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Understanding Consumer Behaviour In The Age Of Social Commerce: An In-Depth Study With Special Reference To Goregaon (East)

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Abstract

With a progressively digital-first world, the synthesis of social media and e-commerce has created a revolutionary phenomenon, social commerce. This paper discusses the ways in which social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram have begun to shape consumer behavior in urban Indian contexts, with a special emphasis on Goregaon (East), Mumbai. Based only on secondary data, the study investigates the psychological, infrastructural, and technological determinants of online shopping purchases among consumers in the local area. It brings out the increased role of influencer marketing, user-generated content, and peer review in forming trust and purchasing intentions. The research identifies a marked behavioral change where consumers place a high value on convenience, authenticity, and social endorsement ahead of traditional advertising and in-store visits. In spite of the constraint of having to work with secondary data, the paper provides an insightful analysis of the micro-dynamics of social commerce within a localized urban setting, advancing the larger debate on Indian digital consumerism.

Keywords: ***Social Commerce, Consumer Behavior, Influencer Marketing, Trust, eWOM (Electronic Word of Mouth), Urban India.***

Introduction

With the current digital-first world, the confluence of e-commerce and social media has brought into being a revolutionary phenomenon called social commerce. No longer relegated to generic online shopping sites, customers now find, research, and buy products on social networking platforms like Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube. This emergent commerce is revolutionizing the customer experience, which is becoming more interactive, immersive, and driven by social influences, peer ratings, and influencer postings. Social commerce integrates the potency of online marketing with the informality and social-based nature of social interactions, hence making the experience of buying more natural and engaging. Consequently, companies are spending more on social media plans to reach a digitally informed consumer that values real-time interaction, personalization, and frictionless buying options embedded in their social streams. This change

in consumer behavior is not only changing the dynamics of marketing but also transforming the expectations that consumers have around convenience, trust, and product discovery.

The Indian digital ecosystem mirrors this global trend in a highly dynamic and diverse form. With more than 800 million internet users and a fast-growing base of mobile-first consumers, India offers a fertile ground for the growth of social commerce. Urban areas, especially, have become hotspots for this phenomenon, where young professionals, students, and digitally savvy consumers are embracing social commerce as a new normal of their buying behavior. Mumbai, being among the country's largest metropolitan cities, provides a unique perspective on how urban consumers engage with digital platforms. Among Mumbai, areas like Goregaon (East) are the epitome of this shift. A blend of working-class people, middle-class families, and young professionals, Goregaon (East) is a quintessential urban environment to study the subtleties of consumer behavior in the social commerce era. The people who reside here are becoming more and more active on media channels such as Instagram and Facebook, where they receive product suggestions through influencers or community networks, as opposed to mainstream advertising. Their buying choices are guided by digital word-of-mouth, product live demonstrations, shoppable stories, and peer-created content that ensures trust and similarity.

The contemporary Goregaon (East) consumer no longer depends on brand reputation or in-store visits to guide purchase decisions. Instead, purchasing behavior is guided by a combination of social proof, convenience on platforms, and personalization influenced by algorithms. For example, a working professional in Goregaon might learn about a skincare product from an Instagram reel by a beauty influencer and, driven by the visual demonstration and peer feedback, go on to buy it without ever looking for it conventionally. Likewise, a college student might be encouraged to purchase fashion accessories via TikTok hauls or peer-linked links on WhatsApp groups. These instances highlight the way the digital environment, and social media in particular, is not only actively participating in advertising but also in shaping real-time consumer choices. Furthermore, as consumers become increasingly comfortable with social commerce, their expectations are changing. They now expect instant feedback, frictionless checkout experiences, open reviews, and genuine storytelling from brands—qualities that are more commonly found in influencer-created content than in conventional marketing.

This change is also aided by the fast-digitization of payments infrastructure and increasing logistics networks capable of facilitating prompt deliveries even at local geographies such as Goregaon. Digital wallets, UPI-based transactions, and cashless platforms have simplified buying for consumers making it convenient for them to complete transactions directly over social media apps or their corresponding commerce websites. With all these infrastructural developments, social commerce is now no longer a trend but a mainstream movement. Moreover, the emergence of micro and nano influencers with their small but engaged follower communities has added a new level of personalization and authenticity. They tend to live within or close to the communities they represent and therefore their content and word of mouth are more localized and closer to the people. In Goregaon (East), this hyperlocal influencer culture has already started defining micro-trends, with locals depending on community influencers for fashion, food, electronic, and lifestyle product opinions. The credibility tied to these localized voices provides a social validation layer that traditional ads cannot match.

