millennials.

2.3.6. Product novelty and product curiosity

The attributes of a product, particularly the perceived novelty of the product as perceived by the consumer, are of great importance in purchasing a product. In the context of social commerce development, several authors have been interested in the novelty of making online purchases. Thus, in their research, Rodriguez *et al.* (2017) highlighted a significant relationship between novelty-seeking and purchase intention. Similarly, Rachbini and Agustina (2019) underlined that introducing innovation will positively affect the attitude towards online social shopping and information search. More recently, Kim *et al.* (2020) emphasized the importance of novelty-seeking, particularly in omnichannel retailing, and its positive impact on purchase intentions.

New product success research shows that consumers differ in product adoption behaviors (Rogers, 1983). This statement is related to the fact that consumers usually have different levels of familiarity with the novelty of new products and vary in the product benefits they require (Heidenreich and Kraemer, 2016). Thus, the following hypothesis:

H6: Perceived product novelty positively influences millennials' adoption of new products through social media.

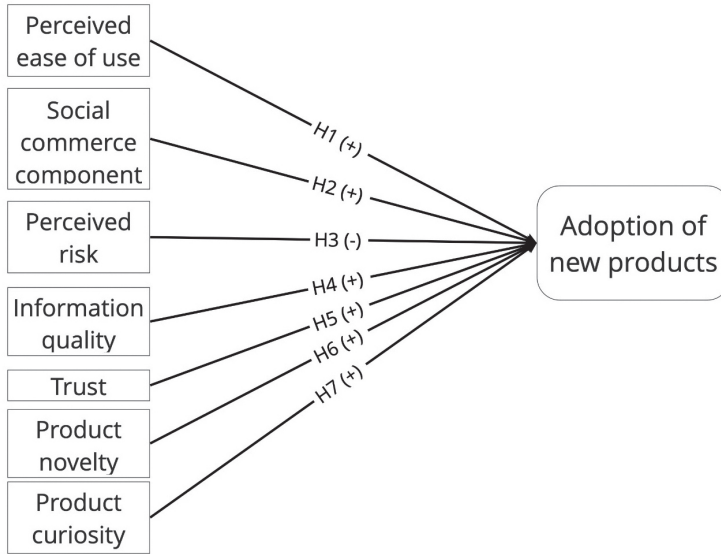
Psychologically, newer products increase consumers' curiosity through their unexpected and original benefits and features. Curiosity is a complex feeling and cognition that accompanies the desire to learn about the unknown (Litman and Spielberger, 2003). Research has found that curiosity is a powerful predictor of behavior, playing an essential role in motivating learning, mastery, and facilitating scientific discovery (Menon and Soman, 2002). According to Sääksjärvi *et al.* (2017), curiosity is a positive state of arousal. Curiosity can be either a stable trait (i.e., some individuals are more curious than others) or a situational cue (i.e., certain stimuli trigger more curiosity than others) (Gerrath and Biraglia, 2021). For example, Sääksjärvi *et al.* (2017) show that incremental versus radical new products generate curiosity based on the ambiguity of rumors about new product launches.

The above developments allow for the formulation of the above hypothesis:

H7: Product curiosity positively influences millennials' adoption of new products presented through social media.

Figure 1. represents the different relationships examined in this research and the relationships that correspond to the different aspects of the hypotheses.

Figure 1.: Theoretical model of the research



3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study aims to determine the factors that affect the adoption of new products launched through social media among millennials in the Cameroonian context. Therefore, we adopted exploratory, descriptive research, operationalized it through a survey, and applied it to 350 millennials on various social media platforms. A study combining qualitative and quantitative methods was conducted in this line.

