Original Article

Attitude and financial risk perceived by Facebook users in relation to a dermatology office in Lima, Peru

ABSTRACT

The last few years have evidenced the increasing use of social media. This has given companies the opportunity to offer their products and/or services, and has given consumers the opportunity to purchase them. The aim of this study was to determine the relationship between attitude and financial risk, as perceived by a group of users of social networking site Facebook who were interested in purchasing dermatology services. To this end, an applied study was conducted, with a quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional, and correlational approach. It used a five-item questionnaire which was responded by 358 users. The results indicated that 94.4% of the survey respondents stated that they had perceived a good or very good attitude from the company's employees, generating a very low to low perceived risk in 85.5% of the survey respondents. In conclusion, a positive moderate correlation exists between attitude and financial risk.

Keywords: Attitude; financial risk; quality; service; clients.

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INTRODUCTION

In the last few years, a considerable increase in the use of social media in Peru has been noted. The number of social media users has gone from 12.4 million in 2014 to 28.1 million in January 2022. Facebook is the social media site with the most users, with 24.8 million, followed by YouTube with 17.5 million accounts, TikTok with 12.17 million users, and Instagram with 8.9 million users. In addition, Facebook Messenger advertisements reached 14.15 million users (Datareportal, 2022). For this reason, social media are being used as a powerful advertising tool for the promotion of goods and services by all types of companies, ranging from the largest companies to small businesses.

The aim of this study was to determine the perception of Facebook users during the pre-purchase stage. This stage includes a series of event prior to a purchase, such as receiving stimuli, recognizing the problem, searching for information, and evaluating the alternatives (Hoffman and Bateson, 2008). The event that this study will focus on will be searching for information, because it is the first moment when consumers interact directly with the sellers through several means of communications and can have their entire attention. For the purposes of this study, this interaction was conducted through Facebook's messaging service.

To learn the clients' perceptions, two variables were considered to measure these perceptions. The first variable is Attitude, which is displayed by the company's employee who responds to the clients' queries through Facebook's messaging app. The second variable is the Financial Risk that these users perceive in relation to the service offered.

Attitude

According to Grönroos (1994), attitude is the clients' belief related to the care shown to them by employees. It is also considered to be an emotional concept for consumers (Oliver, 2010), and a subjective degree of favorableness or unfavorableness with respect to a psychological object (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2000).

Additionally, it is a sub-dimension considered in the multidimensional, hierarchical model by Brady and Cronin (2001) used to measure service quality, as shown in Figure 1, which is based on several models such as Service Quality (SERVQUAL), developed by Parasuraman *et al.* (1988), the Nordic model of perceived service quality by Grönroos (1994), the three-component model by Rust and Oliver (1994), and the hierarchical conceptualization model of retail service quality by Dabholkar *et al.* (1996).

The background literature review included the following cases:

The aim of the study by Pradiani *et al.* (2023) was to investigate the relationship between the e-service quality, e-satisfaction, e-trust, and e-commitment in the construction of clients' e-loyalty. Through a descriptive, quantitative approach, they showed that the quality of e-service, e-satisfaction, e-trust, and e-commitment have a significant impact on earning the loyalty of e-clients.

Meanwhile, the aim of the study by Nguyen *et al.* (2020) was to investigate how digital technology interacts with the service quality dimensions to influence the value perceived by clients within the context of B2B services. Through a qualitative and quantitative empirical study, they found that digital technology enhances the value perceived by clients when companies provide interaction quality, outcome quality, and environment quality to their customers.

In addition, Afifi and Amini (2018) decided to understand and respond to the problems of the service quality variables (interaction quality, environment quality, and outcome quality), customers' trust, customers' value and customers' loyalty in hospitals that have applied the standard JCI accreditations through the Green Hospital concept. Their study used a descriptive design, finding that interaction quality, environment quality and outcome quality positively influence clients' trust.

