

Economic and Business Horizon

ISSN: 2963-2765

Economic and Business
Horizon

Volume: 05

Issue: 02

Year: 2026

Page: 159-176

Citation:

Jati, H. M., Wijaya, T., & Utama, A. (2026). Trust in social commerce: A bibliometric analysis of live endorsement and social proof in the TikTok Shop era. *Economic and Business Horizon*, 5(2), 159-176.

Trust in Social Commerce: A Bibliometric Analysis of Live Endorsement and Social Proof in the TikTok Shop Era

Hafidz Mahkota Jati¹, Tony Wijaya¹, Agung Utama¹

¹ Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

* Corresponding author: Hafidz Mahkota Jati (hafidzmahkota.2024@student.uny.ac.id)

Abstract

The rapid growth of digital platforms has transformed social commerce into a key channel for online consumer engagement and transactions. This study aims to provide a comprehensive bibliometric review of the evolution of social commerce research, with a focus on trust, live endorsement, and social proof. Through the analysis of 106 Scopus publications (2013-2025) using VOSviewer, this study maps the network of keywords, author collaboration, and joint citations. The results showed that Business (27.9%), Computer Science (24.2%), and Social Sciences (14.6%) were the dominant disciplines. Geographically, Malaysia, China, and the United States are the main contributors. The cluster analysis identified five key themes, including Platform and Adoption, Social Proof, and Quality of Interaction. The study confirms a significant research gap: core topics such as trust and live streaming commerce are identified as still isolated from the main literature networks. These findings provide practical and theoretical implications by highlighting the need for more integrated research frameworks and encouraging practitioners to shift their strategic focus from purchase intention to actual sales conversion.

Keywords

Bibliometric Analysis, Live Endorsement, Social Commerce, Social Proof, TikTok Shop, Trust.

1. Introduction

The rapid development of the digital economy has transformed consumer shopping behavior from catalog-based transactions into interactive ecosystems integrating social communication and user recommendations (Leong et al., 2024). This shift reshapes marketing and trust-building strategies, where product credibility is influenced by reviews and feedback (Zhao et al., 2023). Social media strengthens trust through content credibility, transparency, and seller reputation, which shape purchasing decisions. Trust is a key determinant of purchasing behavior, reinforced by influencer endorsements and social proof such as interactions, comments, and recommendations. This dynamic is increasingly prominent in video-based platforms with real-time interaction (Aloqool & Alsmairat, 2022; Shi et al., 2023; Nuji et al., 2023; Bulsara & Vaghela, 2023; Deng et al., 2024; Zhang & Zhang, 2025).

Live endorsements through streaming enhance consumer trust by enabling real-time product observation, interaction, and feedback, while social proof arises from visible user engagement and recommendations. Qin et al. (2023), Jiang et al. (2024), and Duong et al. (2025) found that these factors increase perceived credibility, emotional engagement, purchasing behavior, and repeat purchases in social commerce. Beyond influencing purchase intention, trust, live endorsements, and social proof also affect consumer engagement in digital ecosystems. However, Liu and Zhang (2024) emphasized that purchase intention does not always lead to actual transactions, highlighting the need to examine sales conversion. Similarly, Bari et al. (2025) showed that influencer credibility and user reviews in live streaming strengthen trust and actual conversion, revealing a research gap regarding their direct influence on real sales outcomes.

Although previous studies have examined trust, live endorsement, and social proof in digital consumer behavior, most focus on purchase intention rather than actual sales conversion. This highlights a research gap in understanding real purchasing behavior, especially on video-based and real-time platforms such as TikTok Shop. Sulistiyansih et al. (2025) show that TikTok Shop interaction mechanisms enhance consumer engagement, while Faiko et al. (2025) and Sulistiyani (2025) confirm that trust, live endorsement, and social proof influence purchase intention. However, their effect on actual sales conversion remains limited in prior studies, indicating the need to examine real purchasing behavior in video-based social commerce (Guo & Li, 2022; Zhang et al., 2022; Barta et al., 2023; Wang & Shahzad, 2024).

New research can explore how trust, live endorsement, and social proof develop from social interaction mechanisms into actual sales conversion behavior in social commerce. Previous studies have primarily focused on their direct influence on purchase intention, with limited attention to real purchasing outcomes. Therefore, this study applies a bibliometric approach to map publication trends, thematic clusters, and future research directions from multidisciplinary perspectives, including consumer behavior, digital marketing, and information systems. Donthu et al. (2021) explain that bibliometric analysis provides objective insights into research evolution, collaboration patterns, and influential publications. Furthermore, Aria and Cuccurullo (2017), Dincer and Dincer (2023), Barbosa and Santos (2023), and Öztürk et al. (2024) highlight that bibliometric analysis effectively identifies dominant topics, collaboration networks, conceptual structures, research gaps, and future collaboration opportunities.

This study maps the conceptual development of social commerce, trust, live endorsement, and social proof within the digital marketing ecosystem while examining how these constructs collectively influence consumer behavior and sales conversion. Unlike prior studies that mainly focus on purchase intention, this

research emphasizes purchasing decisions as a more concrete indicator of digital marketing effectiveness. Sulistiyaningsih et al. (2025) identify TikTok Shop as a platform that facilitates real-time interaction between consumers and creators, strengthening trust-based marketing mechanisms. Using a bibliometric approach, this study is expected to generate a comprehensive conceptual map of publication trends, intellectual actors, thematic clusters, and research gaps in social commerce. The findings are anticipated to provide both theoretical contributions for future research and practical insights for implementing trust-based marketing, live endorsements, and social proof strategies, particularly in video-based social commerce platforms that increasingly shape modern consumer decision-making and sales conversion behavior.

To achieve these objectives and address the identified research gaps, this study is guided by three research questions that link bibliometric findings with theoretical and practical implications. These questions focus on analyzing conceptual shifts, thematic relationships, and intellectual structures in social commerce literature, particularly related to trust, live endorsement, and social proof, as well as their role in shaping digital consumer behavior. The study examines the evolution of research trends in these constructs over time, identifies key intellectual actors, collaboration networks, and thematic clusters that structure the field, and explores the extent to which existing studies shift from purchase intention to sales conversion. It also considers how future research can integrate these constructs to strengthen digital marketing strategies on platforms such as TikTok Shop.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Social Commerce

Social trading is a relatively new concept in trading activities, first introduced by Yahoo! in 2005 through the “Pick List” feature on the Shophosphere platform, which enabled users to share and review products (Rubel, 2005; Zamrudi et al., 2016; Busalim, 2016). It is defined as a collaborative and participatory form of trade where all actors in the value chain interact directly (Baghdadi, 2016). Social commerce is widely viewed as an extension of e-commerce, integrating social networks with electronic commerce platforms through Web 2.0 features (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013; Hajli, 2015). It has further evolved into a model that monetizes social interaction and user-generated content, emphasizing active user participation in the process (Cui et al., 2018; Han et al., 2018).