3.1. Qualitative stage

The qualitative study was conducted using semi-structured interviews with ten individuals who habitually do their shopping through social networks. We selected the interviewees based on the researcher’s judgment. The interviews were conducted face-to-face and individually for 40 to 50 minutes. The tool used to conduct these interviews was the interview guide built around the following themes: most frequently used social networking service, frequency of online purchases and frequency of purchase of new products, types of products they usually search for or buy on the Internet, motivations behind the use of social networks in the act of buying, and factors determining the purchase or not of new products. Following the interviews in December 2020, thematic analysis was carried out. This stage confirmed the importance of several factors already cited in the literature. We have identified trust as an essential factor in purchasing new products. This trust refers to the reputation

of the brand presenting the new product and the belief that the product can fulfill the promises made by the brand. It also includes the credibility of the people presenting the product and the channel used. Finally, trust is also related to product delivery, a new antecedent. Another new element is the curiosity aroused by a new product as a determining factor in the purchase process. The products most purchased via social networks were cosmetics, household appliances, digital products (telephones, tablets, and books), electronic devices, clothes and accessories, handbags, and jewelry.

3.2. Quantitative stage

Based on the results obtained from the qualitative study, we developed a questionnaire. All factors were identified in the literature review and could then be operationalized from validated scales. Furthermore, the measurement of the trust variable was improved by introducing aspects related to product delivery, as developed by Maia *et al.* (2018). Indeed, the items for each concept have been defined and measured on an interval scale. Thus, each variable is assessed by items selected and then adapted from previous studies, according to a five-point "Likert" scale ranging from "Strongly disagree" (corresponding to 1) to "Strongly agree" (corresponding to 5).

The different analysis variables in our model are independent variables. Perceived ease of use was measured using six (03) items (Davis *et al.*, 1989; Venkatesh *et al.*, 2003; Gefen *et al.*, 2003; Maia *et al.*, 2018). The variable social commerce components were measured using three items adapted from Hajli (2013). Five (05) items also measured perceived risk (adapted from Bhatnagar *et al.*, 2000). The information quality variable was measured using four items inspired by Hajli (2013), Kim and Park (2013), and Maia *et al.* (2018). The measurement of the variable trust is derived from Kim and Park (2013) and Maia *et al.* (2018) and was measured using seven items. The variable perceived novelty was measured using four items inspired by Chakrabarti and Khadilkar (2003) and Horn and Salvendy (2009). Finally, three items measured the product curiosity. The measure of perceived novelty is inspired by Gerrath and Biraglia (2021).

Adoption is considered a dependent variable. However, after analyzing the work of various authors, we find that adoption is a complex and multidimensional concept. For this reason, it has been contextualized to be adapted to our field of research. As a result, four items were identified (adapted from Baum *et al.*, 2019; Steenkamp and Gielens, 2003; Goldsmith and Hofacker, 1991).

We added other questions related to the respondents' profiles. These questions concern age, gender, marital status, level of education, living place, income, social networks most used, frequency of use, time spent on social network services, and significant activities on social networks. Other questions were related to the type

of new product bought through this channel, the motivations behind the repeated purchase of new products offered via social networks, and the types of social media content through which the new products have been discovered.

A pre-test was carried out among 18 respondents, after which some questions were reworded for better understanding. The subsequent collection phase was spread over four months, from July 2022 to October 2022. To ensure that the targeted participants met specific characteristics, pre-screening questions were asked at the beginning of the survey.

Three hundred and fifty copies of the survey questionnaire were administered to our target group in Douala, Yaoundé, Bafoussam, and Ngaoundéré. Three hundred thirty-seven questionnaires were collected, representing a response rate of over 95%. Finally, only 300 questionnaires were considered usable, eliminating the questionnaires with irrelevant and missing answers. An analysis of the distribution of respondents by city shows a predominance of respondents in Douala, the economic capital of Cameroon.

Following data collection procedures, we conducted a reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha and exploratory factor analysis for each scale individually, as shown in the following table (Table 1.).

