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Influential Aspects Affecting Purchase Decisions in Social Commerce

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Introduction: Social commerce has revolutionized the traditional e-commerce landscape by seamlessly integrating social interactions with commercial activities. This innovative business model has shifted the balance of influence from sellers to buyers, empowering individuals to share their shopping experiences and insights through word-of-mouth. Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat have become powerful tools for businesses, enabling users to recommend products and services, thereby amplifying their reach. The proliferation of social commerce has significantly impacted consumer behavior, reshaping marketing strategies and business operations. **Objectives**: This research aims to investigate the pivotal influences on consumer purchasing decisions within social commerce platforms. It examines the impact of word-of-mouth, promotional incentives, digital marketing strategies, and perceived convenience in molding customer perceptions and purchasing conducts. Furthermore, the study offers insights into how organizations can harness these factors to bolster customer engagement and drive sales. **Methods**: A quantitative research approach was employed, utilizing a virtual snowball sampling technique. A survey was conducted among 788 participants who were frequent users of social commerce platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat, all of whom were over 18 years old. The collected data was analysed using structural equation modeling to test the research hypotheses and identify the relationships between the influencing factors and purchase decisions. **Results**: The results indicate that word-of-mouth communication, promotional incentives, digital marketing approaches, and user-friendly features substantially sway purchase behaviors on social commerce platforms. Recommendations from peers and industry experts boost trust and engagement. Promotional offerings, like discounts and exclusive deals, drive purchase intent. Digital marketing tactics, encompassing personalized advertisements and influencer marketing, effectively pique consumer interest. Furthermore, the convenience of seamless navigation and simple transactions further encourages online purchasing decisions. **Conclusions**: The study emphasizes the growing significance of social commerce in molding consumer purchasing behavior. Businesses should incorporate online brand communities into their marketing strategies to bolster customer engagement and trust. By leveraging word-of-mouth, personalized promotions, and digital marketing techniques, companies can fortify their presence on social commerce platforms and drive higher conversions. **Keywords:** Social Commerce, Word of Mouth, Virtual Snowball, Digital Marketing, Social interactions.

INTRODUCTION

In today's consumer landscape, there is a prevailing trend of sharing opinions and experiences about products among individuals, commonly known as word of mouth (WOM). This informal communication entails people expressing

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their thoughts on products and brands based on their personal usage experiences. Remarkably, such interactions between buyers can occur either in person or remotely, and due to its long-standing significance in marketing, WOM has been regarded as an alternative to traditional communication methods, possessing substantial influence. The advent of Web 2.0 has transformed the internet into a dynamic social space where users enthusiastically create and exchange content with one another. This change in online interaction has greatly amplified the reach of word-of-mouth (WOM), extending it far beyond traditional avenues. Consumers now hold considerable influence over the perspectives and decisions of others, as their recommendations and experiences resonate across digital platforms.

Customer engagement has become one of the most prominent marketing concepts of the twenty-first century, captivating both scholars and industry professionals (Yadav & Mahara, 2020). The growing prevalence of social media has redefined how businesses and individuals connect in the digital era. With advancements in internet technology, our daily routines have undergone considerable positive shifts (Isohella et al., 2017). The internet has evolved into a dynamic communication tool, fostering more fluid interactions between companies and consumers (Kumar & Dange, 2012). This shift towards social media has also catalysed a transformation in online business frameworks, transitioning from traditional e-marketing to social marketing (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013). In contrast to traditional e-commerce, which emphasized simple, one-click purchases and passive browsing, social commerce fosters a more interactive experience, encouraging active, two-way engagement between users. It allows consumers to engage collaboratively with each other, digitally enhancing their purchase decision-making journey (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013).

The immense popularity of social media as a potent platform for interaction and information sharing has led to the emergence of Social Commerce (Liang et al., 2011). Businesses and marketers now recognize the financial potential of harnessing the vast number of online interactions generated by consumers on social media platforms (Yadav & Mahara, 2020). Social media and networking applications have become deeply integrated into people's daily lives (Yadav & Mahara, 2020). This shift has underscored the need to understand and effectively leverage Social Commerce to build stronger connections with customers.

Active customer participation in online markets and communities is essential within the Social Commerce landscape (Huang & Benyoucef, 2015). Social Commerce has reshaped business-customer interactions, strengthening social connections between them (Spaulding, 2010). The progress of digital technologies has driven the growth of peer-to-peer communication and transactions, now fundamental elements of social commerce (Huang & Benyoucef, 2015). This evolution has introduced a new focus within Social Commerce, centring on gathering and analysing information from customer experiences (Hajli, 2014). Experienced customers play an influential role in this process by sharing their purchasing insights with others, ultimately shaping potential buyers' decisions.