According to Shin (2013), social commerce refers to web-based platforms that connect users and utilize networks for educational, service, and business purposes, enabling interaction and participation that generate value or benefits. Hassan et al. (2016) define social trading as online buying and selling activities conducted through social media and digital platforms. In this context, users can sell, buy, compare, and share product or service information to support others in purchasing decisions within marketplaces and digital communities (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013; Esmaili et al., 2015; Busalim, 2016; Yu et al., 2020).

Social commerce encompasses various aspects such as word-of-mouth communication, social interaction, user-generated content, e-commerce, and Web 2.0 technologies (Han et al., 2018). Driven by social media development, it facilitates the buying and selling of products and services (Wang & Zhang, 2012; Zhou et al., 2013; Kim & Park, 2024). This concept has developed rapidly due to its multidisciplinary nature and is interpreted from diverse perspectives across research fields (Goraya et al., 2021).

2.2. Trust

In a broader theoretical framework, trust is explained through trust value theory, which links risk perception, seller reputation, and user experience as the basis for

trust formation in digital interactions. Kim and Park (2024) state that consumer trust is influenced not only by transaction security and product quality but also by social reputation and digital credibility built through online interactions. In social commerce, trust also involves content credibility, influencer influence, and reputation formed in video-based platforms and live streaming. Zhang et al. (2023) show that real-time interaction in live streaming strengthens trust and encourages impulsive buying, while Tian et al. (2023) find that social presence significantly increases consumer trust in sellers and products. These findings indicate that trust in social commerce extends beyond conventional e-commerce by incorporating more complex dimensions of social interaction and presence.

Operationally, trust in social commerce refers to consumer perceptions of the reliability, transparency, and consistency of actors involved in digital interactions, including sellers, influencers, and content presenters (Husda, 2023; Tubalawony, 2024). It is shaped by content credibility, clarity of information, and social reputation, which collectively form consumer trust in digital environments. Trust is dynamic rather than static, as it evolves through repeated social experiences, community engagement, and ongoing interactions within video-based platforms.

Empirical studies confirm that trust mediates the effects of key antecedents on purchasing behavior in social commerce. Lu and Chen (2021) show that live streaming features such as broadcaster appeal, interactivity, and entertainment increase consumer confidence and impulse buying on TikTok Shop, while Deng et al. (2024) find that visual quality, real-time interaction, and emotional engagement strengthen trust and purchase intention. Likewise, Tubalawony (2024) reports that influencers and referral programs positively affect consumer trust in e-commerce platforms. Trust acts as a psychological mechanism linking social interaction and digital experience to purchasing decisions.

2.3. Live Endorsement

From a theoretical perspective, live endorsement is explained by social presence theory, which highlights the role of social presence and interpersonal communication in building trust on digital platforms (Kim & Park, 2024). This social presence creates shared experiences and shapes more authentic consumer perceptions of products. In social commerce, live endorsement enables content presenters to promote products through live streaming, allowing consumers to observe products in real time, interact directly, and receive immediate responses, thereby strengthening trust in both the content and the product credibility.

Live endorsement refers to promotional activities in which consumers can see, hear, and interact with content presenters in real time, enabling more authentic product information. In social commerce, it includes product demonstrations, Q&A sessions, and live comment responses that allow consumers to assess product quality and credibility directly. Chen and Yang (2023) show that trust and influencer attachment significantly increase purchase intention during live streaming, while Lu and Chen (2021) find that real-time interaction reduces consumer uncertainty and strengthens perceived reliability, leading to purchase decisions.

The effectiveness of live endorsement is strongly influenced by the credibility and reputation of content presenters. Kumar et al. (2021) show that influencers or sellers with high reliability significantly enhance consumer trust in promoted products. Real-time interaction in live streaming also fosters emotional and cognitive engagement, which increases both purchase intention and actual buying behavior. Furthermore, Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut (2020) find that direct interaction on platforms such as TikTok Shop helps consumers better evaluate products and strengthens positive brand perceptions. Thus, live endorsement functions not only as a promotional tool but also as a trust-building mechanism that links social interaction with purchasing decisions in social commerce.

2.4. Social Proof

Social influence theory explains how individuals adjust behavior to social pressures, leading to conformity or obedience (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004). In social commerce, this appears as social proof that strengthens trust formation. Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut (2020) show that live streaming increases trust and engagement with sellers, while Siregar and Setiawan (2025) find that social proof significantly affects purchasing decisions. Furthermore, Tjipto and Keni (2025) confirm that live broadcasting and social influence shape purchase intention, with trust as the main mediator.

Social proof is grounded in social influence theory, where individuals adapt their behavior based on group cues, strengthening trust in creators and encouraging participation in digital communities. Consumers tend to follow actions perceived as popular or credible, making social proof influential in impulse buying on short-video platforms (Huang et al., 2025; Sulistiyani, 2025). In livestreaming contexts, Long et al. (2024) found that subjective norms, attitudes, perceived behavioral control, and influencer presence significantly shape purchase intention through real-time persuasion, while Migkos et al. (2025) showed that influencer credibility strengthens the impact of social proof on purchasing behavior. These interactions among consumers, communities, and influencers create synergistic social influence that drives purchase intention and sales conversion in social commerce.

Empirical studies show that social proof influences consumer behavior through perceived security and social validation. Consumers are more likely to purchase when they observe others recommending or engaging with products. Abdul Talib and Mat Saat (2017) found that reviews, recommendations, and likes increase purchase intention through social validation, while Ou et al. (2022) showed that conformity behavior reduces risk perception and increases engagement in group purchases. In livestreaming contexts, Ye et al. (2023) reported that real-time interaction strengthens loyalty and perceived security, whereas Sun et al. (2023) emphasized that trust and risk perception mediate the effects of streamer credibility and interactivity on purchase intention.

3. Methods

This study applies bibliometric network visualization analysis to map intellectual structures, collaboration patterns, and thematic evolution related to trust, live endorsement, and social proof in social commerce. This method effectively illustrates relationships among researchers, topics, and knowledge development dynamics, while also identifying research gaps and conceptual interconnections (Moral-Muñoz et al., 2020; Donthu et al., 2021). Data were collected from the Scopus database due to its broad multidisciplinary coverage and strong academic indexing. All publications matching the search string were included without time restrictions to comprehensively capture the evolution of social commerce, from its early development to the emergence of live streaming commerce and TikTok Shop. Temporal analysis was further applied to examine conceptual changes during the post-2016 TikTok era and the rapid expansion of live commerce since 2021.

