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Social Commerce and Fashion Buying Behaviour: A Qualitative Synthesis of Secondary Data

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The emergence of social commerce has significantly transformed consumer behaviour, particularly within the fashion industry, where social interaction and visual engagement play a crucial role. This study explores the influence of social commerce on fashion buying behaviour through a qualitative synthesis of secondary data. Drawing on established theoretical perspectives, including the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Social Influence Theory, and Uses and Gratifications Theory, the research examines how technological features, social dynamics, and psychological motivations interact to shape consumer decision-making. The study systematically analyses peer-reviewed literature, industry reports, and academic sources published between 2015 and 2025, employing thematic analysis to identify key patterns. The findings reveal that social proof, influencer credibility, user-generated content, and platform trust significantly affect purchase intentions, whereas emotional drivers and platform affordances contribute to impulse-buying behaviour. The study highlights the importance of authenticity, engagement, and personalisation in enhancing consumer trust and satisfaction. By integrating fragmented insights into a unified framework, this research contributes to the growing body of knowledge on social commerce and offers practical implications for marketers and digital platform designers.

Keywords: social commerce, fashion buying behaviour, influencer marketing, user-generated content, consumer trust, impulse buying, digital platforms.

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1. Introduction

The rapid advancement of digital technologies has fundamentally transformed the way consumers interact with brands and make purchasing decisions. Among these transformations, the convergence of social media and electronic commerce has given rise to what is now widely recognised as social commerce. Social commerce represents a significant shift from traditional transactional e-commerce toward a more interactive, community-driven model that integrates social networking features into online shopping environments (Liang & Turban, 2011). This integration enables consumers to engage in activities such as sharing opinions, reviewing products, and interacting with peers, thereby influencing purchasing behaviour in unprecedented ways.

The fashion industry, characterised by its dynamic trends, visual appeal, and symbolic consumption, has been particularly impacted by the rise of social commerce. Fashion consumption is not merely a functional activity but also a means of self-expression and identity construction. As a result, consumers are highly susceptible to social influences, making fashion an ideal domain for the application of social commerce strategies (McNeill & Moore, 2015). Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook have evolved beyond communication tools to become powerful marketplaces where consumers discover, evaluate, and purchase fashion products.

One of the defining features of social commerce is the role of user-generated content (UGC) and influencer marketing in shaping consumer perceptions. Unlike traditional advertising, which is often perceived as intrusive or biased, UGC and influencer content are viewed as more authentic and relatable. Consumers tend to trust recommendations from peers and influencers more than brand-generated messages, as these sources are perceived to provide honest and experiential insights (Cheung et al., 2008; Lou & Yuan, 2019). This shift in trust dynamics has significant implications for how fashion brands communicate with their audiences and build relationships.

Another critical aspect of social commerce is its ability to facilitate social interaction and community engagement. Social presence, defined as the extent to which a medium allows users to experience others as being psychologically present, plays a crucial role in enhancing trust and reducing perceived risk in online transactions (Gefen et al., 2003; Hajli, 2015). Through features such as comments, likes, shares, and live streaming, social commerce platforms create a sense of community that encourages consumers to participate actively in the decision-making process.

Moreover, the integration of advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and personalised recommendation systems has further enhanced the effectiveness of social commerce. These technologies enable platforms to deliver tailored content and product suggestions based on individual

preferences and browsing behaviour, thereby increasing engagement and conversion rates. In the context of fashion, where personalisation and aesthetics are paramount, such technological advancements play a crucial role in influencing consumer behaviour.

Despite the growing importance of social commerce, the existing literature remains fragmented, with studies focusing on specific aspects such as trust, influencer marketing, or technological adoption. There is a need for a comprehensive synthesis that integrates these diverse perspectives to provide a holistic understanding of how social commerce influences fashion buying behaviour. This study addresses this gap by conducting a qualitative synthesis of secondary data, drawing on a wide range of academic and industry sources.

The research is grounded in established theoretical frameworks, including the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Social Influence Theory, and Uses and Gratifications Theory. These theories provide valuable insights into the technological, social, and psychological factors that drive consumer behaviour in social commerce environments. By integrating these perspectives, the study aims to develop a comprehensive framework that explains the complex interplay of factors influencing fashion purchasing decisions.

