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# The Applications of Analytics in Social Commerce: A Bibliometric Analysis

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**ABSTRACT:** The present review is a systematic literature review-cum-bibliometric analysis of the applications of analytics in social commerce. Through this review, the authors have tried to find the dominant themes in the field, its most relevant authors and sources, and how research on the topic has grown over time. The data for the review is procured from Elsevier's Scopus database using the keywords "Social Commerce AND Analytics". The final database used for this review comprises 415 documents published between 2016 and 2026. It was found that social media platforms, influencer marketing and customer engagement were the most dominant themes, while artificial intelligence, chatbots and natural language processing remain less developed.

**KEYWORDS:** Social Commerce; Analytics

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Buying has always been a social act. Long before the internet, people asked friends, family and fellow customers for advice before they spent their money, and the internet has simply widened that circle. Social commerce refers to the delivery of e-commerce activities and transactions through the social media environment, using Web 2.0 technologies to support online interactions and user contributions that help people acquire products and services (Liang & Turban, 2011). It brings together two spaces that were once separate: the social networks where people talk, share and recommend, and the commercial platforms where they buy (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013).

Every interaction on these platforms, whether a like, a share, a review or a product search, leaves behind data. Big data analytics covers a range of data-intensive approaches capable of analysing such large-scale data, and it adds considerable value to decision-making (Khanra et al., 2020). Within this literature, social media analytics and sentiment analysis form a distinct theme centred on targeting consumers, alongside marketing analytics and predictive analytics (Khanra et al., 2020). In social commerce, analytics is used to personalise recommendations and content (Chandra et al., 2022), to understand the effect of social media influencers, who are now a significant element of the marketing mix (Kim et al., 2021), and to detect spam reviews written to promote or demote products (Hussain et al., 2019).

Research on social commerce has grown alongside the market, and earlier reviews have helped organise it. Zhang and Benyoucef (2016) reviewed the literature on consumer behaviour in social commerce, while Busalim and Hussin (2016) conducted a systematic literature review of the field and set out directions for further research. These reviews, however, were published a decade ago and do not focus specifically on how analytics is applied in social commerce. The literature on this subject is also spread across Computer Science, Engineering, Business, Management and

Accounting, Decision Sciences, and Economics, Econometrics and Finance, which makes it difficult to see how the field fits together as a whole.

The rest of the paper is organised as follows. The next section reviews the literature, followed by the research objectives and the research methodology. The analysis and findings are then presented, followed by the future research agenda, the conclusion and the limitations of the study.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on social commerce has been reviewed, summarized, and analyzed using previously conducted bibliometric reviews. Social commerce is the blend of social media and e-commerce. Essentially, social commerce allows for consumers to search for, discuss, and purchase products on platforms connected socially. The approach contrasts with traditional e-commerce which focuses on sellers, buyers, products, and websites and adds a social element where consumers share experiences about products, sellers, and each other (Wang & Zhang, 2012). According to reviewers, many publications have been written on consumer behavior, adoption, trust, and engagement (Busalim & Hussin, 2016; Zhang & Benyoucef, 2016; Ng, 2018) and the field itself is multidimensional/intersdisciplinary covering areas such as marketing, consumer psychology, information systems, and management (Busalim & Hussin, 2016). The earliest paper that was included in the analysis is the work of Wang and Zhang (2012) while the latest papers looked at more specialized cases like community group buying and visual social media platforms (Tingli et al., 2024; Wang & Xin, 2026). The results of the latest bibliometric analysis are based on the evaluation of the findings published in Web Science only until 2022 (Herzallah et al., 2025) which proves the need for an updated summary of findings in the area being considered. A convenient overview of all the is given in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Summary of Review articles