To ensure rigor, this study adopts a four-step selection procedure from Page et al. (2021): identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion. At the identification stage, keywords were developed from prior studies, dictionaries, and encyclopedias. The initial search string (“social commerce” AND “trust” AND “live endorsement” AND “social proof” AND “TikTok Shop”) produced limited results, indicating the novelty and scarcity of studies combining all variables. Therefore, the search strategy was refined to ensure sufficient and relevant data (approximately 50–100 documents). This refinement involved using the Boolean operator “OR” and broadening terms by removing highly specific variables such as “TikTok Shop” and “live endorsement” to capture broader conceptual foundations. The final search

string used was (“social commerce” OR “live commerce” OR “live streaming commerce”) AND (“trust” OR “credibility” OR “confidence”) AND (“social proof” OR “electronic word of mouth” OR “eWOM” OR “reviews”), ensuring a systematic and relevant literature selection for network analysis.

Although “live endorsement” and “TikTok Shop” were removed from the final search string to ensure dataset feasibility, both remain relevant and are incorporated through thematic interpretation of the results. Live endorsement is explored via related keywords such as influencer marketing, streamer, and source credibility, while the TikTok Shop context is captured through terms like live streaming commerce and short-form video. Cluster findings are then interpreted to connect these themes with live endorsement practices and the TikTok Shop ecosystem.

The Scopus search (TITLE-ABS-KEY) conducted on November 3, 2025 covers publications from 2013–2025 using the final query. Irrelevant documents were excluded during screening, leaving 152 records that met topical criteria. Further filtering by English language and article/review type resulted in a final dataset of 106 documents for analysis. The literature selection process is presented in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Data Collection Process

The bibliometric analysis was conducted using VOSviewer version 1.6.20 to visualize and examine relationships within the literature. The analysis focuses on bibliographic coupling, keyword co-occurrence, co-authorship, and co-citation to identify conceptual structures, thematic clusters, and research trends. This approach provides an in-depth understanding of how the field evolves over time. To ensure validity and replicability, the study follows established scientific mapping guidelines based on Van Eck and Waltman (2010), supported by methodological standards in bibliometric research. This framework ensures analytical accuracy and traceability

while enabling a robust mapping of research developments on trust, live endorsement, and social proof within the social commerce landscape.

4. Results

4.1. Conceptual Development and Publication Trends in Social Commerce

Based on data taken from the Scopus database using a combination of keywords (“social commerce” OR “live commerce” OR “live streaming commerce”) AND (“trust” OR “credibility” OR “confidence”) AND (“social proof” OR “electronic word of mouth” OR “eWOM” OR “reviews”), a total of 106 relevant articles published between 2013 and 2025 were successfully identified after a feasibility search and screening process.

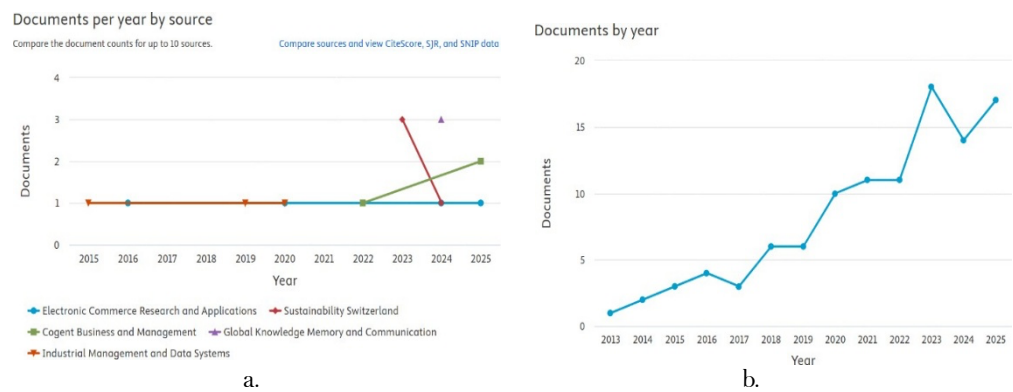


Figure 2. (a) Publication and (b) Journal Source Trends

Figure 2a shows that research on social commerce, trust, and social proof has grown significantly over time. From 2013–2019, publications increased steadily, followed by a notable rise in 2020 (10 documents), reflecting the growing relevance of social commerce and live streaming in the post-pandemic digital economy. The strongest growth occurred between 2022 (11 documents) and 2023 (18 documents), likely driven by the rapid adoption of platforms such as TikTok Shop that integrate live endorsement, trust, and social proof in real time. Although there was a slight decline in 2024 (14 documents), publications rose again in 2025 (17 documents), indicating sustained research interest and a field that is still expanding rather than saturated. Figure 2b shows the evolution of publication sources, indicating a shift from scattered publications in niche journals during 2015–2021, such as Electronic Commerce Research and Applications and Industrial Management and Data Systems, to a sharp increase in research output across multiple journals after 2022. Journals including Sustainability (Switzerland) and Global Knowledge, Memory and Communication experienced notable publication spikes, while Cogent Business and Management demonstrated consistent growth from 2022–2025. This pattern confirms the transition of the topic from a niche research area in e-commerce to a multidisciplinary “hot topic” widely published across diverse academic journals.

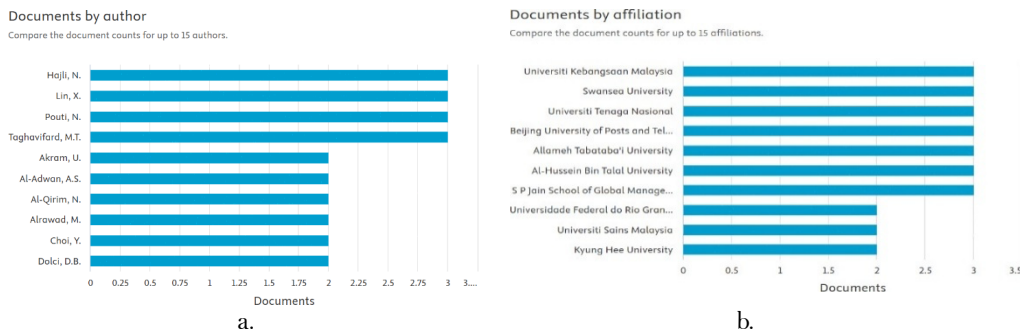


Figure 3. (a) Documents by Author (b) Institutions with the Highest Contribution

Figure 3a presents a list of the most prolific authors who have contributed to this field of research. The results of the analysis showed that intellectual leadership appeared to be concentrated in a group of core researchers. Hajli, N., Lin, X., Pouti, N., and Taghavifard, M.T. emerged as the most prolific authors, each with the contribution of three documents. In addition, there is a second prolific research group consisting of six authors, including Akram, U., Al-Adwan, A.S., Al-Qirim, N., Alrawad, M., Choi, Y., and Dolci, D.B., who have published two papers each. This pattern indicates that although the field has an active and growing research base, its scientific discourse is significantly shaped and led by a small group of key authors who are central to this intellectual network.

