

Title: Role of Social Presence, Trust and Purchase Intention in Social Commerce towards Online Apparel and Cosmetic Products in Bangalore

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Abstract

The rapid growth of artificial intelligence (AI) in social commerce has resulted in shifts when it comes to consumer purchasing behaviour. Along with allowing for personalized recommendations, intelligent product recommendations and an ability to talk to customers through chatbots the introduction of AI technologies has reached up to a new level leading to better customer engagement, trust in the brand and social interaction. The present research is aimed at understanding the impact of AI-powered social commerce on consumer purchasing habits by focusing on the mediating roles of social presence and trust in Bangalore.

Its specific objectives include determining consumer preferences regarding apparel and cosmetics on social commerce websites, assessing the influence of AI technologies on social presence and trust, and examining how they affect purchase intention. The further objective is to study the influence of online reviews, influencer marketers' communication and consumer engagement on the purchase behaviour of customers online.

I did a study where I gave a questionnaire to people who buy clothes and makeup using media in Bangalore. I looked at the answers to see how people feel about buying things on media when companies use artificial intelligence. I wanted to know if artificial intelligence helps companies seem friendly and trustworthy and if that makes people want to buy more things.

The study shows that when companies use intelligence on social media it helps them seem more friendly and that makes people trust them more. When people trust a company they are more likely to buy things from them. Artificial intelligence also helps companies show people things they really like and that makes people happy and more likely to keep buying from them. This study helps us understand how new technology affects what people buy on media.

This study is also helpful for companies that want to sell things on media. It shows them how to use intelligence to make people happy and want to buy things from them. The study is useful, for companies

that want to be responsible and care about what their customers want.

Keywords: Social commerce, presence, trust, purchase intention, consumer behaviour, clothing and cosmetics artificial intelligence and digital marketing.

Introduction

The quick growth of technology and the easy access to the internet along with the use of smartphones has changed how people shop. Shopping in stores is now like a support for online shopping because of the convenience the fast service and the wide range of choices. Also the involvement of media in shopping has led to social commerce using sites like Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Pinterest and Snapchat. Unlike online shopping social commerce focuses on interaction, communication and connection, between people who buy and people who sell through reviews, ratings, messages and other ways of talking and sharing.

Among various product categories, apparel and cosmetic products are very appropriate for social commerce since they have a high dependence on trends, visual content and recommendations from customers. The role of social presence is very significant in influencing consumer behaviour since comments, likes, shares, reviews and feedback enable social connection and make people feel more comfortable shopping online. Trust is a very important factor since consumers cannot see and touch products that they will buy ahead of time. It helps ease their worries and concerns regarding the quality of products, authenticity, safety of payment and delivery reliability. All of these factors, as well as social interaction, engagement of customers on the internet, online reviews and recommendation made by an influencer affect consumers' intention to buy the product.

Bangalore is a suitable area to research social commerce because of the advancement of technology that makes it more appealing to consumers. Social media assists people, particularly young ones, in finding clothes and makeup to wear and following trends in the fashion industry. As such, this research investigates social presence, trust and purchase intention with regard to social commerce and online selling of clothing and cosmetics. The goal is to find out how social interaction via social media can create trust and impact consumer behaviour. The results obtained can be used to attract consumers and create the trust necessary for sales.

Research Objective

1. To identify consumers preferences and behaviour towards purchase of apparel and cosmetic products through social commerce platforms in Bangalore.
2. To assess the relationship between social presence and trust among consumers using social commerce platforms.
3. To provide suggestions for businesses to improve customer trust, engagement and purchase intention in social commerce platforms.