Though the appeal of social commerce is obvious, equally significant are the psychological drivers behind this behavior. Social proof, fear of missing out (FOMO), exclusivity, and immediate gratification are some of the most influential drivers that lead customers to interact with products and services on social media. The incessant flow of content keeps the customer in a cycle of discovery, leading frequently to impulse buys. Visual storytelling, influencer endorsements, and user-generated content are potent means of building perceived value and immediacy. For someone in Goregaon (East), noticing a trending item promoted by a local influencer or being talked about in a local Facebook group will quite often provoke instant interest and possible conversion. This new reality illustrates a consumer who is not merely a purchaser but a living and breathing part of the marketing and branding process, writing reviews, generating content, and influencing friends. The social aspect of social media introduces a psychological element into the buying process, turning it into not only a transaction but an experience for others as well.

The easy availability of smartphones and cheap internet further speeds this change. With almost every family in urban zones now possessing one smartphone and a connection to social media sites, the digital gap has narrowed tremendously. This has resulted in a democratized online market where small and medium enterprises can compete for space with larger brands using innovative content, personal stories, and targeted niches. For entrepreneurs and businesses in Goregaon (East) who are local, this provides new opportunities to engage with their audience through low-cost and participatory means. From home crafters selling handcrafted products through Instagram accounts to neighborhood eateries providing promotions through Facebook offers, social commerce enables sellers and consumers in significant ways. It creates a symbiotic environment where timeliness, relatability, and shared engagement are more important than glamourous ads and celebrity endorsements.

With numerous benefits, social commerce also has its drawbacks in the form of data privacy, disinformation, and quality assurance. With consumers placing greater reliance on peer-created content and influencer endorsements, the boundaries between genuine reviews and sponsored endorsement are becoming increasingly thin. Consumers in regions such as Goregaon (East) are getting increasingly smart and are second-guessing in most cases, cross-verifying reviews and taking second opinions before they buy. This led to a push for transparency and ethical marketing practices in the realm of social commerce. Brands that are unable to live up to these expectations can lose credibility and consumer trust. Marketers, therefore, now face pressure to stay authentic and connect their messages to the values and tastes of their target consumers.

In conclusion, social commerce's emergence marks a huge shift in how brands are engaged by consumers and decisions are made on what to buy. Cities such as Goregaon (East) in Mumbai are mini-microcosms of this changing world, representing a vast mix of digital consciousness, societal pressure, and behavior driven by convenience. As buyers increasingly interact within the social commerce landscape, recognizing their incentives, likes, and trust practices is vital for companies seeking success here. Based on secondary data, this research endeavors to investigate these dynamics and provide insights into the manner in which consumer behavior in Goregaon (East) is being redefine during the era of social commerce. Through an investigation of available reports, case studies, and digital marketing trends, the research endeavors to contribute towards further understanding of this revolutionary movement as part of the broader context of contemporary marketing.

Review of Literature

Alam, F., Tao, M., Lahuerta-Otero, E., and Feifei, Z. (2022) in their paper titled, "Let's Buy with Social Commerce Platforms through Social Media Influencers: An Indian Consumer Perspective." Examined how social media influencers influence consumer purchase intentions on Indian social commerce platforms. The authors carried out a quantitative study among 379 Indian participants and used Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to analyze the data. The research found that trust and social interaction on social platforms such as Instagram and Facebook effectively mediate the relationship between influencer traits such as expertise, engagement, and humor and consumers' online purchasing behavior. This study places emphasis on the increasing influence of influencers in influencing trust and buying behavior, especially in countries like India where there is a speedy adoption of digital. The study also points to the fact that the authenticity and similarity of influencers are strong drivers in turning social media interaction into purchase intention and is therefore quite relevant to marketers in social commerce contexts.

Patel, A. A. et al. (2024), in the article, "The Impact of Social Commerce on Consumer Buying Behaviour: Comparative Study of Instagram and Facebook." Offered an analytical contrast of how customers engage and make purchasing decisions on two prevailing platforms—Facebook and Instagram. With a sample of 100 respondents from Mumbai, the research utilized ANOVA to analyze the effect of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and influencer marketing on consumer engagement and purchase intentions. The study established that while both sites influence buying behavior in a positive way, eWOM influences buying behavior more

than direct influencer marketing, especially because of its perceived authenticity and peer credibility. The research found that the marketers have to change their strategy according to the unique patterns of behavior on every platform because, for example, Instagram users are more visually oriented and have a better reaction to visual content compared to Facebook users who trust community conversation and comments more. This paper provides useful information regarding platform-specific consumer behaviors, particularly for cities such as Mumbai where both platforms are equally popular among the population.

