Exploring the Influence of Social Media Shops: A Comparative Analysis of Instagram and TikTok

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the influence of social media shops by conducting a comparative analysis of Instagram Shopping and TikTok Shop. Through a case study approach, the research examines how these platforms impact economic outcomes and consumer behavior. The study aims to fill a gap in social commerce research by providing an analysis of contemporary statistics focused on shops within social media platforms. The findings indicate that both TikTok Shop and Instagram Shopping have a positive impact on economic growth, though consumer responses vary due to the distinct approaches of each platform. TikTok Shop, in particular, faces more criticism than Instagram Shopping. Additionally, both platforms elicit similar user behaviors and offer comparable appeal. The study concludes that the economic benefits of social commerce shops will likely continue with a positive revenue growth in this sector, and it recommends that future research focus on long-term analyses to monitor the evolution of social media over time.

Keywords: Business, Consumer, Influencer, Platform, Social Commerce

1. Introduction

Social commerce, a branch of e-commerce, differs in that it focuses on conducting commercial activities and transactions within social media platforms. Particularly, social networks are a growing phenomenon that is gradually overshadowing traditional e-commerce (Curty & Zhang, 2013; Liang & Turban, 2011, Esmaeili & Hashemi, 2019). In just recent years, social commerce has seen a massive surge due to its positive correlation with social media, which has been identified as the most interactive platform online (Lin et al., 2017). Projections indicate that by 2025, social commerce sales in the US are expected to nearly double from 2023 levels, surpassing $107 billion (Snapchat, 2022). Social commerce can be categorized into seven different general types (Kapoor, 2014). The most prevalent type is when consumers buy products after being directed to a site via a social media platform like Facebook, known as social network-

driven sales. The second type is community-based marketplaces like Depop, eBay, and Etsy, where individuals sell to each other. Another type is social shopping sites, which are online stores with social features, such as chat options for buyers to share advice and opinions. Other types include pick list sites such as Lyst, where users can create and share shopping lists with each other; group buying platforms like Groupon, which enable collective purchasing; participatory commerce, where users engage in the production process by voting and designing; and user review websites like Amazon, where customer reviews play a crucial role in driving sales.

The rapid emergence of social commerce comes with both benefits and drawbacks. One prominent benefit that sets social commerce apart from e-commerce is its support and encouragement for social interaction. Bringing the element of intercommunication into electronic shopping can help accelerate globalization, as it gathers diverse groups of people in one place (Nacar & Ozdemir, 2022). Additionally, using social media as a platform enables a larger audience base, which equates to a larger consumer base for businesses. Businesses can gain many advantages through the use of social commerce: from establishing a personal relationship with their consumers to garnering more satisfied purchases and reduced returns with the help of user reviews. On the contrary, a dependency on user reviews can result in a prevalence of fake, generated bot reviews, which are highly misleading and can produce distrust towards the seller/product (Šedý, n.d.). Similarly, oversaturation in the market leads to high advertisement and frequent paid reach, reducing organic reach. From a business standpoint, utilizing one platform for both marketing and sales is convenient, but it simultaneously increases competition between the high number of businesses concentrated together.

The current literature primarily addresses the distinctions between e-commerce and social commerce, social networking, consumer satisfaction, impulsive buying, and related topics. For instance, Esmaeili and Hashemi (2019) conducted a bibliometric study and systematic review of social commerce over 10-years (2004-2013), calling for future research in areas like system/website design and social/commerce processes. Similarly, Zhang and Benyoucef (2016) conducted a systematic review that highlighted the lack of research on consumer behavior within social commerce. However, as digital media evolves and technology advances, many features are likely to be updated or discontinued within just a few years, impacting the relevance of existing research findings. There is a noticeable gap in the literature concerning the adoption of social commerce "shops" on social media platforms, particularly between Instagram and TikTok. This study seeks to fill this gap by conducting a multiple case study on TikTok and Instagram shops. The results show that the economic and consumer behavioral effects of both e-commerce services are highly similar, with only minor differences in feedback and structure.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Social Commerce Overview

In simple terms, the primary difference between electronic commerce and social commerce is that social commerce platforms extend beyond traditional social network platforms.