The rising popularity of social networks has resulted in a significant transformation in consumer behavior, transitioning from traditional WOM to E-WOM (Isohella et al., 2017). E-WOM entails an ongoing and interactive sharing of insights about products, services, brands, or companies among potential, existing, or former customers, reaching a broad audience through online channels. With social platforms, customers now have quicker, more efficient channels to communicate and establish connections (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010). These platforms empower users to connect with one another, participate in activities like reviewing, rating, recommending, and sharing experiences, thereby enhancing their intent to purchase (Hajli, 2015).

Studies have emphasized the significance of E-WOM as a critical source of information for online shoppers (Liu et al., 2015). This dynamic flow of consumer-generated content on the internet significantly influences purchasing choices. The COVID-19 pandemic created an unprecedented global disruption, leading to noticeable shifts in consumer behavior (Eger et al., 2021). During lockdowns, people spent more time on Social Commerce platforms, increasing their popularity and engagement (Williams Commerce, 2020). The second wave of the pandemic further accelerated these changes, with consumers adapting to new conditions and prioritizing online shopping and Social Commerce (Eger et al., 2021). This study seeks to investigate the main factors that impact purchase decisions in Social Commerce. Gaining insights into these aspects is essential for businesses and marketers to engage customers effectively and create impactful Social Commerce strategies in today's evolving digital environment.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents an in-depth look at Social Commerce and highlights factors identified in the literature as potential influences on customer purchase decisions in this space. Social Commerce has emerged from the integration of e-commerce with the interactive features of social media. This concept includes two primary types of websites: those that allow direct product purchases and those that primarily serve to advertise and guide users to online stores (Ng, 2013; Zhang & Benyoucef, 2016). The dynamics of interaction and social connections fostered online, especially within social networks, have transformed traditional E-Commerce into Social Commerce, enabling businesses to engage customers more effectively through user-created content (Zhou et al., 2013).

Online shopping offers several advantages often not found in physical retail, including convenience, extensive product selections, user-friendly interfaces, and time-efficient features. Scholars have suggested various definitions for social commerce. (Stephen and Toubia, 2010) describe It is a social media-driven internet platform that actively engages users in marketing and selling products and services within online communities and marketplaces. Social commerce platforms utilize various communication tools and social functions, such as product ratings, review options, discussion boards, user communities (like those in gaming), and endorsement indicators (similar to Facebook's "Like" button). Liang and Turban (2011) identify three key features of social commerce platforms: the combination of social media technology, community-focused engagement, and commercial activities. These elements work together to facilitate the sharing of product information among users prior to making a purchase.

Factor influencing the Purchase decision

Social Commerce is connected to E-Commerce, enabling consumers to purchase products from any location worldwide at any time, eliminating the need to visit physical stores. Internet shopping offers the convenience of placing orders around the clock while also reducing transaction costs. The ability to conduct business transactions 24/7 without physical interaction has significantly accelerated the growth of online shopping. This digital approach not only facilitates global product access but also fosters stronger connections between customers and suppliers. It enhances customer loyalty and retention, making online shopping an attractive option for an expanding consumer base (Omotayo & Omotope, 2018; Zhou et al., 2007). The accessible and user-friendly nature of Social Commerce continues to draw and retain a growing number of online shoppers.

In Social Commerce, consumer participation encompasses both direct and indirect business activities. Direct interactions relate to consumers' purchasing behaviors during their decision-making journey, specifically in the purchase stage. Indirect interactions, on the other hand, involve activities like electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) recommendations, sharing of information, and peer reviews gathering, decision-making processes, and post-purchase activities. These indirect interactions involve seeking, selecting, and sharing business-related information through social media (H. Zhang et al., 2014). To attract more customers, entrepreneurs in Social Commerce must identify the factors influencing consumer purchases, understand their needs, and develop strategic approaches to manage this online environment (Sohn & Kim, 2020). Similarly, e-retailers must adopt sustainable strategies to keep consumers engaged in internet shopping. As the e-retail sector remains in its developmental phase, collaboration among stakeholders is essential to support the growth and success of this evolving market (Usman & Kumar, 2020).

Social commerce platforms should prioritize minimizing user resistance by offering sufficient support and guidance. Platform developers are crucial in this effort, delivering helpful, comprehensive information and tutorials to guide customers smoothly through the search, decision-making, and purchasing stages of their shopping experience. Such assistance helps customers overcome challenges related to online shopping, building their trust and engagement with Social Commerce platforms (Al-Adwan, 2019). Customer trust is a crucial factor in their willingness to participate in Social Commerce, with recommendations, reviews, and other user-generated content significantly contributing to trust in these online platforms (H. Zhang et al., 2014). Creating a secure and reliable environment is fundamental for fostering positive consumer experiences and encouraging ongoing engagement within the digital marketplace.

