

# TO STUDY CONSUMER PERCEPTION TOWARDS SOCIAL COMMERCE PLATFORMS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON PURCHASE DECISIONS AMONG YOUTH

**Manali Bhanushali, Dr. Deepa Nirav Vyas**

Research Scholar, GLS University, Ahmedabad

Assistant Professor, GLS University, Ahmedabad

## ABSTRACT

The rapid advancement of digital technology has transformed the way consumers engage with brands and make purchase decisions. Social commerce platforms, which integrate social media and e-commerce, have emerged as powerful tools influencing consumer behavior. Today's youth, being highly active on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Telegram, rely on user-generated content, reviews, influencer recommendations, and peer feedback to evaluate products and services before making a purchase. This study examines consumer perceptions towards social commerce platforms and their impact on purchase decisions among youth. It explores the factors that drive consumer trust, engagement, and purchase intentions, including the credibility of online reviews, brand interactions, and personalized recommendations. Additionally, the study investigates how demographic factors such as age, gender, and income level shape consumer attitudes toward social commerce. With the increasing popularity of social commerce, understanding these behavioural patterns is crucial for businesses looking to enhance their digital marketing strategies. The findings of this research will provide insights into the key elements that influence young consumers' decision-making processes, helping brands optimize their engagement strategies and improve customer experiences on social commerce platforms.

**Keywords:** Social Commerce platforms, User-Generated Content, Perceptions, E-commerce, social media

## INTRODUCTION

Social commerce leverages social networking websites to market and sell products and services. It encompasses the entire shopping experience on platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and X, enabling consumers to explore, shop, and complete purchases directly. The success of a social commerce campaign is determined by the level of consumer engagement, including likes, shares, and retweets (Dollarhide, 2022)

### Social Commerce vs. E-Commerce

Don't confuse social commerce with e-commerce or online shopping. While they share some similarities, they are fundamentally different. Social commerce is a subset of e-commerce that occurs entirely on social media platforms, enabling users to browse, share, and purchase products without leaving the platform. In contrast, online shopping takes place on dedicated e-commerce websites and apps that focus solely on the shopping experience, without social media integration. For example, consumers can shop on platforms like Amazon and Alibaba or directly from retailer websites such as Walmart and Target. E-commerce broadly refers to the buying and selling of products or services online, typically through websites or mobile apps. Social commerce, however, integrates social networking with online shopping, allowing businesses to engage potential customers and facilitate purchases directly within social media platforms. This unique blend of social interaction and commerce differentiates social commerce from traditional e-commerce, enhancing engagement and streamlining the buying process (Dollarhide, 2022; Storyly, 2024)

## Benefits of Social Commerce to Customers

**1. Convenience and Ease of Use:** Social commerce offers a unified shopping experience, allowing customers to compare, browse, and purchase products directly within their favorite social media platforms without switching to different websites or apps. Additionally, many social commerce platforms provide integrated payment gateways, ensuring a quick, secure, and hassle-free checkout process.

**2. Personalized Recommendations:** Social commerce utilizes algorithm-driven suggestions to analyze user data and provide personalized product recommendations, helping customers discover items that match their preferences and interests. Additionally, influencer endorsements play a crucial role, as customers can see products recommended by influencers they follow, adding a layer of trust and personalization to their shopping decisions.

**3. Enhanced Customer Engagement:** Social commerce enhances the shopping experience with interactive content such as polls, quizzes, and live streams, making it more engaging and entertaining. Additionally, it enables direct communication between customers and brands through comments, messages, and live chats, ensuring quick responses to inquiries and improved customer service.

**4. Social Proof and Reviews:** Social commerce thrives on user-generated content, allowing potential buyers to make informed decisions by viewing reviews, ratings, and unboxing videos from real customers. Additionally, it fosters community building, as shoppers can share their own experiences and engage with others' feedback, creating a sense of belonging and trust.

**5. Exclusive Offers and Discounts:** Social commerce attracts customers with special promotions, as brands frequently offer exclusive sales, discounts, and giveaways on their social media channels, giving followers unique opportunities to save. Additionally, limited-time offers such as flash sales and time-sensitive deals create a sense of urgency, encouraging quick purchasing decisions while providing customers with attractive prices.

**6. Innovative Shopping Experiences:** Social commerce enhances the shopping experience with augmented reality (AR) features, enabling customers to virtually try on products like clothing or makeup for a better sense of fit and style. Additionally, shoppable posts streamline the purchasing process by allowing users to click on tagged products within posts and stories to learn more and buy directly.

**7. Trust and Authenticity:** Social commerce leverages peer recommendations, as endorsements from friends and family add an extra layer of trust and authenticity to purchasing decisions. Additionally, influencer credibility plays a significant role, as influencers and brand ambassadors share genuine experiences with products, making their recommendations more persuasive than traditional advertising.

**8. Real-Time Updates and Trends:** Social commerce keeps customers informed about the latest trends, product launches, and brand updates directly through their social media feeds. Additionally, it enables trend participation, allowing users to purchase and showcase trendy products, enhancing their social presence and engagement.