Financial risk

Financial risk is described as a component of perceived risk; it can be explained as the loss of money due to a possible product failure. It is also argued that it is the possibility of losing money because the product does not work at all, or if its maintenance costs or any other

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expenses that may be required for its operation are too high (Roselius, 1971; Jacoby and Kaplan, 1972; Lovelock and Wirtz, 2009).

There are various models to measure financial risk, regarded as a component of perceived risk, such as Roselius (1971), Jacoby and Kaplan (1972), Lovelock and Wirtz (2009), and Schiffman *et al.* (2010). These models consider from 4 to 7 risk dimensions, including financial risk, performance risk, physical risk, psychological risk, and social risk, as shown in Figure 2.

Some authors referring to financial risk in their papers are Amirtha *et al.* (2021), who analyze the relationship between perceived risk and behavioral intention (BI) in electronic purchases, in relation to the stages of the family life cycle (FLC), by means of a non-experimental, quantitative study whose result is that the different facets of risks had distinct effects on purchase behavior among women belonging to different FLC stages.
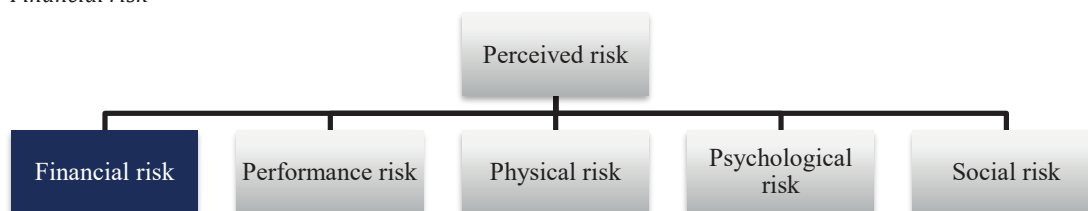
In addition, Noreen *et al.*, (2021) evaluated the impact of perceived risk and perceived

Figure 1
Service quality
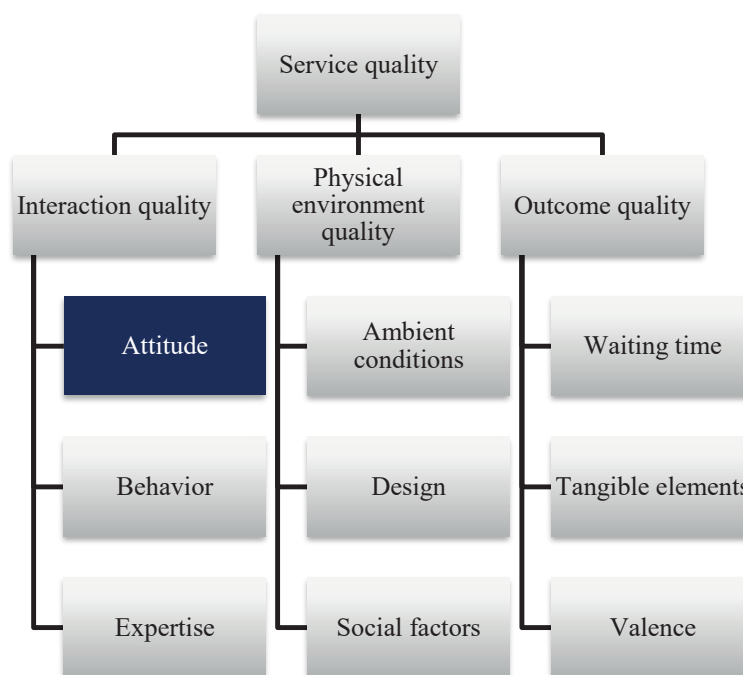
Nota. Adaptado de Brady y Cronin, 2001.

Figure 2
Financial risk

Note. Adapted from Jacoby and Kaplan, 1972.

trust on the adoption of mobile money services in Pakistan. Through a cross-sectional survey, they found that three dimensions of perceived risk, that is, safety risk, privacy risk and financial risk, have a significant impact on the adoption of mobile money services in that country.

Finally, Tham *et al.,* (2019) examine the impact of financial risk, convenience risk, non-delivery risk, return policy risk and product risk in online consumers' behavior in Malaysia though a cross-sectional explanatory analysis. The study found that financial risk has insignificant and negative effects on consumers' behavior.

