EFFECT OF SOCIAL COMMERCE ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS APPAREL SELECTION

PROJECT SUBMITTED

TO

ST. TERESA'S COLLEGE (Autonomous), ERNAKULAM

Affiliated to

MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY, KOTTAYAM
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF
BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ECONOMICS

By

T Anjana Suresh	**Reg No: AB20ECO046**
Nikhitha Margret	**Reg No: AB20ECO056**
Aleena Francis	**Reg No: AB20ECO048**
Sandra Joseph	**Reg No: AB20ECO063**
Adhulya T	**Reg No: AB20ECO047**

Under the Guidance of
Dr. PEARLY ANTHONY O.
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS
ST. TERESA'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), ERNAKULAM

MARCH 2023

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the project titled **"Effect of social commerce on consumer behaviour towards apparel selection"** submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for B.A. Degree in Economics from **St. Teresa's College (Autonomous) (Affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam)** is a bonafide record of the work done by the project group under my supervision and guidance.

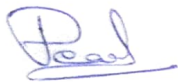Head of the Department

Dr. Mary Liya C A

Guide and Supervisor

Dr. Pearly Anthony O.

DECLARATION

We hereby declare that the project **"Effect of social commerce on consumer behaviour towards apparel selection"** submitted by us for the B.A. Degree in Economics is our original work.

Signature of the supervisor

Signature of the candidates

Dr. Pearly Anthony O.

T Anjana Suresh

Nikhitha Margret

Aleena Francis

Sandra Joseph

Adhulya T

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, we thank God almighty for showering us with blessings and giving us the strength to carry on and complete the project.

We extend our gratitude to the members of the faculty of the Department of Economics for their encouragement and support.

We extend our gratitude to the Head of the Department of Economics, Mary Liya C A, and to our guide, Dr. Pearly Anthony O., Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, St. Teresa's College (Autonomous) without whose guidance and encouragement this project would never have been completed.

T Anjana Suresh

Nikhitha Margret

Aleena Francis

Sandra Joseph

Adhulya T

EFFECT OF SOCIAL COMMERCE ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS APPAREL SELECTION

CONTENT

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER-1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In November 2005, Yahoo! coined the phrase "social commerce" to refer to a set of online collaborative shopping tools, including user ratings, select lists, and other user-generated content that allows for the sharing of product information and recommendations. David Beisel and Steve Rubel created the term "social commerce" to describe user-generated advertising material on e-commerce websites and collaborative e-commerce technologies that let consumers "search products and services, get recommendations from people they can trust, and then make purchases. A subset of electronic commerce called social commerce uses social media, online forums, and user-contributed content to facilitate the online buying and selling of goods and services. To put it simply, it is the utilization of social networks in the context of online purchases. The following goals are what social commerce is intended to help businesses accomplish. It helps to interact with consumers about their brands based on their social interactions. It gives clients a reason to visit their website again. It offers clients a forum to discuss their brand on their website. E-commerce, or electronic commerce, refers to the buying and selling of goods and services over the internet. In this case, the customers choose the products after consulting the seller's descriptions or product photographs rather than choosing them directly.

But in Social Commerce, Customers can interact directly with sellers and browse, and purchase things using social media without ever leaving the site. It is quick, easy, and most importantly, simple. Social commerce, in a nutshell, offers consumers of today what they want. Social Commerce is more trustable than e-commerce because they provide detailed product information. Instagram, Facebook, and Pinterest are some of the social media platforms that currently support social commerce. According to a report by the consulting firm Accenture, the global market for social commerce would increase by two and a half times, from $492 billion in 2021 to $1.2 trillion in 2025, with India's market expanding the quickest during this time, that is three times quicker growth than what is anticipated for conventional e -Commerce during this time. Up from the current 10%, social commerce is predicted to represent 17% of all e-commerce spending by 2025. According to the survey, developing markets like India and Brazil will experience the strongest growth even while China would continue to be the most developed market in terms of size and maturity. As new business models enable more participation in digital commerce across all spheres of society, "social commerce has the potential to overtake e-commerce in these markets. "According to Accenture, the gross merchandise value of the social commerce market in India is predicted to reach $17 billion by

2025, growing at a rate of 59 percent CAGR." Brazil's market will increase by 30% CAGR to $5 billion throughout that time.

India's fashion industry has long been at the forefront of constantly reinventing, re-strategizing, and realigning itself to rapidly shifting market conditions and shifting consumer needs. Several retail companies have established prosperous online businesses in the fashion sector. Because of their ongoing innovation and technological adoption, the fashion and accessory industry leads the whole e-commerce industry in terms of order volume share. Social commerce is also seeing a rise in the use of user-curated platforms like Lyst, The Fancy, and Pinterest. Users can make and share product lists for other shoppers on these websites that are specifically geared toward shopping. When the items a user has pinned go on sale, Pinterest's function notifies the user. According to statistics, almost 75% of social media users first learned about fashion via online resources and influencers before.

Customers can choose from a variety of alternatives to help them make quicker selections by getting a realistic representation of how the accessories and clothing will look on them when shopping online. The expansion of the Metaverse will increase the use of digital avatars and make it easier for fashion merchants to capitalize on this fad by selling the digital attire and avatars that are popular on these platforms. Since there are influencers, celebrities, and bloggers with sizable fan bases, social commerce can affect consumer behaviour. The followers of these influencers are inspired by their lifestyle, clothing, and even their views in addition to believing in their fashion and remarks. Additionally, the majority of these influencers support brands, which influences the sales of goods and services. Social commerce makes it simple for customers to share a look, a design, or even a unique combination with others on the same platform while displaying the product they intend to buy.

Companies see social commerce as a way to expand the market, but consumers see it as a way to buy high-quality goods at a significant discount with no difficulty. Another factor contributing to product costs being high is the offline market's extensive chain. Large discounts, comfort, and quality are all offered to customers when they shop online. Social commerce has altered consumers' perspectives. The main focus is to analyse the consumers' buying behaviour while they purchase clothes from social commerce platforms like Facebook, Instagram, etc and how social commerce is useful when we compare it with other E-commerce platforms.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Around half of the world's population is using social media and exploring the world. Social Commerce is a sub-segment of e-commerce that is now spreading to all online users. Online shopping is not a new concept but now many have begun shopping through the available social media platforms. According to surveys, there will be an approximation of a $790 billion increase in the social commerce market by 2025. Social interaction with entrepreneurs has changed several people's shopping patterns, especially in the clothing industry. Consumers' buying behaviour and expenditure patterns can be affected by switching to social commerce platforms.

This research aims to study the effect of social commerce platforms on consumer buying behaviour and cost-effectiveness with special reference to the clothing industry. The increase in the number of clothing shops on social media platforms, the opportunity to interact, and frictionless checkout may have made certain changes in the consumption pattern of people. This study is helpful to analyse the effect of social commerce on consumer behaviour towards apparel selection and the cost-benefit of consumers who are engaged in social commerce platforms.

1.3 OBJECTIVES

1) To analyse the effect of social commerce on the consumer's buying behaviour and apparel selection.

2) To determine the cost-effectiveness of shopping from social commerce platforms.

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1. Theory of reasoned action

According to the Theory of reasoned action of Fishbein & Ajzen (1975), beliefs, attitudes, intentions, and behaviour form a causal chain, so beliefs lead to attitudes, and attitudes, in turn, lead to intentions and thus behaviour. This theory was developed to explain how a consumer leads to a certain buying behaviour and is structured using the basic assumption that humans behave in a conscious way and consider all available information. The theory states that

consumers take a decision to purchase a commodity only after analysing all the information available. This theory shows that consumer is always rational in their actions. Fishbein & Ajzen's theory is important for our study as it shows what motivates consumer behaviour and helps us understand the importance of reason and information in rational decision-making.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

The study is conducted to analyse the effects of social commerce platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Meesho, etc on shopping among consumers. Here both primary and secondary sources is used for data collection. Primary data is collected from 100 samples who come under the age group of 15 to 60. This sample of people has been chosen from the city of Kochi. Purposive sampling technique is used for the study as we are looking to examine a diverse range of cases that are all relevant to this particular study. The city of Kochi has been chosen for this study. The study was conducted from the beginning of July to the end of November in the year 2022. The questionnaire was prepared using Google Forms which measures various aspects such as consumer behaviour, consumer preferences in clothing, use of social commerce apps, the cost-effectiveness of shopping, customer relationships, and customer satisfaction. Statistical tools such as percentages, pie diagrams, and bar charts are used to summarise the results to predict a conclusion. Secondary sources of data include various unpublished sources and internet resources.

1.6 LIMITATIONS

1. The study was concentrated in Kochi city alone due to time constraints

2. Lack of reliable data due to lack of prior research on the subject.

1.7 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dong, Esfidani, & Izadi, (2021) study explains the types of communication that affect shopping outcomes in collaborative online shopping. It deals with the social interaction and communication happening on social commerce platforms. In this research, they study different types of communication activities consumers are engaged in, outcomes of co-shoppers'

communication activities, and how technologies and co-shoppers' group structure affect communication. They categorized co-shoppers' communication into two types: task-oriented and socio-emotional. And then puts forward the typology of shopping group structure in collaborative online shopping. Task-oriented communication is "directly relevant to the problems of adaptation and instrumental control" [Huang et al. 2011 p. 4], while socio-emotional communication is "relevant to the problems of expression of emotional reactions and tensions and maintenance of group integration" [Huang et al. 2011, p. 4]. Many prefer to shop together than shopping all alone. From this study, we get to the conclusion that people who shop together engage in socio-emotional and task-oriented communication.

Jain, (2014) study consumer behaviour on social commerce platforms with special reference to f-commerce (Facebook commerce). The study also discusses different types, drivers, and trends of f-commerce. This research studies all options available on Facebook which help one to get into social commerce. The main focus of this research is to study consumer behaviour in f-commerce. This research concludes that consumers are willing to participate in marketing initiatives on Facebook, consumers are using social tools and can have an interactive experience on this platform, and the maximum no. of people using f-commerce is the young generation they also came to the conclusion that there are many people who are still not aware of social commerce or f-commerce.

Sikaria, (2022) in his article states that social commerce has spread worldwide and can influence consumer behaviour. In social commerce, unlike e-commerce, consumers have the opportunity to interact with the shopkeepers. This article states that according to the Indian Brand Equity Foundation, approximately 28 percent of India's millennials buy products on the basis of social media endorsements. Here social commerce is expressed as a 'hyper value platform' where the supply chain and distribution chain is cut out. This is more economical for the consumers. Sellers are also benefited from this platform as their initial investment will be minimal. The resellers are more benefited one, their investment maybe even be zero, and they only need a laptop or a mobile with an internet connection. They don't need a warehouse, an office, or staff and can set their own profit margins.

S. Diwanji & Cortese, (2021) study the impact of the review presentation model on social commerce platforms. There are four different formats of presentation of consumer reviews: text, images, text with images, and video reviews. This study provides new perspectives, models, and insights on consumer responses to and reliance on consumer-generated reviews in

different presentation formats on social commerce platforms, especially in the COVID-19 era. This research also puts forward and discusses important managerial implications for online shops and brands which helps them to stay ahead in presentation trends. The research concludes that video reviews are more effective. This research contributed toward developing a more enhanced understanding of the concept of consumer-generated brand co-creation, within social commerce platforms. The research further studied and made to the conclusion that brands and vendors on social commerce websites should carefully consider different presentation formats of consumer-generated content as part of their overall advertising strategy. On social commerce platforms, recommendations, ratings, and reviews play vital roles to build trust, which in turn affect shoppers' perceptions, attitudes, and purchase intentions.