Table 1.: Reliability and exploratory factor analysis

CONSTRUCTS	Loadings
Perceived ease of use (Maia et al., 2018; Gefen et al., 2003) $\alpha = 0.75$	
It is easy to become skillful at using social media	0.757
My interaction with various social media is clear and understandable	0.883
Learning to operate on various social media for different purposes is easy	0.755
Social commerce components (Hajli, 2013) $\alpha = 0.79$	
I use online forums and online communities to acquire information about new products.	0.727
I usually use people's ratings and reviews about of products on the Internet.	0.763
I usually use people's recommendations to buy a product on the Internet	0.765
Perceived risk $\alpha = 0.765$	
Prices of new products sold via social networks do not reflect their quality	0.731
New products sold via social networks are of poor quality	0.614
Products sold via social networks have a short lifetime	0.711
New products bought via social networks never reached me	0.676
I think that people and companies who sell new products via social networks are not trustworthy	0.636
Information quality (Kim and Park, 2013; Hajli, 2013) $\alpha = 0.79$	
The Companies that launch new products through social media provide accurate information about their products on social media.	0.715
The Companies that launch new products through social media provide sufficient information about their products on social media.	0.653
The Companies that launch new products through social media provide reliable information about their products.	0.709

The Companies that launch new products through social media provide useful information about their product.	0.874
Trust (Kim and Park, 2013; Maia et al., 2018) $\alpha = 0.82$	
I am more confident in firms with good reputations when buying new products through social media.	0.852
I used to buy new products from familiar firms.	0.725
I am more confident in firms with a reputation for being honest when buying new products through social media.	0.791
I have more trust in well-known firms when buying new products through social media.	0.801
I am more confident with firms implementing security measures to protect online shoppers.	0.706
I have more trust in firms, that usually ensure that transaction-related information is protected.	0.726
I am more confident with firms that ensure transaction safety	0.628
Product novelty (Chakrabarti and Khadilkar, 2003; Horn and Salvendy, 2009) $\alpha = 0.75$	
I am interested in rare products	0.766
I am always searching for infrequent products	0.757
I am more interested in the novelty of products presented through social media	0.711
I used to buy standard products	0.452
Product curiosity (Gerrath and Biraglia, 2021) $\alpha = 0.88$	
I am usually curious about new products	0.711
When I meet with a new product, I learn as much as possible about it	0.714
When I am interested in a new product, I usually buy it.	0.730
Adoption of new products (adapted from Baum et al., 2019; Steenkamp and Gielens, 2003; Goldsmith and Hofacker, 1991) $\alpha = 0.73$	
I am among the first to buy new products when they appear on social media.	0.730
I am very cautious when trying new and different products.	0.767
I enjoy taking chances when buying new products.	0.731
Compared with my friends, I own many products that are new to the market.	0.710

Source: Authors

Once the factor loadings were grouped into a single factor, the analysis confirmed the unidimensionality of most constructs proposed in the study. Only the variable “Trust” was measured through company reputation and product delivery. We used Cronbach’s alpha coefficients to evaluate the reliability of the scales, with scores ranging from 0.73 to 0.88, suggesting excellent internal consistency of the scales for exploratory studies. The statistical package SPSS for Windows 20.0 was used to perform the validation stages and data analysis presented and discussed in the following section.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Results of the descriptive analysis

We started the presentation with a descriptive analysis of the main characteristics of the 300 participants in the study. The predominant age group is between 27 and 35 years (53%) and 35-40 years (47%). Regarding gender, 134 (44.66%) are male and 166 (55.34%) are female. Regarding marital status, most of the sample is single (54%). Regarding education, 92% of our sample are graduates or postgraduates. These findings are the same as Park et al. (2021), who concluded that the millennial generation had a high university entrance rate. Most respondents live in Douala (50.67%) and Yaoundé (32%). Their income is above 100,000 CFA francs/month, mainly for workers in the public sector (45%).