Figure 3b indicates the institutional affiliation of the most contributing researchers. Unlike concentrated author productivity, institutional maps show a very even and geographically diverse distribution of contributions. Seven institutions share the top position as the most prolific contributors, each with three documents: Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Swansea University, Universiti Tenaga Nasional, Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Al-Hussein Bin Talal University, and S P Jain School of Global Management. In addition, three institutions such as Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Universiti Sains Malaysia, and Kyung Hee University also showed strong contributions with two documents each. This pattern indicates that research in this field is not dominated by one country or region alone. Instead, it is a truly global field of research, with actively contributing centres of excellence from Malaysia, the UK, China, Iran, Jordan, India, Brazil and South Korea.

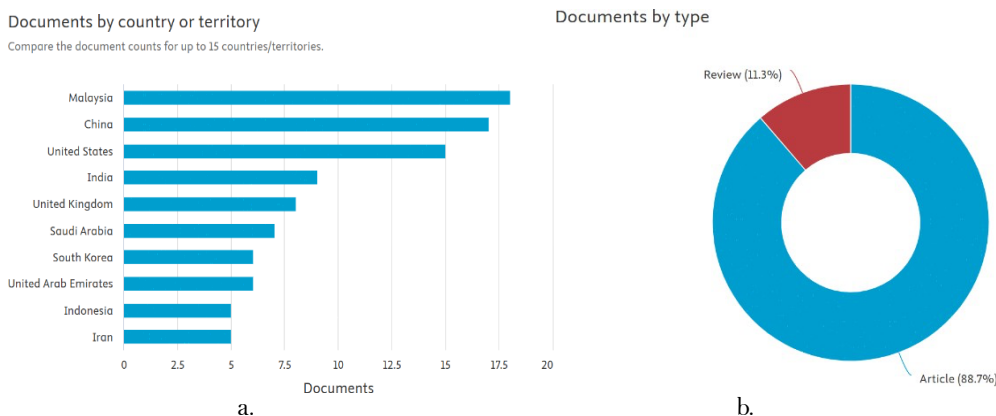


Figure 4. (a) Publication Distribution by Country (b) Distribution of Document Types

Figure 4a presents a geographical distribution of publications by country or region. The results of the analysis show that Malaysia leads as the most productive

country with the contribution of 18 documents. This position is followed by China (17 documents) and the United States (15 documents). The dominance of these three countries highlights the strong research focus of Asia and North America, likely driven by their large and mature social commerce markets. In addition to the top three, there are other groups of countries with significant contributions. India (9 documents) and the UK (8 documents) form the next layer of important contributors. It was followed by Saudi Arabia (7 documents) as well as South Korea, the United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, and Iran (5 documents each). This pattern reaffirms the global nature of this field of research, with substantial contributions coming from different continents, demonstrating the relevance of this topic internationally.

Figure 4b shows the distribution of document types in the research dataset. The results clearly show that this field is dominated by original research articles, where Articles make up 88.7% of the total publications. Reviews (Review Articles) accounted for 11.3% of the remainder. The dominance of these empirical articles shows that the field is very active, with a strong focus on generating new findings and testing hypotheses. Meanwhile, a significant proportion of review articles (11.3%) indicate that the field has also reached a level of maturity where literature synthesis and knowledge consolidation are considered important and necessary. The combination of these two types of documents confirms that the dataset used in this study is a balanced and valid representation of the overall research landscape.

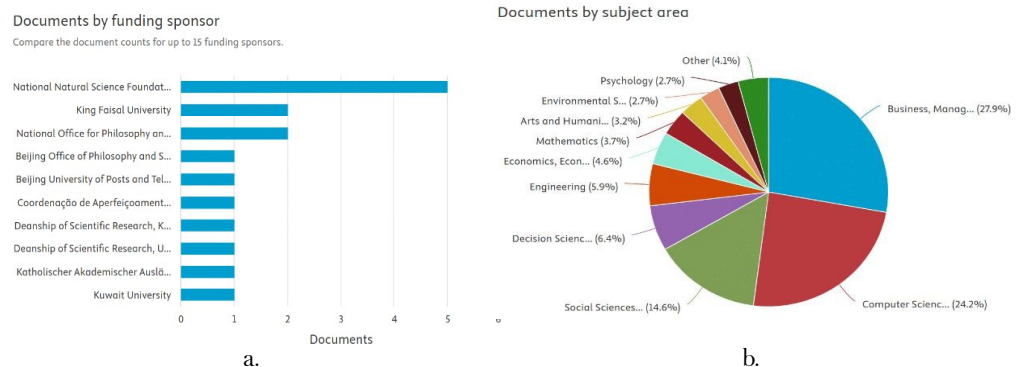


Figure 5. (a) Top Funding Institutions in Research (b) Distribution of Research by Subject Area

Figure 5a indicates the main funding institutions that support research in this area. The results of the analysis show a clear dominance of the National Natural Science Foundation of China, which leads with 5 documents. This position places it well above other funding institutions, indicating a strategic focus and significant investment from the institution to drive research in this area. It was followed by King Faisal University and the National Office for Philosophy and Social Science of China, each with 2 documents. In addition, there are various other funding institutions that contribute with a single document, including institutions from Beijing, Brazil (Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento...), Saudi Arabia (Deanship of Scientific Research...), Germany (Katholischer Akademischer Aus...), and Kuwait (Kuwait University). This pattern shows that although funding is dominated by one large institution, there is also a vast ecosystem of supporters from various universities and national research councils around the world.

Figure 5b shows the distribution of research by subject area, which clearly confirms the multidisciplinary nature of this field. There are three main pillars that dominate. Business, Management, and Accounting (27.9%) were the largest study areas, showing a strong focus on strategy, marketing, and management aspects. This field is closely followed by Computer Science (24.2%), which highlights the crucial role of technology, data, and information systems. Social Sciences (14.6%) also play

an important role, likely including the study of communication, behavior, and the social impact of these phenomena. In addition, significant contributions from Decision Sciences (6.4%), Engineering (5.9%), Economics (4.6%), and Mathematics (3.7%) confirm the analytical and quantitative underpinnings of this research, which often involves data and systems modeling. This distribution illustrates that social commerce and trust research is a balanced intersection between business management science, technical computer science, and behavioral social science.

4.2. Intellectual Structure, Collaboration Networks, and Thematic Clusters

Figure 6 shows, keyword co-occurrence analysis using VOSviewer produced a network map that identified 5 main thematic clusters. Out of a total of 29 keywords that met the criteria (minimum 2 occurrences), only 19 keywords appeared in the largest connected component. Core keywords such as trust, live streaming commerce, and electronic word of mouth did not appear in the main network, indicating that these themes may form separate research clusters that have not yet been fully integrated with the core of the social commerce literature. Here is the interpretation of the 5 identified clusters.