Huang & Benyoucef, (2012) study offers to explain the concept of social commerce, track its nascent state-of-the-art, and discuss relevant design features as they relate to e-commerce and Web 2.0. They propose a new model and a set of principles for guiding social commerce design. They also apply the model and guidelines to two leading social commerce platforms, Amazon and Starbucks on Facebook. The findings indicate that, for any social commerce website, it is critical to achieving a minimum set of social commerce design features. These design features must cover all the layers of the proposed model, including the individual, conversation, community, and commerce levels.

Jun Chen & Xiao-Liang Shen, (2015) study the impact of Consumers' Decisions in Social Commerce Context. This study looks into the determinants of social commerce from a relational perspective. In social commerce, the relationship between customers' decisions plays an important role. The decisions of consumers regarding the purchase of a product can be dependent on their friends, relatives, and social media influencers. People share their experiences and feedback through social media platforms, which helps other consumers decide on the product. This relation is only seen in social commerce platforms. This article by Jun Chen and Xiao-Liang tries to examine this relational perspective of social commerce. The main objective of the study is to show social commerce promotes relationship building and the impact of these relational factors in social shopping.

Raed S. Algharabat & Nipendra P. Rana, (2020) in the study Social Commerce in emerging markets and its impact on online community engagement studies the emergence of social commerce and its influence on online community engagement. Social support theory, trust

theory, social presence theory, flow theory, and the self-dominant logic theories were used to propose the study. The study concludes that social commerce has a positive influence on social support, community members' trust, and social presence. The study also reveals that recommendations and referrals have the most significant impact on social commerce that is in social commerce platforms consumers believe in others' recommendations and feedback.

Nick Hajli, (2015) in the study of social commerce constructs and consumer's intention to buy, tries to build social commerce constructs and look at the role of these constructs on trust and intention to buy. The research investigates the new branch of e-commerce; social commerce and to offer more knowledge of social commerce. In the study, social commerce constructs are forums and communities, ratings, recommendations, and reviews. This research also investigates the role of social interactions of customers through social commerce constructs to develop a trust factor in e-commerce. In this context, trust is taken as the critical aspect of the study. The study concludes that consumers are using social networking sites to share feedback, knowledge, pieces of information, and experience about a product or a service with other consumers.

1.8 SCHEME OF STUDY

The first chapter consists of a general introduction, the need for the study, the objective of the study, the scope of the study, methodology, limitations, and a review of the literature.

The second chapter consists of an overview of Social Commerce, Consumer behaviour, expenditure patterns of consumers, and various other aspects related to social commerce.

The third chapter consists of a detailed graphical study of the responses received from the questionnaire.

The fourth chapter includes the findings, recommendations, and conclusion of our study.

The last part of the study includes the appendix.

1.9 CONCLUSION

Social commerce is a brand-new form of online business that varies substantially from conventional traditional e-commerce. The heart of marketing has shifted from brand awareness to community recognition and from brand marketing to relationship management as a result of the rising trend known as social commerce, in which buyers and sellers are connected via online social networks. Social commerce is a brand-new type of online trade that is fundamentally distinct from the familiar traditional e-commerce. Through this study, we expect to find the change in consumer behaviour and the motivation behind apparel selection as a result of personal interaction and influences from social commerce platforms.

CHAPTER-2

SOCIAL COMMERCE -AN OVERVIEW

2.1 WHAT IS SOCIAL COMMERCE?

Social Commerce uses websites such as Whatsapp, Facebook ,Instagram and Meesho etc to sell and promote products. In E-commerce platforms like Amazon,Flipkart etc,relationships are usually a one-way platform. Social Commerce websites help for a two-way interaction between the producer and consumer. In social commerce platforms, the consumer can interact directly with the producer without the involvement of any middleman. Through social commerce platforms, one can interact, bargain and question the producer regarding the product. Estimates show that the global value of social commerce will reach about $2.9 trillion by 2026.

2.2 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOCIAL COMMERCE AND E-COMMERCE

E-commerce is an acronym that stands for "Electronic Commerce".E-Commerce platforms help businesses and consumers by buying and selling products through the internet. Social Commerce is a subset of E-Commerce. Social commerce too helps to sell and buy products through the internet,the difference being the lack of middlemen present. Unlike E-commerce platforms, producers can sell their goods and services directly to the producer. Examples of social commerce platforms are Instagram, Facebook Marketplace, Whatsapp etc. Here the consumers have the freedom to interact,bargain and question the producer regarding their products directly.This sort of interaction is not possible in E-commerce platforms.

2.3 WHY IS SOCIAL COMMERCE ON THE RISE?

According to a 2020 PWC survey, consumers who are shopping using social media channels are rising. However, the popularity of social media for communication and purchasing has escalated further as a result of the epidemic and social isolation. Social media use has increased for 58% of consumers, and for 86% of those, it is anticipated to continue to increase even after isolation restrictions are lifted. It is impossible to dismiss the potential of social media as a sales channel. Paypal revealed that 80% of internet retailers in Indonesia only engage in social e-commerce. According to a report by McKinsey, at least $3 billion will be spent on social commerce, with customers making purchases using platforms including BlackBerry Messenger, Facebook, Instagram, Line, and WhatsApp. The three most popular social media sites in the world—Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp—have a combined 7 billion active

users, according to Hootsuite. The potential audience for dishonest people on social media alone is enormous. Like conventional marketers, counterfeiters try to drive customers to third-party websites by setting up accounts on various platforms. Such accounts frequently link to landing pages for social media references that direct users to other e-commerce or third-party payment websites. The mistrust that consumers have for conventional e-commerce advertising is exploited by local commerce. 92 percent of consumers worldwide say they trust earned media, such as recommendations from friends and family, over all other types of advertising, according to Nielsen's Global Trust in Advertising survey. This is not shocking given that social media advertising is not tarred with the same brush as traditional advertising. By paying for positive evaluations through bots and even increasing sales volume through fictitious transactions, counterfeiters bolster their reputations. Keeping an eye on illegal activity is difficult. In Southeast Asia, the majority of social media platforms do not demand identity verification, therefore imposters can create bogus profiles while remaining anonymous. Facebook Inc. recently informed the U.S. Over a three-month period, the House Committee on Energy and Commerce claimed to have deleted 1.3 billion false accounts.

Through closed groups like those on Facebook, fake vendors can also establish a hidden network for distribution and sales. Groups allow criminal networks to exert some kind of control since they may be configured so that prospective members must respond to a series of questions before being admitted. Administrators can also set a group's visibility to "hidden," which prevents users from finding it through searches. Recent plans by Facebook to launch a shopping feed within its app are intended to make it easier for users to find new things and buy them. Greetings from the social commerce frontier. Recently, the term "social commerce" has become somewhat of a buzzword in the retail sector, and it's easy to understand why: Customers may purchase things wherever it's most convenient for them. Why not allow your clients to make purchases at the websites they already frequent frequently? New features like purchasing could aid in Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, and Twitter's efforts to keep you interested in their online communities. Any firm, big or small, may use social commerce to boost sales since it seamlessly mixes entertainment, interpersonal relationships, and shopping into one seamless experience.

2.4 ADVANTAGES OF SOCIAL COMMERCE:

2.4.1 Improved customer engagement- Social media platforms provide a two-way connection between your company and its customers. It not only aids in the promotion of your goods but also helps your target market connect with them. On these channels, users are more likely to read customer feedback such as reviews, comments, and opinions. This strengthens your company's legitimacy even further and assists customers in making an informed choice. Some channels go above and beyond this, assisting you in creating a smooth purchasing experience. For instance, Instagram just unveiled Shoppable Instagram Feed, which enables you to tag your products found in user-generated content or your own posts and embeds them straight into eCommerce websites. Customers can therefore simply get to the appropriate product page with just two or three clicks.

2.4.2 Consistent audience growth- Building a loyal audience is the main goal of social commerce. According to Kiepo's data, the rate of new user generation in Southeast Asia is 16.98%. These figures unequivocally demonstrate the significance of social media channels in the lives of Generation Z and the ways in which your company may broaden the scope of its advertising and marketing efforts, ultimately exposing your sales efforts to a continually growing user base.It is equally crucial to maintain the same level of engagement with every user who interacts with your business given that you gain new customers through these channels. By employing the appropriate communication techniques, you may help customers connect with your brand and increase the likelihood that they will promote your goods to others.Therefore, having a social commerce plan enables you to roll out new audience growth and reliably keep your current customers.

2.4.3 Increased average order value- There is no doubt that millennials are the main social media users. Businesses and brands are now aware of the characteristics of the millennial market and how to appeal to it.To persuade these customers to shop more online, offer them conveniences like direct checkout, interactive look books, and seamless shopping experiences.Additionally, it raises your average order value (the average amount customers are likely to spend in a single transaction) based on the social media posts from your target market, the simplicity of the purchasing process regardless of the device they use, what their friends and followers are buying right now, etc.The point Is that social media can encourage consumers to spend more money, and you can utilize this data to create better product recommendations

for your customers. You may also turn the datasets into useful insights by linking your multichannel management software with your social media platforms.

2.4.4 Higher search engine ranking- Social media has previously been shown to enhance website traffic and facilitate direct business transactions. How? Improved engagement enables you to tailor content to users' interests, encouraging them to make repeat purchases. You can further benefit from this by creating links, recommendations, feedback, and comments, among other things. Such natural activities increase your digital footprint and raise your search engine rating.

2.4.5 Improved customer insights- Your efforts to analyse and assess company insights are made easier by social commerce. You can measure these channels on a regular basis because they all have ready-made metrics for impressions, engagement, and reach. It enables you to properly segment your audiences and distribute relevant content to each group.You may create an effective plan and decide what is advantageous for your business based on the goals and KPIs you set for social commerce.You can gain precise insights by A/B testing your most recent projects, analysing the relevance of your material, and researching your followers and prospects.In the upcoming years, social commerce is a trend that will only gain strength. According to the Social Commerce Global Market and Trajectory Report, this trend will reach $604.5 billion in 2016.

2.5 DISADVANTAGES OF SOCIAL COMMERCE

True, social media can aid in increasing traffic and sales. However, everyone can see what you do online. It may also imply that your rivals are able to analyse your strategy. They are able to observe your social commerce activities. Due to this, your brand may be overshadowed.Your brand's success on social media may make or ruin it. Nowadays, people are more sensitive. Everybody interprets a post differently. So, even if you did not intend to offend someone, your post nonetheless might be perceived as such. Many different brands have fallen victim to this. Thus, their sales drastically decreased. Therefore, you must make sure that your message is unmistakable.The benefits that social commerce provides can be easily overlooked. However, relying just on likes and comments to increase purchases is risky. Keep in mind that not everything converts. Therefore, you cannot assume that all of your paid advertisements or all

of your comments will result in purchases. You'll be able to avoid disappointment when you keep this in mind.