They contain both social interactions (non-commercial and non-working) and commercial/work-related interactions (Esmaeili & Hashemi, 2019). Early studies described social commerce as the action of "providing and carrying out electronic commerce activities and transactions in the context of social media, and especially social networks." However, the more it rose in popularity, the more complex its definition became. Presently, social commerce's definition not only states that it encompasses an individual's social network, but also that it covers activities related to need recognition, pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase stages of a primary exchange (Yadav et al., 2013). Additionally, social commerce spans a variety of forms depending on the field of study in which it is examined (Esmaeili & Hashemi, 2019). The rapid development of social media in recent years has largely contributed to the progression of social commerce, and researchers predict that it can potentially shift the scope of e-commerce from a production-based environment to a social and customer-oriented environment (Wigand, Benjamin, & Birkland, 2008).

Social commerce systems serve 2 primary purposes: (i) Realization of commercial goals especially e-commerce (W) and (ii) promoting collaboration and interaction between stakeholders (Esmaeili & Hashemi, 2019). They achieve these objectives through two primary architectural models (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013; Liang & Turban, 2011). The first model, known as the off-site or introductory model, is commonly used by retailers such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Pinterest. This off-site model includes social network sites that integrate commercial features and support advertisements and transactions (Curty & Zhang, 2011). For example, Pinterest offers an option for creators to advertise their links through pins (Pinterest, 2024). The advertised pin will be integrated, then forwarded within the user's feeds, and upon clicking on the pin, they'll be redirected to the website where they can purchase the product.

Through this feature, Pinterest will gain profit from the creator for their part in advertisement and the creator will gain a portion of the commission if they can successfully redirect and receive interactions with their link. In contrast, the on-site or direct sale model features traditional e-commerce websites that incorporate social networking capabilities to leverage the benefits of social media. Prominent examples include Amazon, Etsy, and Macys (Liang & Turban, 2011). In particular, Amazon's product reviews system is its prime form of social network. These reviews provide additional information and assist individuals in making informed decisions before

purchasing products (AlZu'bi et al., 2019). Additionally, users can upvote or downvote a review, which can contribute significantly to the decision-making of potential new customers. AlZu'bi et al. (2019) showed that the relationship between the number of reviews and the percentage of votes is inverse. Amazon has become a leading retailer marketplace, earning a revenue of $232 billion in 2018 due to its efficient platform and its user-friendly "social network."

Fig. 1: Reviews voting distribution for the electronics category (AlZu'bi, 2019)
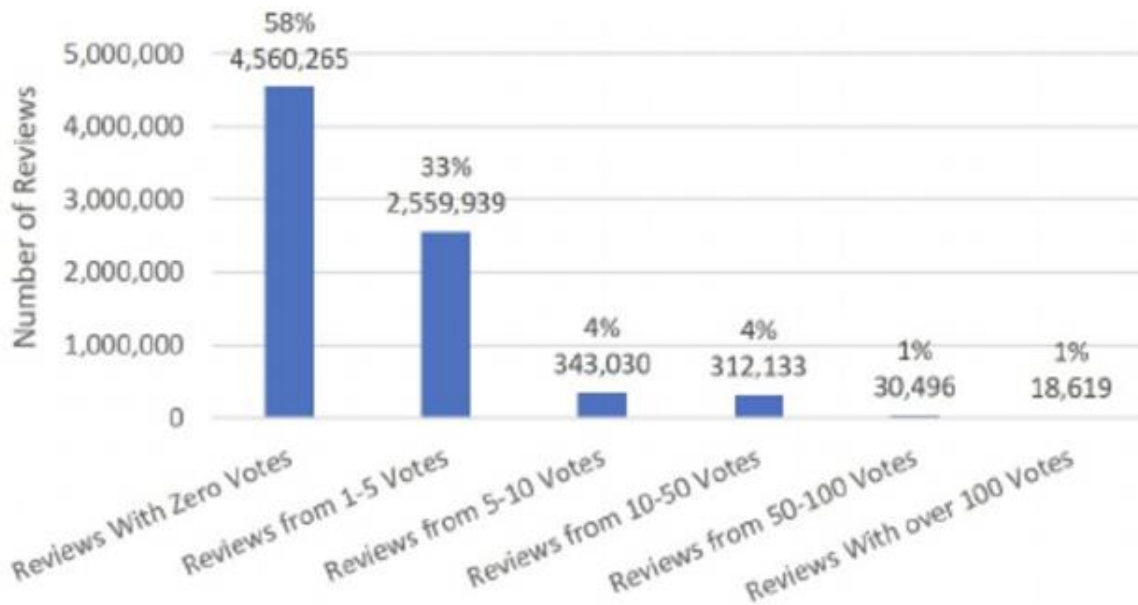
2.2. Theories Review

Several theories related to social commerce have been extensively discussed. Among the most researched are the technology acceptance theory (TAM) and trust theory.