Review of Literature

1. **Lu, Fan and Zhou (2016)** looked at how social presence, trust and the desire to buyer connected. They said that social presence that comes from using technologies makes up for the lack of contact with other people that is found in traditional e-commerce. The study found that different types of presence increased peoples trust in sellers, which affected how they shopped online. The study offers reasons for future research on how social presence and trust are related in social commerce.
2. **Ahmad and Laroche (2017)** looked at how electronic word-of-mouth's an important part of social commerce by looking at different reviews. They found that online reviews help customers by giving them feelings and information when they need to make a decision. Positive reviews were seen as helpful because they had details about how a product works, its technical features and how it looks, while negative reviews were seen as important because they showed problems with the service. The study is important for the research done in this project because looking at the reviews shows that customer choices and their actions are affected by the reviews especially when it comes to commerce.
3. **Cheng, Gu and Shen (2019)** looked into how trust is formed in the context of social commerce by differentiating between particularized trust of individuals and system trust in social commerce platforms. The study relied on the answers from 614 social commerce users and came to the conclusion that trust disposition, quality-attributed information shared with members, knowledge of other members and their recommendations altogether help to form the feeling of particularized trust. The research also suggested that trust could be passed from members to social commerce system. This means that the existence of reliable information, knowledge about the community and positive recommendations given by consumers can help build trust in social commerce.
4. **Zhou (2019)** investigated how social interaction influences users' behaviour in social commerce. The study analysed human-to-human and human-to-computer interactions, including informational interaction, emotional interaction, experience of control, responsiveness and personalisation of interaction. The findings showed that social interaction has an impact on trust in other members and trust in the community, hence having a positive effect on intention to participate in social commerce. The study recommends businesses to create opportunities for real social interaction in order to help consumers gain more trust in one another and develop.
5. **Yin, Wang, Xia and Gu 2019** about how people talk to each other when they buy things on social commerce websites. They wanted to know how it affects what people buy. The study looked at people in China and France who had bought things before. What they found out is that talking to people is a big part of what makes people want to buy things. This study is helpful for what we're doing now because we need to know about talking to people trusting them and feeling safe when we buy things on social commerce websites.
6. **Huang and Su (2019)** about how trust affects whether people keep buying from people, on social commerce websites. They asked 206 people who sell things and people who buy things what they think. What they found out is that people will keep buying if they trust the person selling and the company. The study also said that if people get help and feel supported they will trust the person selling mode. If the person selling does too much advertising it can actually make people not want to buy.

7. **Ahmad et al. (2022)** Was done to look at the link between trust and customers desire to buy things in commerce. They looked at 20 effect sizes from 19 studies. Found that trust has a positive effect on customers desire to buy. The researchers found that trust in sellers has an effect than other types of trust. Online forums and communities help build trust. This research gives evidence that trust is one of the factors that affect customers buying in the social commerce area.
8. **Zhang et al. (2022)** Looked at how trust affects customer loyalty in streaming commerce from a social and technical point of view. The study showed how important trust is when building customer relationships in shopping. The authors say that combining interactions and technology features can help build trust and keep customers in the market. This is especially true, for commerce that uses live video, influencers, product demonstrations and real-time communication. These methods are commonly used in the fashion and beauty industries. The authors believe that it is necessary to focus on.

Research Gap

The Study based on people are using media more and more to find products and buy things. Social commerce is getting really important because of this. Some studies have already looked at things like how people feel when they're on social media if they trust the sites and how they interact with others. These studies found that when people interact with each other on media and trust the site it affects what they buy online. Most of these studies just looked at social commerce in general not specifically at things like clothes and makeup. For clothes and makeup people really care about what things look like what other people say about them and what celebrities recommend. They also like to talk to each other about these things. A lot of the studies were done in other countries so we need to learn more about what people in Bangalore city think. Also, not many studies have looked at how people feel about social media sites and if they trust them. So this study wants to learn more about what people in Bangalore city like when it comes to clothes and makeup on media. It will look at how people feel when they're on these and if they trust them. Then it will give advice to companies on how to make people trust them more want to interact with them and want to buy things from them on media. This study is, about commerce, social commerce is important and social commerce will help us understand people better. Social commerce like all things related to media is changing how people shop online.

Hypothesis of the study

To assess the relationship between social presence and trust among consumers using social commerce platforms. (Correlation)

H₀: There is no significant relationship between social presence and trust among consumers using social commerce platforms.