2.6 SOCIAL COMMERCE AND CLOTHING INDUSTRY

There has been high growth in the digital world in the past years. The world is moving at a fast pace, making it highly digital-oriented. The use of numerous social media platforms has increased at a high rate. Nowadays buying and selling commodities online has grown with the use of social media platforms. Seamless checkout is another factor that makes social commerce preferable because it eliminates the number of steps that should be followed on other platforms. Many reports have confirmed that 75 percent of social media users' fashion knowledge is guided by influencers. Now every sort of business joins social media for marketing and the clothing industry is one among them. Like, shares, comments, and feedback are important social commerce tools.

In the clothing industry, frequent changes occur and social media is the most convenient way to communicate. Social media provides a vast outlook of consumers' likes and preferences. So many individuals and organizations sell clothes directly through social media platforms. There is an increase in the online cloth industry. Especially during and after the covid pandemic, there has been an increase in online cloth stores that offers a wide variety of clothes. Social media platforms grant, shops and brands to build up their customer relationships to engage large crowds. The main advantage while purchasing through social media platforms is that the users can have social interaction with the retailers. While purchasing through social media platforms rather than buying what they provide the users can purchase customized clothes. Even many top brands and designers join the social media platforms. They use these social media platforms as new effective marketing strategies. Social media and the clothing industry are highly interdependent on each other. Through social media, top brands and designers study the trends and consumer behaviour that guide them to compete with each other.

2.7 SOCIAL COMMERCE AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

The emergence of social commerce has led to changes in both consumer and business. Social Commerce has opened a new space that helps consumers have a direct and effective route to an instant shopping experience. Social commerce, in a nutshell, offers consumers of today what they want. Social media companies keep adding new options and functionalities to make shoppers' purchases easier. Understanding consumer behaviour in social commerce has become essential for all businesses engaged in this platform. Consumer Behaviour comprises how consumers' emotions, attitudes, and preferences affect their buying behaviour. Many factors affect buyers' behaviour: culture, social, psychological, and personal. Customers also go through many stages before making a final decision. By introducing social commerce, the world is now smaller in our hands but the behaviour of consumers has only grown complicated.

Social Media is the best way to get the latest information about consumers' choices. Consumers can also compare their choices with a wide variety of other alternatives. Finally, the consumer makes the purchase. And it does not end there, the post-purchase stage is where the consumers give feedback and recommendations to others. When a consumer searches for any commodity, social networking sites should be able to attract the customer. A predetermined factor about online buying behaviour is that it is rational, as the consumer searches for information and compares it before purchasing. But rational choices are not always made. There can be impulsive decision-making, here comes the role of attractive and creative posts, content, and designs of shops and brands that influences the customer to make a choice. Consumers are more focused on user-generated content and social engagement. Customer satisfaction plays a pivotal role in social commerce. Online shoppers should know whether their customer is satisfied or not. Only if the customer is satisfied does he/she make another purchase from the same shop.

As Consumer behaviour is not static and varies from one consumer to another, online stores should move according to the changes. Brands and companies use different techniques to understand the current trend and consumer behaviour such as surveys, feedback, and interviews. Hence consumer behaviour is a vital part of social commerce.

2.8 SOCIAL COMMERCE IN THE WORLD

The social commerce industry is predicted to expand steadily over the forecast period, recording a CAGR of 62.4% between 2022 and 2028. In India, it is anticipated to grow by 71.5% annually to reach US$8, 258.8 million in 2022. The social commerce industry is anticipated to grow steadily over the forecast period, recording a CAGR of 62.4% between 2022 and 2028. The country's social commerce GMV will rise from US$8, 258.8 million in 2022 to US$1, 43, 583.3 million by 2028. The country's social commerce GMV will rise from US$8, 258.8 million in 2022 to US$1, 43, 583.3 million by 2028. India is experiencing a growing digital boom, supported by higher internet and smartphone penetration. The expansion of social commerce in India is being aided by the expanding digital boom, which is being supported by greater internet and smartphone penetration. The social commerce market in India is anticipated to soar in the next four to six quarters as the populace there gets increasingly digitally connected, particularly in the underdeveloped tier-2 and tier-3 towns and rural areas. The COVID-19 outbreak has also contributed to the growth of social commerce because it has kept people at home and increased their online time. The Influence of "Influencers" and Celebrity Collaborations - Brands all over the world have realized the potential of influencer marketing. According to reports, the Rs 900 crore business would increase by 25% every year to reach a Rs 2,000 crore industry by 2025.Influencer marketing's power and reach have been recognised by brands all over the world. Celebrity collaborations have also benefited from the influence of "influencers." According to reports, the Rs 900 crore business would increase by 25% every year to reach a Rs 2,000 crore industry by 2025. Retailers are contacting macro and micro-influencers to generate awareness about the goods and eventually boost sales by developing specialized discount coupons and promo codes.

The ability to choose the ideal influencer for the product would be the differentiating aspect. Food bloggers, for instance, can assist in reaching the correct audience by advertising organic walnuts because they can use the product in their recipes and showcase its USP.The shifting customer preferences of Gen Z and millennials, as well as the rising demand for more individualized products, are further factors pushing the social commerce industry. Brands and retailers can target particular populations with their products and offer personalized items thanks to social commerce. As a result of the rapid use of social media platforms, the social commerce industry in India is anticipated to grow rapidly.Numerous well-known companies, like Facebook and Myntra, have also forayed into the Indian social commerce business in an

effort to cash in on the growing popularity of online shopping. Overall, the Indian market is still in its infancy and will change the market's dimensions over the course of the next 24 months.Leading e-commerce firms are expanding into India's social commerce business.

2.9 SOCIAL COMMERCE IN INDIA

In India, the social commerce market is expected to grow rapidly, and major e-commerce firms are starting to take notice. Through acquisitions or the development of new verticals, large retailers and e-commerce businesses are utilizing the potential of social commerce.Myntra, an online apparel store owned by Walmart, announced its foray into social commerce at scale in November 2021. The business also introduced M- Live, a ground-breaking interactive and real-time purchasing experience for its customers, as part of its entrance into social commerce.

The debut of Shopsy, a different platform for social commerce that enables people to start their online business without investment, was announced in July 2021 by Flipkart, another big online retailer owned by Walmart.

YouTube also made a foray into the world of commerce in July 2021 when it bought SimSim, which had raised roughly $17 million prior to the acquisition and was valued at $50.1 million in its 2020 Series B fundraising round. SimSim is a social commerce start-up that uses creators and videos to assist small companies in making the switch to online shopping.Meesho is the industry leader in social commerce in India at the moment. Its valuation in 2021 has already doubled, going from $2.1 billion in April to $4.2 billion in September, all while raising about $570 million in Series F funding. As a result, big businesses like Flipkart are going head-to-head with businesses like Meesho, SimSim, GlowRoad, and many more in the social commerce space, driving up competition.Local startups are profiting from the rise in social commerce demand In India, the social commerce market is still in its infancy and is developing quickly. After realizing the potential of social commerce, a large number of domestic businesses and start-ups rushed fast to seize this chance. More than a dozen start-ups with a focus on social commerce, including B2B, B2C, and C2C, have emerged in the past eight quarters. Local social commerce start-ups have reportedly earned more than $100 million in capital by enlisting roughly 10 million resellers, according to estimates.Social commerce will become increasingly popular in India over time, and major businesses are already keeping an eye on this enormous potential market. However, businesses backed by well-known brands like Myntra and Facebook are also attempting to join the expanding social commerce field but

are encountering difficulties because of their do-it-yourself business strategy. The local start-ups can offer the necessary support and have much deeper on-the-ground insights on consumer behaviour than big brands, which is crucial if a company wants to penetrate the local markets of India. The sellers in India, especially from tier 2 & 3 cities and rural areas, require some support to transition into the digital world.

CHAPTER-3

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

OF DATA ON SOCIAL COMMERCE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of collected data from the respondents. Questions were prepared to satisfy the general objective of the study such as to analyze the effect of social commerce and personal interaction on the consumer's buying behaviour and to determine the cost-effectiveness of shopping. Based on the survey collected from 100 respondents, analysis is done in form of tables and bar graphs Explanations are also provided for a better understanding and analysis of the data.

FIGURE 3.1 AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS
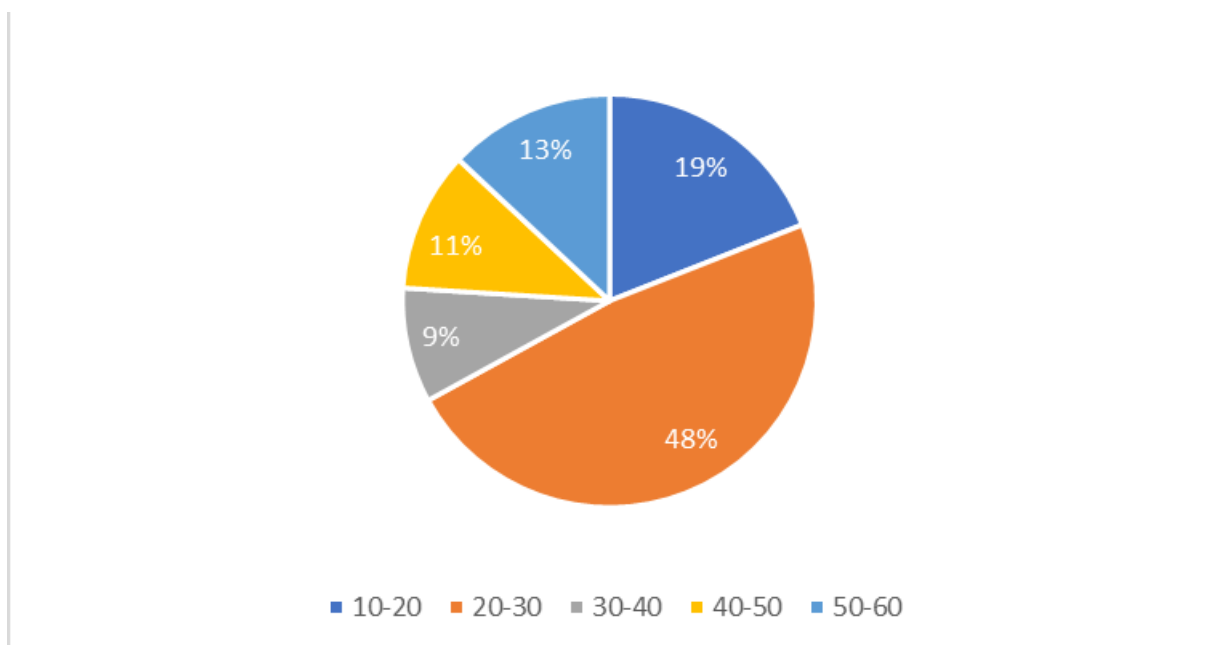
The result reveals that the majority of the 100 respondents are between the age group of 20 - 30 years. From the above bar diagram among the respondents, we can see that students and the working class are the ones who use social commerce platforms the most. At the same time, people between the age group 45-60 are also engaged and their engagement is increasing in social commerce platforms for shopping. The use of social commerce has no age barriers. Those with a smartphone/device can engage in social commerce platforms.