By leveraging these advantages, social commerce delivers a more interactive, personalized, and convenient shopping experience, ultimately increasing customer satisfaction and fostering long-term loyalty. (Storyly, 2024)

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Social media plays a important role in people's lives by facilitating learning, interacting, and the exchange of knowledge and information, among other purposes. Various platforms, including Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat, serve these functions. (L S & Kavitha, 2024). The rapid expansion of e-commerce has transformed consumer shopping habits, making online shopping a preferred choice for many. However, trust and security concerns remain critical factors influencing consumers' willingness to engage in online shopping (Sharma, 2024). The internet era has significantly transformed people's lives, with individuals across all generations embracing it to enhance convenience. One notable shift in today's world is the changing buying behavior, as more consumers move toward online shopping (Mayya et al., 2022). With rapid technological advancements, the internet and mobile applications have become essential parts of daily life, providing unparalleled convenience and value, especially in the online retail sector (Jabbour Al Maalouf et al., 2025). The rapid development of Web 2.0 and social networking sites has led to the evolution of e-commerce into social commerce. In social commerce, consumers can share their knowledge about products and services, fostering a friendly and supportive online environment (Kamangarpoor & Shahmoradi, 2017). Instagram is one of the most widely used social media platforms in the digital world. Beyond entertainment and social connections, it also serves as a powerful tool for digital marketing (B. Anjan Kumar, 2024). The rise of digital media has brought innovative changes and opportunities to the marketing landscape. When utilized effectively, social media marketing can significantly reduce costs over time (Rudianto et al., 2024). Teenagers are generally more familiar and comfortable with the digital era. Compared to previous generations, they

are more inclined to purchase products online, especially clothing. Instagram, one of the most popular web applications for editing and sharing photos, continues to see a growing user base each year (Kumar, 2023). This study aims to explore the impact of sponsored posts by "homefluencers" on millennial consumers' purchase intentions in the international marketing landscape of the new normal. It draws upon the theories of source credibility, parasocial interaction, and the persuasion knowledge model (Ghosh & Islam, 2023). This paper aims to examine the impact of celebrity endorsements on consumers' purchase intentions on Instagram. The use of celebrity endorsements is increasingly prevalent across various social media platforms, including Instagram (Gupta, 2021). Purchase intention assists entrepreneurs in identifying geographic markets and segmenting customers for selling products and services on social commerce platforms (Paramitha et al., 2023). While extensive research has explored the influence of consumer attitudes, the findings remain inconsistent, highlighting a gap in studies that consider mediating variables (Zirena-Bejarano & Zirena, 2024). This study aims to expand the stimulus organism response model to examine how short video users' persona perception influences their purchase intention on short video platforms, specifically within the context of Chinese short video marketing (Shen & Wang, 2024). Analyze the factors influencing purchases on Instagram and their contribution to the growth of Instagram Commerce. It also examines the moderating effects of gender, age, and Instagram usage experience on the proposed relationships among six variables derived from commitment–trust theory, the technology acceptance model, and consumer decision-making theory (Herzallah et al., 2022). This paper aims to develop and validate a comprehensive scale to measure consumer perceptions of social commerce. As social media platforms play an increasingly significant role in e-commerce, understanding consumer perceptions and attitudes is crucial for both businesses and researchers (Vij & Kaur, 2024). This study aims to examine the impact of social support, customer review quality, social commerce trust, and e-commerce satisfaction on consumer behavior at Tokopedia Indonesia (Sari et al., 2023). The popularity of social media, particularly Instagram, continues to grow steadily. Users engage with various platforms to share pictures and videos while staying connected with friends (Eggert, 2023). The results confirm that Facebook advertising positively influences the behavioral attitudes (intention to purchase and actual purchase) of Millennials in South Africa. Additionally, usage characteristics such as login duration, frequency of profile updates, and demographic factors like ethnic orientation contribute to more favorable perceptions of Facebook advertising (Duffett, 2015). This study examined four factors perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, subjective norm, and media richness affecting online purchase intention. Simple regression analysis revealed that perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and media richness have a significant and positive impact on online purchase intention (Sidek et al., 2020). This study explores the influence of trust in sharing commerce, social commerce information sharing, and perceived privacy risk on purchase intention, using a conceptual model to examine the relationships between these constructs (Bugshan & Attar, 2020)

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The primary objective of this study is to understand the perception of young consumers towards social commerce platforms and their influence on purchase decisions. To achieve this, both primary and secondary data sources were utilized. Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire designed to assess consumer attitudes, preferences, and behaviours towards social commerce platforms. The survey was administered using Google Forms, ensuring accessibility and ease of participation. A total 151 responses were gathered from young consumers, and the data was analysed using SPSS and Microsoft Excel to extract meaningful insights. Secondary data was obtained from various scholarly articles, research papers, industry reports, and credible online sources. This helped establish a theoretical foundation and provided context by reviewing existing literature on digital consumer behavior and social commerce trends.

## OBJECTIVES

- To examine how consumer perceptions of social commerce platforms influence purchase decision-making processes among youth.
- To identify the key factors on social commerce platforms that consumers find most compelling when making purchase decisions.
- To analyse the challenges and barriers faced by youth while using social commerce platforms, including trust and privacy concerns.