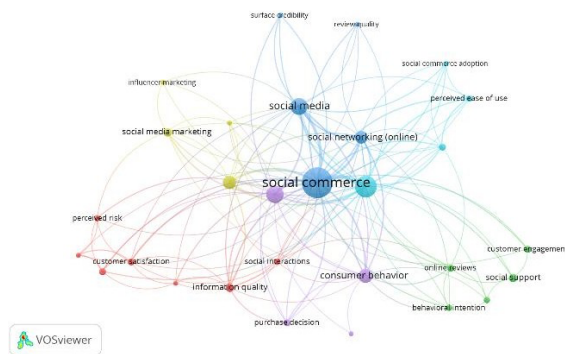


Figure 6. Keyword Visualization (Co-occurrence)

The first cluster (blue) represents the technical and platform foundation of social commerce, centered on keywords such as social commerce, social media, and social networking. This cluster highlights platform adoption, perceived ease of use, surface credibility, and review quality in shaping user perceptions. The second cluster (green) focuses on user-generated output and social proof, with dominant keywords including online reviews, customer engagement, social support, and behavioral intention. It explains how online reviews and social support encourage engagement, which subsequently influences consumers’ purchase intentions.

The third cluster (red) focuses on social interaction quality and psychological perceptions, emphasizing keywords such as social interactions, information quality, customer satisfaction, and perceived risk. This cluster highlights that high-quality interaction and information increase satisfaction and reduce consumer risk perceptions. The fourth cluster (yellow) centers on promotional strategies, particularly social media marketing and influencer marketing, representing the active marketing approaches used to influence consumer engagement in social commerce. Meanwhile, the fifth cluster (purple) reflects the conversion outcome of social commerce activities, linking consumer behavior with purchase decisions. This cluster shows that platform factors, social proof, interaction quality, and marketing strategies ultimately aim to drive actual purchasing behavior.

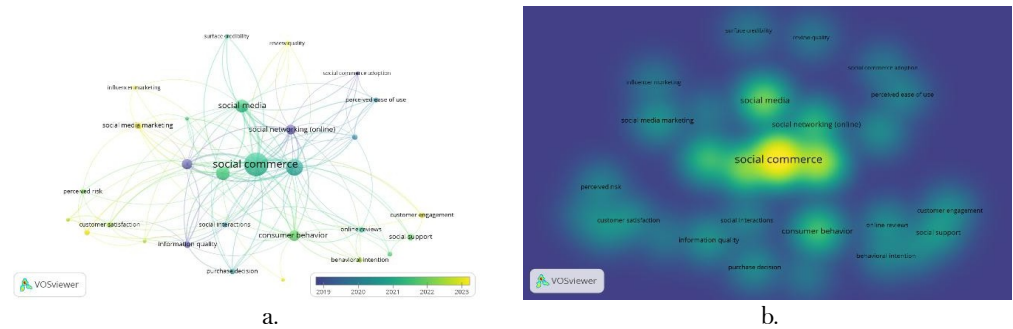


Figure 7. (a) Keyword Overlay Visualization (Co-occurrence) (b) Keyword Density Visualization (Co-occurrence)

Overlay visualization in Figure 7a illustrates the temporal evolution of research keywords using a color spectrum, where blue represents earlier topics (2019–2020) and yellow indicates more recent topics (2021–2023). Early research mainly focused on foundational concepts such as social commerce, social media, consumer behavior, and social networking (online). More recent studies emphasize influencer marketing, social media marketing, customer engagement, and perceived risk. This shift indicates the evolution of research from platform-oriented discussions toward deeper analysis of marketing strategies and consumer psychology within social commerce environments.

Figure 7b highlights the main focus areas in the literature through keyword density and relevance. Bright yellow areas indicate the most frequently studied and central topics, with social commerce emerging as the core concept connecting all themes in the network. Surrounding dense areas include social media, social networking (online), and consumer behavior, confirming the close relationship between social commerce platforms and consumer behavior studies. More specific topics, such as influencer marketing and review quality, appear at the network’s periphery, indicating their role as supporting subtopics. Meanwhile, keywords such as trust and live streaming commerce are absent from the main network, suggesting that these themes remain fragmented and are not yet fully integrated into the broader social commerce literature.

4.3. From Purchase Intention to Sales Conversion: Emerging Research Directions

An analysis of author collaboration (co-authorship) was carried out to map intellectual networks in this field. Based on the results of the Vosviewer software output of a total of 313 authors, 23 authors were found who met the minimum threshold (minimum 2 documents). However, network visualizations show that the collaboration structure is highly fragmented. Only 4 of the 23 authors formed a single connected network (the largest component), while the other 19 authors were isolated. This indicates that research in the fields of social commerce, trust, and live streaming commerce is still being conducted by separate research groups and has not yet formed an integrated global scientific community.

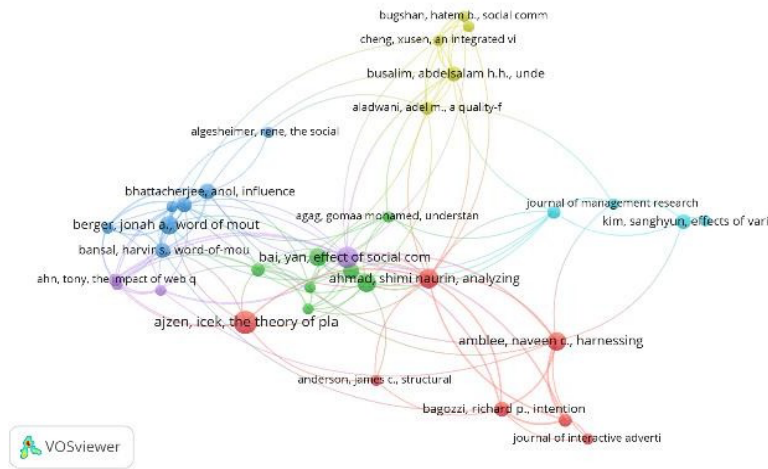


Figure 8. Co-citation Visualization

Figure 8 presents the co-citation analysis that maps the intellectual structure of social commerce and trust research into five major thematic clusters. The first cluster is grounded in classical behavioral theories, particularly the Theory of Planned Behavior by Ajzen (1991) and intention theory by Bagozzi (1992), which explain how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived control shape consumer intention and behavior. The second cluster represents applied social commerce research, including studies by Bai et al. (2015), which examine how trust, social interaction, and platform features influence consumer behavior. The third cluster focuses on social influence and information diffusion, highlighted by Bhattacharjee (2001) and Berger (2016), emphasizing the role of eWOM, influencers, and social transmission in shaping trust and perceptions in digital environments.