TABLE 3.2 GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS

| Gender	Number of respondents	Percentage
Male	34	34%
Female	66	66%

Source: Primary Data
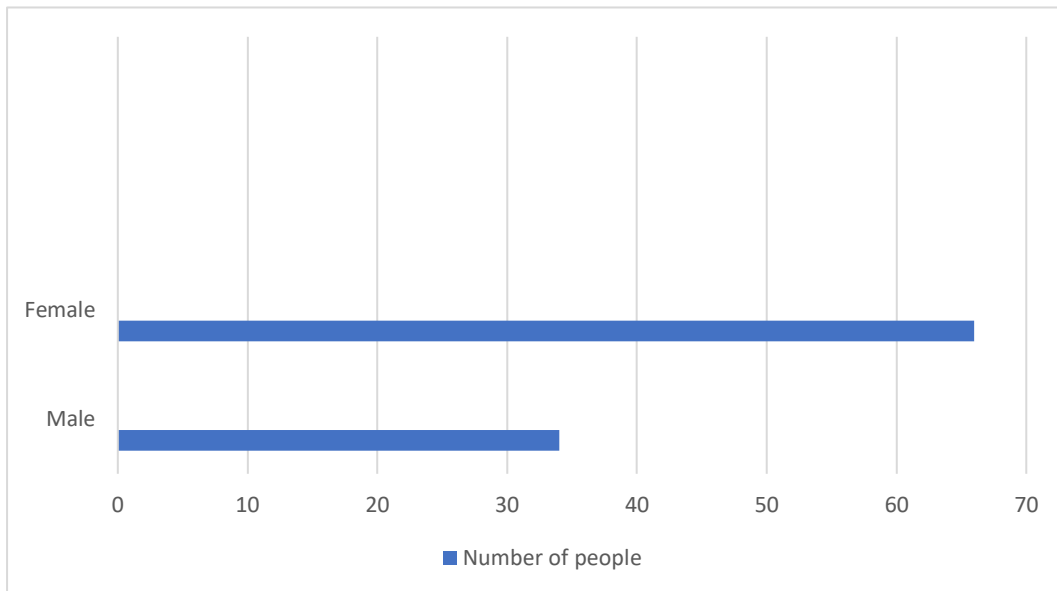
The above bar diagram reveals that out of 100 respondents, 66% were females and 34% were males. More than 50% of females prefer to use social commerce platforms, more when compared to males who constitute only 34%.

TABLE 3.3 MONTHLY INCOME

Monthly Income (in Rupees)	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 20,000	42	42%
20,000-50,000	31	31%
50,000-1,00,000	22	22%
More than 1,00,000	5	5%

Source: Primary Data
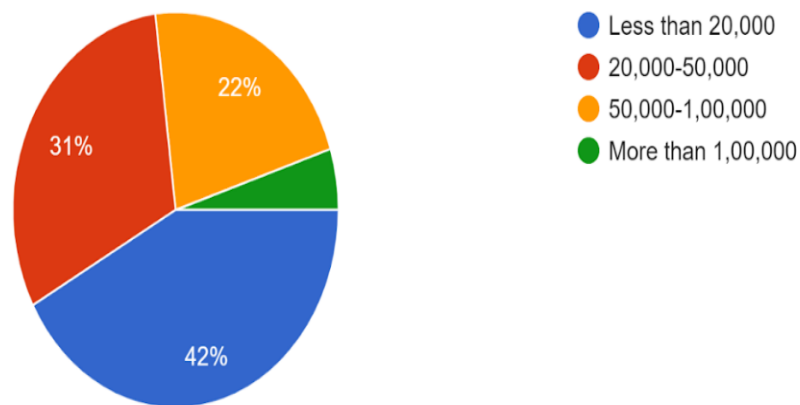
The above pie diagram reveals that out of 100 respondents, 42% earn monthly income less than Rs. 20,000, 31% earn income between Rs. 20,000-50,000, 22% earn between Rs. 50,000-1,00,000 and 5% earn more than Rs.1,00, 000.The majority of our respondents earn less than 20,000.

TABLE 3.4 AMOUNT SPENT ON A SINGLE ONLINE PURCHASE

Expenditure (In Rupees)	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 1000	50	50%
1000-3000	46	46%
3000-5000	2	2%
5000-10,000	1	1%
More than 10,000	1	1%

Source: Primary Data
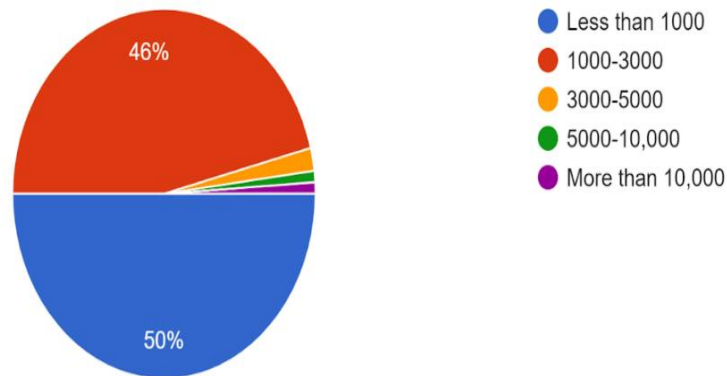
The above pie diagram reveals that 50% of the respondents spent less than 1000 rupees on a single online purchase and 46% of respondents spent between 1000 - 3000 rupees. A very small percentage of people spent more than 3000 rupees on a single purchase. This data guides us to the conclusion that half of the respondents are only willing to spend less than 1000 rupees for a purchase.

3.5 SHOPPING VIA E-COMMERCE PLATFORMS

| Do you shop via E-commerce platforms	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	81	81%
No	19	19%

Source: Primary Data
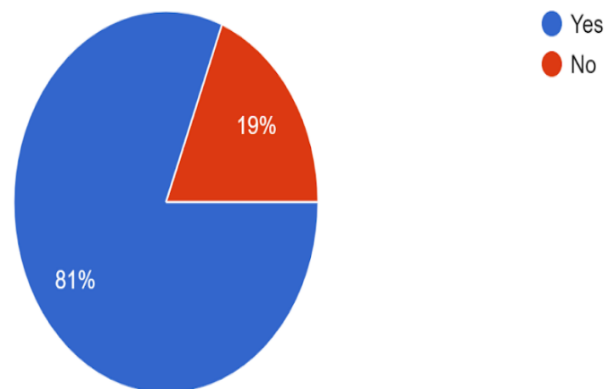
Based on the survey done out of 100 respondents, 81% of the respondents shop through social commerce platforms and 19% of respondents do not shop via social commerce platforms. The majority of the respondents are engaged in social commerce platforms but there is still a small percentage of respondents who don't shop via social commerce. Even though the use of social commerce platforms is becoming common, out of the 100 respondents there is still a small percentage of people who don't shop via social commerce.

TABLE 3.6 SOCIAL COMMERCE PLATFORMS VERSUS CONVENTIONAL PLATFORMS

| Preference for social commerce	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	77	77%
No	23	23%

Source: Primary Data
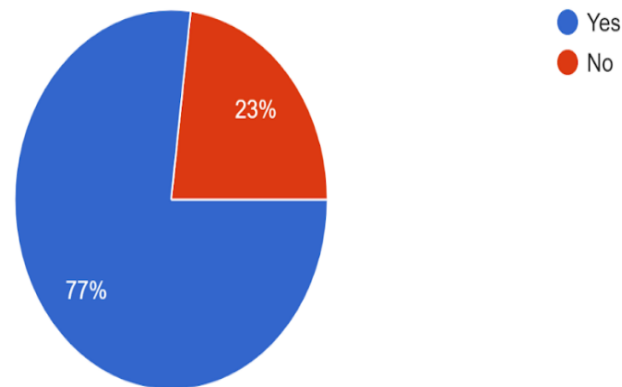
The above figure reveals that out of 100 respondents, 77% of respondents prefer using social commerce platforms over conventional online platforms and 23% of respondents prefer conventional online platforms. Among the 100 respondents, more than half of the people prefer to shop via social commerce platforms where the consumer can interact with the seller. This shows the emergence of social commerce platforms and the preference for personal shopping experiences by consumers.

TABLE 3.7 TYPE OF COMMODITY

| Type of Commodity	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Clothing	83	83%
Cosmetics	31	31%
Utilities	34	34%
Others	46	46%

Source: Primary Data
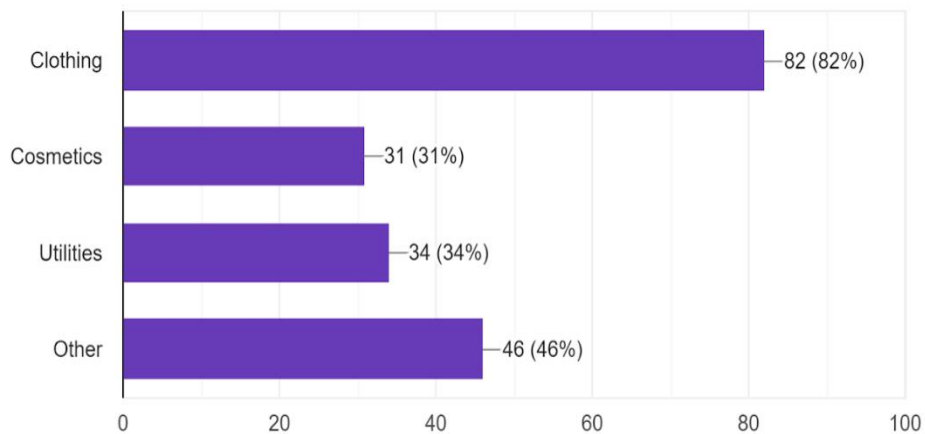
From the data collected out of 100 respondents, 82% of the respondents prefer to buy clothes instead of cosmetics, utilities, etc through social commerce platforms. Based on the survey conducted it is evident that a majority of the respondents engage in social commerce to buy clothes. 31% of respondents use social commerce platforms to shop for cosmetic items. 34% of respondents shop for utilities and 46% of respondents use social commerce platforms to shop for other commodities. Thus, clothing constitutes a majority due to reasons like increased choices, convenience, ability to compare etc.

TABLE 3.8 FREQUENCY OF SHOPPING IN A MONTH

| Frequency of Shopping	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Once	66	66%
Twice	24	24%
Thrice	5	5%
More than thrice	5	5%

Source: Primary Data
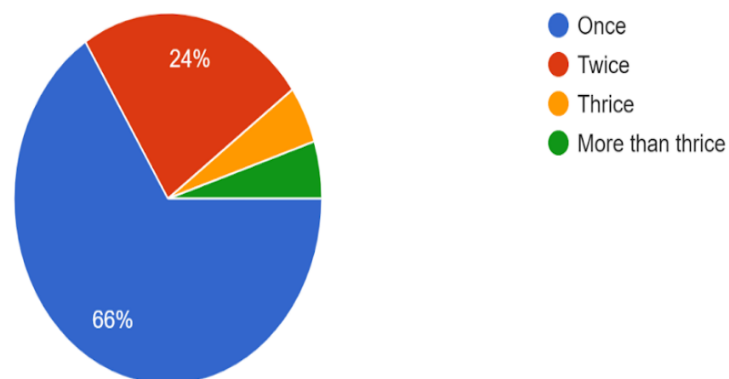
Based on the survey done, it was found that out of 100 respondents 66% of them shop once a month, 24% of respondents shop twice a month and only 10% of respondents shop more than twice a month. Most respondents shop online only once a month.