## ANALYSIS

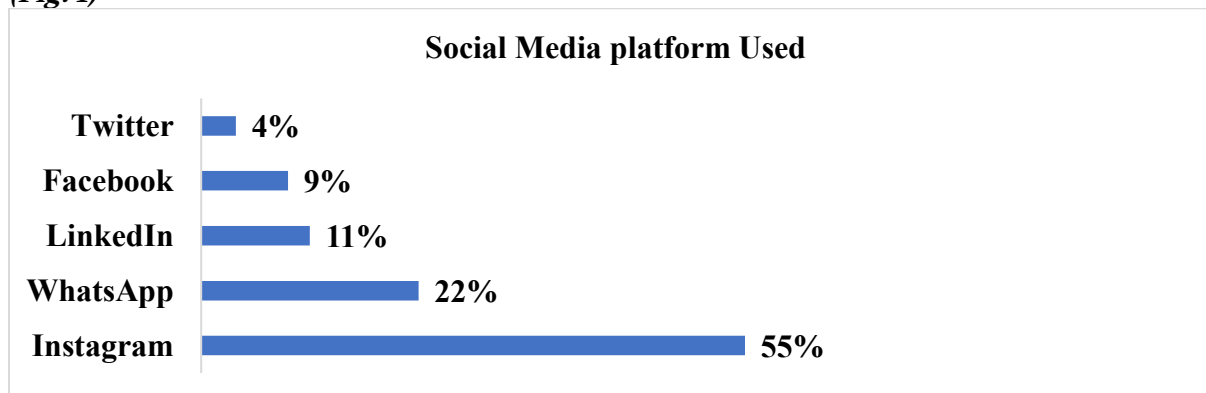
### Univariate Analysis

#### Demographic Profile of the respondents (Table: 1)

Particular	Frequency	Contribution (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	71	47%
Male	80	53%
<b>Age</b>		
16 – 20 Years	75	50%
21 – 25 Years	47	31%
26 – 30 Years	21	14%
31 – 35 years	8	5%
<b>Income</b>		
Less than 19,999	95	63%
20,000 - 39,999	25	17%
40,000 - 59,999	5	3%
60,000 - 79,999	10	7%
80,000 - 99,999	7	5%
100,000 or more	9	6%
<b>Occupation</b>		
Private Job	29	19%
Government Job	3	2%
Student	104	69%
Entrepreneur/Businessmen	14	9%
Homemaker	1	1%
<b>Education/Qualification</b>		
SSC	1	1%
HSC	25	17%
Bachelor's Degree	84	56%
Post Graduate	38	25%
Doctorate or Professional Degree	3	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>100%</b>

The above table represents the demographic details of the respondents.

(Fig: 1)

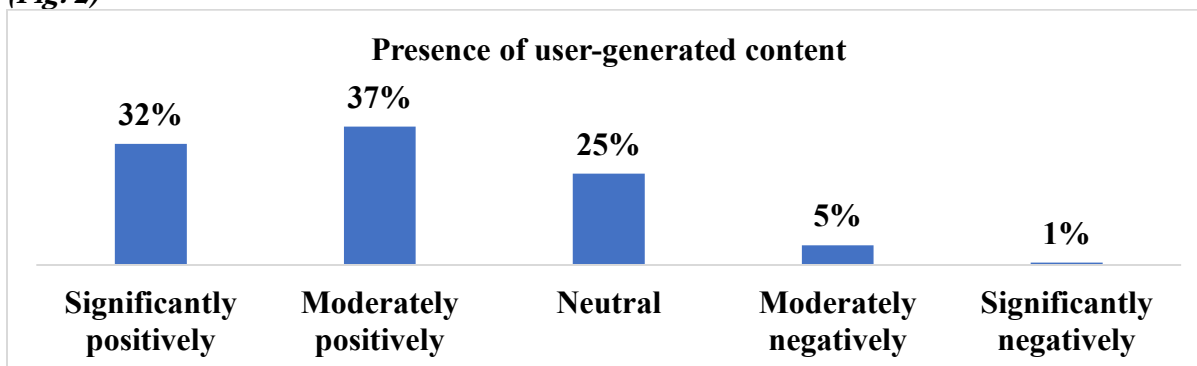


Above graph show the most used social media platforms used by the youngsters. This was a multiple-choice multiple response question. Based on the results it was found that Instagram is one of the most used social media platforms among youngsters which is used by almost 55% respondents, whereas WhatsApp is used by 22% respondents remaining LinkedIn, Facebook, and twitter is used by 11%, 9% and 4% respondents (Fig:1). When the youngsters were asked how often they use social media for purchasing products online it was found that 59% respondents use social media platform daily, 15% use social media rarely, 12% use monthly, 9% weekly and