This study proposes the following hypotheses:

- H_0: There is no correlation between attitude and financial risk as perceived by Facebook users for a dermatology office in Lima, Peru.

- H_a: There is correlation between attitude and financial risk as perceived by Facebook users for a dermatology office in Lima, Peru.

METHOD

Given that this paper intends to analyze the relationship between perceived attitude and financial risk, this research is applied and correlational. It uses a quantitative approach because it shows statistical data processed through SPSS Version 25. It considered a population of 3,325 Facebook Messenger users who sent a message to request information on the services of a small business providing healthcare services. A survey was chosen as a technique, whose instrument was a five-item questionnaire. The result obtained was a probabilistic sample of 358 responses, with a confidence level of 95%. It is also non-experimental because no variable was manipulated, and cross-sectional because it was conducted between February and March 2023.

RESULTS

To measure instrument reliability, Cronbach's alpha was used, with a result of .845, as shown in Table 1. For this reason, the instrument is considered to be reliable.

Table 1
Reliability statistics

Cronbach's alpha	No. of items
.845	5

Note. Prepared by the author, 2023.

According to the data obtained in the surveys, it was noted that users found that the attitude displayed was Very Good (60-3%) Good (34.1%), Acceptable (5%) and Very Bad (0.6%). This is to say, most users (94.4%) believe that the attitude displayed was good or very good, as Figure 3 shows.

Figure 3

Survey on attitude
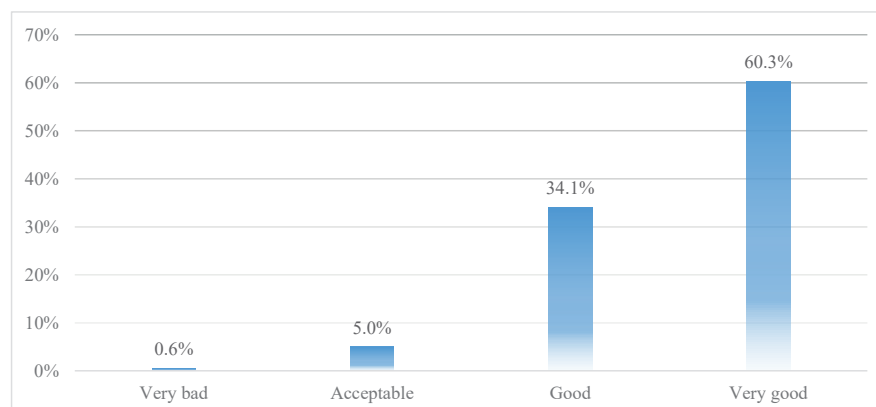
Note. Prepared by the author, 2023.

It was also found that 46.4% of users perceived a Very Low financial risk, while 39.1% perceived a Low financial risk, 11.2% perceived a Medium risk, 2.8% perceived a High risk, and 0.6% perceived a Very High risk. Therefore, most users (85.5%) perceived very low or low financial risk, as Figure 4 shows.

To evaluate the correlation between both dimensions, Spearman's rho was used, considering a maximum significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. The result obtained was Sig. (two-tailed) of 0.000; for this reason, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is a correlation between attitude and perceived financial risk. In addition, the correlation coefficient reached .512, which evidences a moderate positive correlation (Martínez *et al.*, 2009) as Table 2 shows.

DISCUSSION

Through this study, it can be verified that attitude displayed is correlated with financial risk. In such regard, the work by Pradiani *et al.* (2023) confirms the importance of attitude as a component of interaction quality, confirming that it has a significant impact on customer loyalty. This is also argued in another study where the courteous attitude of hospital staff was the most significand indicator of customer trust (Afifi and Amini, 2018). Nguyen *et al.* (2020) also mention that the attitude of service personnel can increase the perceived value of the service. Therefore, these studies demonstrate that attitude is also related to other highly important variables such as trust, perceived value and loyalty, as confirmed by the results of this research in relation to financial risk.