TABLE 3.9 RATING OF ONLINE SHOPPING

| Rating	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Excellent	34	34%
Average	64	64%
Poor	2	2%

Source: Primary Data
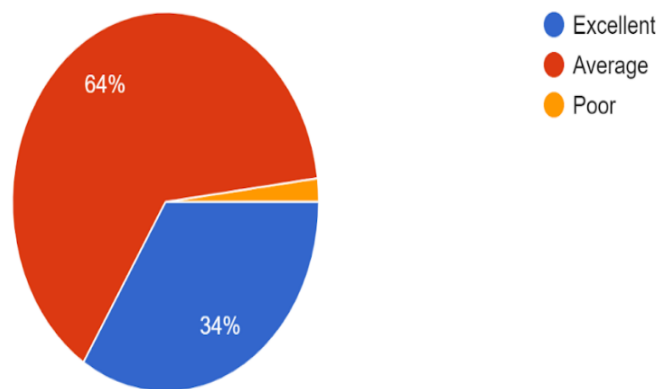
From the data collected 64% of respondents give an 'average' rating for the overall online shopping experience. The above table reveals the rating for online shopping.34% of the respondents give an 'excellent' rating for online shopping. The majority of the samples give an average rating and only 2% give a 'poor' rating for online shopping. Through this, we can conclude that the majority of the respondents have had a decent online shopping experience.

TABLE 3.10 FEATURES OF ONLINE SHOPPING

| Features	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Personal Interaction	32	32%
Transparency	35	35%
Design	17	17%
Credibility	26	26%
Social networking Integrations	13	13%
All of the above	46	46%

Source: Primary Data
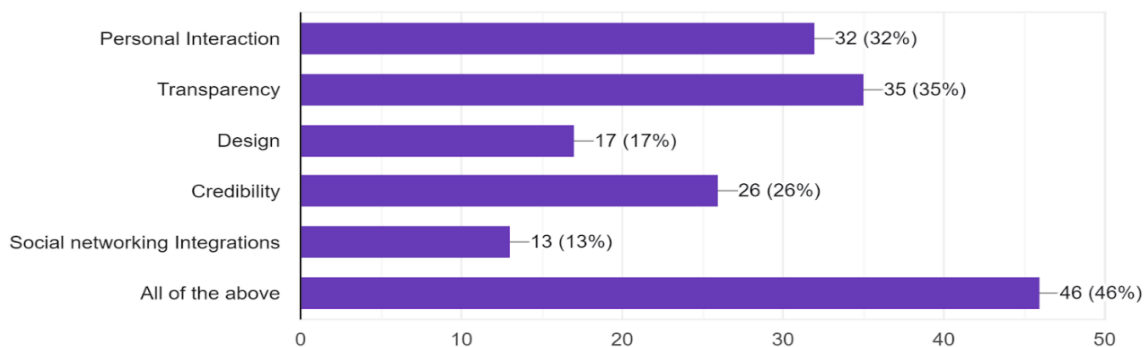
From the analysis we can see Personal interaction, Transparency, design, credibility and social networking integrations are necessary features for online Shopping. The above table shows that 32% of the respondents prefer personal interaction as an important feature in online shopping.35% of the sample prefer transparency as a necessary feature. Only 17% of the respondents prefer design. 26% of them prefer credibility and 13% prefer social networking integrations as an important feature. The majority of the respondents (46%) reveal that all the above-mentioned features are necessary for online shopping. This shows that personalization and transparency play a crucial role in a consumer's shopping experience.

TABLE 3.11 EXPENDITURE PATTERN ON SOCIAL COMMERCE PLATFORMS

| Expenditure Pattern	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Increased	56	56%
Decreased	44	44%

Source: Primary Data
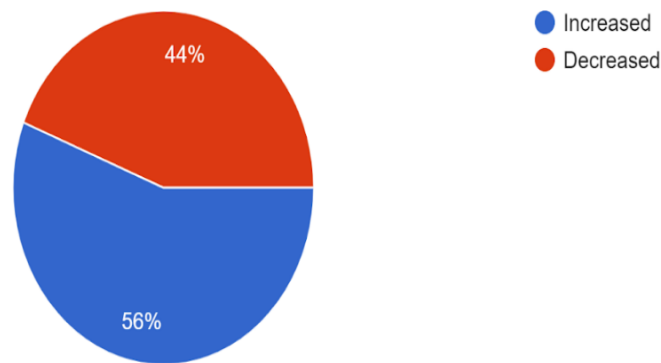
After engaging in social commerce, the expenditure pattern of 56% of the respondents has increased. The table above mentioned reveals the relationship between social commerce and expenditure pattern. After shopping through social commerce platforms, the majority of respondents believe that their expenditure has increased. 44% of the respondents' expenditure has decreased. The majority of the respondents' expenditure has increased. It may be due to the increased number of hours spent on social commerce platforms.

TABLE 3.12 INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL INTERACTION IN DECISION MAKING

| Helpful in making decisions	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	91	91%
No	9	9%

Source: Primary Data
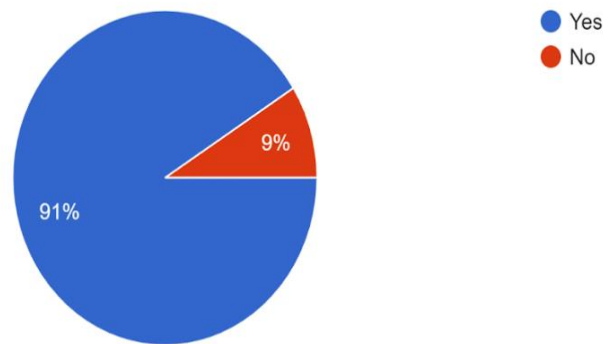
From the data collected 91% of the population responded that social interaction is helpful in making final decisions about the product. The above table reveals the importance of social interaction in making decisions about the product while shopping through social commerce platforms. The majority of the respondents (91%) say that social interaction is helpful in making the right decision and only 9% of them say that it is not helpful in making a decision. As the majority of them agreed with the above statement, social interaction is important in making decisions.

TABLE 3.13 EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

| Effect of social media posts	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Influential	85	85%
Not influential	15	15%

Source: Primary Data
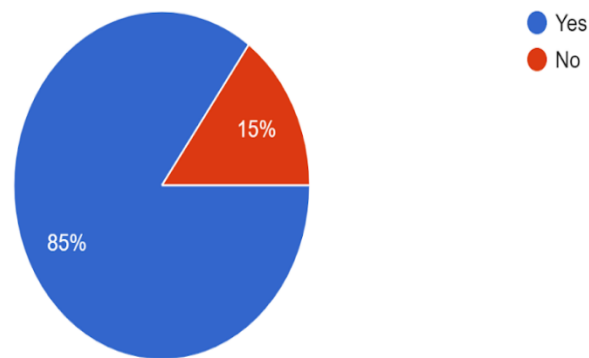
From the data collected it is found that Out of the 100 respondents, 85% of people are influenced by the social media posts of clothing retailers. The table above reveals the influence of social media posts on consumers while shopping on social commerce platforms. Out of 100 respondents, 85% of them say that they get influenced by social media posts, and only 15 % of them say that they are not get influenced by social media posts. Since the majority of them are influenced by social media posts we can say that it plays an important role in consumers shopping through social commerce platforms.

TABLE 3.14 AHEADNESS OF SOCIAL COMMERCE TRENDS

| How ahead are social commerce trends	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Trends are ahead	77	77%
Not ahead	23	23%

Source: Primary Data
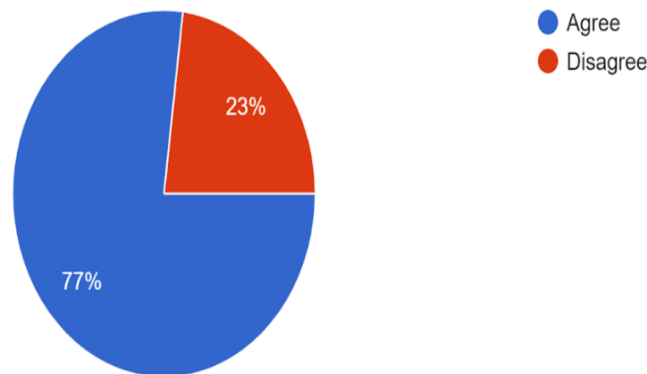
From the table, it can be interpreted that 77% of people agree that social media shopping platforms are ahead of e-commerce on the latest clothing trends. The above table reveals how ahead social commerce trends while compared with traditional E-commerce. 77% of the respondents agree that social commerce trends are ahead of E–commerce. 23% of them do not agree with the above statement. From this, we can state that social commerce trends are becoming more popular than that of E-commerce.

TABLE 3.15 CHOICES FOR CLOTHING AMONG PLATFORMS

| Which platform provides more choices	Number of Respondents	Percentage
E-Commerce	51	51%
Social Commerce	49	49%

Source: Primary Data
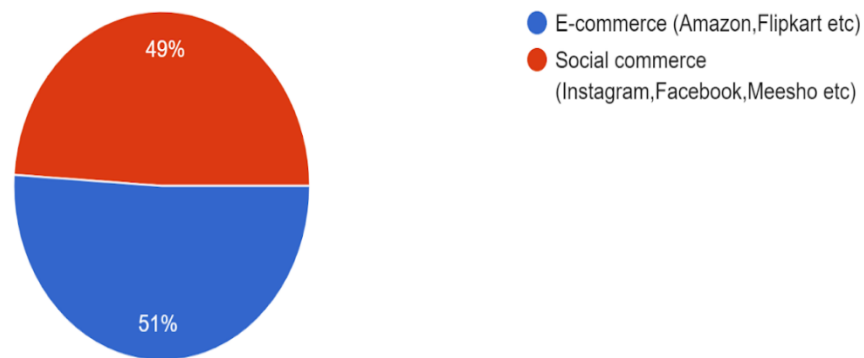
The above figure reveals out of 100 respondents 51% agrees that E-commerce platform such as Amazon, Flipkart etc provides us with more choices for clothing and a close majority (49%) of people considers social commerce platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Meesho etc as platform which provides more choices for clothing. From this we can understand that although social commerce platforms are way ahead in terms of trends, respondents still believe that E-Commerce provides more choices on clothing.