TAM highlights the important roles of perceived usefulness, perceived risk, and perceived ease of use (Zhang & Benyoucef, 2016). Studies reveal that any form of a 'nudge' from friends or reviewers can significantly influence online shopping behavior and is often positively related to purchase intentions (Harris & Dennis, 2011). Users' emotions notably affect their perceived usefulness, ease of use, and enjoyment, according to a survey conducted on Facebook's event page (Lee et al., 2012). Additionally, a separate survey using structural equation modeling (SEM) and partial least squares (PLS) found that among 277 active social media users, perceived risk significantly impacts the perceived usefulness of social commerce (Torki Biucky et al., 2017). Perceived risk is understandably significant in the social commerce context because risks are greater in an online shopping environment compared to a physical shopping environment.

When shopping online, customers are unable to physically examine the products, which results in a lack of tangible evidence about their quality. Furthermore, concerns related to security and privacy also arise (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). This is when the trust theory becomes relevant.

The trust theory emphasizes that the factor of trust is critical in all stages of social commerce adoption (Zhao et al., 2023). This theory helps us understand how trust plays a role in consumer and seller connections. What sets social commerce apart from general e-commerce is its reliance on business activities supported by social media. Social commerce users exhibit new traits such as interactivity, personalization, and social engagement, which necessitate real-time connections with the demands and services provided by strangers (Phan et al., 2020). However, users would need to trust the product of another unknown user through confidence in the social commerce platform, which can pose a challenge. Therefore, the trust theory is especially applicable as trust is critical in social commerce (Geissinger et al., 2020; Arvidsson, 2014). Due to the importance of trust, a theory that quickly arose is the social support theory. Social support is most generally defined as the social resources that individuals perceive as available or that are offered to them by non-professionals, whether in formal support groups or informal helping relationships (Gottlieb & Bergen, 2010). Examples of online social support include forums, communities, ratings, reviews and recommendations (Hajli, 2014), with the purpose of either providing assistance or seeking support (Barrera, 1986). Multiple surveys conducted throughout the years have all found a positive correlation between social support and social commerce intention. A survey in 2012 concluded that social support positively influences the user's intention to use social commerce and to continue using a social networking site. Another in 2014 reveals that social support has a positive relationship with relationship quality and social commerce intention (Hajli, 2014) and in 2015, the same researchers found that social support (measured by emotional and informational support) is not only positively correlated, but it also increases the social commerce intention of participants (Hajli & Sims, 2015).

3. Method and Data

The primary approach I will employ involves conducting literature reviews. To ensure the credibility and reliability of my sources, I will exclusively utilize Google Scholar for source acquisition. I will analyze the statistical data from surveys and experiments detailed in various sources, as well as assess the research methodologies employed in these studies. Establishing relevant connections is essential; thus, I will create summaries that focus on information directly related to my research question concerning the specific impacts of social commerce.

Additionally, I will gather qualitative data through social media monitoring. Since part of my research addresses the effects on consumers, it is imperative to obtain direct feedback from users of each platform. Social media monitoring may also involve observing the growth of company

accounts and comparing their sales performance before and after engaging in social commerce.

To comprehensively compare the role of digital "shops" between Instagram and TikTok and its contribution to the social commerce scene, research findings will be gathered through reputable scholarly articles, and analysis data will be collected through both content analysis of consumer behavior and statistics from the websites of the respective platforms. The subjects of comparison in this study are the social media platforms Instagram and TikTok.

Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger launched Instagram in 2010, and unbeknownst to them, it soon hit 500 million users by 2016 (Bruner, 2016). According to Instagram's official website, Instagram strives to "give people the power to build a community" and "bring the world closer together" with a platform for them to share posts about their day-to-day stories and create real change (Instagram, n.d.). As of 2024, Instagram's features include photo posts, short video reels, stories to capture moments, direct messaging, an explore page, and most recently, an integrated e-commerce shop. Instagram's user base has been consistently increasing over the years, with the last official release confirming over 2 billion monthly active user accounts (1 billion increase in 4 months) (Dean, 2024).