| Authors | Scope of Review | Type of Study |
|---|---|---|
| WANG C; ZHANG P (2012) | Evolution of social commerce and its people, management, technology and information dimensions | Conceptual review |
| BAETHGE C; KLIER J; KLIER M (2016) | Social commerce literature (116 papers, 2007–2014) across information systems, e-commerce and marketing, with a future research agenda | Structured literature review |
| BUSALIM AH; HUSSIN ARC (2016) | 110 studies (2010–2015); user behavior, business models, platforms and adoption identified as major themes | Systematic review |
| ZHANG KZK; BENYOUCEF M (2016) | Consumer behavior in social commerce through integrated decision-making and stimulus–organism–response perspectives | Literature review |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| NG CSP (2018) | 407 papers synthesized; definitions, technologies, benefits, challenges and strategies | Systematic review and data synthesis |

| Authors | Scope of Review | Type of Study |
|---|---|---|
| POUTI MT; TAGHAVIFARD MT; FATHIAN M (2020) | Theories and factors explaining the acceptance and usage of social commerce | Literature review |
| ZHAO W; HU F; WANG J; SHU T; XU Y (2023) | Research from 2017–2021; growing focus on social interaction, consumer response and new technological features | Systematic review |
| TINGLI J; AW ECX; CHENG X; TAN GWH (2024) | 41 publications on community group buying; self-, online-, quality-, operations- and risk-related antecedents | Systematic review |
| HU K; KARACAOGLU N (2024) | Differences in consumer search and purchase behavior between social commerce and mobile apps | Comparative study |
| HERZALLAH D; LIÉBANA-CABANILLAS F; MUÑOZ-LEIVA F; ZARCO C (2025) | Co-word themes in Web of Science records for 2008–2018 and 2019–2022 | Bibliometric analysis |
| AHMAD A; GHANI NA; HAMID S (2025) | Technological, organizational, social and motivational predictors of trust and engagement | Systematic review |
| XIE Y; ARMAN SM; SU C (2025) | Role of social-media re-commerce groups in circular consumption | Research study |
| WANG Y; XIN Y (2026) | Creator, content and timing signals on a visual social platform | Multimodal analysis |

Table 1 reveals that earlier surveys focused on the establishment of social commerce and the examination of its different aspects (Wang & Zhang, 2012; Baethge et al., 2016). This is then followed by studies of consumer action, acceptance and implementation (Zhang & Benyoucef, 2016; Pouti et al., 2020). In contrast to earlier works, the present studies include trust and engagement (Ahmad et al., 2025), community group buying (Tingli et al., 2024) and circular consumption (Xie et al., 2025), and this indicates that the scope of research in this field has widened. Yet, many of the

reviews center on the study of one or another variable, platform, or period, and from the works listed in the table only Herzallah et al. (2025) makes use of bibliometric analysis. It follows that there is not enough evidence on the ways of structuring and development of research topics in social commerce, and this is why the analysis is conducted in the following chapters.

## 3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The objective of this review is to describe how analytics is being used in social commerce research by analysing publication trends, the most productive authors and journals, and the key themes. This may be achieved by setting smaller goals as follows:

- To find the trend of publishing the research work related to analytics in social commerce from 2016 to 2026 in years, journals, and authors.
- To find out the most relevant authors and journals that publish articles of this study area.
- To identify key themes prevalent in the field and how its keywords are interconnected.
- To analyse if the earlier works are biased towards certain platforms, topics, or technologies.
- To identify gaps in the research and suggest future research avenues.

## 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a systematic literature review (SLR) design combined with bibliometric analysis. An SLR follows a predefined, transparent and replicable protocol for identifying, selecting and evaluating the literature on a topic, which reduces researcher bias in the choice of studies ( Martina K Linnenluecke et al., 2020). Bibliometric reviews are themselves recognised as one form of SLR (Paul et al., 2021). In this study, the systematic component governs how documents were searched, screened and selected, reported using the PRISMA framework (Moher et al., 2010), while the bibliometric component is used to analyse the resulting body of work.