TABLE 3.16 LIKES AND REVIEWS IN BUYING DECISION

| Do likes,reviews and ratings affect buying decisions	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	92	92%
No	8	8%

Source: Primary Data
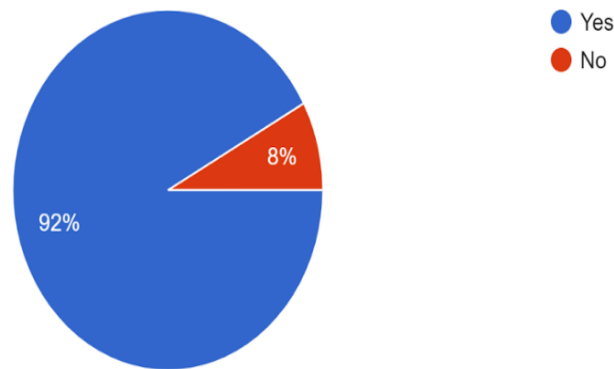
The above figure shows that out of 100 respondents, 92% agrees that likes, reviews and ratings affect their buying decision. Only 8% don't consider likes, reviews and ratings as a factor that affect their buying decision. More than half of the respondents agree with the statement as online reviews by past customers have a strong impact on customers' intentions. Thus, we reach the conclusion that ratings and reviews affect buying decisions of consumers.

TABLE 3.17 COMPARISON BETWEEN SOCIAL COMMERCE AND E-COMMERCE PLATFORMS

| Ratings	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	3	3%
Disagree	5	5%
Neutral	63	63%
Agree	23	23%
Strongly Agree	5	5%

Source: Primary Data
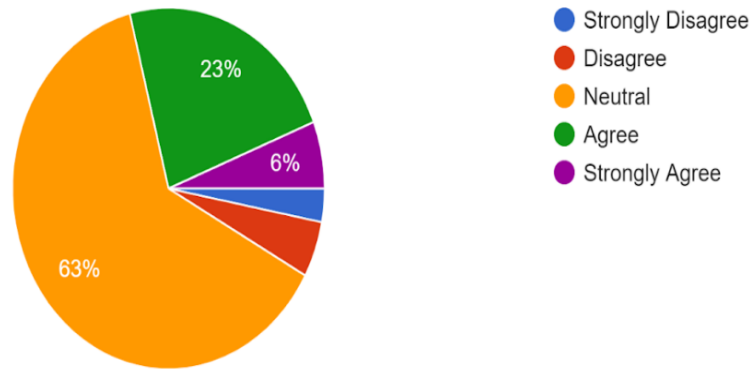
The above figure reveals that out of 100 respondents, 63% of people are having a neutral opinion that shopping on social commerce platforms is better than conventional e-commerce platforms.23% of people agree with this statement and 6% disagree with this statement. But we can see that respondents neither agree nor disagree with this statement.

TABLE 3.18 ADVANTAGES OF INTERACTION WITH THE SELLER

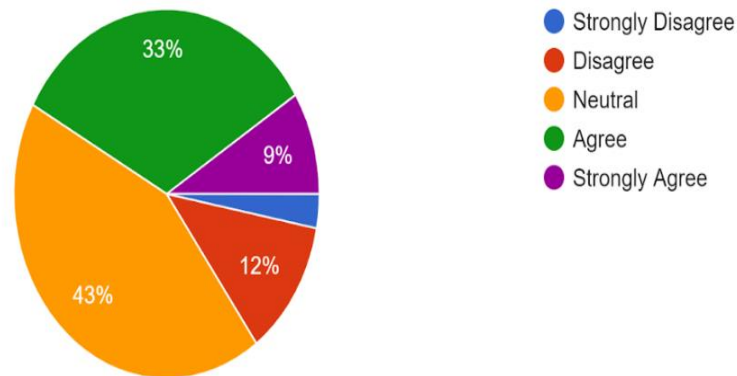| Ratings	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Disagree	4	4%
Neutral	26	26%
Agree	39	39%
Strongly Agree	31	31%

Source: Primary Data
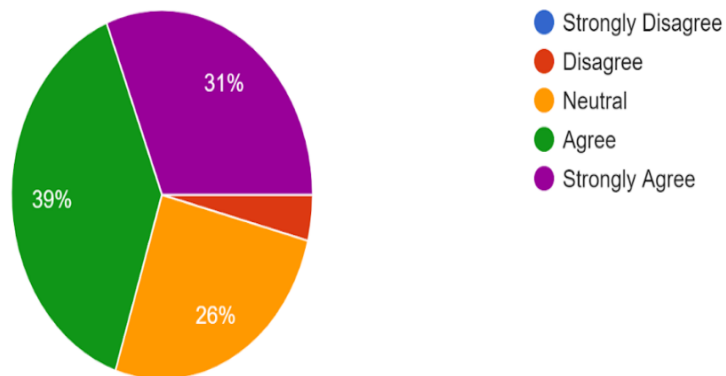
The above figure reveals that out of 100 respondents, 39% of people agree that interaction with the seller provides a greater advantage to social commerce.31%strongly agree with this statement and 26% have a neutral opinion on this statement. From this, it is evident that interaction is a key factor because customer interaction as it not only provides insight into the experience of a particular customer but also adds another data point to customer satisfaction. Thus, we can state that interaction with sellers in social commerce provides great advantages.

TABLE 3.19 AVAILABILITY OF CLOTHING COMMODITIES IN SOCIAL COMMERCE PLATFORMS

| Ratings	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	3	3%
Disagree	12	12%
Neutral	43	43%
Agree	33	33%
Strongly Agree	9	9%

Source: Primary Data

The above figure reveals that out of 100 respondents 43% of people have a neutral opinion on if there are better collections for clothing in social commerce. 33% agree with the statement and 9 % strongly agree. However, 12% disagree with the statement. Thus, in terms of competition for choices and variety, social commerce and E-commerce come quite close.

TABLE 3.20 AFFORDABILITY OF PURCHASING CLOTHING ITEMS

Ratings	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	2	2%
Disagree	11	11%
Neutral	51	51%
Agree	33	33%
Strongly Agree	3	3%

Source: Primary Data
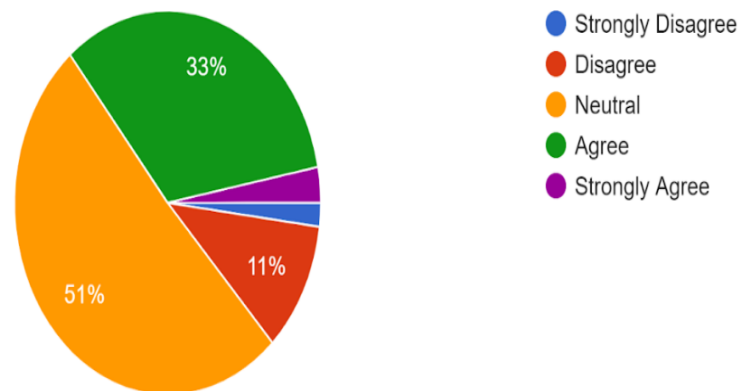
The above figure reveals that out of 100 respondents, 51% of people give a neutral opinion on if clothing from social commerce platforms is affordable. 33% of people agree with this statement and only 11% disagree. From this, it is understood that clothing from social commerce platforms is affordable to some consumers. This can be due to shopping from social commerce platforms being certainly more cost-effective as it gives more options to browse and compare prices. The neutral stand shows that the price competition between social and E-commerce platforms is very high.

TABLE 3.21 EFFECT OF INFLUENCERS AND ADVERTISEMENTS IN BUYING DECISIONS

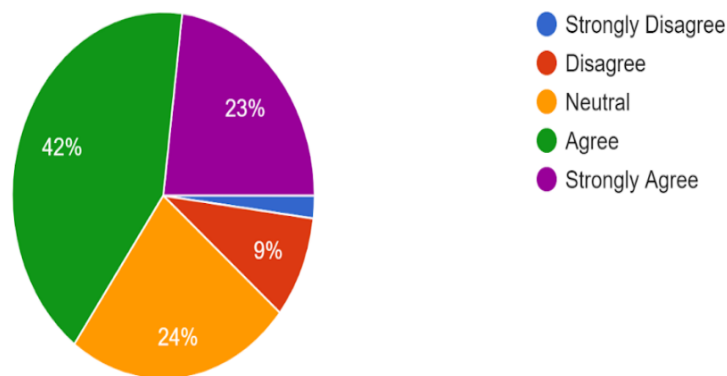| Ratings	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	2	2%
Disagree	9	9%
Neutral	24	24%
Agree	42	42%
Strongly Agree	23	23%

Source: Primary Data

The above figure reveals that out of 100 respondents, 42% of people agree with the statement that influencers and advertisements influence their buying decision. 23% strongly agree,24% of the sample has a neutral opinion and about 9% disagree with the statement. From this, it is evident that influencers and advertisements are a key factor that influences the buying decision of consumers. This can be because consumers are more likely to buy when they get recommendations from a person they trust or admire. Celebrities and popular people inspire their audience and influence their buying decisions. Thus, we conclude that influencers and advertisements influence the buying decision of consumers.

TABLE 3.22 SOCIAL PLATFORMS AND REDUCTION IN MONETARY COSTS

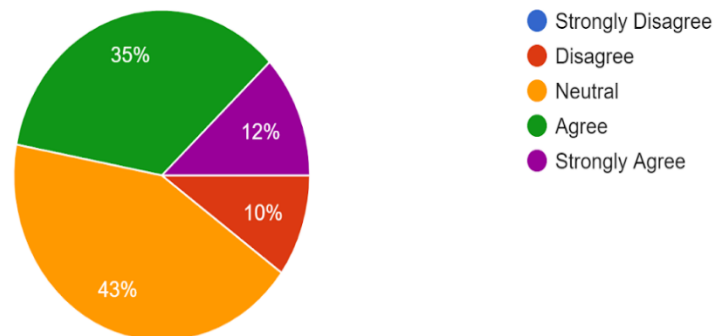| Ratings	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Disagree	10	10%
Neutral	43	43%
Agree	35	35%
Strongly Agree	12	12%

Source: Primary Data

Based on the survey conducted, the above diagram reveals that out of 100 respondents, 35% of respondents agree that there is a reduction in their monetary shopping cost after engaging in social commerce platforms. 43% of respondents have a neutral opinion on the statement and about 10% of respondents disagree with this statement. It drives us to the conclusion that a lot of consumers after engaging in social commerce have experienced a reduction in their monetary cost. At the same time, the majority of the people have a neutral opinion on this which concludes that the monetary costs remain the same before and after engaging in social commerce platforms.

TABLE 3.23 CHANGE IN CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR AFTER ENGAGING IN SOCIAL COMMERCE

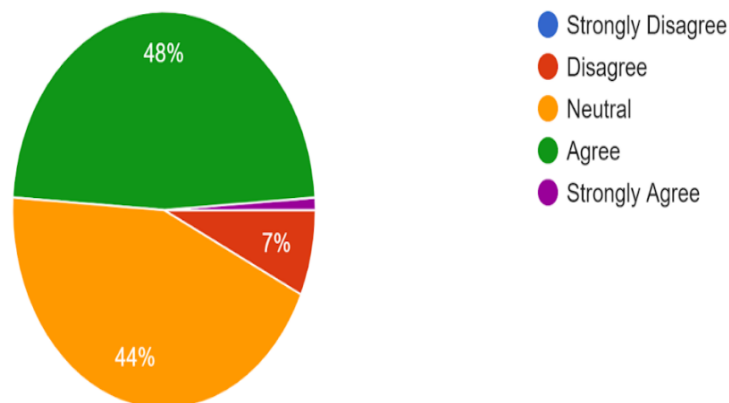| Ratings	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Disagree	7	7%
Neutral	44	44%
Agree	48	48%
Strongly Agree	1	1%

Source: Primary Data

The above diagram reveals out of 100 respondents, 48% agree that shopping through social commerce has increased their decision-making power and buying behaviour. 44% of people have a neutral opinion on the statement, and 7% disagree with this statement. Less than Half of the respondents find that shopping through social commerce has increased their decision-making power and buying decisions in the market. Only a few consumers disagree with this statement. A close majority of people with neutral opinions show that they have not experienced any impact on decision-making power or buying behaviour after engaging in social commerce.