Trust is a core factor in shaping customers' decision-making processes and their comfort with online purchases. Several components, including recommendations, referrals, ratings, reviews, forums, and communities, are instrumental in enhancing trust in online sellers their products, increasing the likelihood of purchase (Hew et al., 2016). Continued satisfaction & frequent use of Social Commerce platforms also contribute to stronger brand loyalty.

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The literature review identifies several factors that consistently motivate consumers to revisit online shopping sites, with perceived website value, information quality, and trust emerging as the three primary drivers of customer engagement in S-Commerce (Ali et al., 2020).

Online recommendations have a significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions by alleviating product uncertainty and boosting credibility and trust in the products (Maia et al., 2018). Customer behavior theory highlights factors that encourage participation in Social Commerce, such as being younger and more educated (Cutshall et al., 2020). Trust based on institutions plays a crucial role in Online Commerce. Platforms leaders must cultivate a trustworthy environment where consumers feel secure and can engage in meaningful interactions (Hajli, 2019). Additionally, the accuracy and reliability of the information shared on Social Commerce platforms significantly influence consumers' confidence in these sites. (Kim & Park, 2013; Gatautis & Medziausiene, 2014). Social influence also contributes to shaping consumers' behavioral intentions to accept and engage with Social Commerce (Maia et al., 2018). Keyfactors impact on consumer participation in Social Commerce include trust, the quality of information, and the perceived usefulness of the platform (Usman & Kumar, 2021).

The rise of online shopping has led to greater access to a variety of products, ultimately improving consumers' living standards and contributing to the increase in gross domestic product (GDP) (Usman & Kumar, 2021). Previous research has identified several important factors within Social Commerce, such as perceived risk, perceived usefulness, trust, online information, and customer service. These factors collectively influence consumer attitudes and behaviors in the digital marketplace.

Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis Formulation

The study framework in this study is constructed drawn from an extensive analysis of existing literature and the study's theoretical framework. The connections between trust, buying intentions, and word-of-mouth (WOM) behaviors were previously examined by (Kim and Park 2013). Moreover, the connection between satisfaction, repurchase intentions, and WOM intentions was outlined in Spreng's (1995) service restoration framework. Previous studies have mainly focused on the connections between reputation, information, trust, and repurchase intentions. This research, however, expands by incorporating Social Commerce elements such as customer engagement and factors like WOM, offers, digital marketing, and convenience. These factors are recognized as significant influences on repurchase decisions in Social Commerce. A graphical representation of the suggested research framework is illustrated in Figure 1.

WOM

WOM is widely recognized as one of the most influential channels for customers to seek and exchange information (Özdemir et al., 2016). On Social Commerce platforms, customers can engage in WOM through various mechanisms, such as evaluations and feedback, discussion boards and groups, and suggestions and referrals (Hajli, 2015). WOM enables customers to exchange their personal experiences, insights, and expertise with potential buyers, ultimately impacting the purchasing decisions of others (Liao et al., 2010; Prendergast et al., 2010).

For customers to actively participate in WOM, they must have the intention to share details about products or services (WOM behavior). WOM intention, as described by Kim and Park (2013), refers to the likelihood of customers sharing their experiences with other potential buyers. When customers have a favourable WOM intention, they are more inclined to share and suggest products or services they have tried (M. Zhang et al., 2017). WOM intention offers several benefits to both customers and businesses.

H₁: WOM intention positively influences purchase decisions on Social Commerce platforms.

Offers

In social media, an "offer" refers to a special promotion, discount, or reward shared across various platforms to attract and engage an audience. This marketing approach is widely used by businesses and brands to capture attention, draw in new customers, and motivate specific actions like making a purchase, signing up for a service, or visiting a website. Promotions on social media are frequently shared via posts, stories, or targeted ads across platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and more.

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Users can interact with these promotions by clicking on links, using discount codes, or following the instructions provided in the promotional material. Common tactics for driving customer action in social commerce include using discount codes or coupons for immediate savings, organizing giveaways and contests to generate excitement and user interaction, running flash sales with limited-time discounts to encourage urgency, and offering freebies or product samples to boost interest and trust. These strategies create an interactive, incentive-rich environment on social media platforms, enhancing engagement and guiding customers toward purchase decisions.

H$_2$: Offers have a positive effect on purchase decisions on Social Commerce platforms.

Digital Marketing

In the rapidly evolving digital world, Companies are constantly exploring creative ways to engage with their target market and sustain a competitive advantage. This has led to the growth of digital marketing, a transformative strategy that has redefined how brands promote themselves and interact with customers. In this article, we explore the essentials of digital marketing and reveal strategies to succeed in the ever-changing digital space. Digital marketing, or online marketing, involves utilizing the internet and various digital channels to promote brands and build relationships with potential customers. Numerous studies, such as those by Tarsakoo & Charoensukmongkol (2020) and Lagrosen & Grunde (2014), have examined different facets of digital marketing, including its influence on business performance and its application in industries like wellness.