In contrast, TikTok began as a different app called Musical.ly, which officially launched in Shanghai in 2014. Musical.ly was notably the first platform that specialized in short videos as the primary form of communication. It attracted a substantial audience in both mainland China until 2016, when ByteDance introduced Douyin, which swiftly came to dominate the market.

According to the BBC (2020), "it attracted 100 million users in China and Thailand within a year." Capitalizing on this success, ByteDance acquired Musical.ly and rebranded it as TikTok for a global audience. TikTok's success is largely due to its highly effective algorithm, which provides personalized content tailored to the user. Additionally, the app offers a vast library of songs for users to incorporate into their short videos, boosting their appeal and engagement.

Both Instagram and TikTok are among the most downloaded apps of all time. In July of the previous year, Tiktok and Douyin had achieved a combined one billion downloads globally, with 500 million being active users. By the following year, the number of downloads had reached two billion, and the active user count had grown to approximately 800 million (Galer, 2020). As of early 2024, Instagram boasts two billion monthly active users globally (Statista, 2024), and given this rate of growth, Instagram is expected to soon surpass Facebook in terms of downloads. A large user base not only provides more diverse statistics but also enables a comprehensive analysis of consumer trends. Furthermore, Instagram and TikTok are owned by prominent companies with access to advanced digital tools. These companies continuously evolve and enhance their platforms, including their social commerce features.

4. Case Analysis

4.1. TikTok Shop

The e-commerce platform TikTok Shop is one of the latest integrations within the TikTok app, having only been in the U.S. for less than a year. It allows TikTok users to explore and browse a wide range of products directly through live streams and short videos from their favorite creators. This innovative way of social commerce leverages TikTok's dynamic algorithm to make recommendations and foster impulsive purchases. Currently, there are no specific eligibility requirements for the TikTok Shop; even creators with no followers can take advantage of the platform as long as they produce content related to their products.

The digital "shop" functions as an extension of TikTok, with each creator having their personal "storefront" on their profile. Creators can feature these products in their videos, enabling their audience to make purchases directly through their storefront (Tiktop Shop, 2024). A key feature enhancing the appeal of TikTok Shop is the ability for users to combine products from different brands into a single cart and complete their purchase without leaving the app (Yuen, 2024). This creates a seamless and highly convenient e-commerce experience. Alongside the launch of TikTok Shop, several supporting services have been introduced, such as TikTok Shop Academy and the Affiliate Program, to further encourage its use.

Fig. 2: Tiktok Shop storefront example/ Fig. 3: Example of a consolidated cart
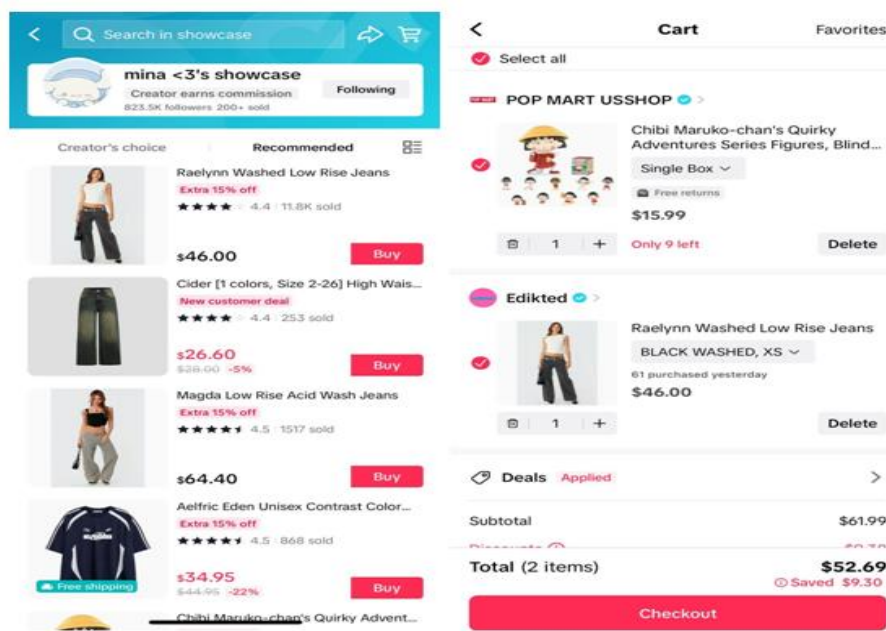
The TikTok Shop Academy is precisely what it sounds like: an "educational hub" designed for sellers and creators to learn how to maximize their earning potential on TikTok Shop. Within the academy, there are tips for sellers on how to grow their business, how to attract the right demographic, and how to engage the market and establish a signature style.