The significance of this study lies in its ability to contribute to both academic and practical domains. From an academic perspective, the research advances the understanding of social commerce by synthesising existing knowledge and identifying key themes and

patterns. From a practical standpoint, the findings offer valuable insights for fashion marketers and platform designers, enabling them to develop more effective strategies for engaging consumers and driving sales.

In summary, the rise of social commerce represents a transformative shift in the retail landscape, particularly within the fashion industry. By leveraging social interactions, user-generated content, and advanced technologies, social commerce platforms have created a new paradigm of consumer engagement and decision-making. This study seeks to explore these dynamics in depth, providing a comprehensive analysis of the factors that shape fashion buying behaviour in social commerce environments.

2. Literature Review

Social commerce has emerged as a distinct domain within the broader field of electronic commerce, characterised by the integration of social media functionalities into online shopping experiences. Liang and Turban (2011) define social commerce as a subset of e-commerce that involves the use of social media technologies to facilitate commercial activities and transactions. This definition highlights the dual nature of social commerce, which combines technological infrastructure with social interaction.

The development of social commerce can be traced back to the advent of Web 2.0 technologies, which enabled users to create, share, and interact with content online. These technologies have transformed passive consumers into active participants, often referred to as “prosumers,” who contribute to

the value creation process (Hajli, 2015). As a result, the boundaries between producers and consumers have become increasingly blurred, leading to a more collaborative and participatory marketplace.

Zhou et al. (2013) further emphasise the role of social networking in shaping social commerce, noting that platforms such as Facebook and Instagram provide an environment where users can interact, share experiences, and influence each other's purchasing decisions. This interactive dimension distinguishes social commerce from traditional e-commerce, which is primarily transactional and lacks social engagement.

2.1 Fashion Consumption in Digital Environments

Fashion consumption is inherently social and symbolic, driven by factors such as identity, self-expression, and social belonging. In digital environments, these factors are amplified through the visual and interactive nature of social media platforms. Consumers are exposed to a constant stream of curated content, including fashion trends, styling tips, and influencer endorsements, which shape their preferences and purchasing behaviour (McNeill & Moore, 2015).

Online fashion shopping presents unique challenges and opportunities. On one hand, the lack of physical interaction with products increases perceived risk and uncertainty. On the other hand, digital platforms offer rich information and interactive features that can mitigate these concerns. For instance, high-quality images, videos, and virtual try-on

tools enable consumers to evaluate products more effectively (Park & Lin, 2020).

Furthermore, the immediacy and accessibility of social media platforms have led to the emergence of “see now, buy now” consumption patterns, where consumers can purchase products directly from social media posts. This seamless integration of content and commerce has shortened the decision-making process and increased the likelihood of impulse purchases.

2.2 Influencer Marketing and Consumer Trust

Influencer marketing has become a cornerstone of social commerce, particularly in the fashion industry. Influencers are individuals who have established credibility and a substantial following on social media platforms, enabling them to influence the opinions and behaviours of their audience (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Their effectiveness lies in their ability to create authentic and relatable content that resonates with consumers.

Research indicates that influencer credibility, which encompasses factors such as expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness, plays a crucial role in shaping consumer attitudes and purchase intentions (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Micro-influencers, who have smaller but highly engaged audiences, are often perceived as more authentic and trustworthy compared to macro-influencers or celebrities.

In addition to influencer marketing, user-generated content (UGC) has a significant impact on consumer trust. UGC includes reviews, ratings, testimonials, and social media posts created by consumers. Unlike

brand-generated content, which may be perceived as biased, UGC is considered more credible and reliable (Cheung et al., 2008). This credibility enhances consumer confidence and reduces perceived risk, thereby increasing the likelihood of purchase.

2.3 Social Interaction and Community Engagement

Social interaction is a defining feature of social commerce, distinguishing it from traditional e-commerce. Through features such as comments, likes, shares, and live streaming, social commerce platforms facilitate real-time interaction among users. This interaction creates a sense of community and belonging, which influences consumer behaviour.

Social presence theory suggests that the perceived presence of others in an online environment enhances trust and engagement (Gefen et al., 2003). Hajli (2015) argues that social support, including informational and emotional support, plays a critical role in social commerce. Informational support refers to the provision of advice and recommendations, while emotional support involves expressions of empathy and encouragement.