Within Social Commerce platforms, digital marketing is essential in directing and influencing customers through their purchasing decisions. It uses various techniques to influence and assist customers throughout their buying journey. From personalized ads and targeted email marketing to engaging social media content, digital marketing helps customers make informed and confident purchasing choices on Social Commerce sites.

H$_3$: Digital marketing positively influences purchase decisions on Social Commerce platforms.

Convenience

Convenience stands out as one of the most significant factors fueling the rise of online shopping. Unlike traditional shopping in physical stores, online shopping provides unique conveniences that make it a compelling choice for many consumers. This digital shopping experience offers customers the ability to browse, compare, and purchase items from virtually anywhere, anytime, making convenience a primary motivator in their decision to shop online (Omotayo & Omotope, 2018). Research by (Tarhini et al. 2018) and (Omotayo and Omotope 2018) emphasize that consumers are drawn to online shopping largely for its ease and efficiency, prioritizing these aspects in their purchasing decisions.

Shoppers who choose online retail often consider convenience an essential factor, as it allows them to avoid the time, effort, and potential frustration associated with visiting physical stores. This aligns with findings from (Hidayat-ur-Rehman et al. 2016), who reported that U.S. consumers view convenience as a primary reason for engaging in online shopping. The flexibility of 24/7 access, quick product search features, and simplified checkout processes make online shopping a preferred choice for many, underscoring convenience as a cornerstone in today's digital retail landscape.

Online marketing plays an essential role in enhancing convenience for customers. It provides quick access to product information, a wide variety of options to suit different preferences, personalized shopping experiences, smooth transactions, social validation through reviews and ratings, flexible delivery methods, and interactive features across digital platforms. The impact of online marketing has revolutionized how businesses and customers interact, simplifying the purchasing journey and making it more efficient.

A key aspect of convenience in online marketing is home delivery, which enables customers to receive products at their doorstep. This eliminates the need to go to physical stores, saving time and effort. The convenience provided by online marketing has played a crucial role in the growth of e-commerce, making it the preferred option for consumers who prioritize efficient and hassle-free shopping experiences.

H$_4$: Convenience positively influences purchase decisions on Social Commerce platforms.
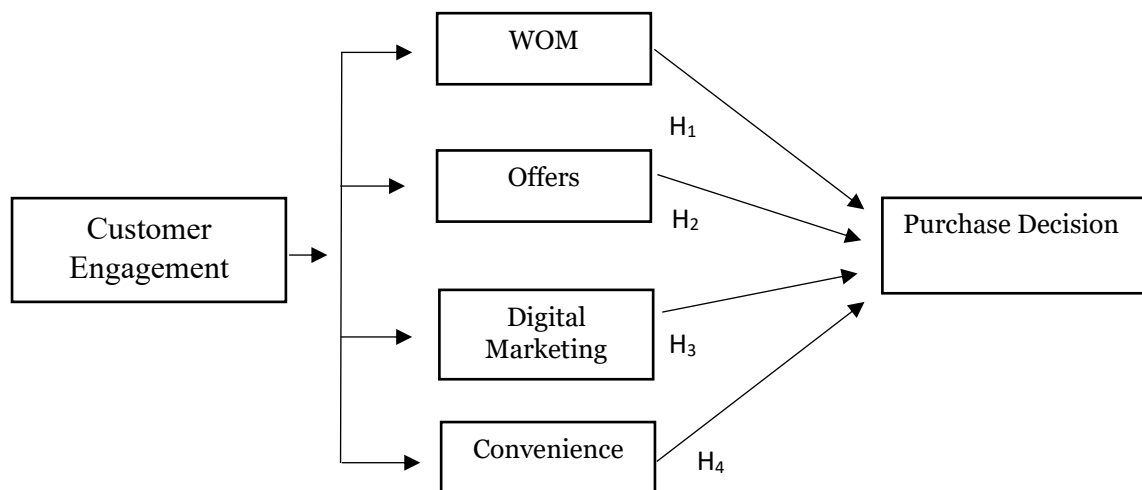
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Fig.1

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) metric is a statistic used to assess the appropriateness of sample data for factor analysis. It represents the proportion of the total squared correlations between all variables to sum of squared correlations along with the sum of squared conditional correlations between pairs of variables. The denominator grows as the variation specific to the relationships between variable pairs (partial correlations) rises, resulting in a KMO value less than one. A low KMO value indicates that factor analysis might not be appropriate for the data. Kaiser (1974) suggests that a KMO value of 0.9 or above is considered excellent, while values below 0.5 are regarded as inadequate.