remaining 5% don't use social media platforms for purchasing the products online. When respondents were asked about their overall satisfaction with social commerce platforms 42% reported a neutral satisfaction, indicating that they neither find the platforms particularly satisfactory nor dissatisfactory. Meanwhile, 37% of participants expressed satisfaction, showing a positive inclination toward these platforms. Additionally, 19% of respondents reported being very satisfied, highlighting a strong level satisfaction. On the other hand, dissatisfaction was relatively low, with only 2% of respondents expressing dissatisfaction. These findings suggest that while a considerable number of users have a positive perception of social commerce platforms, a large portion remains neutral, possibly indicating room for improvement in user experience, features, or trust in these platforms. When the respondents were asked to what extent to they trust the product information that is provided on social commerce platforms. It was found that 42% of respondents remain neutral, suggesting uncertainty or mixed experiences regarding the reliability of the provided information. Meanwhile, 35% of participants trust the product information somewhat, reflecting a moderate level of confidence. Only 13% of respondents express strong trust in the information available, indicating that complete faith in these platforms is relatively low. Conversely, 9% of respondents report low trust, while 1% do not trust the product information at all. These findings highlight the need for improved transparency and credibility in product details to enhance consumer trust in social commerce platforms. When the respondents were asked if reviews and ratings are important factor in decision making process 41% said that it is very important, while 38% said somewhat important, 11% were neutral about it remaining said that they are not very important and not at all important which is 9% and 2% respectively. The survey results indicate that a significant portion of respondents exhibit a neutral stance towards following product recommendations or advertisements on social commerce platforms, with 42% expressing neutrality. Meanwhile, 36% of participants stated that they are likely to follow such recommendations, and 12% are very likely to do so, suggesting a notable level of openness toward social commerce influences. On the other hand, a smaller percentage of respondents are hesitant, with 7% indicating they are unlikely to follow recommendations, and only 2% stating they are very unlikely to be influenced. These findings suggest that while a considerable number of consumers remain neutral, there is a substantial segment that is receptive to product promotions on social commerce platforms. The survey findings suggest that while social commerce advertisements and promotions influence consumer purchasing behaviour, their impact varies. 44% indicate that they sometimes make purchases after engaging with such content, showing a moderate level of responsiveness. Meanwhile, 18% frequently buy products after seeing social commerce promotions, indicating a smaller but engaged consumer segment. However, 30% of respondents rarely make purchases, suggesting skepticism or selective buying behaviour. Additionally, 6% of respondents never purchase after engaging with ads, and 2% are unlikely to do so. These insights highlight that while social commerce advertisements can drive conversions, brands need to build credibility and trust to convert hesitant consumers into buyers. The survey results indicate that a majority of respondents perceive social commerce platforms as providing good value for their purchases. Specifically, 48% agree that these platforms offer good value, while 10% strongly agree. However, 38% of respondents remain neutral, suggesting some level of uncertainty or variability in their experiences. A small percentage (3%) disagree, and only 1% strongly disagree, indicating that negative perceptions about value are minimal. These findings suggest that while social commerce platforms are generally seen as valuable, there is room for improvement in reinforcing consumer confidence and trust in product quality and pricing.

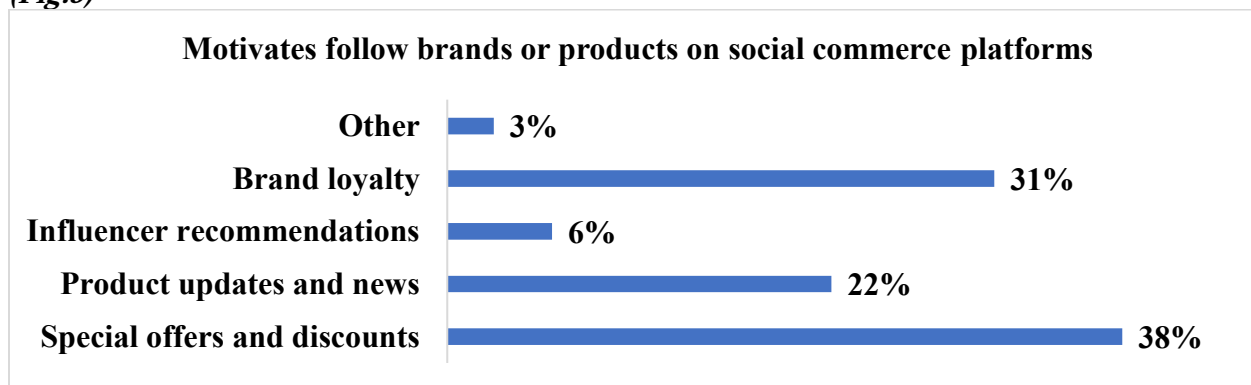
(Fig: 2)



The survey results suggest that UGC has a predominantly positive influence on consumer perceptions. A combined 69% of respondents believe that UGC affects them positively, with 32% stating it has a "significantly positive" impact and 37% indicating a "moderately positive" effect. Meanwhile, 25% of respondents remain neutral, indicating that