H₁: There is a significant positive relationship between social presence and trust among consumers using social commerce platforms.

Research Methodology

Research Design: Descriptive (approach)

Nature of data: Primary

Sample Size: 200 respondents

Correlation Analysis

Research Objective: To assess the relationship between social presence and trust among consumers using social commerce platforms.

	<i>17.Communication with influencers or sellers improved my confidence in purchasing products online.</i>	<i>19.I trust online reviews and ratings while purchasing products online.</i>
17.Communication with influencers or sellers improved my confidence in purchasing products online.	1	
19.I trust online reviews and ratings while purchasing products online.	0.282459474	1

H₀: There is no significant relationship between social presence and trust among consumers using social commerce platforms.

H₁: There is a significant positive relationship between social presence and trust among consumers using social commerce platforms.

Interpretation: The connection, between talking to sellers or influencers and how much people trust ratings and reviews is pretty small it is 0.282. This means that people who talk to influencers or sellers a lot are a little more likely to trust ratings and reviews when they buy clothes and cosmetics on social media sites. The connection is positive. When one thing goes up the other thing goes up too. It is not a very strong connection, which means that talking to influencers or sellers is not the only thing that makes people trust online reviews. The quality of the product what happened when they shopped before how good the brand is and if the website is reliable all these things can make people trust reviews more or less.

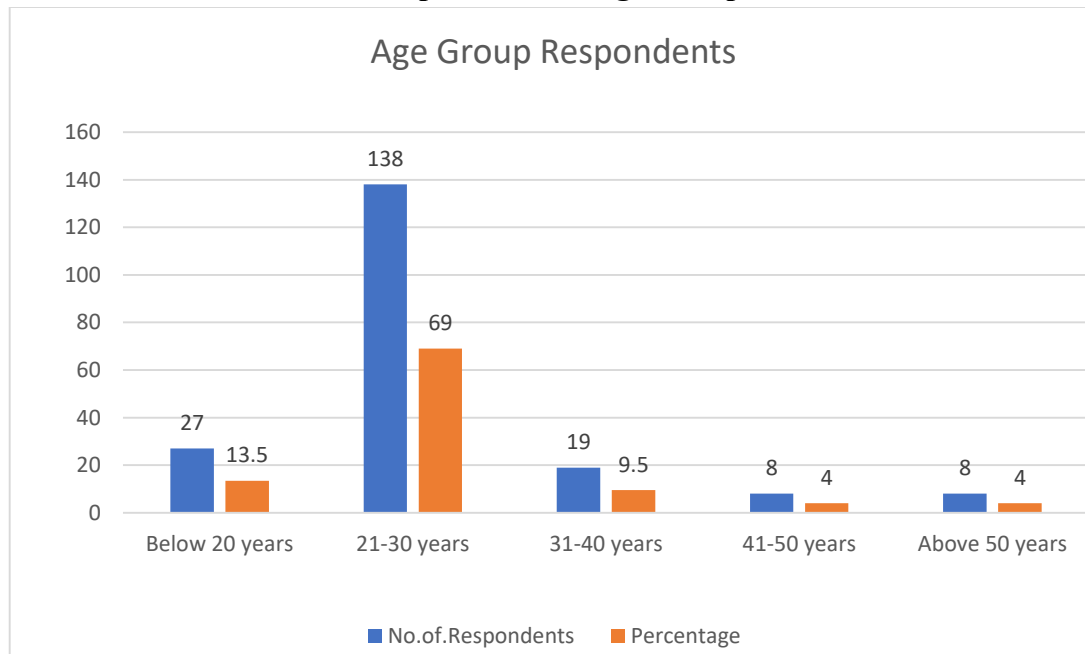
Table No.4.1.2 -Age Group

Sl. NO	2.Age Group	No.of. Respondents	Percentage
1	Below 20 years	27	13.5
2	21-30 years	138	69
3	31-40 years	19	9.5
4	41-50 years	8	4

5	Above 50 years	8	4
	TOTAL	200	100

Source: Primary Data

Graph No.4.1.2 -Age Group



Interpretation: We looked at the people who answered our questions and found out that most of them are between 21 and 30 years old. There were 138 people in this age group, which is 21-30 years old and that is 69% of the total 200 people who answered. Then we have the people who're below 20 years old there were 27 of them which is 13.5% of the total. The rest of the people are in age groups like 31-40 years old which is 9.5% and 41-50 years old which is 4% and some people are, above 50 years old which is also 4%.