Bibliometric analysis is a popular and rigorous method for exploring and analysing large volumes of scientific data, and it allows researchers to trace how a field has evolved and where it is heading (Donthu et al., 2021). It draws on two sets of techniques: performance analysis, which accounts for the contributions of authors, journals, institutions and countries, and science mapping, which examines the relationships between them through citation, co-citation, bibliographic coupling, co-word and co-authorship analysis (Donthu et al., 2021). As these measures are quantitative, they bring a degree of objectivity to the evaluation of a body of literature (Zupic & Čater, 2015). To keep the review replicable and transparent, the search terms, database and filtering criteria were defined and documented before the data was analysed ( Martina K Linnenluecke et al., 2020).

Data was retrieved from Elsevier's Scopus database, which, along with Web of Science, is generally accepted as one of the two most comprehensive bibliographic databases (Pranckutė, 2021). The search was run on 10th September 2026 using the query "Social Commerce AND Analytics" across article titles, abstracts and keywords.

The selection of documents followed the four phases of the PRISMA flow diagram: identification, screening, eligibility and inclusion (Moher et al., 2010). The search identified 1,451 documents. In the screening stage, 131 documents published before 2016 were removed, leaving 1,320. A further 900 book chapters, conference papers, conference reviews and proceedings were excluded so that only peer-reviewed articles and review papers remained, which brought the count to 420. In the eligibility stage, 2 non-English documents were removed, leaving 418, and 3 documents not published in journals were excluded. The final sample for the review therefore consists of 415 documents. Figure 1 shows the search, inclusion and exclusion flow chart.

The records of the 415 documents were exported from Scopus in RIS format to Mendeley for reference management, and in BibTeX format for the bibliometric analysis. The analysis was carried out in Biblioshiny, the web interface of the bibliometrix R package, an open-source tool for comprehensive science mapping (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017).

Network maps were built in VOSviewer, as the VOS mapping technique has been shown to give a more satisfactory representation of bibliometric data than multidimensional scaling (van Eck et al., 2010). Microsoft Excel and Tableau were used for further data handling and visualisation.