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		
		.840
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	21307.222
	Df	300
	Sig.	.000

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity tests the null hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix, where all diagonal elements are 1, and all off-diagonal elements (correlations) are zero. This would suggest there are no significant relationships among the variables. If this hypothesis holds true, there would be no foundation to justify conducting factor analysis. A significant result from Bartlett's Test, however, indicates that relationships do exist among the variables, thereby justifying the application of factor analysis.

Table 2: Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
Comprehensive Information at Single Window	1.000	.670
Frequent Ads Changed My Opinion	1.000	.725
Appealing Advertisements	1.000	.660
Impact of Product Images	1.000	.771
Ease of Understanding Product Use	1.000	.698
Recommendations from Acquaintances	1.000	.784

Encourages Repeat Purchases	1.000	.675
Product Trustworthiness	1.000	.735
Guaranteed Purchases	1.000	.784
Easily Identifiable Fake Products	1.000	.728
Familiarity with the Product	1.000	.737
Comfortable Shopping Experience	1.000	.703
Extensive Product Selection	1.000	.742
Hassle-Free Return Policy	1.000	.798
Convenient Product Comparison	1.000	.755
Received Valid Coupon Code	1.000	.636
Timely Offers	1.000	.671
Attractive Festival Offers	1.000	.733
High-Quality Offered Products	1.000	.623
Offer Duration	1.000	.655
Multiple Payment Options	1.000	.636
Credit Facility (EMI)	1.000	.791
Secure Payment System	1.000	.842
Personal Information Privacy	1.000	.739
Fast Transactions	1.000	.732

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The overview of extracted components is shown in the total variances (Table 3). Notably, the first component explains the majority of the variance (52.538%), while the second, third, and fourth components contribute 8.013%, 6.869%, and 4.661% of the variance, respectively, with the remaining components accounting for the rest of the variance across variables. Four components were derived from their Eigenvalues exceeding 1, collectively explaining approximately 72.082% of the variance in the decathlon scores. Additionally, it is evident that each rotated and unrotated solution explains the same overall variance.

Table 3: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% Of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	13.134	52.538	52.538	13.134	52.538	52.538	4.862	19.448	19.448
2	2.003	8.013	60.551	2.003	8.013	60.551	4.693	18.771	38.219
3	1.717	6.869	67.420	1.717	6.869	67.420	4.347	17.388	55.607
4	1.165	4.661	72.082	1.165	4.661	72.082	4.119	16.475	72.082
5	.969	3.876	75.958						
6	.880	3.519	79.477						
7	.772	3.086	82.563						
8	.631	2.526	85.089						
9	.541	2.163	87.252						

10	.466	1.863	89.115				
11	.393	1.570	90.685				
12	.375	1.502	92.187				
13	.328	1.313	93.500				
14	.261	1.045	94.545				
15	.238	.952	95.497				
16	.220	.881	96.378				
17	.185	.741	97.119				
18	.145	.582	97.700				
19	.132	.530	98.230				
20	.117	.468	98.698				
21	.108	.433	99.131				
22	.073	.292	99.422				
23	.060	.238	99.660				
24	.048	.191	99.851				
25	.037	.149	100.000				

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

As displayed in Table 3, the four derived factors account for 72.082% of the total variance. Table 4 provides the component matrix, which outlines the factor loadings for each variable. In an orthogonal solution, these loadings represent both the correlations and regression weights for the factor variables. It is observed that nearly all variables load onto the first component in the component matrix. Factor loadings below 0.40 are typically excluded from calculations, but since the first four components account for such a substantial portion of the variance in decathlon scores, distinguishing between the variables becomes challenging.

Table 4: Component Matrix

	Component			
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Comprehensive Information at Single Window	.534	.587	.195	-.036
Frequent Ads Changed My Opinion	.662	.522	-.121	-.020
Appealing Advertisements	.671	.340	-.186	-.244
Impact of Product Images	.803	.007	-.238	-.265
Ease of Understanding Product Use	.711	.310	.294	.100
Recommendations from Acquaintances	.696	.528	.144	-.024
Encourages Repeat Purchases	.778	.227	.054	-.124
Product Trustworthiness	.803	.139	.071	.256
Guaranteed Purchases	.685	.018	.465	.315
Easily Identifiable Fake Products	.766	-.202	.281	-.145
Familiarity with the Product	.751	-.094	-.259	-.311