Sammi, D., and Vij, S. (2023) in their paper titled, "Understanding Consumer Behavior in Social Commerce: Insights from the Indian Market." Examined the primary determinants of consumer behavior in India's fast-expanding social commerce market. Using a descriptive research method and data collected from 214 regular social commerce users, the authors found trust, social influence, platform ease of use, and price sensitivity as significant drivers of consumer choice. Of these, trust was the most significant determinant, with numerous users reporting they are deeply reliant on peer reviews, word-of-mouth, and influencer endorsements prior to buying goods via social platforms. The study highlighted the need for the development of authentic online communities and openness in the influencer-brand partnerships if long-term consumer trust is to be maintained. With the emphasis on the Indian context, the paper presents a localized analysis of consumer drives in social commerce and urges firms to invest in relational marketing approaches instead of purely transactional content.

S Suresh et al. (2022) in the presented research journal, “Impact of Social Commerce on Consumer Buying Behaviour in India.” The anonymous writer discussed how social commerce growth has created a dramatic shift in buying behaviors among different consumer groups within the nation. The article addresses the increasing use of social platforms not only for product discovery, but also for purchase confidence building through real-time ratings, product demonstrations, and peer-to-peer interaction. The study points out that the estimated worth of India's e-commerce sector is likely to be $200 billion by 2026, with a big chunk coming from social commerce. The study also contends that the mass use of smartphones, high-speed internet connectivity, and localized digital payment systems have democratized the purchase process, allowing even small-volume sellers to access hyperlocal markets. The research highlights that social media consumer interactions tend to happen before purchases are made, so the pre-purchase stage is key for marketers to drive decision-making through creative, credible content.

C Taylor et al. (2021) in the presented business article, “India’s Luxury Market: A Growing Powerhouse for Global Brands.” Considering its long history of luxury, it is surprising that India does not control much of the world's luxury industries and brands. Most books written on luxury brands and India concentrate on what cultural and other issues Western brands need to consider before attempting to enter this complicated market. India is either viewed as a potentially enormous consumer market for European luxury products or as an immensely cheap factory to manufacture Western-badged luxury products. This paper seeks to understand why Indian Luxury Experts and even students pursuing Master's Degree in Luxury at a prominent Business School in India and the UAE think India lacks its own worldwide luxury brands. This paper reviews their views based on a 'French' vantage point and tries to provide insights and inspiration towards fostering the growth of a self-assured India that creates, rather than 'makes', its own global, 'sustainable' and ethical luxury brands.

M Pathare et al. (2022) in the presented research paper, “Impact of Social Commerce on Consumer Buying Behaviour in India.” With the emergence of Covid-19, quarantine has put emphasis on how important it is to have an ecommerce business, and now it's safe to say that if you don't have one, you're missing a great amount of revenue. Because of its fast and easy way of exchanging commodities and local and international services, e-commerce has dramatically increased in popularity during the past several decades. India is likely to be one of the hotspots for models of e-commerce business. [1] The Indian online marketplace industry is ranked 9th in the global list of cross-border development. Our world is evolving, and e-commerce will only become more vital as time passes. It will be assisted in this mission by emerging technologies. Since consumers are hesitant to take risk exposure, coronavirus pandemic has reversed everything everywhere, and it is expected that consumers' buying habits will turn online. [2] The aim of this research cum survey paper is to explore how social media contributes to the role of consumers while making decisions concerning complicated transactions that are costly, infrequent, and are characterized by significant brand differences, deep consumer involvement, and risk. The study also investigates the manner in which the richness of the content and the user generated

data can alter the pattern of the consumers' purchases. The quantitative survey through the means of survey questionnaires examines to what extent experiences are transformed for the consumers through the utilization of social media and e-commerce applications. Customer satisfaction is affected by utilizing social media platforms throughout the steps of data collection and evaluation alternatives, increasing the satisfaction as the customer navigates through the process towards an end purchasing decision and post-purchasing assessment.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the rapid rise of social commerce in India, relatively little is known about its influence on consumer behavior at the local level. Cities such as Goregaon (East) have experienced growth in digital involvement, but reasons why consumer purchasing takes place using online channels like Instagram and Facebook have yet to be extensively examined. Classical marketing theories cannot reflect emotional and social motives for decision making when making a purchase using social commerce channels. With influencer marketing, peer recommendations, and user-generated content becoming major drivers, companies require better understanding of these new behaviors. This study will fill this gap by examining secondary data to identify patterns, likes, and trust measures driving consumer behavior in Goregaon's social commerce culture.