These forms of social support contribute to the development of trust, which is a key determinant of online purchasing behaviour. When consumers perceive a platform as trustworthy, they are more likely to engage in transactions and share personal information.

2.4 Technological Factors and Platform Affordances

Technological factors, including perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness, are central to the adoption of social commerce platforms. These factors are derived from the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989), which has been widely applied in studies of online consumer behaviour.

Perceived ease of use refers to the extent to which a platform is user-friendly and requires minimal effort to navigate. Perceived usefulness, on the other hand, relates to the degree to which a platform enhances the shopping experience. In the context of social commerce, these factors influence user engagement and satisfaction.

Platform affordances, such as personalisation, interactivity, and multimedia capabilities, further enhance the effectiveness of social commerce. For example, personalised recommendations based on browsing history and preferences enable consumers to discover relevant products more easily. Interactive features, such as live streaming and chat functions, create a more engaging and immersive shopping experience.

2.5 Impulse Buying and Emotional Drivers

Social commerce environments are designed to stimulate impulse buying behaviour through various psychological and technological mechanisms. Features such as limited-time offers, flash sales, and personalised recommendations create a sense of urgency and excitement, prompting consumers to make spontaneous purchases.

Emotional factors, including desire for social approval, fear of missing out (FOMO), and hedonic enjoyment, also play a significant role in influencing purchase decisions. The visual and interactive nature of fashion content amplifies these emotions, making consumers more susceptible to impulsive behaviour.

2.6 Research Gap

Despite the extensive body of literature on social commerce, several gaps remain. Most studies focus on specific variables, such as trust or influencer marketing, without considering the broader context. Additionally, there is a lack of a comprehensive qualitative synthesis that integrates findings from multiple sources.

This study addresses these gaps by providing a holistic analysis of social commerce and fashion buying behaviour, drawing on diverse theoretical perspectives and empirical findings.

3. Theoretical Framework

Understanding fashion buying behaviour within social commerce environments requires a multidimensional theoretical perspective that captures technological adoption, social dynamics, and psychological motivations. This study integrates three well-established theories-Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Social Influence Theory, and Uses and Gratifications Theory-to develop a comprehensive framework for analysing consumer behaviour in social commerce.

3.1 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), originally proposed by Davis (1989), is one of the most widely used frameworks for explaining user adoption of information systems. TAM posits that two key constructs-perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use-determine an individual's intention to use a technology. Perceived usefulness refers to the degree to which a person believes that using a system enhances their performance, while perceived ease of use relates to the extent to which the system is free of effort.

In the context of social commerce, these constructs play a critical role in shaping consumer engagement with digital platforms. Social commerce platforms that are easy to navigate, visually appealing, and functionally efficient are more likely to attract and retain users. For instance, features such as seamless checkout processes, intuitive interfaces, and personalised recommendations enhance perceived usefulness and encourage repeated usage (Gefen et al., 2003).

Moreover, TAM has been extended in various studies to include additional variables such as trust and perceived risk, which are particularly relevant in online shopping environments. Trust in the platform and its associated transactions significantly influences perceived usefulness, as consumers are more likely to engage with systems they consider secure and reliable (Hajli, 2015). In fashion social commerce, where consumers cannot physically inspect products, ease of use and perceived usefulness are crucial for reducing

uncertainty and facilitating purchase decisions.

3.2 Social Influence Theory

Social Influence Theory, as articulated by Kelman (1958), explains how individuals' attitudes and behaviours are shaped by the influence of others through processes such as compliance, identification, and internalisation. In social commerce, these processes are highly visible and influential due to the interactive nature of social media platforms.

Compliance occurs when individuals conform to others' expectations to gain rewards or avoid negative consequences. In the context of fashion, consumers may purchase trending items endorsed by influencers or widely accepted within their social networks. Identification refers to the desire to establish or maintain a relationship with a group or individual, such as following a fashion influencer whose style aligns with one's identity. Internalisation involves adopting beliefs or behaviours because they are perceived as inherently correct or valuable.

Social commerce platforms amplify these processes through features such as likes, comments, shares, and follower counts, which signal popularity and social approval. Influencers and peer networks act as opinion leaders, guiding consumer perceptions and decisions (Lou & Yuan, 2019). The visibility of others' behaviours creates a bandwagon effect, where individuals are more likely to adopt products that are widely accepted or endorsed.