The Affiliate Program "connects creators and sellers through creativity and commission," according to TikTok Business's official website. Brands looking to boost sales on TikTok Shop can offer free samples to creators via the Creator Connect portal in exchange for promotion.

Creators earn a percentage of each sale they assist in, depending on the product's price. This opens up the doors for a whole new level of personalized advertisement, as creators can utilize the trust of their follower base and unique branding style to generate more sales for both the brand and themselves.

4.2. Instagram Shop

Social commerce has been a key component of Instagram's strategy since the official launch of Instagram Shopping in 2020 (Babcock, 2022). As stated on Instagram Business's website, "Instagram Shopping is a set of features that allow people to easily shop your brand's photos and videos all across Instagram." Similar to TikTok Shop, Instagram Shopping also allows creators to set up their own "storefront."

What truly distinguishes Instagram from other platforms is its seamless integration of e-commerce with posts. Creators can tag products directly in their posts, reels, and stories, making digital shopping more convenient than ever. Users interested in a particular item can now click on the product link within a post and add it directly to their cart, bypassing the need for back-and-forth comments. Instagram further enhances this feature by offering advertisement options for sponsored posts. This setup not only allows creators to earn commissions on sales they help generate but also motivates them to produce more content, benefiting Instagram overall. While both TikTok and Instagram provide social-commerce features for users to build their businesses, Instagram offers more extensive benefits for creator-owned businesses. For instance, the collections feature lets creators customize their storefront with categories of their choice, elevating navigation and aesthetics. Additionally, starting December 5, 2023, business creators can generate anticipation for their upcoming product launches by adding reminders to their Instagram stories.

Since its launch in 2020, Instagram Shopping has undergone several changes. Initially, it faced limited traction and engagement. In the article "Instagram Reviews: Increasing E-Commerce Security & Small Brand Visibility" from The Startup, Isabel Herczeg (2021) highlights the feature's low engagement, finding that "the IG Shop feature is difficult to locate, and users often

feel overwhelmed and confused by its content, leading them to abandon the purchase process." One 20-year-old Instagram user interviewed by Herczeg also expressed concerns, stating, "Shopping on Instagram does not feel as secure as shopping on my laptop; I find it sketchy to put my card information into a website through another app, and sometimes I get spooked that the ads are going to steal my information." To combat this issue, Instagram should establish a trustworthy reputation by accumulating more customer reviews on Instagram Shopping.

Fig. 4: Instagram Shopping storefront example (@bohemian_seoul)
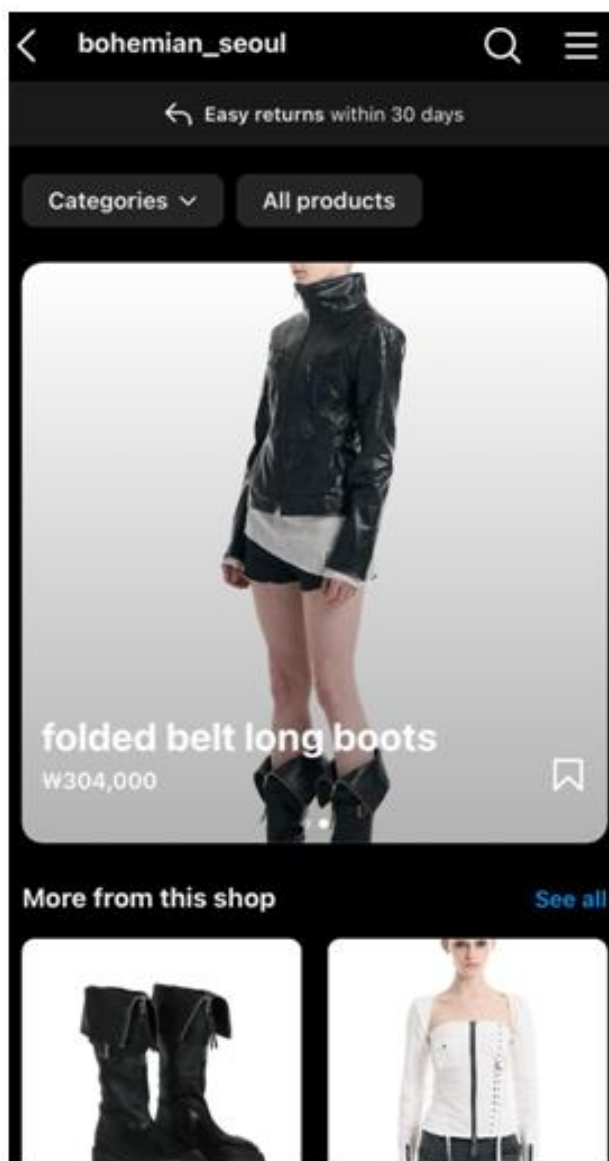
5. General Discussion