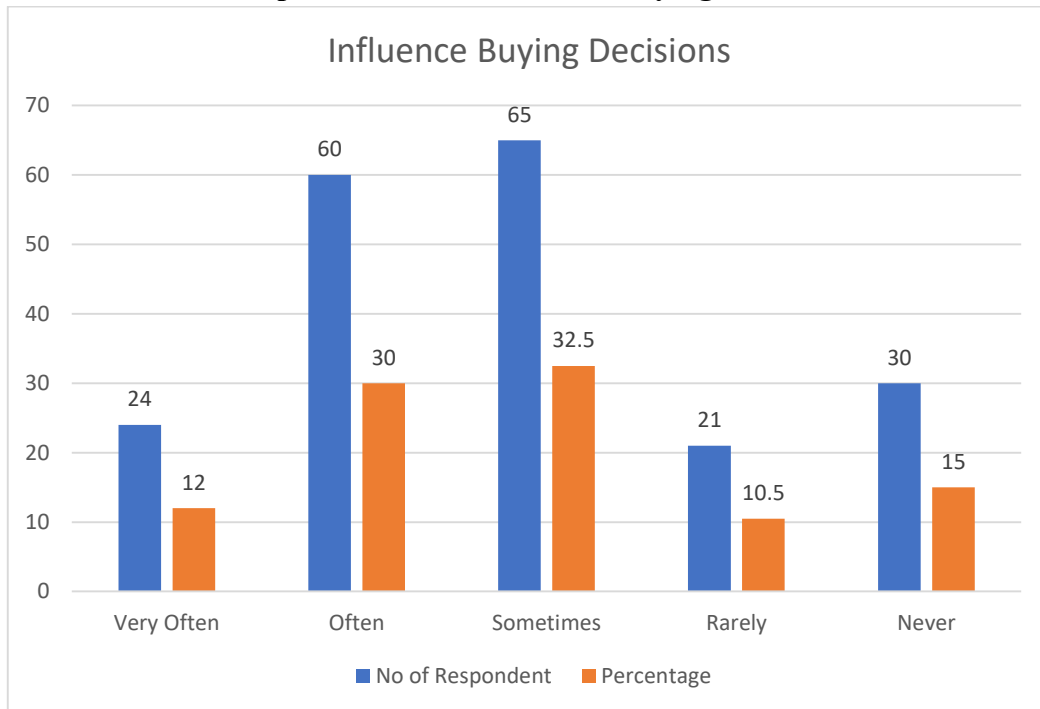
Inference: The findings show that the age group 21 years, to 30 years makes up 69% of the respondents.

Table No.4.1.12 – Influence Buying Decisions

SLN O	12.How often do online reviews influence your buying decisions?	No of Respondent	Percentage
1	Very Often	24	12
2	Often	60	30
3	Sometimes	65	32.5
4	Rarely	21	10.5
5	Never	30	15
	Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