Additionally, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) plays a central role in social influence. Reviews, ratings, and testimonials provide valuable information that shapes consumer attitudes and reduces perceived risk (Cheung et al., 2008). In fashion, where aesthetic preferences and trends are socially constructed, social influence becomes a dominant factor in purchasing decisions.

3.3 Uses and Gratifications Theory

Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), developed by Katz et al. (1973), offers a psychological perspective on media consumption by focusing on the motivations that drive individuals to use specific media platforms. According to UGT, individuals actively seek out media to satisfy various needs, including information, entertainment, social interaction, and personal identity.

In social commerce environments, these gratifications are closely linked to consumer engagement and purchasing behaviour. For example, consumers may use social media platforms to discover new fashion trends (informational gratification), enjoy visually appealing content (entertainment gratification), interact with others (social gratification), and express their personal style (identity gratification).

The interactive and multimedia nature of social commerce platforms enhances these gratifications. Features such as live streaming, short-form videos, and interactive polls create engaging experiences that go beyond traditional shopping. These experiences not only attract users but also influence their attitudes toward products and brands.

Furthermore, UGT highlights the role of emotional engagement in consumer behaviour. Fashion consumption is often driven by hedonic motivations, such as pleasure, excitement, and self-expression. Social commerce platforms cater to these motivations by providing immersive and personalised experiences that resonate with users' preferences.

3.4 Integrated Theoretical Framework

The integration of TAM, Social Influence Theory, and Uses and Gratifications Theory provides a holistic framework for understanding fashion buying behaviour in social commerce. Each theory contributes a distinct perspective:

- **Technological dimension (TAM):** Explains how platform usability and functionality influence user adoption and engagement.
- **Social dimension (Social Influence Theory):** Highlights the impact of peer interactions, influencers, and social norms on consumer decisions.
- **Psychological dimension (UGT):** Addresses the motivations and gratifications that drive media usage and purchasing behaviour.

These dimensions are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. For instance, a user-friendly platform (TAM) enhances engagement, which increases exposure to social influences (Social Influence Theory) and fulfils psychological needs (UGT). This synergy creates a dynamic environment where consumers are continuously

influenced by technological features, social interactions, and personal motivations.

The proposed framework suggests that fashion buying behaviour in social commerce is not driven by a single factor but by the interaction of multiple forces. Understanding these interactions is essential for developing effective marketing strategies and designing user-centric platforms.

4. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research design based on the systematic analysis of secondary data. Qualitative research is particularly suitable for exploring complex phenomena such as consumer behaviour, where multiple factors interact in nuanced ways (Creswell & Poth, 2018). By synthesising existing literature, this study aims to develop a comprehensive understanding of social commerce and fashion buying behaviour.

A qualitative synthesis approach was chosen to integrate findings from diverse studies, allowing for the identification of patterns, themes, and relationships. This approach is consistent with the interpretivist paradigm, which emphasises the subjective and socially constructed nature of reality.

4.1 Data Sources and Collection

Secondary data were collected from a wide range of credible sources, including:

- Peer-reviewed academic journals (e.g., *Journal of Retailing*, *International Journal of Information Management*)

- Academic databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar
- Industry reports from organisations such as McKinsey & Company and Statista
- Conference proceedings and scholarly books

The data collection process involved systematic keyword searches using terms such as “social commerce,” “fashion buying behaviour,” “influencer marketing,” “user-generated content,” and “online consumer behaviour.” Boolean operators were used to refine search results and ensure relevance.

4.2 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To ensure the quality and relevance of the data, specific inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied:

Inclusion Criteria:

- Studies published between 2015 and 2025
- English-language publications
- Research focusing on social commerce, digital marketing, or online consumer behaviour
- Empirical and theoretical studies with clear methodologies

Exclusion Criteria:

- Non-peer-reviewed sources with limited credibility
- Studies unrelated to fashion or consumer behaviour
- Publications lacking methodological rigour

These criteria ensured that the selected studies were both relevant and reliable.

4.3 Data Analysis: Thematic Synthesis

Thematic analysis, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), was used to analyse the collected data. This method is widely used in qualitative research for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns within data.