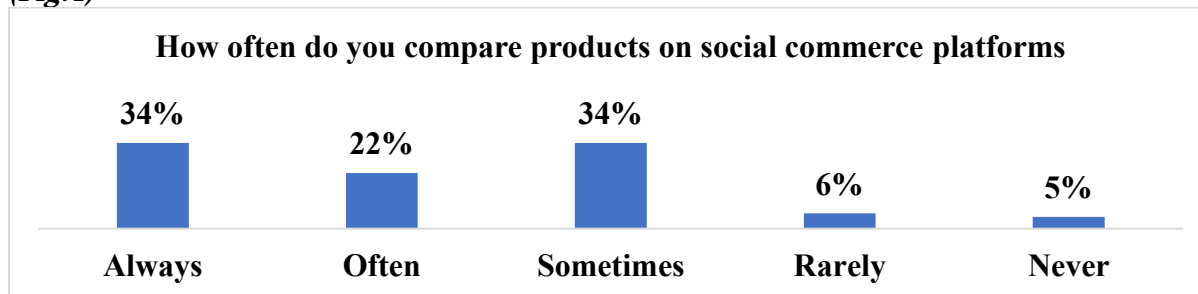
UGC does not strongly influence their decisions. Negative perceptions of UGC are minimal, with only 5% reporting a "moderately negative" impact and 1% stating it affects them "significantly negatively." These findings highlight the strong role UGC plays in shaping consumer attitudes and the potential for brands to leverage it for engagement and trust-building (Fig:2)

**(Fig:3)**



When the respondents were asked about the what motivates them to follow brand or products on social commerce platforms, 38% said special offers and discounts, followed closely by brand loyalty which is 31%. Additionally, product updates and news is 22% which play a significant role, showing that consumers value staying informed about new releases and developments. However, influencer recommendations is 6%. Lastly, the respondents who selected others is 3% indicate that a small portion of respondents have unique motivations not captured by the main categories (Fig:3). The survey results reveal that opinions on the effectiveness of social commerce platforms in providing a personalized shopping experience are mixed. Significant portion of respondents (42%) remain neutral, indicating neither strong approval nor disapproval, 36% find these platforms effective, and 18% consider them very effective. However, only 3% find them ineffective, and only 1% view them as very ineffective.

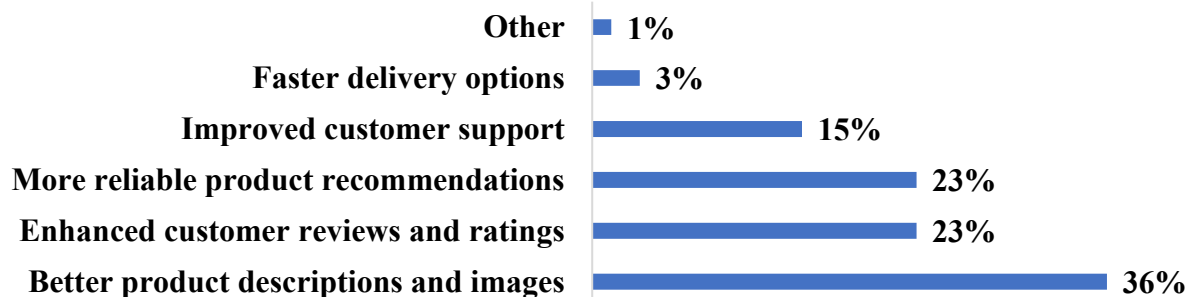
**(Fig:4)**



Based on the collected data it was found that significant proportion of consumers compare products on social commerce platforms with those on other stores, both online and offline, before making a purchase. A notable 34% of respondents stated that they "always" engage in product comparison, while another 34% do so "sometimes." 22% of consumers "often" compare products, highlighting a strong tendency among buyers to evaluate multiple options before finalizing a purchase. In contrast, only 6% "rarely" compare products, and only 5% reported that they "never" engage in such comparisons (Fig:4)

**(Fig:5)**

### Improvements would you like to see on social commerce platforms



When the respondents were asked about the key areas for improvement on social commerce platforms to enhance the shopping experience. The most significant concern for consumers is the need for better product descriptions and images, with 36% of respondents emphasizing this aspect. Additionally, 23% of participants expressed a desire for enhanced customer reviews and ratings, while another 23% prioritized more reliable product recommendations. Improved customer support was highlighted by 15% of respondents as a necessary enhancement. 3% of consumers identified faster delivery options as a critical improvement, suggesting that other factors, remaining 1% said there are other factors apart from the above mentioned that they would like to see. (Fig:5)

### ANOVA

**Question: How often do you purchase after engaging with a social commerce advertisement or promotion? How effective are social commerce platforms in providing a personalized shopping experience?**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12.238	4	3.060	4.916	.001
Within Groups	90.861	146	.622		
Total	103.099	150			

The ANOVA results assess the effectiveness of social commerce platforms in providing a personalized shopping experience. The analysis reveals a statistically significant difference between groups, as indicated by the F-value of 4.916 and a significance level (p-value) of 0.001, which is well below the conventional threshold of 0.05. The between-groups sum of squares (12.238) and mean square (3.060) suggest notable variance across different groups. Meanwhile, the within-groups sum of squares (90.861) and mean square (0.622) indicate variability within individual responses. Given the significant p-value, we conclude that social commerce platforms have a differential impact on personalized shopping experiences, warranting further investigation into the specific factors driving this variation.