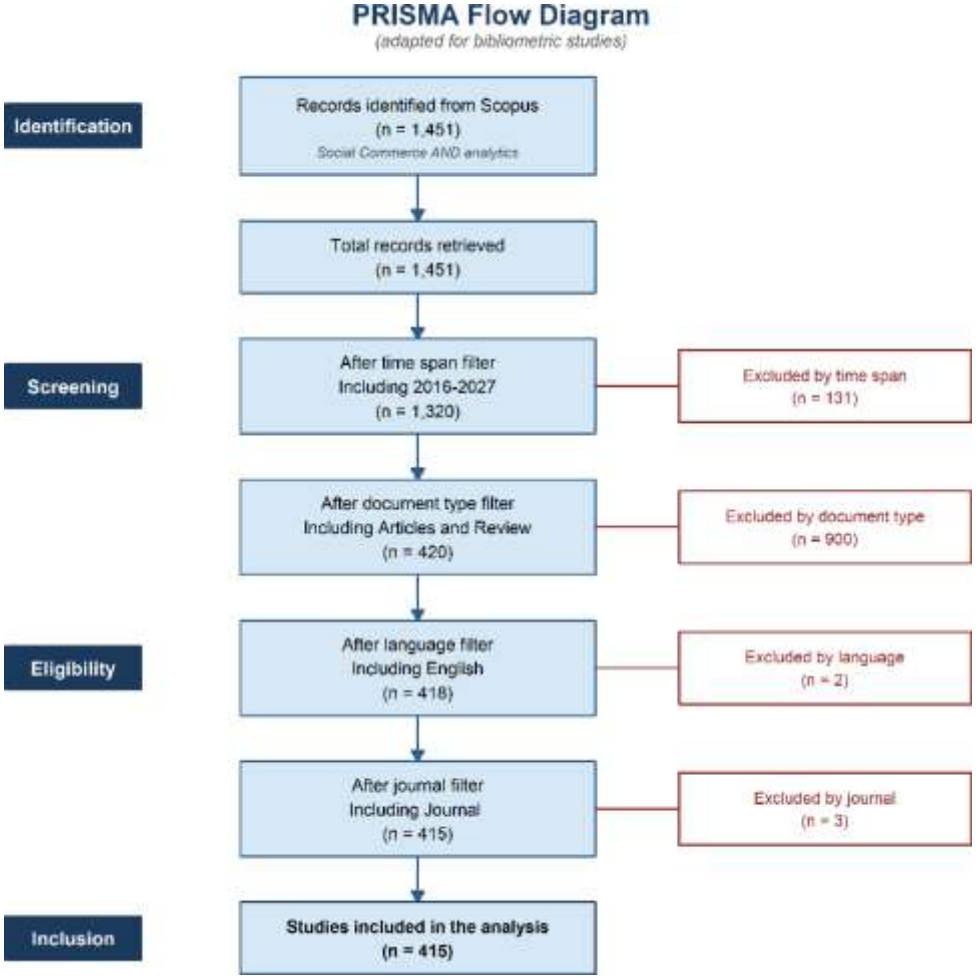



**Figure 1.** PRISMA Flow Diagram

## 5. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This study examines the structure and development of research on social media, digital marketing and related technologies through seven bibliometric perspectives: (1) the thematic map and strategic positioning of research themes; (2) the co-occurrence network of keywords;
(3) authors' production over time; (4) the most relevant authors; (5) the evolution of publication sources; (6) the most relevant sources; and (7) annual scientific production. Taken together, these perspectives identify the themes that are most developed and central to the field, the topics that remain specialised or emerging, the main intellectual connections among keywords, and the growth of the literature over time.