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Comfortable Shopping Experience	.742	-.040	-.209	-.327
Extensive Product Selection	.665	.057	-.381	.388
Hassle-Free Return Policy	.643	-.268	-.509	.231
Convenient Product Comparison	.764	-.240	-.008	.338
Received Valid Coupon Code	.652	-.365	-.072	.270
Timely Offers	.807	-.005	-.140	-.027
Attractive Festival Offers	.835	-.105	.058	.144
High-Quality Offered Products	.743	-.045	.236	.116
Offer Duration	.761	-.033	.241	-.128
Multiple Payment Options	.731	-.162	.243	.127
Credit Facility (EMI)	.704	-.481	.111	-.226
Secure Payment System	.554	-.455	.488	-.301
Personal Information Privacy	.787	-.169	-.272	-.132
Fast Transactions	.780	.028	-.349	.035

Extraction Method: Principal Components Analysis.

a.4 components extracted

Table 5: Rotated Component Matrix

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
WoM				
Recommendations from Acquaintances	.820			
Comprehensive Information at Single Window	.799			
Frequent Ads Changed My Opinion	.726			
Ease of Understanding Product Use	.702			
Encourages Repeat Purchases	.584			
Product Trustworthiness	.563			
Offers				
Attractive Festival Offers		.889		
Offer Duration		.715		
Easily Identifiable Fake Products		.702		

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Guaranteed Purchases	.601		
Multiple Payment Options	.598		
Received Valid Coupon Code	.581		
High-Quality Offered Products	.540		
Digital Marketing			
Familiarity with the Product		.732	
Impact of Product Images		.709	
Comfortable Shopping Experience		.706	
Personal Information Privacy		.644	
Appealing Advertisements		.582	
Fast Transactions		.564	
Timely Offers		.501	
Convenience			
Hassle-Free Return Policy			.751
Extensive Product Selection			.747
Convenient Product Comparison			.682
Secure Payment System			.634
Credit Facility (EMI)			.514

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 12 iterations

The rotated component matrix presented in Table 5 shows four distinct components that capture key factors influencing consumer perceptions and decisions in a social commerce setting. These components—labeled as "Word of Mouth," "Offers," "Digital Marketing," and "Convenience"—highlight different areas impacting customer engagement and buying behavior.

The first component, "Word of Mouth," highlights the significance of social proof and peer influence in shaping consumer decisions. High loadings on items like "Recommendations from Acquaintances" (.820), "Comprehensive Information at Single Window" (.799), and "Frequent Ads Changed My Opinion" (.726) indicate that consumers value input from friends and comprehensive product details, which help in reshaping opinions and fostering trust. Additionally, "Ease of Understanding Product Use" (.702), "Encourages Repeat Purchases" (.584), and "Product Trustworthiness" (.563) suggest that clear information and credible products are essential in encouraging repeat purchases.

The second component, "**Offers**," reflects the impact of promotional aspects on buying behavior. High loadings on "Attractive Festival Offers" (.889) and "Offer Duration" (.715) indicate that limited-time promotions and seasonal deals can attract consumers. Other aspects, such as the ability to identify fake products easily (.702), guaranteed

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purchases (.601), and multiple payment options (.598), add to the perceived value, making the shopping experience both secure and versatile. Additionally, elements like "Received Valid Coupon Code" (.581) and "High-Quality Offered Products" (.540) emphasize the role of quality assurances and redeemable discounts.

The third component, **"Digital Marketing,"** captures the influence of digital content and platform design on consumer comfort and trust. "Familiarity with the Product" (.732) and "Impact of Product Images" (.709) are significant indicators, showing that consumers appreciate detailed visuals and familiarity with brands or products. Additionally, "Comfortable Shopping Experience" (.706), "Personal Information Privacy" (.644), and "Appealing Advertisements" (.582) underscore the need for secure, pleasant online interactions, while "Fast Transactions" (.564) and "Timely Offers" (.501) further enhance customer satisfaction through speed and relevance.

Finally, the fourth component, **"Convenience,"** includes factors related to ease and flexibility in shopping. "Hassle-Free Return Policy" (.751) and "Extensive Product Selection" (.747) show that consumers prioritize a smooth, varied shopping experience. Other loadings, like "Convenient Product Comparison" (.682) and "Secure Payment System" (.634), emphasize the value placed on comparing options and paying safely. Lastly, "Credit Facility (EMI)" (.514) indicates that flexible payment methods also contribute to the appeal of online shopping.

Overall, these four components offer a structured view of the key factors driving consumer engagement and purchase decisions, highlighting the importance of trust, promotions, digital familiarity, and convenience in social commerce platforms.

Table 6: Component Transformation Matrix

Component	1	2	3	4
1	.509	.505	.501	.485
2	.812	-.525	-.057	-.247
3	.272	.669	-.565	-.399
4	.084	-.146	-.653	.738

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

The component transformation matrix of the extracted factor and the respective correlation values are displayed in the diagonal side of the factors. The first factor **Word of Mouth construction** include Recommendations from Acquaintances (**PDRC1**), Comprehensive Information at Single Window (**PDDM1**), Frequent Ads Changed My Opinion (**PDDM2**), Ease of Understanding Product Use (**PDDM5**), Encourages Repeat Purchases (**PDRC2**), Product Trustworthiness (**PDRC3**).