5.1. The Economic Impact

Both Instagram and TikTok are prominent players in social commerce. Their abilities to leverage visual storytelling are incredibly powerful. Visual storytelling allows products to be presented within the context of a lifestyle that aligns with the brand.

Studies reveal that 70% of TikTok users discover new brands and products on TikTok, with 75% of TikTok users being likely to buy something while using TikTok. Additionally, 83% of users indicate that TikTok influences their buying decisions (TikTok Shop, 2024), largely due to the platform's spontaneous nature. A more detailed exploration of how consumer behavior theories relate to TikTok's social commerce will be provided in Section 5.2.

In comparison, Instagram's broad appeal and younger user demographic make it a hotspot for the latest trends (Chetioui et al., 2020). According to Gitnux's 2024 report, 60% of Instagram users discover products on the platform, and Instagram users are 70% more likely to make online purchases than non-users. Instagram has established itself as a leading platform for brand promotion, with Gitnux's report noting that "at least 75% of small and medium businesses in the US use Instagram for advertising" (Lindner, 2024).

Instagram Shopping and TikTok Shop both play crucial roles in helping small businesses achieve not only local but also international success. As one of the top five most used social media platforms globally (DataReportal, n.d.), Instagram provides a significant opportunity for businesses to reach an international audience. A notable example is Bohemseo (@bohemian_seoul), a South Korean clothing brand with over 140,000 Instagram followers.

Previously operating solely within their local market, Bohemseo saw their unique, edgy aesthetic quickly become a hit amongst the Western audience after they began promoting their products on Instagram. Bohemseo now offers worldwide shipping directly through their Instagram Shop and website.

So while Instagram businesses see long-term growth, Tiktok Shop takes a more direct approach. Tiktok Shop's official website documents how Tiktok Shop has completely changed the trajectory of Brandon's small plant business. Brandon The Plant Guy has accumulated more than 1.5 million views and more than $350k in live shopping sales since his shop's recent debut. He expresses his gratitude towards Tiktok Shop by saying, "It has allowed me to connect with a global audience and promote my products to people who would have never found me."

Just as of June 2024, Stormi Steele, the founder of Canvas Beauty, achieved $1 million in sales

during a single livestream. Steele's post revealed that over 20,000 people bought items through her storefront by the end of the livestream. She attributes her success largely to her authenticity: "It's not just about saying, 'Hey, give me your money.' Because that's not always what it's about," Steele explains. "Sometimes it's about connecting with people, entertaining people, just being engaging." According to Lundstrom and Hiebert (2024), TikTok Shop has become the ninth-largest online beauty and wellness retailer in the US and the second-largest in the UK.

5.2. Consumer Response

The consumer responses to TikTok Shop and Instagram Shopping are highly comparable. Both invest heavily in influencer marketing and commercial activities, which creates a cycle of consumer spending. Factors like parasocial relationships, trust, and social support contribute to the high rate of impulse purchases.

Users naturally start to trust the creators they follow, often relying on their opinions to make decisions. When a creator has built an authentic and trustworthy persona, even users who were initially skeptical of a product can be swayed to purchase due to the creator's influence.

This behavior can be explained by a combination of consumer behavior theories. When a well-trusted influencer endorses a sponsored product, both the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and trust theory come into play. The influencer is simultaneously praising the product and establishing a seemingly genuine connection with the audience, which satisfies both perceived ease of use and the trust factor outlined by the theories. Additionally, the social support from public comments on Instagram and TikTok further encourages consumer engagement with the shop, as reviews from other users are perceived to be more reliable and genuine.