***The Thematic Map***

**Figure 2:** Thematic Map

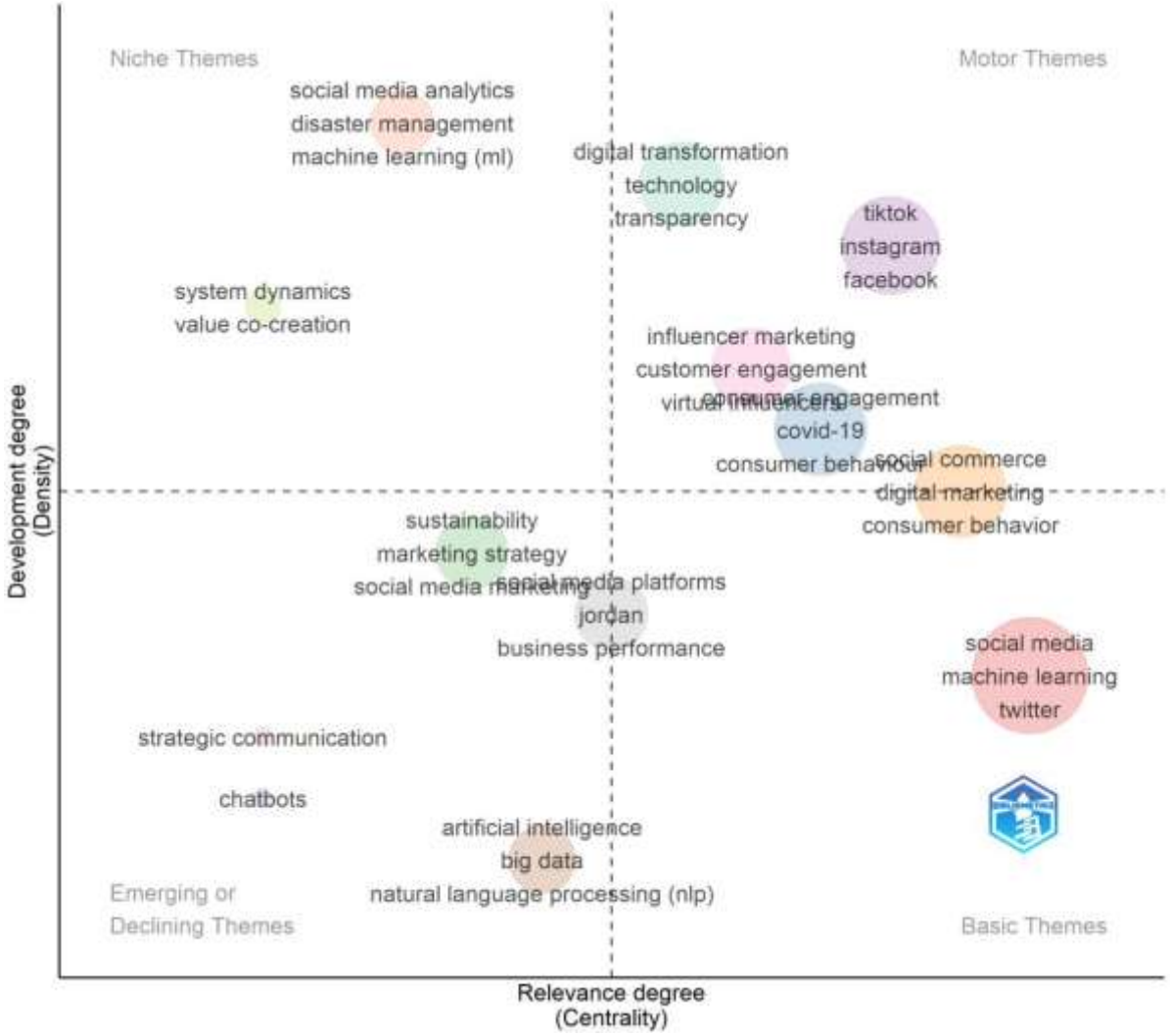



Figure 2 presents a strategic diagram in which the horizontal axis represents relevance or centrality, while the vertical axis represents development or density. The four quadrants distinguish motor themes, niche themes, basic themes, and emerging or declining themes. Larger bubbles indicate themes with greater keyword occurrence and therefore greater research attention.

The motor-theme quadrant is led by social-media platforms and digital engagement topics. TikTok, Instagram and Facebook form a prominent, highly developed social-media cluster, while influencer marketing, customer engagement and virtual influencers also occupy the upper-right area. This indicates that platform-based engagement and influencer-led communication are both well-developed and strongly connected to the broader research field.

Digital transformation, technology and transparency are also positioned close to the centrality boundary, showing their growing importance in the wider discussion.

The niche-theme quadrant contains social media analytics, disaster management and machine learning (ML), together with system dynamics and value co-creation. These topics show comparatively high development but lower centrality, suggesting specialised research streams that have developed internally without becoming as broadly connected as the dominant social-media and engagement themes.

The basic-theme quadrant contains social media, machine learning and Twitter as a large cluster, along with social commerce, digital marketing and consumer behaviour. Their high centrality indicates that these topics are important building blocks of the literature, although their relatively lower density suggests that they are still being developed across multiple research directions rather than functioning as narrowly defined specialist areas.

Finally, strategic communication, chatbots, artificial intelligence, big data and natural language processing (NLP) appear in the emerging or declining region, while sustainability, marketing strategy, social media marketing, social media platforms, Jordan and business performance lie close to the lower-central area. Given the positioning of AI, chatbots, big data and NLP, these should be interpreted cautiously: the map alone cannot distinguish a genuinely emerging theme from a declining one. Their location primarily shows that they are currently less developed and/or less central than the dominant themes.

***The Co-occurrence Network***

**Figure 3:** Co-occurrence Network




Figure 3 maps keywords according to their co-occurrence relationships, where nodes represent keywords and the connecting lines indicate that the terms appear together in the literature. The size and position of the nodes indicate the relative prominence of keywords and their relationships within the network.