The fourth cluster emphasizes structural frameworks and quality dimensions, with contributions from Aladwani (2006) and Busalim (2016) focusing on system design, service quality, and user experience as determinants of trust and engagement. The fifth cluster reflects managerial and strategic perspectives, including studies published in *Journal of Management Research* and research by Kim and Park (2013), which examine how organizations utilize trust, platform engagement, and digital interaction to improve marketing performance and business outcomes. These clusters demonstrate that social commerce research is built upon interconnected streams of behavioral theory, information systems, and managerial strategy in explaining trust and consumer behavior in digital ecosystems.

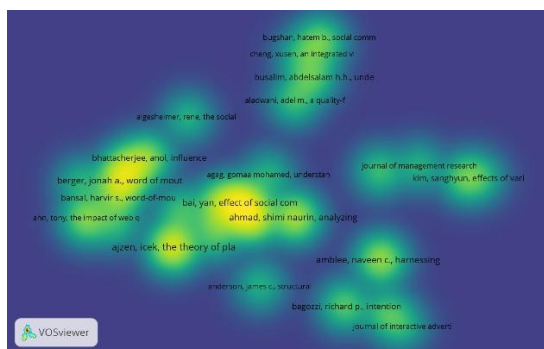


Figure 9. Visualization of Author Collaboration Density (Co-authorship)

The density visualization in Figure 9 illustrates the intellectual “center of gravity” of the social commerce research field. The bright yellow areas indicate highly cited and foundational works, while the color gradient from blue to yellow

reflects the temporal evolution of the literature, where blue represents older studies and yellow represents more recent publications. The results show that the intellectual foundation of this field is built on three main layers. First, classical behavioral theory (dark blue) is represented by seminal work such as the Theory of Planned Behavior by Ajzen (1991), which forms the earliest theoretical base of the research domain. Second, conceptual and intermediary foundations (green) include key contributions such as Bhattacharjee (2001) on information systems influence and Berger (2016) on word-of-mouth communication, which extend behavioral theories into digital influence and social transmission contexts. Third, modern applied studies (yellow), such as Bai et al. (2015) represent contemporary research that directly applies these theoretical foundations to social commerce phenomena. The visualization demonstrates a clear evolutionary trajectory of the field, moving from general behavioral theories, to digital influence and WOM frameworks, and finally to applied social commerce research.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study provide a comprehensive overview of the intellectual structure, thematic evolution, and research dynamics in the field of social commerce, particularly in relation to trust, social proof, and consumer behavior. The rapid increase in publications after 2020 reflects the growing academic and practical relevance of live streaming commerce and platform-based shopping ecosystems. The emergence of interactive platforms such as TikTok Shop has strengthened the integration of real-time engagement, influencer marketing, and social proof mechanisms in shaping consumer decisions. This trend is consistent with prior studies emphasizing the rising importance of live streaming and influencer-driven commerce in digital marketing environments (Chen & Yang, 2023; Barta et al., 2023). In addition, the uncertainty reduction mechanism in live streaming commerce further explains the increasing scholarly attention in recent years (Lu & Chen, 2021).

The thematic structure identified through co-occurrence analysis demonstrates that social commerce research is organized into interconnected clusters, ranging from platform infrastructure to consumer decision outcomes. The dominance of social media and social networking-related keywords supports the view that system design and technological features form the foundation of user engagement in social commerce environments, as previously highlighted by Huang and Benyoucef (2013). The prominence of online reviews and social proof mechanisms aligns with the theory of social influence, which emphasizes the role of observational cues in shaping consumer behavior (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004). This is further reinforced by empirical evidence showing that social proof significantly contributes to impulse buying behavior in digital platforms (Huang et al., 2025).

Trust appears as a central construct across the literature, yet its position within the network indicates a fragmented integration across different thematic areas. While trust has been widely recognized as a key determinant of purchase intention in social commerce contexts, its dispersed representation suggests that it functions more as a bridging variable rather than a unified theoretical construct (Kim & Park, 2013; Shin, 2013). This observation is consistent with Busalim (2016), who highlight the conceptual fragmentation within social commerce research despite its rapid growth.

The intellectual foundation of the field is strongly rooted in behavioral and information systems theories. The Theory of Planned Behavior by Ajzen (1991) and self-regulation theory by Bagozzi (1992) remain central in explaining how attitudes, norms, and perceived control shape consumer intentions. These are complemented by expectation-confirmation theory, which extends behavioral explanations into digital environments (Bhattacharjee, 2001). The persistence of these frameworks is also reflected in meta-analytic findings indicating that social, technological, and

motivational factors jointly shape purchase intention in social commerce settings (Wang & Shahzad, 2024).

The evolutionary pattern of keywords further illustrates a clear shift from foundational behavioral theories toward applied and context-specific studies. Early research focusing on social commerce platforms and user behavior has expanded into more specialized areas such as influencer marketing, customer engagement, and perceived risk. This transition reflects the growing maturity of the field and its movement toward applied digital commerce contexts, as also emphasized by Leong et al. (2024).

The implications of these findings highlight that social commerce operates as an integrated ecosystem where platform design, social influence mechanisms, and trust collectively shape consumer decision-making. Strengthening trust signals through credible reviews, transparent interactions, and consistent influencer endorsement becomes critical in enhancing user engagement and purchase outcomes. In addition, the strong role of social proof and real-time interaction suggests that consumer behavior in social commerce is increasingly shaped by immediacy, visibility, and collective validation rather than isolated decision-making processes.

6. Conclusion

This bibliometric study concludes that social commerce research on trust and social proof has developed rapidly, particularly after 2020, and has evolved from platform-oriented studies into more complex analyses involving influencer marketing, live streaming commerce, and consumer psychology. The field is strongly multidisciplinary, dominated by Business, Management, and Accounting, Computer Science, and Social Sciences, indicating that social commerce is understood through both technological and behavioral perspectives. Geographically, research is concentrated in Malaysia, China, and the United States, supported by major funding bodies, reflecting global but uneven research distribution. The intellectual structure further reveals five key thematic clusters: platform adoption and credibility, social proof and behavioral outcomes, interaction quality and perceived risk, digital marketing strategies, and consumer decision processes. However, the mapping also shows fragmentation, particularly in the separation of trust, live streaming commerce, and eWOM from the main conceptual network.

The main implication of these findings is that social commerce should be understood as an integrated ecosystem where technological design, social influence, and psychological trust mechanisms jointly shape consumer behavior. For practitioners, this highlights the importance of strengthening trust-building strategies through credible reviews, influencer authenticity, and interactive live streaming features to enhance consumer engagement and decision-making effectiveness.