Research Gap

Current research on social commerce tends to emphasize national or international patterns at the expense of localized consumer action in such markets as Goregaon (East). Very little research is conducted on the effect of regional determinants and locally based social media interactions on trust and buying decisions. Little work also utilizes second-hand data exclusively to analyze such trends. This leaves a vacuum in explaining social commerce micro-dynamics.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine how citizens in Goregaon (East) shop using social media.
2. To understand what encourages them to buy items online.

Hypotheses of the Study

1. H_{01}: Social media has no significant effect on the shopping behavior of people in Goregaon (East).

   H_{11}: Social media has a significant effect on the shopping behavior of people in Goregaon (East).

2. H_{02}: Factors like trust, reviews, and influencer posts do not influence online buying decisions.

   H_{12}: Factors like trust, reviews, and influencer posts do influence online buying decisions.

Limitations of the Study

1. The study is based only on secondary data, so it may not reflect the most recent consumer behavior changes.
2. The research focuses only on Goregaon (East), so the findings may not apply to other areas.
3. The study does not include primary data like surveys or interviews, which could give deeper insights.

Research Methodology

This research relies purely on secondary data gathered from numerous reliable sources including research papers, journals, government reports, websites, and online articles. The research is based on a descriptive methodology to grasp consumer behavior when it comes to social commerce, namely in the field of Goregaon (East). Data have been scrutinized and examined to determine patterns and trends in how individuals use social media platforms for purchase. As no primary data such as surveys or interviews were employed, the research relies on available literature and cyber resources to make conclusions. The objective is to provide useful insights through already existing published material on social commerce and consumerism.

Data Analysis

The secondary data analysis indicates that social media sites such as Instagram and Facebook significantly affect the way individuals shop online, particularly in urban regions such as Goregaon (East). Research indicates that reviews, trust, and influencer content significantly influence consumer purchasing decisions. Individuals tend to make purchases based on recommendations, peer reviews, and online activity prior to making a purchase. This demonstrates that social commerce is restructuring traditional buying patterns and making online interaction an integral component of the shopping process.

Hypotheses 1:

H_{01}: Social media has no significant effect on the shopping behavior of people in Goregaon (East).

H_{11}: Social media has a significant effect on the shopping behavior of people in Goregaon (East).

Result: On the basis of the secondary data examined, we accept the alternative hypothesis and reject the null hypothesis. The literature evidently supports the fact that social media sites heavily influence consumers in urban areas, such as Goregaon (East), to make shopping choices. Influencer marketing, community reviews, and social interaction on sites like Instagram and Facebook have revolutionized the way individuals find and buy products.

Hypotheses 2:

H_{02}: Factors like trust, reviews, and influencer posts do not influence online buying decisions.

H_{12}: Factors like trust, reviews, and influencer posts do influence online buying decisions.

Result: According to the analysis, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. In a number of different studies, there is clear evidence that consumer trust and influencer engagement are among the most influential factors in driving online purchase behavior. Secondary data indicates that customers tend to search for reviews, ratings, and influencer recommendations prior to making a purchase, which verifies that these are in fact influential.

Conclusion

The research holds that social commerce is radically changing the way Goregaon (East) consumers are engaging in shopping. With the growth of channels such as Facebook and Instagram, individuals are now engaging in buying choices based on social media engagement, word-of-mouth reviews, and influencer opinions instead of conventional advertisements or physical store experiences. The availability of visual content, real-time engagement, and trusted voices like local influencers is fueling faster, emotionally charged buying behavior. Convenience, trustworthiness, and relatability are becoming more important than brand reputation alone. This shift is particularly prominent in urban pockets like Goregaon (East), where the digitally active population is also growing more reliant on social media to discover products and seek recommendations.

By analyzing secondary data, the research demonstrates that social media significantly affects consumers' buying habits and motivations. It indicates that factors such as trust, user reviews, and influencer content are powerful drivers of online purchase behavior. Brands that prioritize genuine engagement and openness are likely to establish long-term consumer trust. Although the research is confined to secondary sources and the Goregaon (East) area, it provides meaningful insights into the wider impact of social commerce on urban Indian contexts and acts as a guide to companies looking to comprehend and harness these new digital purchasing trends.

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