Graph No.4.1.12 – Influence Buying Decision



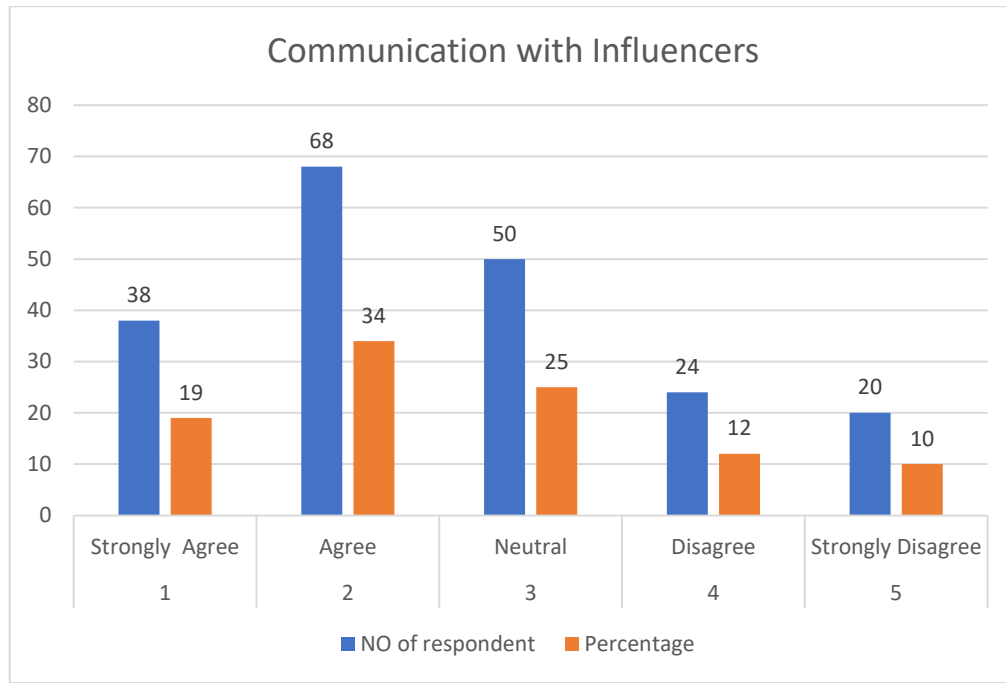
Interpretation: According to the graph 65 people said that they are sometimes affected by reviews when they buy something. That is 32.5 percent of the people. Another 60 people said that they are influenced by reviews most of the time. That is 30 percent of the people. The rest of the people said the following. They never are affected by reviews. That is 15 percent. They are always affected by reviews. That is 12 percent. They are rarely affected by reviews. That is 10.5 percent.

Inference: According to the results most people said that online reviews affect what they buy reviews sometimes which is 32.5 percent of them and another group of people 30 percent said they often find online reviews helpful.

Table No.4.1.17 – Communication with Influencers

SL NO	17.Communication with influencers or sellers improved my confidence in purchasing products online.	NO of respondent	Peren tage
1	Strongly Agree	38	19
2	Agree	68	34
3	Neutral	50	25
4	Disagree	24	12
5	Strongly Disagree	20	10
	Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data



Graph No.4.1.17 – Communication with Influencers

Interpretation: The results show that, of 200 participants, most respondents think that talking to influencers or sellers helps them buy products from the internet with more assurance with 68 individuals (34%). As for 50 individuals (25%), they are neutral in their opinion as the rest of the respondents are (strongly in favor - 19%, disagree - 12%, strongly disagree - 10%).