### Chi-Square

**1. Gender \* What motivates you to follow brands or products on social commerce platforms?**

		What motivates you to follow brands or products on social commerce platforms?					Total
		Special offers and discounts	Product updates and news	Influencer recommendations	Brand loyalty	Other	
Gender	Female	33	11	6	18	3	71
	Male	25	22	3	29	1	80
Total		58	33	9	47	4	151

### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	8.840 <sup>a</sup>	4	.065
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	8.972	4	.062
<b>Linear-by-Linear Association</b>	1.146	1	.284
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	151		

a. 4 cells (40.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.88.

#### Analysis:

The chi-square test examines whether there is a significant association between gender and the motivations for following brands or products on social commerce platforms. The Pearson Chi-Square value is 8.840 with 4 degrees of freedom (df), and the asymptotic significance (p-value) is 0.065. Since the p-value (0.065) is slightly above the conventional significance threshold of 0.05, the result suggests that there is no strong statistical evidence to conclude a significant association between gender and motivations for following brands or products on social commerce platforms. However, the p-value is close to 0.05, indicating a possible weak relationship that may warrant further investigation with a larger sample.

### 2. Age \* What improvements would you like to see on social commerce platforms to enhance your shopping experience? Crosstabulation

	What improvements would you like to see on social commerce platforms to enhance your shopping experience?						Total
	Better product descriptions and images	Enhanced customer reviews and ratings	More reliable product recommendations	Improved customer support	Faster delivery options	Other	
<b>Under 16 Years</b>	32	16	15	6	4	2	75
<b>16 Years – 20 Years</b>	16	9	14	8	0	0	47
<b>21 Years – 25 Years</b>	4	7	3	6	1	0	21
<b>26 Years – 30 Years</b>	2	2	2	2	0	0	8
<b>Total</b>	54	34	34	22	5	2	151

### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	17.049 <sup>a</sup>	15	.316
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	19.362	15	.198
<b>Linear-by-Linear Association</b>	1.883	1	.170
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	151		

a. 15 cells (62.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .11.

#### Analysis:

The chi-square test assesses whether there is a significant association between age and the preferred improvements on social commerce platforms. The Pearson Chi-Square value is 17.049 with 15 degrees of freedom (df), and the p-value is 0.316. Since the p-value (0.316) is greater than the conventional significance threshold of 0.05, it indicates that there is no statistically significant association between age and the preferred improvements in social commerce platforms. This suggests that age does not play a major role in determining users' preferences for improvements such as better product descriptions, enhanced customer reviews, more reliable recommendations, improved customer support, or faster delivery options.

#### Crosstabs

### 1. Gender \* How often do you use social commerce platforms (e.g., Facebook Marketplace, Instagram Shopping, etc.)? Crosstabulation



		How often do you use social commerce platforms (e.g., Facebook Marketplace, Instagram Shopping, etc.)?					Total
		Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Rarely	Never	
Gender	Female	43	4	10	11	3	71
	Male	46	10	8	11	5	80
Total		89	14	18	22	8	151

#### Analysis:

When analysed by gender, males (80 respondents) show slightly higher engagement in daily usage (46) compared to females (43). Weekly usage is also more common among males (10) than females (4), while monthly usage is slightly higher among females (10) compared to males (8). The number of respondents who rarely use social commerce platforms is equal for both genders (11 each), whereas a slightly higher number of males (5) compared to females (3) report never using these platforms. These findings suggest that both males and females actively engage with social commerce platforms, with a significant proportion using them daily. However, males demonstrate slightly higher overall engagement in daily and weekly usage, whereas female usage is more evenly distributed across different frequency levels.

#### 2. Income \* How important are reviews and ratings in your decision-making process when purchasing through social commerce platforms? Crosstabulation

		How important are reviews and ratings in your decision-making process when purchasing through social commerce platforms?					Total
		Very important	Somewhat important	Neutral	Not very important	Not important at all	
Income	Less than Rs 20,000	41	30	9	12	3	95
	Rs 20,000-Rs 39,999	10	11	3	1	0	25
	Rs 40,000-Rs 59,999	2	2	1	0	0	5
	Rs 60,000-Rs 79,999	4	5	1	0	0	10
	Rs 80,000-Rs 99,999	4	2	1	0	0	7
	Rs 100,000 and above	1	7	1	0	0	9
Total		62	57	16	13	3	151

#### Analysis:

Income-wise, respondents earning less than Rs 20,000 form the largest group (95), with 41 considering reviews and ratings "Very important" and 30 finding them "Somewhat important." As income levels rise, the number of respondents decreases, but a similar trend persists—most individuals across income groups place significant importance on reviews and ratings. For instance, among those earning Rs 20,000-Rs 39,999 (25 respondents), 10 consider reviews "Very important," and 11 find them "Somewhat important." Higher income groups (Rs 100,000 and above) also show a preference for considering reviews, with 1 rating them "Very important" and 7 marking them as "Somewhat important." Overall, the data suggests that reviews and ratings play a crucial role in purchasing decisions across all income groups, with a stronger influence among lower-income respondents. Very few individuals, regardless of income, find reviews unimportant in their decision-making process.

