

FACTOR INFLUENCING PRODUCT PURCHASING THROUGH SOCIAL COMMERCE IN RURAL AREA

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Abstract

Social commerce, otherwise known as social shopping or social media shopping, is the use of social media to sell products directly to consumers. In the modern era, every type of business is shifting towards E-commerce and as a response, the competition is rising, due to which it is important to know why rural consumers chooses to continue using a social commerce and what's the satisfaction level of social commerce in rural consumers. The objective of the study is To examine the consumer demographic profile towards eco-friendly products and To find out the factor influencing product purchasing through social commerce social commerce. Convenience sampling technique has been adopted to collect data from 120 respondents in kalkulam taluk. The limitation of the study is restricted to selected rural consumers in Kalkulam Taluk. The tools used are weighted average and f-test. It is suggested To increase the awareness of social commerce by e-commerce company and To improve satisfaction level of the social commerce by taking extra measures.

Keywords: E-commerce, Social media, Rural areas, Satisfaction, Consumer.

INTRODUCTION

Social commerce refers to the use of social platforms to promote, sell, and purchase products and services directly. It combines social interactions with online shopping, allowing users to discover, recommend, and buy products without leaving the social platform. Social commerce includes social media-based selling, peer influence, seamless purchase journey, and content-driven marketing. Social commerce is an emerging tool in rural markets as smartphone and internet penetration are rising rapidly, and rural users are increasingly using platforms like Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and other media. Unlike traditional e-commerce, it thrives on trust, familiarity, and peer recommendation, which align well with the community-centric culture of rural India. This paper explores how social media platforms are being converted into sales channels in the context of rural marketing in India. It examines the potential of social commerce to empower the rural population, challenges it faces, and strategies for sustainable growth.

In the modern era, advancements in information and communication technology have significantly impacted various aspects of human life, including consumption behavior and business practices. The internet has become one of the essential technologies inseparable from daily activities. According to data from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), the number of internet users in Indonesia during the 2021–2022 period reached 210.03 million, an increase of 6.78% from the previous period (APJII, 2022). This growth has created tremendous opportunities for online businesses or e-commerce to thrive. E-commerce has become an integral part of modern lifestyles, facilitating seamless buying and selling transactions without spatial or temporal constraints.

Social commerce, otherwise known as social shopping or social media shopping, is the use of social media to sell products directly to consumers. By definition, social commerce is a type of ecommerce. However, there's a key difference between true social commerce and other types of e-commerce.

♣ In 'TRADITIONAL E-COMMETRCE', retailers sell products on their own apps and websites. They may advertise items on social media, but shoppers have to click through to the retailer's online store if they want to investigate and buy a product.

♣ In 'SOCIAL COMMERCE', retailers sell products via their profiles on different social media networks. Consumers can discover and even purchase products entirely within the social networking platform, so they never have to interrupt their social experience. Sellers can use social messaging features and apps such as Facebook Messenger to provide support along the way — so that shoppers can ask questions and receive one-on-one attention at any point during the experience.

Social commerce is the use of social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram to market and sell products and services. This type of selling model lets customers complete purchases without leaving social media apps. Social commerce is a more convenient and interactive shopping experience which may explain why it's becoming increasingly popular. With social commerce, brands can sell through their social media platforms.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kurt et al., (2021) explained that trust could reduce behavioural uncertainty when consumers buy on seller's web pages, decreasing psychological blockades trust in sellers increase their buying intensions through social commerce.

Cao et al., (2021) points that social commerce is based on not only on commerce but also on online social media and social networking, which can aid in promoting services and goods both offline and online.

Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut., (2020) discuss the role of social commerce in promoting sales through streaming video. Their conclusion points out that, unlike traditional e-commerce, social commerce has important advantages in building trust and improving user participation.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Social commerce, is a branch of e-commerce, has become popular because of Facebook, Linkdin, Twitter and other sites. In the modern era, every type of business is shifting towards E-commerce and as a response, the competition is rising, due to which it is important to know why rural customer chooses to continue using a social commerce site, what are the factors that he/she is influenced by and how the overall experience can be improved and what's the impact of social commerce in rural consumers. In social commerce, electronic media and online websites is also involved, gives support to interact with consumer, which help to online selling and of tangible and intangible goods. Many users usually look towards Google to help them find what there are looking for rather than visiting specific e-commerce sites, which may be due to lack of marketing, exposure or advertisements. It was observed that in normative literature the participation of rural consumer is focal so socialization is not realized without user's daily participation.

OBJECTIVES

- To examine the consumer demographic profile towards social commerce.
- To find out the factor influencing product purchasing through social commerce

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study is based on primary and secondary data. The primary data is collected through an interview schedule administered to a sample of 120 samples from Kalkulam Taluk. The respondents are selected based on convenient sampling. The secondary data was collected from available literature in books, journals, research reports and other published materials pertaining to the impact of social commerce in rural areas in Kalkulam Taluk.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE 1
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Demographic		No of respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	48	40
	Female	72	60
Total		120	100
Age	Below 20	24	20
	20-40	36	30
	40-60	36	30
	Above 60	24	20
Total		120	100
Educational qualification	Illiterate	10	8
	Hr. Sec	17	14
	Graduate	38	32
	Professional degree	48	40
	Any other	7	6
Total		120	100

Source: Primary data

This table shows that the factor influencing product purchasing through social commerce in rural area 40 percent of the respondents were Male and 60 percent of the respondents were Female. Satisfaction level of rural consumer in social commerce 20 percent of the respondents belongs to the age group of Below 20 years, 30 percent of the respondents belongs to the age group of 20-40 years, 30 percent of the respondents belongs to the age group of 40-60 years, 20 percent of the respondents belongs to the age group of above 60 years. the factor influencing product purchasing through social commerce in rural area 8 percent of the respondents were illiterate, 14 percent of the respondents were Hr. Sec, 32 percent of the respondents were Graduate, 40 percent of the respondents were professional degree, and 6 percent of the respondents have chosen any other.

TABLE 2
FACTOR INFLUENCING PRODUCT PURCHASING THROUGH SOCIAL COMMERCE

SL. NO	REASON	HA	A	N	D	HD	Total	Average mean score	Rank
1	Convenience	52 (260)	40 (160)	10 (30)	10 (20)	8 (8)	478	3.983	I
2	Lots of option	32 (160)	27 (108)	25 (75)	20 (40)	16 (16)	399	3.325	IV
3	Search for certain brand	28 (140)	12 (48)	40 (120)	24 (48)	16 (16)	372	3.1	VIII
4	See reviews	48 (240)	30 (120)	16 (48)	18 (36)	8 (8)	452	3.767	II
5	Product demonstration	25 (125)	32 (128)	27 (81)	16 (32)	20 (20)	386	3.216	VI
6	Safety (avoid public)	27 (135)	32 (128)	13 (39)	40 (80)	8 (8)	343	3.25	V
7	Discount	24 (120)	16 (64)	39 (117)	27 (54)	14 (14)	390	3.075	IX

8	Products only sold online	28 (140)	24 (96)	30 (90)	19 (38)	19 (19)	383	3.191	VII
9	Price comparison	38 (190)	43 (172)	16 (48)	13 (26)	10 (10)	446	3.716	III

Source: Primary Data

From the above table 2 it was revealed that, the factor influencing product purchasing through social media the respondents choose convenience, see reviews and price comparison had highly weighed average mean score of 3.983, 3.767 and 3.716 respectively. Lots of options, safety (avoid public place) and product demonstration had the weighted average of 3.325, 3.25 and 3.216 respectively. Product only sold online, search for certain brand and discount had lowly weighted average mean score of 3.191, 3.1 and 3.191 respectively.