The second factor **Offers** include Attractive Festival Offers (**PDPS3**), Offer Duration (**PDPS2**), Easily Identifiable Fake Products (**PDRC5**), Guaranteed Purchases (**PDRC4**), Multiple Payment Options (**PDPS1**), Received Valid Coupon Code (**PDSO5**), High-Quality Offered Products (**PDSO4**).

The next factor **Digital Marketing** include Familiarity with the Product (**PDPE1**), Impact of Product Images (**PDDM4**), Comfortable Shopping Experience (**PDPE2**), Personal Information Privacy (**PDPS4**), Appealing Advertisements (**PDDM3**), Fast Transactions (**PDPS5**), Timely Offers (**PDSO2**).

The final factor **Convenience** Hassle-Free Return Policy (**PDPE4**), Extensive Product Selection (**PDPE3**), Convenient Product Comparison (**PDPE5**), Secure Payment System (**PDSO1**), Credit Facility (EMI) (**PDSO3**).

Table 6: Reliability Analysis

Factor	Reliability Statistics	Scale Statistics

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|	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items	Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation
Factor 1: **Word of Mouth**	.897	.898	6	19.82	33.528	5.790
Factor 2: **Offers**	.903	.905	7	23.84	38.312	6.190
Factor 3: **Digital Marketing**	.922	.922	7	25.93	37.123	6.093
Factor 4: **Convenience**	.873	.874	5	17.70	22.110	4.702

Measurement Model

To assess the robustness and validity of the factors, the model underwent Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), allowing for the identification and calculation of one or more proposed factors structures (Hair et al., 2013). Using selected variables derived from the principal components For the analysis, CFA was performed using AMOS to validate the factor structure. The factor loadings for the selected items were above 0.50, aligning with recommended thresholds (Netemeyer, Bearden & Sharma, 2003). Given that the chi-square statistic (χ^2 = 575.544, d.f. = 183, p-value = 0.0001) is sensitive to sample size, additional fit indices were utilized to evaluate model fit (Hair et al., 2013).

Table 7: Measurement Model (CFA)

Factor and Items			Factor Loadings	Critical Ratio (CR)	Alpha	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Construct Reliability
Word of Mouth					**0.897**	**0.593**	**0.770**
PDRC1	<---	WOM	0.819	27.30			
PDDM1	<---	WOM	0.63	12.12			
PDDM2	<---	WOM	0.692	20.97			
PDDM5	<---	WOM	0.774	22.11			
PDRC2	<---	WOM	0.861	35.88			
PDRC3	<---	WOM	0.821	31.58			
Offers					**0.903**	**0.577**	**0.760**
PDPS3	<---	OFF	0.688	15.64			
PDPS2	<---	OFF	0.758	31.58			
PDRC5	<---	OFF	0.832	39.62			
PDRC4	<---	OFF	0.741	20.58			
PDPS1	<---	OFF	0.775	31.00			
PDSO5	<---	OFF	0.761	29.27			
PDSO4	<---	OFF	0.758	22.29			
Digital Marketing					**0.922**	**0.634**	**0.796**
PDPE1	<---	DM	0.824	34.33			
PDDM4	<---	DM	0.861	47.83			
PDPE2	<---	DM	0.777	35.32			
PDPS4	<---	DM	0802	42.21			
PDDM3	<---	DM	0.674	18.72			
PDPS5	<---	DM	0.818	40.90			
PDSO2	<---	DM	0.808	36.73			

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Convenience					0.873	0.580	0.761
PDPE4	<---	CON	0.684	17.54			
PDPE3	<---	CON	0.669	15.93			
PDPE5	<---	CON	0.838	28.90			
PDSO1	<---	CON	0.745	27.59			
PDSO3	<---	CON	0.854	37.13			
Goodness of fit indices							
CMIN/df = 30.964; CFI = 0.621; GFI = 0.597; AGFI = 0.514; NFI = 0.614; IFI = 0.621; TLI = 0.577; RMSEA = 0.195							
Source: Computation form Primary data							