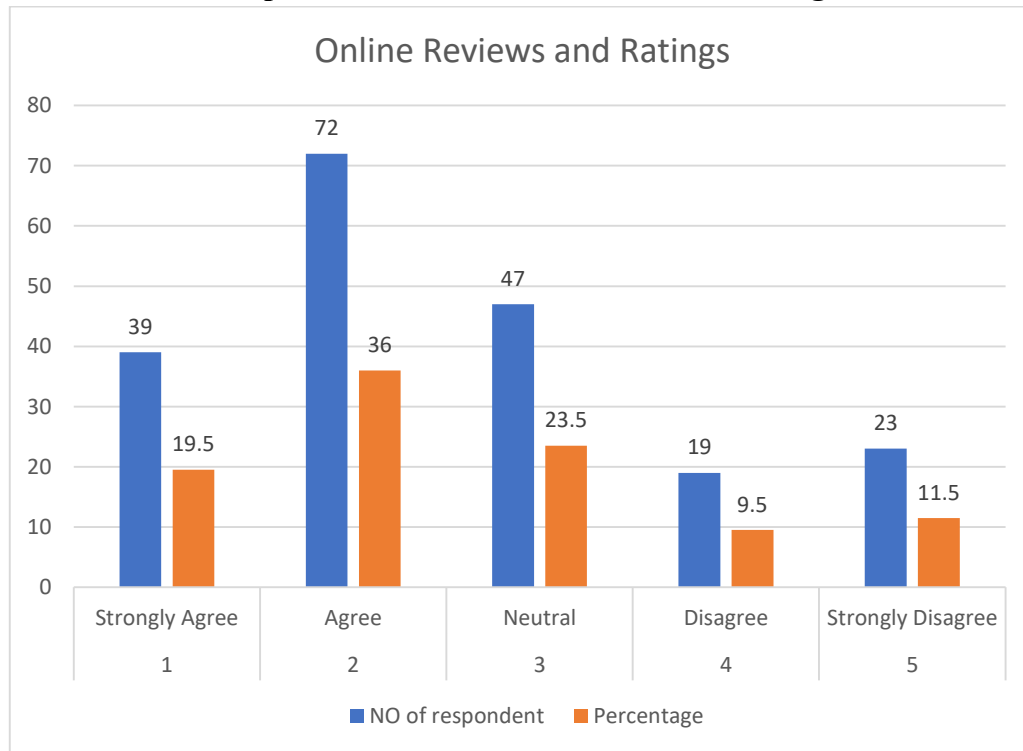
Inference: The results show that most people believe that talking to influencers or sellers helps customers buy products from the internet with more confidence (34%).

Table No.4.1.19: Online Reviews and Ratings

SLNO	19.I trust online reviews and ratings while purchasing products online.	NO of respondent	Percentage
1	Strongly Agree	39	19.5
2	Agree	72	36
3	Neutral	47	23.5
4	Disagree	19	9.5
5	Strongly Disagree	23	11.5
	Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

Graph No.4.1.19: Online Reviews and Ratings



Interpretation: The graph shows that out of 200 people who answered 72 people said they trust reviews when they buy things. This is 36 percent of the number of people who answered. The other people who answered are not really sure what they think they are just okay, with it they do not think it is an idea they really do not think it is a good idea or they really think it is a good idea.