A key limitation of this study is the reliance on a single database (Scopus), which may exclude relevant publications indexed elsewhere, as well as the use of bibliometric mapping that emphasizes structural relationships but does not capture deep qualitative insights from individual studies. Future research should focus on integrating fragmented constructs such as trust, eWOM, and live streaming commerce into a unified theoretical framework. In addition, research should move beyond behavioral intention and emphasize actual purchase behavior and sales conversion, particularly in emerging interactive platforms such as TikTok Shop, to better reflect real-world digital commerce dynamics.

References

- Abdul Talib, Y. Y., & Mat Saat, R. (2017). Social proof in social media shopping: An experimental design research. In *SHS Web of Conferences* (Vol. 34, p. 02005). Paris: EDP Sciences.
- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179–211.
- Aladwani, A. M. (2006). An empirical test of the link between web site quality and forward enterprise integration with web consumers. *Business Process Management Journal*, 12(2), 178–190.
- Aloqool, A., & Alsmairat, M. A. (2022). The impact of social commerce on online purchase intention: The mediation role of trust in social network sites. *International Journal of Data & Network Science*, 6(2), 98–109.
- Aria, M., & Cuccurullo, C. (2017). Bibliometrix: An R-tool for comprehensive science mapping analysis. *Journal of Informetrics*, 11(4), 959–975.
- Baghdadi, Y. (2016). A framework for social commerce design. *Information Systems*, 60(10), 95–113.
- Bagozzi, R. P. (1992). The self-regulation of attitudes, intentions, and behavior. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 8(4), 178–204.
- Bai, Y., Yao, Z., & Dou, Y. F. (2015). Effect of social commerce factors on user purchase behavior: An empirical investigation from renren.com. *International Journal of Information Management*, 35(5), 538–550.
- Barbosa, B., & Santos, J. D. (2023). Bibliometric Study on the Social Shopping Concept. *Administrative Sciences*, 13(10), 213–220.
- Bari, A., Angguna, W. M., Izzati, U., & Anindea, F. (2025). Loyalty to influencers and brands: Does negative publicity matter? *Journal of Innovation in Business and Economics*, 8(1), 1–16.
- Barta, S., Belanche, D., Fernández, A., & Flavián, M. (2023). Influencer marketing on TikTok: The effectiveness of humor and followers' hedonic experience. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 70(10), 103–119.
- Berger, J. (2016). *Contagious: Why things catch on*. London: Simon and Schuster.
- Bhattacharjee, A. (2001). Understanding information systems continuance: An expectation–confirmation model. *MIS Quarterly*, 25(3), 351–370.
- Bulsara, H. P., & Vaghela, P. S. (2023). Trust and online purchase intention: a systematic literature review through meta-analysis. *International Journal of Electronic Business*, 18(2), 148–164.
- Busalim, A. H. (2016). Understanding social commerce: A systematic literature review and directions for further research. *International Journal of Information Management*, 36(6), 1075–1088.
- Chen, N., & Yang, Y. (2023). The role of influencers in live streaming e-commerce: Influencer trust, attachment, and consumer purchase intention. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, 18(3), 1601–1618.
- Cialdini, R. B., & Goldstein, N. J. (2004). Social influence: Compliance and conformity. *Annu. Rev. Psychol.*, 55(1), 591–621.
- Cui, Y., Mou, J., & Liu, Y. (2018). Knowledge mapping of social commerce research: A visual analysis using CiteSpace. *Electronic Commerce Research*, 18(4), 837–868.
- Deng, M., Yang, Y., & Sun, B. (2024). Research on the purchase intention of social commerce consumers in video streams: Dual pathways of affection and rationality. *Behavioral Sciences*, 14(9), 738–745.
- Dincer, C., & Dincer, B. (2023). Social commerce and purchase intention: a brief look at the last decade by bibliometrics. *Sustainability*, 15(1), 846–854.
- Donthu, N., Kumar, S., Mukherjee, D., Pandey, N., & Lim, W. M. (2021). How to conduct a bibliometric analysis: An overview and guidelines. *Journal of Business Research*, 133(11), 285–296.
- Duong, N. T., Lin, H. H., Wu, T. L., & Wang, Y. S. (2025). Understanding consumer trust dynamics and purchase intentions in a multichannel live streaming e-commerce context: A trust transfer perspective. *International Journal of Human–Computer Interaction*, 41(14), 9123–9136.

- Esmaeili, L., Mutallebi, M., Mardani, S., & Golpayegani, S. A. H. (2015). Studying the affecting factors on trust in social commerce. Retrieved on October, 24, 2025. from <https://arxiv.org/abs/1508.04048>.
- Faiko, E., Fitri, A., & Hernidatiatin, L. T. (2025). The influence of social commerce and influencers on purchase intention at tiktokshop in Cirebon City. *Jurnal Manajemen*, 16(2), 567-582.
- Goraya, M. A. S., Jing, Z., Shareef, M. A., Imran, M., Malik, A., & Akram, M. S. (2021). An investigation of the drivers of social commerce and e-word-of-mouth intentions: Elucidating the role of social commerce in E-business: MAS Goraya et al. *Electronic Markets*, 31(1), 181-195.
- Guo, J., & Li, L. (2022). Exploring the relationship between social commerce features and consumers' repurchase intentions: the mediating role of perceived value. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12(5), 775-766.
- Hajli, N. (2015). Social commerce constructs and consumer's intention to buy. *International Journal of Information Management*, 35(2), 183-191.
- Han, H., Xu, H., & Chen, H. (2018). Social commerce: A systematic review and data synthesis. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 30(5), 38-50.
- Hassan, S., Toland, J., & Tate, M. (2016). From blogosphere to social commerce: A laddering analysis of sellers' motivation. In *2016 49th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS)* (pp. 2146-2155). Paris: IEEE.
- Huang, W., Wang, X., Zhang, Q., Han, J., & Zhang, R. (2025). Beyond likes and comments: How social proof influences consumer impulse buying on short-form video platforms. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 84(10), 104-119.
- Huang, Z., & Benyoucef, M. (2013). From e-commerce to social commerce: A close look at design features. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 12(4), 246-259.
- Husda, N. E. (2023). The trust factor: a comprehensive review of antecedents and their role in shaping online purchase intentions. *Jurnal Ekonomi dan Bisnis Airlangga*. 7(4), 55-66.
- Jiang, Y., Lee, H. T., & Li, W. (2024). The effects of live streamer's expertise and entertainment on the viewers' purchase and follow intentions. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 15(5), 138-146.
- Kim, H., & Park, M. (2024). When digital celebrity talks to you: How human-like virtual influencers satisfy consumer's experience through social presence on social media endorsements. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 76(10), 103-111.
- Kim, S., & Park, H. (2013). Effects of various characteristics of social commerce (s-commerce) on consumers' trust and trust performance. *International Journal of Information Management*, 33(2), 318-332.
- Kumar, S., Talwar, S., Krishnan, S., Kaur, P., & Dhir, A. (2021). Purchasing natural personal care products in the era of fake news? The moderation effect of brand trust. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 63(9), 102-118.
- Leong, L.-Y., Hew, T. S., Ooi, K.-B., Hajli, N., & Tan, G. W.-H. (2024). Revisiting the social commerce paradigm: The social commerce (SC) framework and a research agenda. *Internet Research*, 34(4), 1346-1393.
- Liu, X., & Zhang, L. (2024). Impacts of different interactive elements on consumers' purchase intention in live streaming e-commerce. *PLoS One*, 19(12), e0315731.
- Long, J., Zaidin, N., & Mai, X. (2024). Social media influencer streamers and live-streaming shopping: Examining consumer behavioral intention through the lens of the theory of planned behavior. *Future Business Journal*, 10(1), 1-17.
- Lu, B., & Chen, Z. (2021). Live streaming commerce and consumers' purchase intention: An uncertainty reduction perspective. *Information & Management*, 58(7), 103-109.
- Migkos, S. P., Giannakopoulos, N. T., & Sakas, D. P. (2025). Impact of influencer marketing on consumer behavior and online shopping preferences. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, 20(2), 111-121.
- Moral-Muñoz, J. A., Herrera-Viedma, E., Santisteban-Espejo, A., & Cobo, M. J. (2020). Software tools for conducting bibliometric analysis in science: An up-to-date review. *Information & Management*, 7(4), 35-44
- Nuji, M. N., Ali, A., Noordin, W. W., Thaheer, B. A. N. M., & Mathiew, V. (2023). Of trust and influence: A look at social media influencers and brand promotion. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 13(6), 2152-2170.