The study results, as shown in the table, indicate the goodness-of-fit indices: GFI (= 0.597), AGFI (= 0.514), IFI (= 0.621), CFI (= 0.621), NFI (= 0.614), TLI (= 0.577), and RMSEA (= 0.195). The statistical relevance of parameter estimates was assessed using the t-value (critical ratio), with high loadings observed in each case, which suggests convergent validity. Table 2 provides the standardized loadings, the measurement framework, and the associated t-values (critical ratios).
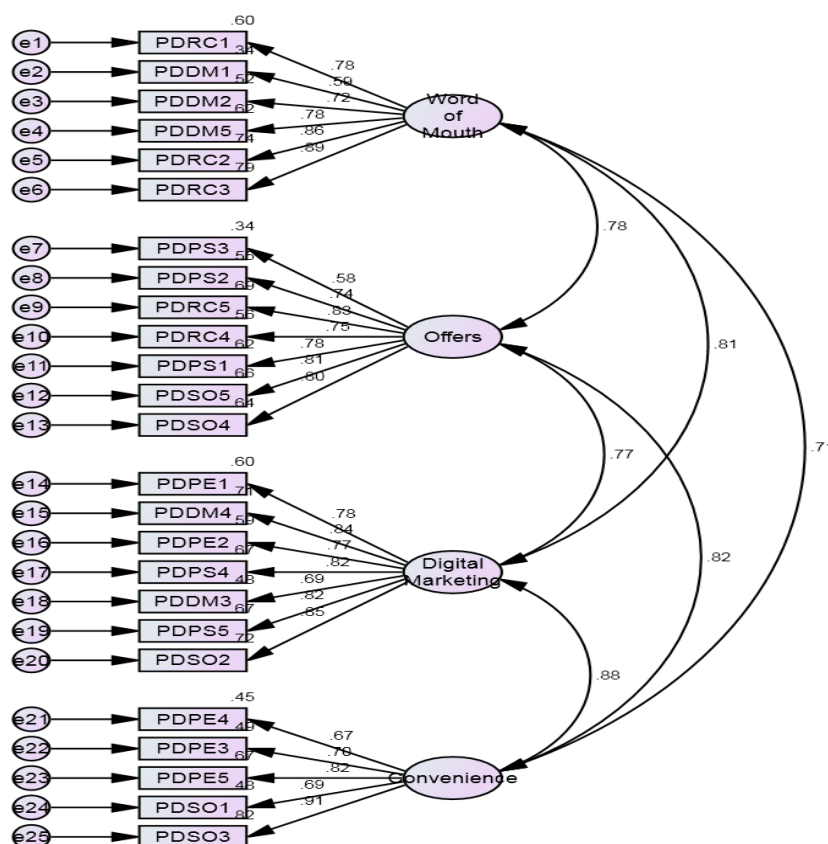
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Online shopping has become a prominent trend, allowing people to purchase products conveniently through computers. However, some consumers may still feel hesitant about using credit cards for online transactions. Collaborations between companies and banks, with the banks directly managing online accounts, could alleviate these fears and boost customer confidence in online shopping. To further enhance trust, the government should establish robust legal frameworks that hold online fraudsters accountable for their actions. To attract and educate

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new online shoppers, it is crucial for websites and merchants to create awareness about the benefits and safety of online shopping, especially among demographics beyond students. Competitive pricing also plays a significant role in consumers' purchase decisions, motivating online sellers to make efforts to offer products at attractive prices.

Effective marketing and advertising strategies are essential to make online shopping websites known to consumers. Utilizing various advertising methods can help reach a broader audience and promote the benefits of online shopping. Cash on delivery is a popular payment method for numerous customers, as it provides a feeling of security. However, not all products come with this option, which could hinder some customers' willingness to make purchases. Addressing this issue and expanding cash on delivery options can improve the effectiveness of online shopping. It is crucial to address any problems that customers may encounter during the online shopping experience. Conducting thorough observation and analysis of these issues will enable companies to find solutions and enhance the overall online shopping experience.

This study examines the factors that influence customers' intentions to continue using the same Social Commerce platform. It aims to identify the key determinants that impact customers' purchasing decisions within the context of Social Commerce. The research model, consisting of four factors, was analysed by using statistical software applications like SPSS 25.0 and AMOS 24. The study identifies customer engagement and Word of Mouth (WoM) as critical determinants that significantly impact customers' purchase decisions in Social Commerce. Additionally, offers and Digital Marketing were also found to be key determinants affecting customer purchase decisions in this domain. Convenience was identified as another important factor influencing customers' purchase decisions in Social Commerce. In conclusion, this paper highlights the essential factors that must be considered when predicting consumers' purchase decisions to shop online. The rise of active social technologies and the increasing adoption of online social networks have made socialization a primary activity on the internet. Social Commerce has developed as a result, with businesses tapping into the potential of online social networks for commercial and sales purposes.

finally, the study conclude that social technologies' acceptance is closely linked to Social Commerce acceptance. However, it also points out that certain product categories, such as fashion, books, travel, and household appliances, may utilize online reviews and ratings less frequently when consumers make purchase decisions. In summary, the factors identified in this study, namely Word of Mouth, Offers, Digital marketing and convenience are crucial factors influencing customer purchase decisions in Social Commerce. By understanding and addressing these elements, businesses can enhance customer engagement and satisfaction on Social Commerce platforms.

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