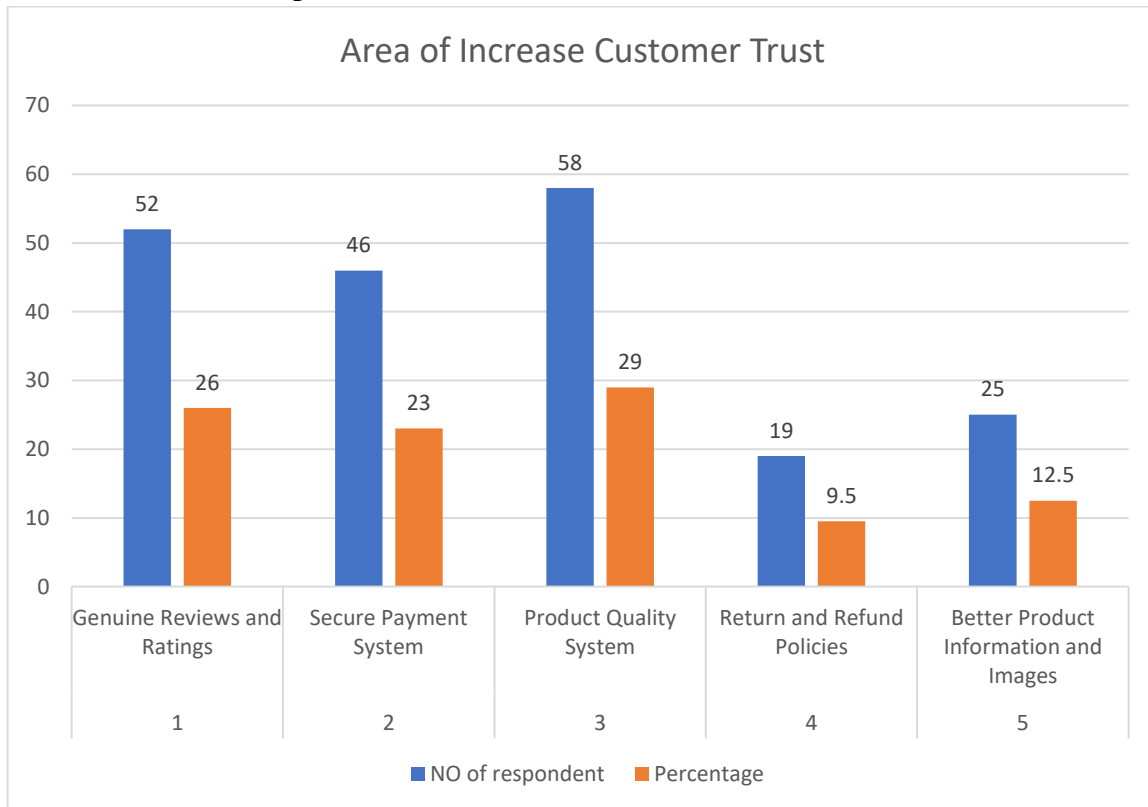
Inference: The findings show that most people, 36 percent of buyers believe that online reviews and ratings are important when they are buying products online.

Table No.4.1.31: Area of Increase Customer Trust

SLNO	31.Which areas should be improved to increase customer trust while purchasing apparel and cosmetic products online?	NO of respondent	Percentage
1	Genuine Reviews and Ratings	52	26
2	Secure Payment System	46	23
3	Product Quality System	58	29
4	Return and Refund Policies	19	9.5
5	Better Product Information and Images	25	12.5
	Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

Graph No.4.1.31: Area of Increase Customer Trust



Interpretation: According to the study results, product quality was given as the main factor in enhancing consumer trust, as endorsed by 58 participants (29%). It was identified by 52 participants (26%) that honest reviews and ratings also influence the process.

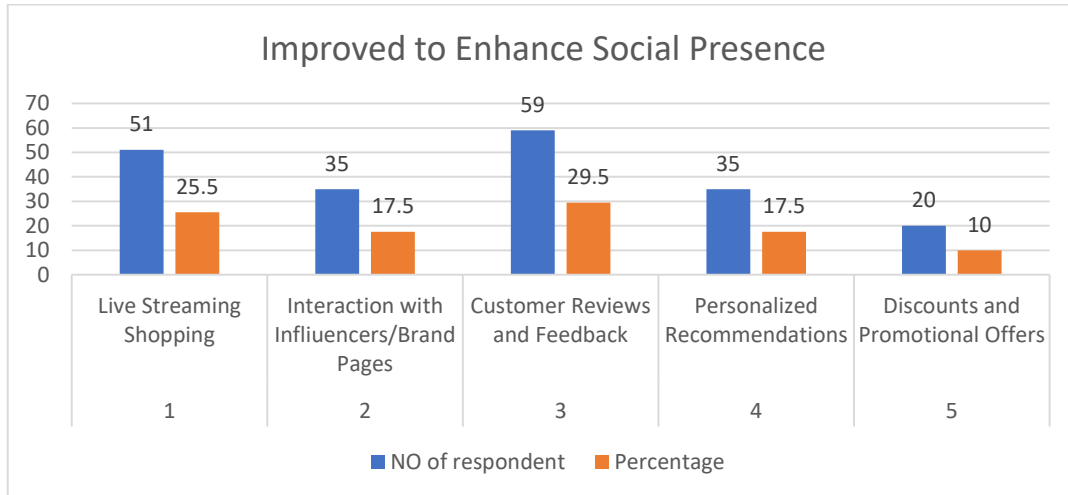
Inference: It shows that 29% of respondents think that improving product quality is the major contribution in increasing customer trust.