- Ou, C., Chen, K., Tseng, W., & Lin, Y. (2022). A study on the influence of conformity behaviors, perceived risks, and customer engagement on group buying intention: A case study of community e-commerce platforms. *Sustainability*, 14(4), 19–41.
- Öztürk, O., Kocaman, R., & Kanbach, D. K. (2024). How to design bibliometric research: An overview and a framework proposal. *Review of Managerial Science*, 18(3), 3333–3361.
- Page, M. J., Moher, D., Bossuyt, P. M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T. C., Mulrow, C. D., ... & McKenzie, J. E. (2021). PRISMA 2020 explanation and elaboration: updated guidance and exemplars for reporting systematic reviews. *Bmj Open*, 2(3), 44–54.
- Qin, C., Zeng, X., Liang, S., & Zhang, K. (2023). Do live streaming and online consumer reviews jointly affect purchase intention? *Sustainability*, 15(8), 69–92.
- Rubel, S. (2005). *Trends to watch. Part II: Social commerce – micro persuasion*. Retrieved on October, 30, 2025 from <https://socialcommercetoday.com/steve-rubels-original-2005-social-commerce-post/>.
- Shi, R., Wang, M., Liu, C., & Gull, N. (2023). The influence of short video platform characteristics on users' willingness to share marketing information: based on the SOR model. *Sustainability*, 15(3), 24–48.
- Shin, D. H. (2013). User experience in social commerce: in friends we trust. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 32(1), 52–67.
- Siregar, A. P., & Setiawan, W. J. (2025). Digital content strategy: How social proof. *Journal of Business Studies and Management Review (JBSMR)*, 8(2), 239–243.
- Sulistiyani, E. (2025). Social proof as a leveraging variable for purchasing decisions. *Matrik: Jurnal Manajemen, Strategi Bisnis, dan Kewirausahaan*, 19(1), 99–110.
- Sulistiyarningsih, S., Ismanto, F., & Effendi, M. (2025). Strategies to boost tiktokshop purchases via brand ambassadors and advertising. *Economics and Business Solutions Journal*, 9(1), 81–94.
- Sun, X., Pelet, J.-É., Dai, S., & Ma, Y. (2023). The effects of trust, perceived risk, innovativeness, and deal proneness on consumers' purchasing behavior in the livestreaming social commerce context. *Sustainability*, 15(23), 163–170.
- Tian, B., Chen, J., Zhang, J., Wang, W., & Zhang, L. (2023). Antecedents and consequences of streamer trust in livestreaming commerce. *Behavioral Sciences*, 13(4), 308–320.
- Tjipto, J. D., & Keni, K. (2025). Generating purchase intentions through live streaming and social influence: Brand trust as a mediator. *Jurnal Komunikasi*, 17(1), 84–102.
- Tubalawony, J. (2024). Effectiveness of digital marketing with influencers, video content, and referral programmes on consumer trust in e-commerce platforms in West Java. *West Science Social and Humanities Studies*, 2(10), 1704–1711.
- Van Eck, N., & Waltman, L. (2010). Software survey: VOSviewer, a computer program for bibliometric mapping. *Scientometrics*, 84(2), 523–538.
- Wang, C., & Zhang, P. (2012). The evolution of social commerce: The people, management, technology, and information dimensions. *Communications of the Association for Information Systems*, 31(1), 5–10.
- Wang, J., & Shahzad, F. (2024). Deciphering social commerce: A quantitative meta-analysis measuring the social, technological, and motivational dimensions of consumer purchase intentions. *Sage Open*, 14(2), 215–230.
- Wongkitrungrueng, A., & Assarut, N. (2020). The role of live streaming in building consumer trust and engagement with social commerce sellers. *Journal of Business Research*, 117(10), 543–556.
- Ye, X., Batool, H., & Huang, S. Z. (2023). The effect of e-commerce livestreaming services on customer loyalty: A test of the chain mediation model. *Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, 12(41), 1–21.
- Yu, C.-H., Tsai, C.-C., Wang, Y., Lai, K.-K., & Tajvidi, M. (2020). Towards building a value co-creation circle in social commerce. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 108(10), 105–116.
- Zamrudi, Z., Suyadi, I., & Abdillah, Y. (2016). The effect of social commerce construct and brand image on consumer trust and purchase intention. *Jurnal Administrasi Bisnis*, 10(1), 1–13.
- Zhang, M., Liu, Y., Wang, Y., & Zhao, L. (2022). How to retain customers: Understanding the role of trust in live streaming commerce with a socio-technical perspective. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 127(12), 1–14.
- Zhang, X., Cheng, X., & Huang, X. (2023). “Oh, my God, buy it!” Investigating impulse buying behavior in live streaming commerce. *International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction*, 39(12), 2436–2449.

- Zhang, Z., & Zhang, L. (2025). Most significant impact on consumer engagement: An analytical framework for the multimodal content of short video advertisements. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, 20(2), 54-64.
- Zhao, L., Xu, Y., & Xu, X. (2023). The effects of trust and platform innovation characteristics on consumer behaviors in social commerce: A social influence perspective. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 60(4), 101-114.
- Zhou, L., Zhang, P., & Zimmermann, H. D. (2013). Social commerce research: An integrated view. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 12(2), 61-68.



Copyright: © 2026 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>).