However, TikTok users appear to be more critical of the platform's new social commerce integration. While Instagram Shopping is viewed as a natural extension of its long-standing role in product promotion and e-commerce, TikTok is primarily seen as a space for community building. Users follow TikTok influencers for reasons beyond aesthetics, as the platform focuses on short-form videos that often feature direct interaction with the audience. A creator's sudden involvement with Tiktok Shop can lead to a sense of disconnection among fans. Active users have even voiced their concerns in TikTok posts. For example, on January 24th, Marika, known as @justgotscared on TikTok, posted a video expressing boredom with the text: "TikTok is a dead mall. This is how I feel swiping through my FYP, and every single post is a sponsored post or something about TikTok Shop." Therefore, while TikTok Shop has the potential to boost sales and profits for indie creators and companies, it risks diminishing the relatability of content.

To avoid losing touch with their audience, a creator should consider being fully transparent about sponsored collaborations. Whether it's through clear labeling of the advertisement or a direct

verbal announcement, transparency helps establish trust and reliability with the audience. This approach allows the influencer to continue promoting partnerships while preserving their authentic connection with their viewers.

5.3. Appeal Features

Instagram Shopping and TikTok Shop take on slightly different approaches to social commerce, yet their appeal is rooted in similar reasons. Both platforms capitalize on impulsive behaviors, which are significantly driven by three key theories: TAM, trust, and social support. This effectiveness is largely due to the convenient placement of these e-commerce features.

The "shops" feature on both platforms has greatly enhanced the ease of purchasing products for consumers. On TikTok, the Shop icon is represented by a bold yellow shopping cart at the bottom of each featured post, making it both eye-catching and easily accessible. In fact, its convenience has led to criticism for making the FYP appear less authentic. Regardless, Tiktok's viral formula makes it so anyone, regardless of their following, can get discovered and reach massive success overnight. Its interactive interface offers a wide variety of ways to stimulate user and creator interactions, such as short videos, live streams, and stories. Hence, despite the controversy, TikTok Shop continues to be a profitable commerce feature.

Instagram Shop is just as serviceable as Tiktok Shop, if not more. Gitnux concluded in their report published on July 17, 2024 that not only are 50% of Instagram users more interested in brands after seeing their products in shopping posts, but 46% of users have also purchased items from Instagram checkout. The ability to tag a product link directly on a post allows consumers to make the association between the sale item and the product being displayed.

Products are more likely to be sold if placed in a favorable setting or with a favorable influencer, as often seen on social media. Therefore, Instagram Shop's accessibility combined with the flexibility it offers makes it an engaging form of social commerce.

Despite the overall success of social media for sales, only 41% of users feel comfortable purchasing products directly through social apps, and just 37% trust these platforms with their payment information, according to HubSpot. A major concern for consumers is the perceived legitimacy of social media companies. To address this, social sellers should uphold and honor customer promises, such as providing fast and reliable communication and maintaining clear return and shipping policies. Building a strong community is also crucial for gaining trust.
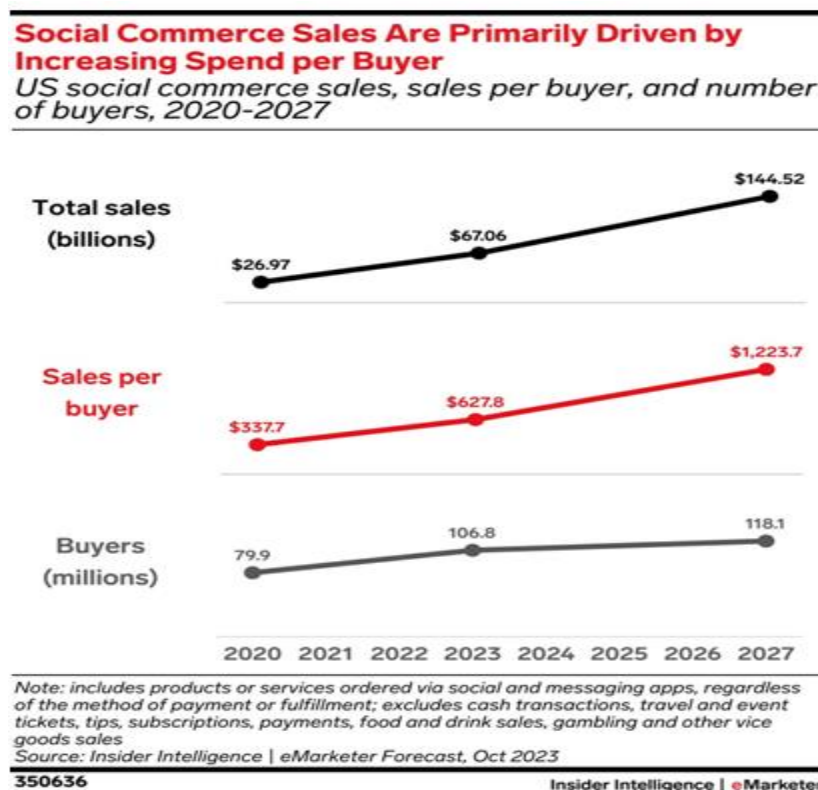
Sellers should invest in engaging personally with their audience, whether through responding to feedback or conducting interactive polls. By fostering a supportive community, sellers can enhance their credibility and generate more reviews, which potential customers can rely on.

