

Original Article

A Study of the Factors Impacting Online Shopping Behavior in Gujarat

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Abstract :

The scope of social e-commerce has grown over the years. Social e-commerce can be best explained if a consumer purchases products or services using a social network. Consumers can purchase online through social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Twitter, and LinkedIn. The usage of social media sites in online shopping has grown too much. Almost every individual utilizes these platforms for various purposes, and most of them use them to shop online because they are convenient and save time. These platforms offer multiple items to make it through the consumer's demands in many buying options. Therefore, a study was conducted to determine what factors influence consumers' decision-making through social e-commerce websites. In the present research, a structured questionnaire was designed, and 103 responses were gathered from the users of social media who were shopping online. Data collected were intended to identify the drivers of their online purchasing decisions. Based on the factor analysis, three variables were identified: trust in social media networking sites, Trust in friends' recommendations and reviews on SNSs, and Willingness to Pay for Services on SNSs, which impacted the online shopping behavior of consumers.

Key Words: Consumer Decision Making, Social E-Commerce, Social Media Platforms, Online Shopping, Purchase Decisions.

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Introduction:

Social commerce is the rising division of e-commerce that uses social networks and digital media to enable the transactions of businesses and customers: finding products, reviewing and rating, sharing and recommending,

transacting, and conducting loyalty programs. In simple terms, social commerce taps into the wave of using social media platforms to market and sell products or services directly to the platforms users frequent daily. (LaFleur, 2023)

How Does Social Commerce Works?

Social commerce is the most popular among all social media sites, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest. Therefore, the retailers and the platforms can sell and market their products and services. It is a give-and-take measure to gain power and acceptance on most social platforms and to also tap into real customer relationships through networks. With this new and improved platform come powerful systems whereby businesses of all types and sizes are bombarding it. For the same reason, direct selling on the platform has brought within reach customers in unimaginably new ways. Through social commerce, the customer can reach his favorite brand or business on one of the social media sites through a click on the site relating to sponsored posts, banner ads, and direct product placement into shopping carts. Companies can offer special deals and specific coupon discount vouchers to the individuals in their list of social media followers. Further, the customer data accessed through the interface is analyzed through social commerce. (LaFleur, 2023)

Literature Review

(Taheri et al., 2024): This research has employed the stimulus-organism-response model to determine the factors that build customer engagement and trust for such platforms. In so doing, it draws on data collected from 819 customers of a leading Iranian e-commerce platform to investigate relationships between enabling antecedents such as website vividness, effort expectation, compulsion, and

behavioral responses such as customer loyalty and trust in shaping postexperience outcomes for loyalty and experience satisfaction.

(Shamim, Azam, & Islam, 2024): This study explores the influence of Fashion Influencers on consumers' urge to buy impulsively in social commerce. The research gathered 452 responses from social media users in Pakistan using a Questionnaire. The impact of financial institutions on universal basic income (UBI) was analyzed using PLS-SEM. The findings indicate that trust in financial institutions' branded posts positively influences UBI. Additionally, the study shows that Influencer Credibility (IC), Message Credibility (MC), and Media Credibility (MeC) are vital factors contributing to trust in FIs' branded posts.

(He et al., 2024): Short video commerce has become increasingly prevalent, while the factors influencing customer engagement must be considered more. The study examined the relationship between social learning behavior and customers' attitudes based on atmospheric cues, how attitudes mediate engagement, and the moderating effect of relationship norms on this mediation.

(Rudianto et al., 2024): Digital media development brought innovative changes and opportunities in the marketing context. Social media marketing would significantly reduce costs in the long run. Advertising on Instagram exemplifies cost-effective and impactful marketing compared to other search engine advertising options. This study explores the impact of Instagram advertisements on consumer interest in purchasing skincare products. Results show that

Instagram ads significantly affect consumer purchase interest.

(B.Anjan Kumar, 2024): Instagram is the most sought-after online medium in the digital world. Instagram is used for fun, social networking, and digital marketing. Almost all brands are on the Instagram platform to cater to the needs and preferences of the present generation. These marketers present the features of products and highlight the offers to attract customers. With the technological advancement in mobile internet connectivity, customers' behavior towards social media platforms has increased. The study was intended to analyze and understand the awareness of Instagram purchases and the satisfaction levels of the customers.

The purpose of this research is to study how social media is affecting the workings of e-commerce; the advent of social media has changed the face of e-commerce and has made it more accessible. In the last decade, social media has gained radical attention from people around the globe; with the increasing use of social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube, almost everyone is using one or another social media to communicate. To promote and advertise the products instead of using older sources like TV or radio or spreading the word in the community social media provides greater ease and convenience. Social media is now spreading its roots in every aspect of life; it has overtaken our daily source of entertainment. Social media has so much hold on our lives; this increasing hold on us has caused major brands to understand online customer behavior and find efficient ways to use

social media to their advantage. Brands are aware of the customer interactions and transparency of social media. This has completely changed the scenario of e-commerce. The brands are at an advantage to increase their customers with suitable marketing strategies, social media has helped maintain transparency between the brand and the customers, and it has helped the brands to communicate with their customers and understand their needs better.