## FINDINGS

- Instagram is the most popular platform among youngsters (55%), followed by WhatsApp (22%), LinkedIn (11%), Facebook (9%), and Twitter (4%).
- A significant portion (59%) of respondents use social media daily for online purchases, while others use it rarely (15%), monthly (12%), weekly (9%), or never (5%).
- While 37% of respondents are satisfied and 19% are very satisfied with social commerce platforms, a large proportion (42%) remains neutral, indicating room for improvement in user experience.

- Trust in product details on social commerce platforms is moderate, with 42% of respondents being neutral and only 13% expressing strong trust. Meanwhile, 9% report low trust, and 1% do not trust product information at all.
- Reviews and ratings significantly influence purchase decisions, with 41% considering them very important and 38% finding them somewhat important.
- 44% of respondents sometimes make purchases after engaging with social commerce promotions, while 18% frequently do so. However, 30% rarely make purchases, highlighting skepticism toward ads.
- While 48% of respondents agree that social commerce platforms offer good value and 10% strongly agree, 38% remain neutral, indicating varying experiences with pricing and product quality.
- A significant number (42%) remain neutral about personalized shopping experiences, while 36% find them effective, and 18% consider them very effective.
- The key motivators for following brands on social commerce platforms are special offers and discounts (38%), brand loyalty (31%), and product updates (22%). Influencer recommendations play a minor role (6%).
- Trust and privacy concerns remain major barriers, as product information credibility and transparency issues deter consumers from fully trusting social commerce platforms.

## CONCLUSION

The study provides valuable insights into consumer perceptions of social commerce platforms and their influence on purchase decisions among youth. The findings suggest that Instagram is the most popular platform for social commerce among youngsters, followed by WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter. A significant proportion of respondents use social media daily for online purchases, indicating a high level of engagement with social commerce. However, overall satisfaction with these platforms remains moderate, with a large portion of respondents expressing neutrality, suggesting potential areas for improvement in user experience, product offerings, and platform reliability. Trust in product information shared on social commerce platforms remains a concern, with many respondents expressing only moderate trust levels. While reviews and ratings are crucial in influencing purchase decisions, a considerable number of users remain neutral or skeptical about product recommendations and advertisements. This suggests that while social commerce platforms have the potential to drive consumer purchases, improving transparency and credibility in product information could further enhance consumer confidence. The study also reveals that user-generated content (UGC) plays a significant role in shaping consumer attitudes, with most respondents perceiving it positively. Factors such as special offers and discounts, brand loyalty, and product updates are the primary motivators for following brands on social commerce platforms. However, influencer recommendations appear to have a comparatively lower impact on consumer engagement. The effectiveness of social commerce platforms in providing a personalized shopping experience is met with mixed responses, indicating that while some consumers find them effective, a large segment remains neutral. Additionally, product comparisons are a common practice among consumers, with most respondents frequently evaluating options before making a purchase. This highlights the importance of competitive pricing and clear product descriptions to attract and retain consumers. Key areas for improvement identified by respondents include better product descriptions and images, enhanced customer reviews and ratings, more reliable product recommendations, and improved customer support. Interestingly, demographic variables such as gender and income level do not exhibit strong associations with consumer preferences and behaviors on social commerce platforms, indicating that these factors are less influential in shaping purchasing decisions. Overall, the study highlights the growing significance of social commerce platforms in shaping consumer behavior, particularly among youth. While these platforms offer value and influence purchasing decisions, there remains considerable room for improvement in areas such as trust, product transparency, and personalization. Brands and social commerce platforms should focus on enhancing the credibility of product information, optimizing customer engagement strategies, and addressing user concerns to foster greater consumer confidence and drive higher conversion rates.

## LIMITATIONS

- The research focuses exclusively on youth consumers residing in Gujarat, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions. Consumer perceptions and behaviours toward social commerce platforms may vary across different geographic locations.

- The study only considers youth who actively use social media for making purchase decisions. Those who do not engage with social commerce or prefer traditional shopping methods were not included, which may result in a biased sample.
- The sample size is limited to 100 respondents, which may not fully represent the diverse range of consumer attitudes and experiences within the youth demographic.
- Data collection was conducted through Google Forms, restricting participation to individuals with internet access and digital literacy, potentially excluding certain segments of the population.
- The study relies on self-reported data, which may be subject to response bias, where participants may provide socially desirable or inaccurate responses.
- Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into how youth in Gujarat perceive and engage with social commerce platforms, contributing to a better understanding of their impact on purchase decisions.