Figure 4

Survey on financial risk
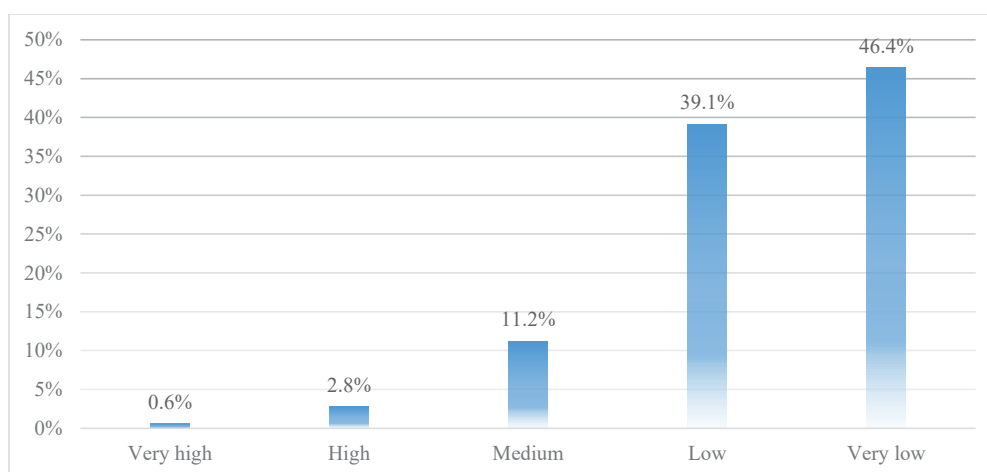
Note. Prepared by the author, 2023.

Table 2
Correlations

			Attitude	**Financial risk**
Spearman's rho	Attitude	Correlation coefficient	1.000	.512**
		Sig. (two-tailed)	.	.000
		N	358	358
	Financial risk	Correlation coefficient	.512**	1.000
		Sig. (two-tailed)	.000	.
		N	358	358

Note. ** Correlation is significant at 0.01 (two-tailed). Prepared by the author, 2023.

In relation to financial risk, the research by Tham *et al.* (2019) states that it has an insignificant and negative impact on online shopping. This is also argued by Noreen *et al.* (2021), whose results showed an insignificant impact of financial risk, unlike the findings of this research, where the correlation was significant. Amirtha *et al.* (2021) state that financial risk has a significant impact on the adoption of mobile money services, as was also noted in the results of this research.

Generally speaking, it was noted that both variables impact various types of companies, both offering goods and services either in physical or virtual locations.

CONCLUSIONS

According to the results obtained, it can be concluded that there is a moderately positive correlation between attitude and perceived financial risk for Facebook users of a dermatology office in Lima, Peru. This is endorsed by the survey answers, where 94.4% rated the attitude displayed as "Very Good" or "Good", and 85.5% rated the perceived financial risk as "Very Low" or "Low". In such regard, the results of this study provide reliable scientific evidence of the importance for company employees of displaying a very good or good attitude to the customer, in order to generate a low or very low financial risk in them.

In addition, this research intends to contribute to the improvement of interaction management for companies and customers seeking to buy services, and to the reduction of the financial risk they perceive. It would be important to learn how many micro and small enterprises (SMEs) currently have a well-defined service protocol. If they do not have it, it should be considered that the sole fact that they display a good attitude may help reduce the perception of risk and, as a result, prevent the loss of the investment in advertisement, whether it is organic (generated by the company) or paid (through Facebook Ads), which helped attract these customers.

Given the findings of this study, a wider-ranging study will be conducted with the aim of measuring the effect of other dimensions related to interaction quality, such as the behavior and expertise of the contact staff, as well as the various types of perceived risk such as performance risk, physical, psychological and social risks. This will help determine which of these dimensions has a greater impact on risk perception by consumers. This, in turn, will help focus management and advertising efforts on the most important areas.

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Conflicts of interest

The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

Author contributions

Alba Agnetta Bastos Perleche (lead author): research, methodology, software, writing (original draft, review, and editing).