The analysis followed six key steps:

- **Familiarisation:** Reading and re-reading the selected studies to gain an overall understanding.
- **Initial Coding:** Identifying meaningful segments of data and assigning codes.
- **Theme Development:** Grouping codes into broader themes based on similarities and relationships.
- **Reviewing Themes:** Refining themes to ensure coherence and relevance.
- **Defining and Naming Themes:** Clearly defining each theme and its significance.
- **Interpretation:** Linking themes to the theoretical framework and research objectives.

The use of thematic analysis allowed for a systematic and transparent examination of the data, facilitating the identification of key factors influencing fashion buying behaviour.

4.4 Validity and Reliability

Ensuring the validity and reliability of qualitative research is essential for producing credible findings. In this study, several strategies were employed:

- **Triangulation:** Using multiple data sources to corroborate findings and reduce bias.
- **Transparency:** Clearly documenting the data collection and analysis process.
- **Consistency:** Applying systematic criteria for study selection and analysis.
- **Peer-reviewed sources:** Prioritising high-quality academic publications.

These measures enhance the trustworthiness of the research and ensure that the findings are grounded in robust evidence.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

As this study is based on secondary data, it does not involve direct interaction with human participants. However, ethical considerations were still taken into account by ensuring proper citation and acknowledgement of all sources. The study adheres to academic integrity standards by avoiding plagiarism and accurately representing the findings of previous research (Mannan & Farhana, 2026).

4.6 Limitations of the Methodology

While qualitative synthesis provides valuable insights, it also has limitations. The reliance on secondary data means that the findings are dependent on the quality and scope of existing studies. Additionally, the interpretive nature of qualitative analysis may introduce subjectivity.

Despite these limitations, the methodology is appropriate for the exploratory nature of this study and provides a solid foundation for

understanding the complex dynamics of social commerce.

5. Findings and Analysis

The qualitative synthesis of secondary data revealed several interrelated themes that collectively explain how social commerce influences fashion buying behaviour. These themes include social proof, influencer impact, user-generated content (UGC), trust and platform credibility, impulse buying tendencies, and emotional-psychological drivers. Each theme reflects a critical dimension of consumer interaction within social commerce environments and demonstrates the interplay between technological affordances, social dynamics, and psychological motivations.

5.1 Social Proof and Collective Validation

One of the most dominant findings is the influence of social proof on consumer decision-making. Social proof refers to the tendency of individuals to rely on the opinions and behaviours of others when making decisions, particularly under conditions of uncertainty. In social commerce, social proof manifests through likes, comments, shares, ratings, and reviews, which signal the popularity and acceptance of products.

Consumers often interpret high engagement metrics as indicators of product quality and desirability. This phenomenon aligns with the principles of Social Influence Theory, where individuals conform to perceived social norms to gain acceptance or avoid disapproval (Kelman, 1958). For instance, a

fashion item that receives thousands of likes and positive comments is more likely to be perceived as trendy and worth purchasing.

Moreover, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) plays a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions. Reviews and testimonials provide experiential information that reduces uncertainty and enhances confidence in purchase decisions (Cheung et al., 2008). The qualitative synthesis indicates that consumers actively seek out peer opinions before making fashion purchases, especially for high-involvement products.

Importantly, social proof not only influences initial purchase decisions but also reinforces post-purchase satisfaction. When consumers observe that others share similar preferences, they experience a sense of validation, which enhances their overall satisfaction and likelihood of repeat purchases.

5.2 Influencer Marketing and Perceived Credibility

Influencer marketing emerged as a central driver of fashion buying behaviour in social commerce. Influencers act as intermediaries between brands and consumers, leveraging their credibility and social capital to shape audience perceptions. The effectiveness of influencers is largely determined by their perceived authenticity, expertise, and relatability (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

The analysis reveals that micro-influencers, who typically have smaller but more engaged audiences, are often more effective than macro-influencers in influencing purchase decisions. This is because micro-influencers are perceived as more genuine and accessible, which enhances trust and

emotional connection. Consumers tend to view their recommendations as honest and unbiased, thereby increasing their persuasive power.

Furthermore, the concept of parasocial interaction—where consumers develop one-sided relationships with influencers—plays a significant role in shaping behaviour. These relationships create a sense of familiarity and trust, making consumers more receptive to influencer recommendations. In the context of fashion, influencers often serve as style guides, helping consumers navigate trends and make informed choices.

However, the synthesis also highlights potential challenges associated with influencer marketing. Over-commercialisation and lack of transparency can undermine credibility, leading to scepticism among consumers. As a result, authenticity and ethical practices are critical for maintaining the effectiveness of influencer strategies.