The most used social networks are Facebook (32%), WhatsApp (25%), Instagram (21%), and YouTube (12%). These statistics align with Hootuite, and We Are Social (2021) report, which defines Facebook and Instagram as the Cameroonian population's most used social networks. However, it is essential to note that social networks are not used in isolation. Respondents are present on at least three sites simultaneously. Furthermore, we note that millennials are constantly connected and online more than five times a day (44%) to more than seven times a day (26%), for a total time ranging from one hour (30%) to four hours (12%). The main activities carried out are posting photos (35%), viewing posts or statuses (18%), buying products (19%), and putting Likes (17%).

Concerning new products, respondents are used to getting information about new products via Facebook pages (32%), WhatsApp statuses of friends and acquaintances (18%), Instagram pages (28%), and YouTube videos (22%) via different links. Therefore, respondents discover new products mainly through third-party recommendations (family, friends, and influencers followed on social networks) and personal research according to their needs. Hence, millennials see social media as an inexhaustible source of information that helps satisfy needs and generates new ones. Table 2. shows the characteristics of the sample.

Table 2.: Characteristics of respondents

Characteristic	Item	Frequency	Rate
Age	27-35 years	159	53
	35-40 years	141	47
Gender	Male	134	44.66
	Female	166	55.34
Marital status	Single	162	54
	married	138	46

Level of education	Primary	7	2.33
	Secondary	15	5
	Higher	276	92
	None	2	0.67
Living place	Douala	152	50.67
	Yaoundé	96	32
	Bafoussam	33	11
	Ngaoundere	19	6.33
Income	Less than 35 000 fcfa	24	8
	35 000-100 000 fcfa	33	11
	100 000-200 000 fcfa	102	34
	200 000-300 000 fcfa	111	37
	More than 300 000 fcfa	30	10
Working sector	Public sector	135	45
	Private sector	114	38
	Entrepreneur	51	17
	None	0	0
Social networks must use	Facebook	96	32
	Whatsapp	75	25
	Instagram	63	21
	YouTube	36	12
	Twitter	24	8
	Blogs	6	2
Frequency of using	Twice	6	2
	3 or 4 times a day	84	28
	5 or 6 times a day	132	44
	More than 7 times	78	26
Time spent on social network	Less than 30 min	18	6
	About 1 hour per day	90	30
	About 2 hours per day	102	34
	About 3 hours per day	54	18
	More than 4 hours per day	36	12
Mayor activities on social networks	Buying products	57	19
	Posting photos	105	35
	Posting videos	33	11
	Clicking "Like"	51	17
	View posts or status	54	18

Source: Authors

Similarly, it is essential to note that millennials' preferred products via social networks are cosmetics, certain food products, and clothing. On the other hand, we noted a solid reluctance to buy electronic devices and household appliances because, for our respondents, these are products whose quality must be reassured visually before purchasing to any disappointment.

In addition, the respondents gave their reasons for repeatedly buying new products offered via social networks. These reasons are mainly related to the time savings offered by this possibility, the possibility to form one's own opinion and give one's opinion, the knowledge of the seller and the brand, and the feeling of post-purchase satisfaction.

Considering the main sociodemographic variables associated with adoption, we found that those who adopt the new products offered via the networks are mainly women with a stable financial situation and a high level of education. On the other hand, non-adopters are mainly men with low-income levels.

4.2. Data Analysis

We tested the hypotheses using multiple regression analysis, the main results of which are presented in Table 3.

Table 3.: Results of the multiple regression analysis

Factors	β	p
Perceived ease of use	0.26	0.000
Social commerce components	0.39	0.002
Perceived risk	-0.22	0.000
Information quality	0.23	0.000
Company reputation	0.34	0.000
Product delivery	0.30	0.000
Product novelty	-0.15	0.055
Product curiosity	0.32	0.003
R square adjusted = 0.636		
R = 0.809		
F = 35.356		
p-value = 0.001 < 0.05		
Durbin Watson = 2.003		
Constant = 18.131		

Source: Authors

The multiple regression analysis provided an adjusted R square of 0.636, indicating that the regression model is a good fit for the data. The variation in millennials' adoption of new products presented through social media is explained at 63.6% by the independent variables. The more significant value of $F = 35.356$ (Sig value = $0.001 < 0.05$) confirmed the excellent fit of the data for this analysis. Moreover, Durbin-Watson = 2.003 between 0 and 4, confirming no autocorrelation.