Along with that, social media has changed the way traditional e-commerce works. This paper closely studies the changes in e-commerce and the workings of social media commerce.

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Research Methodology:

The primary objective was determining the factors influencing consumer decision-making using Social E-Commerce Websites. Non-probability Convenience sampling was used to collect data. The collected data was analyzed using primary and secondary data sources. For xprimary data, a structured questionnaire was framed, and data was collected using Google Forms. 120 forms were collected, of which only 103 samples were considered for the analysis. The collected data was then analyzed using SPSS and Excel. Secondary data was collected through various websites, blogs, articles, etc.

Results:

The survey reveals that 83% of respondents were satisfied with their online purchases. Instagram was the most used platform (57%), and 48% spent 15–30 minutes daily on social media. Most respondents shop online monthly (41%), and 43% trust social media platforms, though 56% still prefer traditional media.

Only 33% felt comfortable sharing personal information online.

When it comes to purchases via social platforms, 38% buy a few times a month, and 51% have purchased directly through platforms like Instagram and WhatsApp. User-generated content is the most preferred type of content, and

smartphones are the primary device used (96%). Discounts and offers are the biggest purchase drivers. Most people spend between 1,000– 5,000, and while 33% said ads had misled them, 65% reported no issues when shopping via social media.

Factor Analysis

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.925
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2495.753
	df	231
	Sig.	0.000

Analysis:

As the KMO value is above 0.5, data for factor analysis is accepted. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity states that

the data has a substantial correlation if the value is less than 0.05. Hence, based on our results, our data is reliable, and we can go ahead and do a factor analysis.

Statements	Trust in Social media networking Sites	Trust in friends	Recommendation and reviews on SNSs
I do not doubt the honesty of SNSs		0.688	
I expect advice given by SNSs is their best judgment.		0.788	
SNSs have my information safety in mind		0.814	
SNSs give me the impression that they keep my private information safe		0.782	
I trust SNSs (such as Facebook and MySpace		0.790	
Promises made by SNSs are likely to be reliable		0.837	
I am likely to pay for fees to have speed dating on SNSs			0.797
I am likely to pay for the membership if SNSs start charging fees.			0.853
I generally buy books from SNSs		0.592	
To purchase from SNSs I would use my credit card			0.719

I feel my friends' recommendations are frank	0.786		
I feel my friends' recommendations are generally reliable	0.816		
Overall, my friends on recommendation are trustworthy	0.865		
I trust my friends on SNSs and share my status and pictures with them	0.752		
Forums and communities posted by my friends are generally frank	0.805		
I rely on forums and communities given by my friends	0.835		
Overall, my friends on forums and communities are trustworthy	0.842		
I trust my friends on forums and communities and share my status and pictures with them	0.732		
Ratings and reviews given by my friends are generally frank	0.844		
I rely on the ratings and reviews of my friends	0.839		
I trust rating and reviews given by my friends	0.861		
I trust my friends on ratings and reviews and share my status and pictures with them	0.802		

Sr. No	Nomenclature	N Items	Reliability
1	Trust in Social media networking Sites	12	0.972
2	Trust in friends	7	0.940
3	Recommendation and reviews on SNSs	3	0.838

Discussion:

The study shows that 83% of respondents were satisfied with their online purchases, indicating a positive shopping experience. Most (48%) spend 15–30 minutes daily on social media, while only 3% use it for over 2 hours. Online shopping is most common monthly (41%), with 43% trusting social media platforms and 46% feeling comfortable sharing personal

information. Engagement with social commerce is high—48% interact with product content, and 51% have made direct purchases, mainly through Instagram (31%). User-generated content and reviews play a key role in purchase decisions. Factor analysis identified three key influences on shopping behavior: trust in social networks, trust in friends'

recommendations, and willingness to pay on these platforms.

Conclusion:

The research highlights key insights into consumer behavior on social commerce platforms, especially Instagram, which leads in online shopping activity. Most users shop monthly and engage frequently with product content. However, concerns about trust and privacy remain, with only 43% trusting social media firms. Reviews, discounts, and offers strongly influence purchase decisions, though product quality and payment security still affect user confidence.

To deepen understanding, future research should include diverse regions and use qualitative methods to explore consumer motivations. Examining demographic, psychological, and platform-specific factors can uncover broader trends in social commerce behavior.

The Study is based only the consumers residing in Gujarat. Due to time factor the study was limited to 103 Respondents only. Responses may be prone to responder biases.

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