5.3 User-Generated Content (UGC) and Authenticity

User-generated content (UGC) is another key factor influencing fashion buying behaviour. UGC includes reviews, photos, videos, and social media posts created by consumers, offering real-life representations of products. Unlike brand-generated content, which may be perceived as promotional, UGC is considered more authentic and trustworthy (Cheung et al., 2008).

The analysis indicates that visual UGC, such as outfit posts and unboxing videos, is particularly influential in the fashion industry. These forms of content allow

consumers to see how products look in real-world settings, providing valuable information about fit, quality, and styling options. This reduces perceived risk and enhances decision-making confidence.

Additionally, UGC fosters a sense of community and participation. Consumers who contribute content feel a sense of ownership and belonging, which strengthens their connection to the brand. This participatory culture aligns with the principles of Uses and Gratifications Theory, where individuals seek social interaction and self-expression through media usage (Katz et al., 1973).

The synthesis also reveals that UGC can amplify brand visibility and reach. When consumers share their experiences, they act as brand advocates, influencing their social networks and extending the impact of marketing efforts.

5.4 Trust, Risk Reduction, and Platform Credibility

Trust is a fundamental determinant of online purchasing behaviour, particularly in social commerce, where transactions occur in a virtual environment. The findings highlight that trust is built through multiple factors, including platform reliability, transparency, and social interactions.

Social commerce platforms enhance trust by facilitating communication between users, providing access to peer reviews, and ensuring secure transactions. The presence of social support, both informational and emotional, contributes to the development of trust and reduces perceived risk (Hajli, 2015).

Moreover, the integration of trust mechanisms, such as verified reviews and secure payment systems, further enhances consumer confidence. According to Gefen et al. (2003), trust reduces uncertainty and increases the likelihood of online transactions.

In the fashion context, where consumers cannot physically examine products, trust becomes even more critical. The availability of detailed product information, high-quality visuals, and customer feedback helps mitigate the limitations of online shopping.

5.5 Impulse Buying Behaviour

Social commerce environments are designed to encourage impulse buying through various features and strategies. The synthesis reveals that elements such as limited-time offers, flash sales, and personalised recommendations create a sense of urgency and excitement, prompting consumers to make spontaneous purchases.

The integration of entertainment and shopping further enhances this effect. Features such as live streaming and short-form videos create immersive experiences that blur the line between browsing and purchasing. Consumers are often drawn into these experiences and make purchases without extensive deliberation.

Impulse buying is also influenced by emotional triggers, such as fear of missing out (FOMO) and social comparison. When consumers observe others purchasing or endorsing products, they may feel compelled to act quickly to avoid being left out.

5.6 Emotional and Psychological Drivers

Fashion consumption is deeply rooted in emotional and psychological factors. The analysis indicates that social commerce amplifies these factors by providing visually rich and socially interactive environments.

Consumers are motivated by the desire for self-expression, social approval, and identity construction. Social media platforms allow individuals to curate their image and showcase their style, making fashion purchases a means of personal branding.

Additionally, hedonic motivations, such as enjoyment and excitement, play a significant role in driving engagement and purchasing behaviour. The interactive nature of social commerce platforms enhances these experiences, making shopping more enjoyable and engaging.

6. Discussion

The findings of this study provide a comprehensive understanding of how social commerce influences fashion buying behaviour through the interaction of technological, social, and psychological factors. By integrating insights from the theoretical framework, this discussion elaborates on the implications of these findings and their contribution to existing literature.

6.1 Integration of Theoretical Perspectives

The results strongly support the applicability of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Social Influence Theory, and Uses and

Gratifications Theory in explaining consumer behaviour in social commerce.

From a TAM perspective, the importance of platform usability and functionality is evident in shaping consumer engagement. Features such as ease of navigation, personalised recommendations, and seamless transactions enhance perceived usefulness and ease of use, thereby increasing adoption and usage (Davis, 1989).

Social Influence Theory is reflected in the significant impact of social proof, influencer marketing, and eWOM on consumer decisions. The visibility of others' behaviours creates a normative environment where individuals are influenced by social cues and expectations (Kelman, 1958).