The network is organised around a large central red cluster, indicating that a core group of social-media and digital-marketing concepts acts as the main connecting structure of the literature. The strong central connectivity suggests that the field is not divided into completely separate streams; instead, several specialised topics connect back to a common research core.

A blue cluster appears toward the upper-left and connects a smaller set of related terms, while a green cluster occupies the upper-right and forms a comparatively cohesive group around digital and engagement-oriented topics. The purple cluster at the far left is more separated from the central network, suggesting a specialised stream with weaker links to the dominant themes. The orange cluster is similarly peripheral and contains a small set of closely connected keywords.

Overall, the co-occurrence structure complements the thematic map: social-media and digital-marketing concepts provide the central research base, while machine learning, influencer- related themes, platform-specific studies and other specialised topics extend outward from this core.

***Authors' Production over Time***

**Figure 4:** Authors' Production over Time

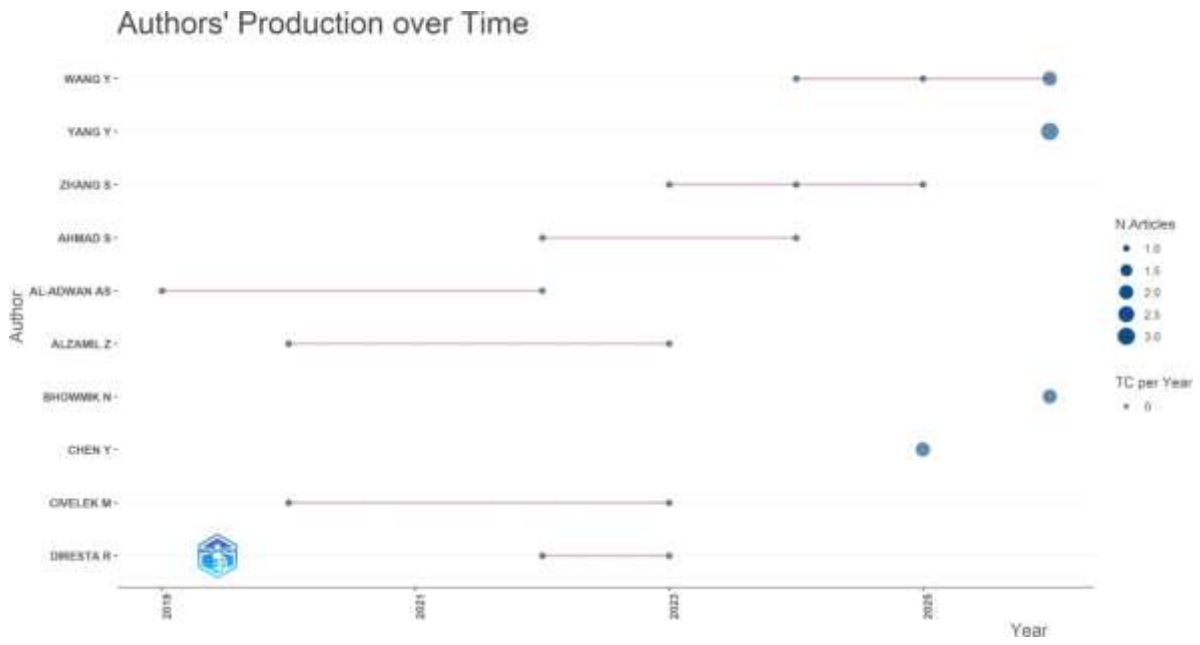



Figure 4 tracks the publication activity of the most visible authors across the observed years. The horizontal position shows when an author contributed to the literature, while the size of the points reflects the number of articles associated with the author in the corresponding period.

WANG Y shows the strongest sustained presence among the authors displayed, with activity extending across the later years and a larger final-year contribution. YANG Y and ZHANG S are also prominent in the most recent period, indicating that their contributions are concentrated toward the current stage of the literature.