## FUTURE RESEARCH SCOPE

The future of social commerce presents several opportunities for further research. Studies can explore how changing consumer preferences and shopping habits influence the growth of social commerce. The impact of evolving social media trends, such as short video content and live shopping, on consumer decision-making can also be examined. Additionally, research can focus on how different age groups, especially older consumers, adapt to social commerce platforms. The role of trust and transparency in shaping long-term customer loyalty is another key area to study. With the increasing use of digital payments, future research can assess the impact of payment security and convenience on purchase decisions. Moreover, understanding how businesses can improve customer engagement through personalized promotions and interactive content will be valuable. Lastly, studies can analyze how social commerce influences small and local businesses, helping them reach a wider audience and compete with larger brands.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- [1] B.Anjan Kumar, D. (2024). The Study On Buyer Behavior Towards Instagram Purchase With Reference To Generation Z. Educational Administration Theory and Practice, 424–428. <https://doi.org/10.53555/kuey.v30i1.2597>
- [2] Bugshan, H., & Attar, R. W. (2020). Social commerce information sharing and their impact on consumers. Technological Forecasting and Social Change, 153. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2019.119875>
- [3] Duffett, R. G. (2015). Facebook advertising's influence on intention-to-purchase and purchase amongst millennials. Internet Research, 25(4), 498–526. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IntR-01-2014-0020>
- [4] Dollarhide, M. (2022). Social Commerce: Definition, Tactics, and Examples. Investopedia.
- [5] Eggert, M. (2023). What Drives the Purchase decision in Instagram Stories. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/372101402>
- [6] Ghosh, M., & Islam, A. S. (2023). Homefluencers' endorsement of millennial consumers' purchase intention in new normal. International Marketing Review, 40(5), 1188–1212. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IMR-10-2021-0308>
- [7] Gupta, R. (2021). Celebrity endorsement on instagram: impact on purchase intention. Strategic Management & Decision Process, 20(6). [www.economicstimes.com](http://www.economicstimes.com),
- [8] Herzallah, D., Muñoz-Leiva, F., & Liebana-Cabanillas, F. (2022). Drivers of purchase intention in Instagram Commerce. Spanish Journal of Marketing - ESIC, 26(2), 168–188. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SJME-03-2022-0043>
- [9] Jabbour Al Maalouf, N., Sayegh, E., Makhoul, W., & Sarkis, N. (2025). Consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions toward food ordering via online platforms. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 82. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2024.104151>
- [10] Kamangarpoor, S., & Shahmoradi, B. (2017). A Close Look at the Importance of Social Support on Relationship Quality and Social Commerce. British Journal of Economics, Management & Trade, 16(4), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.9734/bjemt/2017/30606>
- [11] Kumar, L. (2023). A Comparative study of the effectiveness of Instagram and Facebook on buying intension of buyers with special reference to the purchase of garments. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/376650236>
- [12] L S, M., & Kavitha, D. S. (2024). Lakmé's Successful Engagement With Instagram Customers Through Influencers On Instagram. Educational Administration: Theory and Practice. <https://doi.org/10.53555/kuey.v30i5.3583>

- [13] Mayya, S. D., Subhash, R., Mayya Research Supervisor, S. D., & Joseph Research Co-Supervisor, A. S. (2022). "Social Media Impact on Online Impulse Buying-An Instagram Perspective. *Journal of Xi'an University of Architecture & Technology*, 14(12). <https://doi.org/10.37896/JXAT14.12/316530>
- [14] Paramitha, N., Larasati, I., & Havidz, H. (2023). Purchase Intention Through Social Media Commerce with Age and Gender as Moderating Variables: an Empirical Study. In *Majalah Ilmiah Bijak* (Vol. 20, Issue 2). <http://ojs.stiami.ac.id>
- [15] Rudianto, R., Ekasari, S., Beryansyah, B., Purwanti, P., & Munizu, M. (2024). Effect of Instagram Ads on Consumer Purchase Interest in Skin Care. *International Journal Of Education, Social Studies, And Management (IJESSM)*, 4(2), 833–839. <https://doi.org/10.52121/ijessm.v4i2.381>
- [16] Sari, A., Asri, D., Ambarwati, S., & Nabila, N. I. (2023). Analysis of Social Support, Customer Review Quality, Social Commerce Trust on E-Commerce Satisfaction Study Tokopedia in Indonesia. *International Journal of Current Science Research and Review*, 6. <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijcsrr/V6-i7-123>
- [17] Sharma, K. (2024). Exploring Consumer Trust and Attitudes Towards Online Shopping in Haryana: A Study on Perception and Preferences. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4835983>
- [18] Shen, X., & Wang, J. (2024). How short video marketing influences purchase intention in social commerce: the role of users' persona perception, shared values, and individual-level factors. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-02808-w>
- [19] Sidek, S., Manickiam, N., Jantan, A. H., Amira, S., Sayadi, M., Ismail, K., & Thanasegaran, G. (2020). Factors Leading to Online Purchase Intention on Facebook and Instagram of Generation Z. *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation*, 24(6), 2020. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/375672155>
- [20] Storyly, T. (2024). What is social commerce? Definition and benefits. Storyly.
- [21] Vij, S., & Kaur, B. (2024). Measuring consumer perceptions towards S-commerce: scale development and validation. *Rajagiri Management Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/RAMJ-06-2024-0166>
- [22] Zirena-Bejarano, P. P., & Zirena, E. M. C. (2024). From Consumer's Attitude towards Online Purchase Decision: Influence of Friends and Reference Groups. *Contemporary Management Research*, 20(1), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.7903/cm.23109>