Uses and Gratifications Theory provides insight into the motivations underlying social commerce usage. Consumers engage with platforms not only for functional purposes but also to fulfil psychological needs such as entertainment, social interaction, and self-expression (Katz et al., 1973).

The integration of these theories highlights the multidimensional nature of social commerce, where technological features enable social interactions that fulfil psychological needs.

6.2 The Role of Trust and Authenticity

Trust emerges as a central theme that underpins all aspects of social commerce. The findings suggest that trust is not solely based on platform reliability but also on the authenticity of content and interactions.

Influencers and UGC play a crucial role in building trust by providing relatable and credible information. However, the increasing commercialisation of social media poses challenges to authenticity. Consumers are becoming more discerning and may question the credibility of sponsored content.

This underscores the importance of transparency and ethical practices in maintaining trust. Brands and influencers must prioritise authenticity to sustain long-term relationships with consumers.

6.3 Implications for Consumer Behaviour

The findings reveal that social commerce has transformed fashion buying behaviour by making it more interactive, immediate, and socially driven. Consumers are no longer passive recipients of information but active participants in the decision-making process.

The prevalence of impulse buying highlights the influence of emotional and situational factors. While this can drive sales, it also raises concerns about consumer well-being and responsible consumption.

Additionally, the emphasis on social validation suggests that consumer choices are increasingly influenced by external factors, which may impact individuality and self-expression.

6.4 Managerial Implications

For fashion brands and marketers, the findings offer several practical insights:

- Leveraging influencer marketing and UGC to enhance credibility and engagement

- Designing user-friendly platforms with interactive features
- Building trust through transparency and reliable services
- Creating engaging content that appeals to emotional and psychological needs

By aligning their strategies with these factors, brands can effectively navigate the competitive landscape of social commerce.

6.5 Contribution to Literature and Future Research

This study contributes to the literature by providing a holistic synthesis of social commerce and fashion buying behaviour. It integrates multiple theoretical perspectives and identifies key themes that shape consumer decisions.

Future research should explore emerging trends such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and sustainability in social commerce. Additionally, empirical studies could validate the proposed framework and examine its applicability across different cultural contexts.

7. Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive examination of the influence of social commerce on fashion buying behaviour through a qualitative synthesis of secondary data. By integrating insights from multiple academic sources and theoretical perspectives, the research demonstrates that social commerce is not merely an extension of e-commerce but a dynamic ecosystem that

combines technological innovation, social interaction, and psychological engagement.

The findings highlight that social proof, influencer marketing, and user-generated content are central to shaping consumer perceptions and purchase decisions. These elements collectively reduce uncertainty, enhance trust, and provide consumers with relatable and credible information. In particular, the role of influencers and peer-generated content underscores the shift from traditional brand-centric communication to a more decentralised and participatory model of marketing. Consumers increasingly rely on social validation and experiential information, which significantly influences their decision-making processes.

Furthermore, the study emphasises the importance of technological factors such as platform usability, personalisation, and interactivity. These features not only facilitate user engagement but also create immersive shopping experiences that encourage both planned and impulse purchases. The integration of entertainment and commerce has blurred the boundaries between consumption and social interaction, making shopping a more engaging and emotionally driven activity.

From a theoretical standpoint, the integration of the Technology Acceptance Model, Social Influence Theory, and Uses and Gratifications Theory provides a holistic framework for understanding the complexities of social commerce. This multidimensional approach reveals that consumer behaviour is influenced by the interplay of functional, social, and

psychological factors, rather than any single determinant.

In practical terms, the study offers valuable implications for fashion brands and digital marketers. To remain competitive, organisations must prioritise authenticity, transparency, and consumer engagement. Leveraging influencer partnerships, encouraging user-generated content, and designing user-friendly platforms can significantly enhance consumer trust and loyalty. At the same time, ethical considerations, such as transparency in sponsored content and responsible marketing practices, are essential for maintaining credibility in an increasingly sceptical consumer environment.

Despite its contributions, the study is limited by its reliance on secondary data, which may not capture emerging trends or context-specific variations. Future research should consider empirical approaches, such as surveys or experiments, to validate the proposed framework and explore new developments, including artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and sustainable fashion consumption.

In conclusion, social commerce represents a transformative force in the fashion industry, reshaping how consumers discover, evaluate, and purchase products. Understanding its underlying mechanisms is essential for both academic advancement and practical application in the evolving digital marketplace.

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