Perceived ease of use ($b = + 0.26$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) is significantly related to the adoption of new products presented through social media. H₂, which states that social commerce components positively affect millennials' adoption of new products presented through social media, is supported ($b = + 0.39$, $p = 0.002 < 0.05$). Thus, reviews and recommendations from other customers are essential for millennials' adoption of new products through social media. Perceived risk is inversely related to millennials' adoption of new products presented through social media, supporting H₃ ($b = - 0.22$, $p < 0.05$). Perceived risk may inhibit millennials from adopting new products through social media. H₄, which states that information quality positively

affects millennials' adoption of new products presented through social media, is supported ($b = 0.23$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). As proposed in H₅, trust in company reputation and product delivery is positively related to millennials' adoption of new products presented through social media. This finding suggests that the reputation of the company that launches a new product through social media will influence its adoption by millennials, such as product delivery related to the process of product delivery process. Product novelty is inversely related to millennials' adoption of new products presented through social media. Thus H₆ is not supported ($b = -0.15$, $p = 0.055 > 0.05$). In contrast, product curiosity appears to be positively related to millennials adoption of new products presented through social media ($b = 0.32$, $p = 0.003 < 0.05$).

5. DISCUSSION

Many firms are implementing social media campaigns to support the introduction of new products. This research extends the knowledge of social media's role in product innovation management. The results show that channel-related elements (perceived ease of use and social commerce components), as well as product-related elements (product curiosity), and source-related elements (trust and information quality) significantly influence the adoption of new products launched via social media targeting millennials.

In this case, the elements related to the channel used significantly influenced millennials' adoption of new products. Thus, the perceived ease of use of social media positively influences the adoption of new products presented on them. This result is consistent with that of Tarhini et al. (2014). These authors noted that, among the factors that condition the intention to buy online, the perceived ease of use of the navigation system was one of the most important factors.. This result is in line with Raida and Neji (2013), who noted that perceived ease of use determines adoption. Moreover, the sociological approach to usage, which is concerned with usage, highlights that each actor constructs meaning around the new technology according to his or her way of interpreting the new technical device (Mallein and Toussaint, 1994). The construction of meaning around technology to attribute a particular use to it is at the heart of the adoption process. Indeed, perceived ease of use, which reflects how a user has learned to use social media, is critical for adopting new products. This result is of great importance as it confirms the importance of this feature in the acceptance of technology.

The results also revealed that social commerce components measured through forums and communities, ratings and reviews, and recommendations and referrals positively affect the adoption of new products launched through social media by millennials. This result confirms the findings of Yadav et al. (2013), Hajli (2015), and Sheikh et al. (2017), who highlighted the positive impact of these recommendations

on the decision to continue using social commerce. In this context, word-of-mouth has a positive valence and increases the likelihood of purchasing and sharing product information with others via social media. Therefore, we can conclude, as Riegner (2007) did, that consumers have integrated digital social networks into their purchasing behavior by referring to reviews left online or by forming their own opinions through different information searches and first use.

This study also revealed that perceived risk negatively influences millennials' adoption of new products. This result is in line with Djoma and Durrieu (2015), who found that perceived risk remains negatively associated with individuals' tendency to adopt new products. Thus, the lower the perceived risk, the more likely millennials will likely accept new, over-familiar, or traditional options. This result highlights the negative perceptions of online shopping, mainly related to the "fear of being scammed, losing money, and never receiving the product ordered and purchased". The numerous scams that many face constitute a significant obstacle to the explicit acceptance of social networks and, therefore, to repeated purchases via these platforms. In addition, the opinions gathered noted that many consumers who adopt new products are mainly reluctant because of a painful experience with the channel and not with the product. Therefore, the perception of a product is influenced by the negative perception of the channel used.