6. Conclusion and Limitations

The paper aims to explore the effects of contemporary social commerce. This objective was achieved through a comprehensive comparison between two platforms that utilize similar social commerce models. The study examined the similarities and differences between TikTok Shop and Instagram Shopping, focusing on their economic impacts, user responses, and the appeal of the methods each platform employed.

Key findings reveal that both TikTok Shop and Instagram Shopping have positive economic impacts; however, their consumer responses vary due to their slightly varying approaches, with TikTok Shop facing a higher level of criticism. The variation in results is aligned with established theories of consumer behavior, notably the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and trust theory, which highlight the significance of perceived ease of use and trustworthiness in shaping purchasing decisions. Although Instagram and TikTok have distinct structures, they both operate as standard social media platforms and tend to elicit similar behaviors from users. As a result, despite their differences, they share comparable appeal.

Fig. 5: Annual social commerce sales per buyer are expected to nearly double from 2023 to 2027 (Enberg, 2023)

Social Commerce Sales Are Primarily Driven by Increasing Spend per Buyer
US social commerce sales, sales per buyer, and number of buyers, 2020-2027

Total sales (billions): $26.97 → $67.06 → $144.52
Sales per buyer: $337.7 → $627.8 → $1,223.7
Buyers (millions): 79.9 → 106.8 → 118.1

2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 2026 2027

Note: includes products or services ordered via social and messaging apps, regardless of the method of payment or fulfillment; excludes cash transactions, travel and event tickets, tips, subscriptions, payments, food and drink sales, gambling and other vice goods sales
Source: Insider Intelligence | eMarketer Forecast, Oct 2023
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Insider Intelligence | eMarketer

The future holds significant promise for social commerce. Forrester Research (Anderson et al. 2011) projects that the social commerce market in the U.S. will reach approximately $30 billion by 2015. Social commerce's popularity is positively correlated with the amount of time people spend on social media: and ever since the pandemic, active users on social platforms have skyrocketed. In 2024, US adults are expected to spend 11.4% of their total daily media time and 17.9% of their digital media time on social platforms (Yuen, 2024). Additionally, Emarketer's March 2024 US social commerce survey revealed that 39.4% of US social media users aged 15 to 77 had purchased from a brand founded by a creator or influencer in the past year. This figure increased to about two-thirds for both Gen Z users aged 15 to 26 (66.3%) and millennials aged 27 to 42 (63.1%). With this in mind, we can expect not only more interactive social commerce developments that capitalize off the popularity of short-form videos, but also more personalized approaches centered around influencer-driven content in the future.

One of the primary limitations of this study is the scarcity of existing research on social media shops. Due to social media shops being a relatively new phenomenon, there aren't a lot of published papers that have up-to-date research. Therefore, it limits the number of options for literature reviews and the extent of evidence for my case study. Moreover, the fast-paced evolution of social media platforms and their respective commerce models makes it difficult to reach definitive conclusions as there are constant changes in platform algorithms, user interfaces, and regulatory environments. This limitation highlights the need for continued research as social commerce develops and matures.

Future research should focus on longitudinal studies that track the development of social media shops over time, which provide a more comprehensive understanding of how these platforms evolve and their sustained impact on consumer behavior and economic outcomes.

Additionally, research that explores the role of emerging technologies that enhances the shopping experience on social media platforms, such as artificial intelligence and augmented reality, would also be critical as these platforms continue to grow in influence and complexity.

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