TABLE 3.24 WILLINGNESS TO PURCHASE IN SOCIAL COMMERCE THAN IN TRADITIONAL-SHOPPING

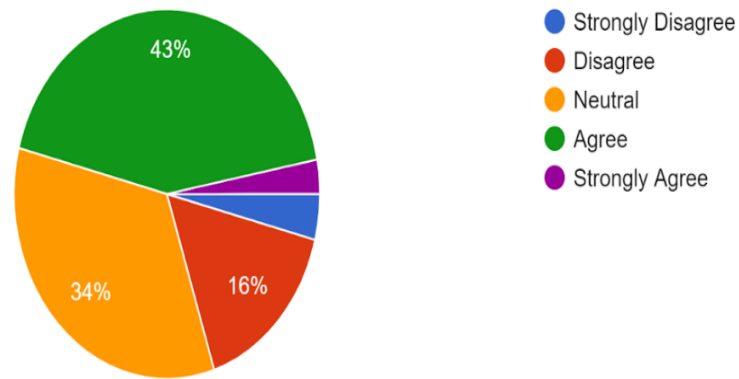| Ratings	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	5	5%
Disagree	16	16%
Neutral	34	34%
Agree	43	43%
Strongly Agree	2	2%

Source: Primary Data
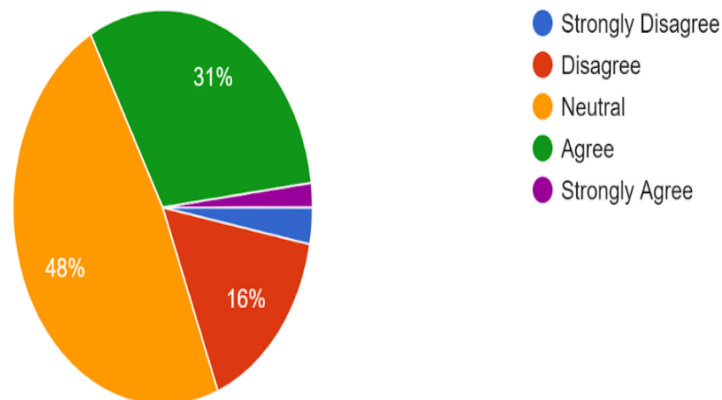

The above diagram reveals that 43% out of 100 respondents agree that willingness to purchase is more in social commerce when compared to traditional commerce. 16% of respondents disagree with this statement. This shows that social commerce provides a more attractive platform for shopping compared to traditional forms. This can be due to increased varieties, comparisons, offers etc.

TABLE 3.25 TRUST TOWARDS ONLINE SHOPPING AFTER ENGAGING IN SOCIAL COMMERCE

Ratings	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	4	4%
Disagree	16	16%
Neutral	48	48%
Agree	31	31%
Strongly Agree	1	1%

Source: Primary Data

The above diagram reveals that out of 100 respondents, 16% of respondents disagree with the statement that their trust towards online shopping has increased after engaging in social commerce which leads to the conclusion that these respondents had a negative experience after engaging in social commerce. A majority of 48% of respondents have a neutral opinion on this statement. Thus, the level of trust obtained from social commerce platforms is still indecisive.

TABLE 3.26 ABSENCE OF MIDDLEMEN IN SOCIAL COMMERCE

Ratings	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	1	1%
Disagree	10	10%
Neutral	24	24%
Agree	44	44%
Strongly Agree	21	21%

Source: Primary Data
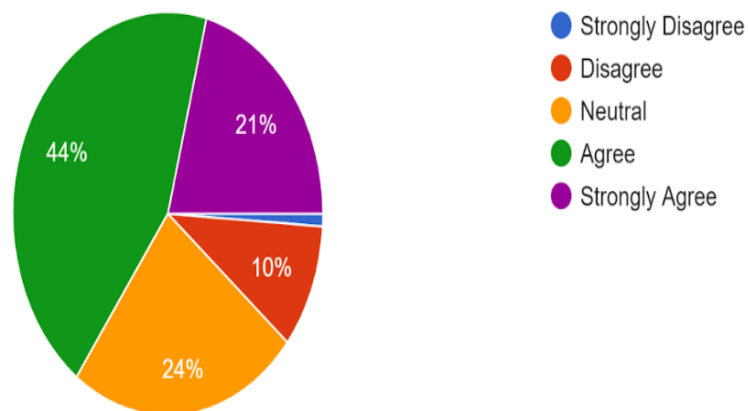
The diagram reveals that out of 100% of respondents, 65% of respondents agree that the lack of middlemen in social commerce leads to a better shopping experience. 24% of respondents have a neutral belief in the statement. Only 11% of consumers disagree which leads to the conclusion that these consumers have a positive experience in the absence of middlemen while shopping.

TABLE 3.27 EFFECT OF CUSTOMER REVIEWS AND TESTIMONIALS IN SOCIAL COMMERCE PLATFORMS

| Ratings	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Disagree	3	3%
Neutral	20	20%
Agree	54	54%
Strongly Agree	23	23%

Source: Primary Data

In the case of 100 respondents, 54% agree that social commerce platform reviews, testimonials, social media posts etc influence shopping.3% disagree,23% strongly agree, 0% strongly disagree, and 20% are neutral. This graph shows that the majority of the consumers get influenced and testimonials and reviews from others play a significant role while shopping on social commerce platforms.

TABLE 3.28 CONSUMER SATISFACTION LEVEL AND SOCIAL COMMERCE

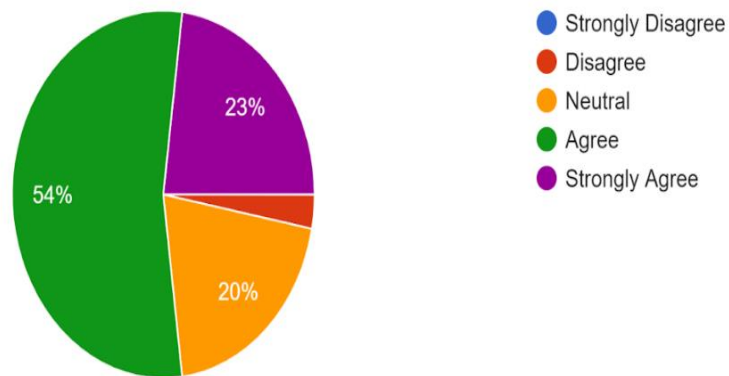| Ratings	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Disagree	7	7%
Neutral	49	49%
Agree	40	40%
Strongly Agree	4	4%

Source: Primary Data
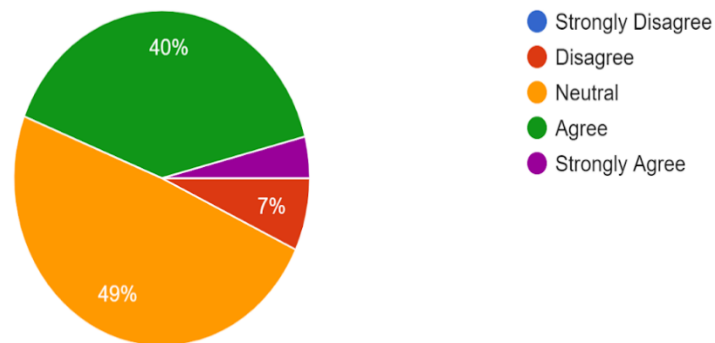
In the case of 100 respondents, 40% agree that there is a change in consumer satisfaction level in social commerce platforms, 7% disagree, 4% strongly agree, 0% strongly disagree and 49% are neutral. The majority of consumers have a neutral stand in terms of a change in customer satisfaction levels through social commerce platforms. But a close majority of the respondents do agree that they experience a change in customer satisfaction levels through social commerce platforms.

TABLE 3.29 COMFORTABILITY OF SHOPPING THROUGH SOCIAL COMMERCE

| Ratings	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Disagree	11	11%
Neutral	51	51%
Agree	32	32%
Strongly Agree	6	6%

Source: Primary Data
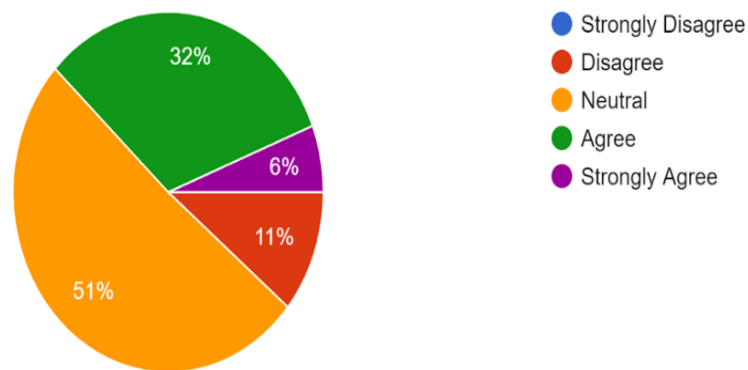
In the case of 100 respondents, 32% agree with the statement social commerce is more comfortable to shop than e-commerce,11% disagree, 6% strongly agree, 0% strongly disagree and 51% are neutral. In comparison to E-Commerce platforms, the majority of the respondents have a neutral response when asked if social commerce platforms are more comfortable. This shows that the majority of consumers are yet to make a distinction in the quality-of-service E-Commerce and Social Commerce platforms provide.

TABLE 3.30 COMPARISON BETWEEN SOCIAL COMMERCE AND E-COMMERCE ON THE BASIS OF QUALITY PRODUCTS

| Ratings	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	1	1%
Disagree	14	14%
Neutral	63	63%
Agree	19	19%
Strongly Agree	3	3%

Source: Primary Data

In the case of 100 respondents, 19% agree with the statement social commerce platforms provide better quality products than e-commerce platforms.14% disagree, 3% strongly agree, 1% strongly disagree and 63% are neutral. In terms of providing quality projects majority of the respondents have a neutral stand to this question. Some agree that social commerce provides better quality products but a close percentage disagree on this opinion. Thus, the respondents' view to this is conflicting.