The validation of the hypothesis related to information quality highlights the significant influence of the quality of the information given to the consumer concerning the product and, even more so, the product's needs. This result is similar to that of Hong and Yang (2009). They pointed out that consumers are more likely to trust social commerce firms that provide accurate, helpful, and sufficient information on products and services. In this way, online buyers depend on the information provided by the website because they need more sources of information about products and services. Moreover, Kim and Park (2013) have identified the quality of information as a critical factor in social commerce that impacts consumers' purchase intentions and word of mouth. Indeed, the information put forward must be sufficiently attractive and illustrative of the competitive advantage provided by the new product to differentiate it from competing products. Moreover, the information should provide points on which millennials can rely to rationalize their purchases and base their recommendations to others. Finally, it is essential to note that this variable tends to reduce the formation of negative attitudes, as Clee and Wicklund (1980) noted. They argue that reactance effects are lower if communication attempts are perceived as helpful and informative.

The validation of the fifth hypothesis highlights the essential place of trust in the adoption process of new products by millennials in a social commerce context. This result is in line with Maia *et al.* (2018), who highlight trust and information quality as the most influential factors of consumer participation in social commerce. Li (2019) and Kim and Park (2013) concluded that trust significantly impacts purchase

intentions. Trust is built on the credibility and reputation of the company launching the new product, brand perception, and delivery process to the consumer. This result is consistent with Doney and Cannon (1997), who suggest that reputation influences consumers' trust in the company, and Maia et al. (2018). Indeed, in their research, the latter noted that product delivery is a characteristic of social commerce that is well evaluated by consumers and is related to the delivery time and the product delivered. If a received product is not the expected one or if it arrives damaged, consumers expect to be easy and quick to exchange the desired product" (Maia et al., 2018). Thus, trust is related to the company's reputation in offering the product and channel and, finally, to security throughout the purchasing and delivery process.

The regression model highlights the importance of perceived novelty and the resulting curiosity in adopting new products by millennials. Indeed, perceived novelty negatively influences this adoption. Consumers are wary of entirely new products. They need to gain prior knowledge and a basis for comparison. Consumers feel more assured when they can identify areas for improvement; hence the negative influence. Thus, a product resulting from a radical innovation will be less adopted than a product resulting from an incremental innovation. This result is divergent from Rodriguez et al. (2017) and Rachbini and Agustina (2019), who found a significant relationship between novelty-seeking and purchase intention. It can be attributed to the fact that the product in our study is new. Hence, the importance of limiting innovation and maintaining known reference standards as benchmarks.

On the other hand, the results highlighted the positive influence of curiosity on millennials' adoption of a new product in social commerce. This is due to the strong willingness to try the new product based on peer recommendations and past experiences with the product. In addition, consumers seek to reassure themselves of the various improvements made to the product and the effectiveness of advertised promises. This result is consistent with Gerrath and Biraglia (2021), who considered product curiosity to be a positive arousal state that engages consumer attention and improves decision-making. Curiosity exerts powerful effects on people's behavior. In one of the most significant undertakings in psychology, researchers have found that curiosity is one of the five most influential human qualities associated with life fulfillment and happiness (Peterson and Seligman, 2004).

6. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings reported in this study highlight the essential factors that can improve the use of social media to engage more effectively with millennials regarding the adoption of new products and offer guidance to managers.

Managers expressed uncertainty about which digital communication format and platform to invest in to support new products. To address this concern, we recommend that managers and communication officers use multiple formats when launching

new products targeting millennials, including text, images, and videos. As for the choice of platform, we recommend that they use Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and YouTube, as these will make it easier to reach the target audience (millennials). Visibility is also a problem when adopting a new product. A company that searches for rentability must look for interactive digital channels (such as YouTube). It is not enough to be present on all social networks to encourage adoption. It only took one advertisement for Biopharma Laboratories on Bactol to gain significant recognition and adoption in the Cameroonian market.