Table No.4.1.32: Improved to Enhance Social Presence

SL NO	32.Which features should be improved to enhance social presence and customer engagement on social commerce platforms?	NO of responde nt	Perce ntage
1	Live Streaming Shopping	51	25.5
2	Interaction with Influencers/Brand Pages	35	17.5
3	Customer Reviews and Feedback	59	29.5
4	Personalized Recommendations	35	17.5
5	Discounts and Promotional Offers	20	10
	Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

Graph No.4.1.32: Improved to Enhance Social Presence



Interpretation: The results show that 59 people out of 200 which is 29.5 percent think customer feedback and reviews are the important part of increasing social presence and getting customers involved on social commerce platforms. Another 51 people, which is 25.5 percent like streaming shopping the most. The other people who were asked said they like interacting with influencers or brand pages which's 17.5 percent and also like personalized recommendations while 10 percent like discounts and special offers.

Inference: The study shows that 29.5 percent of the people who were asked think customer feedback and reviews are the important thing, for making social presence stronger and getting customers involved and 25.5 percent think live streaming shopping is the most important.

Overall Findings

- Social commerce has gained importance as a method through which customers can discover and buy clothing and beauty items because of its ease, availability, variety of items.
- Instagram became the most favoured social commerce channel, meaning that images, product-related posts, reels, and advertising operations via social media affect the way consumers behave.
- Most of the people surveyed are young people, most likely from the age range of 21 to 30, showing their interest and understanding of social media and online buying.
- Presence and trust factor are essential in social commerce. Ignition via comments, chats, likes, evaluations, and communication with sellers makes a consumer feel connected and assured.
- Reviews, ratings, and influencer advices are influential sources making consumers evaluate clothing and cosmetics prior to the buying process.
- Content used in social media serves to create impulse purchases.
- The survey results are reliable with the help of Cronbach's Alpha of 0.8065.
- All in all, the findings indicate that companies can achieve better results in social commerce if they increase their clients' trust, communication, provide truthful information and engage them in the process of buying products.

Conclusion

The research shows that social commerce has changed the way people look for and buy clothes and makeup. People can use media to find out about products and get opinions from others. They can also talk to stores and famous people who promote products. The research says that trust is very important when people decide to buy something. When people get information and have nice interactions with stores and other customers, they are more likely to buy things on the internet. So companies should try to make people trust them talk to their customers and be honest, about what people think of their products. They should also let people communicate with them easily.

Limitation of the Study

1. The limitations of this study included that it only focused on Bangalore and cannot be applied to consumers in other areas.
2. The data for this study was based on 200 respondents, which may not be sufficient to represent this type of population.
3. The use of convenience sampling influenced the ability to generalise the results.
4. The research was solely done on apparel and cosmetics products, thus presenting data only on these two categories.
5. The research depended on the self-response of participant questionnaires and thus reflects the opinions and previous experiences of the respondents.
6. Social commerce is in a constant state of change because of new technologies and consumer trends, resulting in the possibility of changes and updates in findings.

Suggestions

- Companies should focus on making a website that people can trust. They need to make sure their brand looks the same tell the truth about their products and talk to customers in a honest way.
- People who sell things on media need to suggest products that are just right for each customer. They should look at what the customer likes and dislikes what they bought before and what they look at on the website.
- If you sell clothes, you can help customers by giving them size charts, advice, on how to wear things and a way to try things on virtually. If you sell makeup, you can tell customers about skin types show them how to use the products and compare different products.
- When a customer is not happy the company needs to fix the problem away. If they do this customer will trust them more. The company will look good.
- Sellers should not send too many messages trying to get people to buy things and they should not lie about their products. Instead, they should send messages that help the customer and give them information.
- Companies need to always listen to what customers are saying look at what they buy and see what they do on social media. This helps them understand what customers want and make products and adv-

ertising.

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