TABLE 3.31 TRUST TOWARD SOCIAL COMMERCE

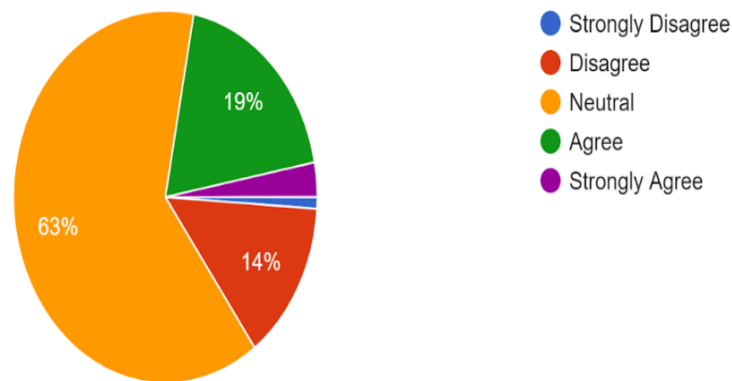| Ratings	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	5	5%
Disagree	19	19%
Neutral	64	64%
Agree	11	11%
Strongly Agree	1	1%

Source: Primary Data
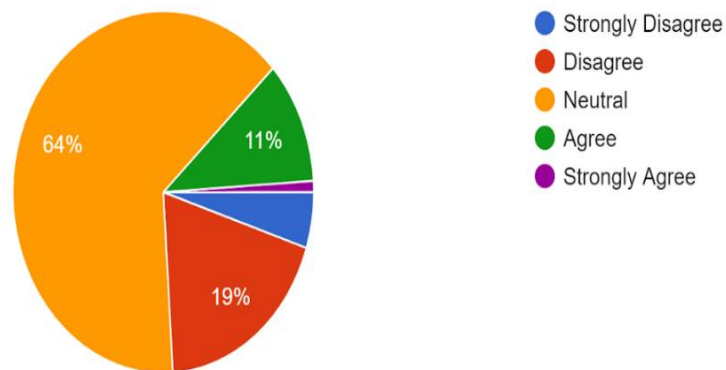
In the case of 100 respondents, 11% agree with the statement social commerce platforms are more trustable,19% disagree, 1% strongly agree, 5% strongly disagree and 64% are neutral. Majority of the respondents had a neutral response when asked if social commerce platforms were more trustable. The second highest percentage of respondents disagree with the opinion that social commerce platforms are more trustable. This might be rooted in reasons like scarcity of established social commerce brands denoting the scope of improvement for social commerce platforms.

CHAPTER-4

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter points out the various findings obtained from the analysis and interpretation of data in the previous chapter and also lists out the suggestions and conclusion

4.2 FINDINGS

- People between the age group 20 – 30 in Kochi are more interested and engaged in social commerce platforms. This includes mainly students and people from the working class.
- Females prefer to use social commerce platforms when compared to men.
- The majority of the respondents spend less than Rs. 1000 for a single online purchase.
- The majority (77%) of respondents prefer using social commerce platforms over conventional platforms.
- The majority of the respondents prefer to buy clothing commodities rather than cosmetics, utilities, etc through social commerce platforms.
- The majority of the respondents find their social commerce shopping experience to be average.
- Personal interaction, Transparency, design, creditability, social networking integrations, etc are found to be necessary features for social commerce.
- After engaging in social commerce, the majority of the respondents reported that their expenditure has increased.
- The majority (91%) of the respondents agree that social media and interaction influence them to make final decisions about the product.
- E-commerce platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, etc provide more choices on clothing than social commerce platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Meesho, etc.
- The majority (92%) of people agree that likes, reviews and ratings have a strong impact on consumers' decision-making.
- While comparing social commerce and E-commerce 63% of people have a neutral opinion about which platform is better for shopping. This shows that people have yet to form an opinion on this matter. This can be because social commerce is still a relatively newer platform.

- Interaction with sellers is a key factor that distinguishes online platforms from social commerce platforms as it provides direct interaction with the seller.

- It is found that Influencers and advertisements have a great influence on consumers' buying decisions.

- After engaging in social commerce platforms 47% of consumers have a reduction in their monetary cost. The majority of respondents' monetary costs have been reduced after engaging in social commerce.

- Half of the respondent's decision-making power and buying behaviour increased after engaging in social commerce.

- Majority of the respondents still lack an amount of trust in social commerce platforms.

- The majority of the respondents agree that the lack of middlemen is a great convenience while shopping in Kochi.

4.2 SUGGESTION

- Improve customer service experience as it creates more loyal followers and attracts new customers which leads to an increase in sales.

- Provide customers with relevant and helpful information and make it more personalized.

- Promote low-cost products as they tend to sell better through social channels.

- Social commerce platforms should stay creative with social media trends in the clothing industry.

- Invest in social commerce features including checkouts.

- Social commerce platforms must use analytical tools to make their sales more efficient.

- Sellers must focus on the right social commerce channels.

4.3 CONCLUSION

Social Commerce is defined as a subset of E-Commerce with the difference of involving social media, personal interaction and personalization as tools to assist in shopping. In the past few years, we have been able to witness the rise of social commerce platforms for shopping. With online commerce becoming a major part of our life we felt it was needed to do a more detailed study on social commerce, the new e-commerce, among people living in Kochi. Through the course of our projects, we were able to find that it was mostly people around the 20 to 30-year age group that was more engaged in social commerce platforms. In terms of the composition of social commerce sales, clothing, and related commodities take the major proportion. This can be attributed to reasons such as better selection and the ability to customize in accordance with the consumer, a feature not available in most conventional e-commerce platforms. Other features of social commerce platforms like personal interaction, transparency, design, creditability, social networking integrations, etc have proved to be a major advantage. With respect to Kochi, we were able to see that the clothing industry was the most chosen sector for shopping in social commerce platforms. Reasons for this were attributed to features like personal interaction and depth of the information that allows the consumer to take a rational decision. In Kochi, it is also seen that people find social commerce platforms to have better collections of clothing than conventional e-commerce platforms. This signifies that Kochi is preferring a shopping experience that includes communication and personalization. With the growth of social media influencers and instant consumer reviews, they have started influencing consumers buying decisions in a very big way. It was also witnessed that even though the monetary cost of commodities is smaller, the increase of it has led to increased expenditure in households. When asked if they prefer social commerce platforms over e-commerce platforms, their responses show that consumers have still not been able to make a final decision on this. This can be due to social commerce still being a comparatively newer platform. The same can be stated when asked about consumer experience in comparison to e-commerce. This shows that even though social commerce platforms have increased in popularity, there is still scope for improvement. With a world increasingly moving towards personalization and social interaction, especially in the clothing industry, in the near future, we might see e-commerce platforms turning into social commerce platforms.

APPENDIX

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Big Commerce. (n.d.). Retrieved from Big Commerce:
https://www.bigcommerce.com/articles/omnichannel-retail/social-commerce/

Curty, R. G., & Zhang, P. (2012). Social commerce: Looking back and forward.
assist, 10.

DFU Publications. (2022, April 25). Retrieved from DFU Publications:
https://www.dfupublications.com/categories/article/the-role-of-social-
commerce-in-fashion-textiles

ETech. (2022, January 4). Retrieved from Economic Times:
https://m.economictimes.com/tech/technology/global-social-commerce-
market-to-hit-1-2-trillion-by-2025-accenture/amp_articleshow/88691925.cms

FIBRE2FASHION. (2013, July). Retrieved from FIBRE2FASHION:
https://www.fibre2fashion.com/industry-article/6981/social-shopping

Gomez, R. (2021, May 4). Retrieved from Sprout Social:
https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-commerce/

Kuchibhatla, R. (2022, May 5). Retrieved from Business Standard:
https://www.business-standard.com/content/specials/how-social-commerce-is-
affecting-consumer-behaviour-122050500900_1.html

McKinsey & Company. (2022, October 19). Retrieved from McKinsey & Company:
https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/growth-marketing-and-sales/our-
insights/social-commerce-the-future-of-how-consumers-interact-with-brands

Mou, J., & Benyoucef, M. (2021). Consumer behaviour in social commerce: Results
from a meta-analysis. *ScienceDirect*.

Oladapo, A. (2021, August 3). Retrieved from Three Sixtee:
https://www.threesixtee.co.uk/social-commerce-vs-ecommerce-what-are-the-
differences/

Press Trust of India. (2020, December 22). Retrieved from Business Standard:
https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/social-commerce-
in-india-could-touch-7-billion-by-2025-report-120122201091_1.html

Stanley, H. (2022, September 28). Retrieved from Shopify:
https://www.shopify.com/in/enterprise/social-commerce-trends

TNA Suite. (n.d.). Retrieved from TNA Suite: https://www.tnasuite.com/blog/social-
commerce-definition-history-and-how-it-works/

Varshney, S. (2021, June 1). Retrieved from Linkedin:
https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/ecommerce-vs-social-commerce-shivam-
varshney

Wardhani, S. A., & Subriadi, A. P. (2020). Consumer Behaviour in Social Commerce Adoption: Systematic Literature Review. *IEEE Xplore*.

Xuequn Wang a, X. L. (2019). Exploring the effects of extrinsic motivation on consumer behaviours in social commerce: Revealing consumers' perceptions of social commerce benefits. *ScienceDirect*.

QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME :
AGE:
GENDER:
ADDRESS:

1. Monthly Income-

o Less than 20,000
o   20,000-50,000
o   50,000-1,00,000
o   More than 1,00,000

2) Select an approximate amount you would spend on a single online purchase (rupees)

o Less than 1000
o 1000-3000
o 3000-5000
o 5000-10,000
o More than 10,000

3) Do you shop via Social-commerce platforms (Meesho,Instagram etc) ?

o Yes
o   No

4) Do you prefer social commerce platforms where you can interact with the seller instead of conventional platforms like amazon and flipkart?

o Yes
o No

5) What Type of commodity do you buy during online shopping?

o Clothing
o Cosmetics
o Utilities
o All of the above
o Other

68

6) How many times do you shop online in a month?

- o Once
- o Twice
- o Thrice
- o More than thrice

7) How would you rate your overall online shopping experience?

- o Excellent
- o Average
- o Poor

8) Features you think are necessary for online shopping

- o Personal Interaction
- o Transparency
- o Design
- o Credibility
- o Social networking Integrations

9) After engaging into social commerce is there any change in your expenditure pattern

- o Increased
- o Decreased

10) Do you think social interaction is helpful in making final decisions about your product?

- o Yes
- o No

11) Are you influenced by social media posts by clothing retailers?

- o Influential
- o Not Influential

12) Do you agree that social media shopping platforms are ahead of e-commerce on latest clothing trends?

- o Trends are ahead
- o Not ahead

13) Which platform gives you a wide variety of choices on clothing

- o E-commerce (Amazon,Flipkart etc)

    o   Social commerce (Instagram,Facebook,Meesho etc)

14) Does likes,reviews,rating affect your buying decisions.

    o   Yes
    o   No

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

Answer the following questions based on the above scale:

15) Shopping on social commerce platforms are better than conventional e- commerce platforms-

16) Interaction with the seller in social commerce provides a great advantage-

17) There are better collections for clothing in social commerce platforms-

18) Clothing from social commerce platforms are affordable-

19) Influencers and advertisements influence your buying decisions-

20) Social platforms reduce the monetary cost of traditional shopping

21) Shopping on social commerce platform has increased my(consumer) decision making power and buying behaviour

22) Willingness to purchase is more in social commerce than in traditional shopping

23) Trust towards online shopping has increased after engaging in social commerce

24)Do you believe the lack of middlemen in social commerce leads to a better shopping experience?

25) In social commerce platform user-generated information is of great influence in process of shopping

26) There is change in my(consumer) satisfaction level in social commerce platform

27) Social commerce is more comfortable than e-commerce

28) Social commerce platforms provide more quality products than e-commerce platforms.

29) Social commerce platforms are more trustable.