An essential finding of this study is that adopting a new product targeting millennials through social media requires a defined strategy. The first stage of this strategy is to construct an implicit positive attitude. Indeed, as Ackermann and Mathieu (2015) have pointed out, the implicit attitude towards a new product is the first attitudinal construct to appear in the consumer during the launch of a new product. This implicit attitude is linked to previous knowledge of the product and experience with the brand. Therefore, it is based on the product characteristics. Managers must, therefore, disseminate information highlighting the novelty of the product and the benefits of the innovation introduced in the product. Heidenreich and Kraemer (2016) noted that new products' success differs based on the fact that consumers usually have different levels of familiarity with the novelty of new products and vary in the benefits of the product they require. Managers also need to consider that the information transmitted must arouse the curiosity of millennials. Therefore, they have to construct the launch phase of the new product with messages and videos designed to arouse curiosity, which will not be covered after use, thus leading to harmful adoption. At this level, the risk is to suggest many expectations to consumers, which will not be covered after use and thus lead to harmful adoption. Therefore, managers should start by acting on both millennials' implicit and explicit attitudes by highlighting the characteristics of the new product.

Furthermore, the results suggest that managers need to build trust by acting on several factors. First, managers must reduce the perceived risk of millennials. In other words, managers must provide clear and accurate information about the purchasing process and, more importantly, the product delivery process, which is a critical issue for millennials. The implementation of complaint possibilities can also enhance security. In this sense, the customer can benefit from technical assistance in the event of a product failure or any other problem they may have noticed. Second, trust is based on the perceived credibility of the company and brand launching the new product. This credibility is mainly based on the company's reputation. That is why building a relationship with the consumer upstream is essential. Finally, this trust also depends on peer recommendations. Thus, managers should be aware of identifying and connecting with opinion leaders and early adopters who will share information about the new product targeting millennials via the most relevant social media to drive adoption.

7. CONCLUSION

In this study, we sought to analyze from the consumer's perspective the factors that affect the adoption of new products launched via social media among millennials in the Cameroonian context. We analyzed the influence of seven factors on millennials' adoption of new products launched through social media: perceived ease of use, social commerce components, perceived risk, information quality, trust, perceived novelty, and product curiosity. We identified trust and social commerce components as the factors that most influence millennials' adoption of new products. Other factors also contribute to adoption, such as product curiosity, information quality, and perceived ease of use. On the other hand, some factors tend to harm adoption, notably perceived novelty and perceived risk, reflecting an aversion to products that are too innovative and contribute to an increased perceived risk. Regarding the different characteristics related to the respondents, we noted that respondents discover new products mainly through third-party recommendations (family, friends, influencers followed on social networks) but also through personal research according to their need. Millennials see social media as an inexhaustible source of information that helps satisfy their needs and generate new ones.

The contributions of this study, include the proposition of factors and characteristics considered by millennials when adopting new products launched through social media. It adds to the growing body of knowledge on e-commerce and product management by providing new insights regarding factors that can lead to the adoption of new products. using social marketing. Furthermore, it can reduce the failure of launching new products targeting millennials.

As a limitation of the study, we can underline the reduced number of interviews conducted during the qualitative stage, which may have left out some relevant factors in the analysis. Thus, it would have been appropriate to analyze the impact of these indirect antecedents on adoption by testing, for example, the relationship between perceived safety and trust or between perceived risk and social norms. Another limitation refers to the selection of participants in this study.. Our study was limited to four cities in Cameroon. However, a broader scope of the study to other cities would have provided a more representative sample and more conclusive results.

Despite these limitations, the results gathered from the study sample cannot be questioned. Therefore, answers to these limitations are likely to be found in future research. For example, it is vital to verify whether variables such as social norms, perceived safety, and values significantly affect the perception of novelty and, in turn, repeat purchases through social networks. Furthermore, it would be interesting to analyze the mediating effects of the socio-demographic characteristics of millennials on the adoption of new products using structural equations.

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