TABLE 3
SATISFACTORY LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS

SL. NO	FACTORS	MEAN SCORE				f- STATISTICS	P VALUE
		Below 20	20-40	40-60	Above 60		
1	Product video	3.2083	3.6667	3.4722	2.3750	5.309*	.002
2	Payment option	3.0000	3.1944	3.8333	3.4583	2.832*	.041
3	Product overview	3.0833	3.1667	3.8056	3.1667	2.518	.062
4	Promotional event	3.2083	3.6389	3.4722	2.3750	5.088*	.002
5	Security	2.8333	3.2778	3.8333	3.4583	3.480*	.018
6	Easy to use	3.2917	3.6389	3.5000	2.6667	2.919*	.037
7	Special discount	3.2083	3.6111	3.4722	2.3750	4.832*	.003
8	Secure communication	3.0000	3.2778	3.8333	3.4583	2.562	.058
	Total	3.1041	3.4340	3.6527	2.9166		

Source: Primary Data

*Significant at five percent level

From the above table 3 it was revealed that, satisfactory level of respondents among the age group below 20 is highly satisfied by the variables 'product video', 'promotional event', 'easy to use' and 'special discount' since their mean score is 3.2083, 3.2033, 3.2917 and 3.2917 respectively. They have the lowest satisfactory level for the variables 'payment option', product review', 'special discount' and 'secure communication' since their mean score is 3.0000, 3.0833, 3.2083 and 3.0000 respectively. The satisfactory level of the respondents among the age group 20-40 is highly satisfied by the variables 'product video', 'promotional event', 'easy to use', and 'special discount' since their mean score is 3.6667, 3.6389, 3.6389 and 3.6111 respectively. They have the lowest satisfactory level for the variables 'payment option', product overview', 'security', and 'special discount' since their mean score is 3.1944, 3.1667, 3.2778 and 3.6111 respectively. The satisfactory level of the respondents among the age group 40-60 is highly satisfied by the variables 'payment option', 'product overview', security' and 'secure communication' since their mean score is 3.8333, 3.8056, 3.8333, 3.8333 respectively. They have the lowest satisfactory level for the variables 'product video', promotional event', 'easy to use and 'special discount' since their mean score is 3.4722, 3.4722, 3.5000, 3.4722 respectively. The satisfactory level of the respondents among the age group above 60 is highly satisfied by the variables 'payment option', 'product overview', 'security', and secure communication since their mean score is 3.4583, 3.1667, 3.4583 and 3.4583 respectively. They have the lowest satisfactory level for the variables 'product video', promotional event', easy to use' and 'special discount' since their mean score is 2.3750, 2.3750, 2.6667 and 2.3650 respectively. Overall satisfactory level of respondents in social commerce among different age groups, below 20 age group mean score 3.1041, 20-40 age group mean score 3.4340, 40-60 age group mean score 3.6527 and above 60 age group mean score 2.9166.

Regarding the satisfactory level of respondents in social commerce significant difference have been identified in the case of variables 'product video', 'payment option', 'promotional event', 'Security', 'easy to use', and 'special discount' since their respective F-statistics are significant at five percent level.

SUGGESTIONS

- ♣ To increase the awareness of social commerce by e-commerce company.
- ♣ To improve satisfaction level of the social commerce by taking extra measures.
- ♣ To increase the trust worthiness of the vendors among rural consumers.
- ♣ To improve the product quality and avoid selling fake products.

CONCLUSION

Based on the studies that have been conducted, there are some conclusions to be drawn: first of all, rural communities need to accept social commerce as a form of technological development they must follow. There are some steps for e-commerce companies to make social commerce more acceptable to rural consumers through advertising, improving product quality. The social media has become an important platform for influencing consumers' purchasing decisions. Factors such as product quality, price, discounts, customer reviews, advertisements, influencer recommendations, brand image, and ease of purchase play a significant role in attracting consumers. Among these, trust, positive reviews, attractive offers, and reliable product information can strongly influence the final purchase decision. Therefore, businesses should focus on providing quality products, transparent information, good customer service, and engaging social media content to build consumer trust and encourage purchases.

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