AHMAD S, AL-ADWAN AS, ALZAMIL Z, BHOWMIK N, CHEN Y, CIVELEK M and

DIRESTA R appear with smaller publication counts or shorter active periods. The pattern suggests that the field includes a combination of authors with continuing recent activity and authors whose contributions are concentrated within particular periods rather than spread continuously across the full-time window.

***Most Relevant Authors***

**Figure 5:** Most Relevant Authors

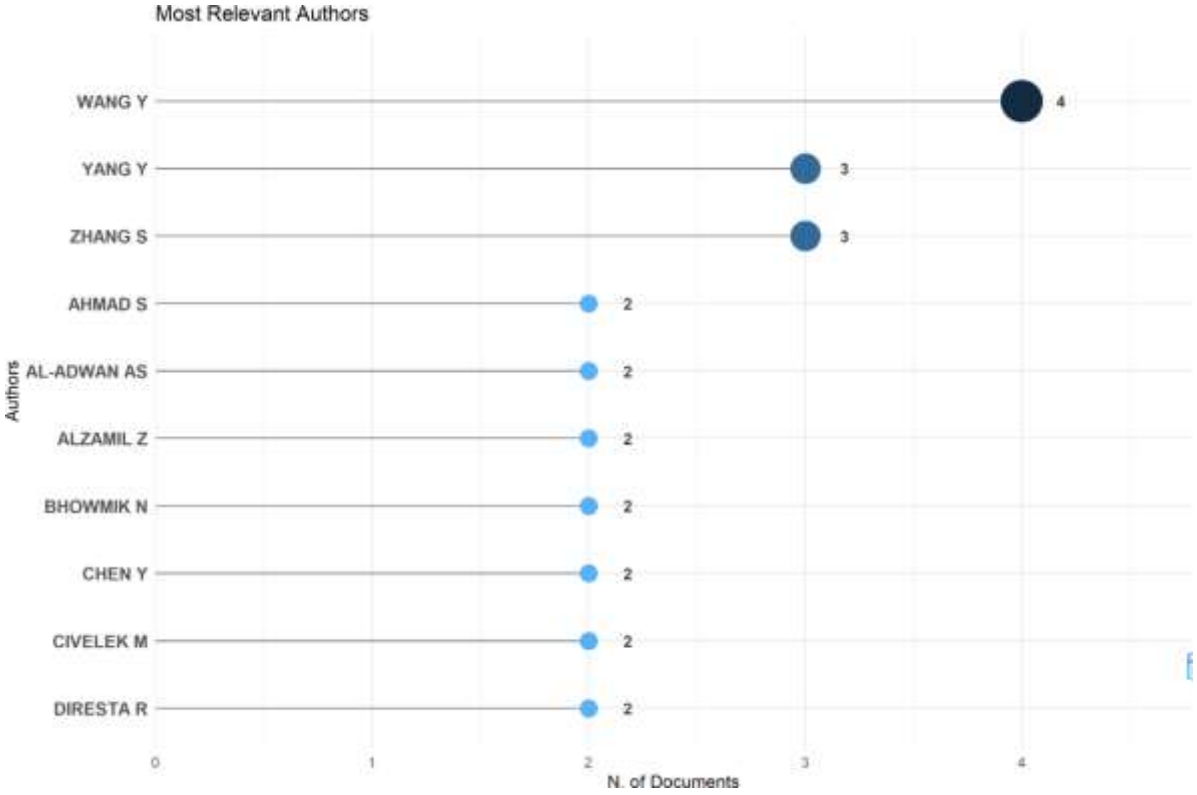



Figure 5 ranks authors according to the number of documents in the dataset. WANG Y is the most relevant author with 4 documents. YANG Y and ZHANG S follow with 3 documents each. A second group AHMAD S, AL-ADWAN AS, ALZAMIL Z, BHOWMIK N, CHEN Y, CIVELEK M and DIRESTA R records 2 documents each.

The concentration of the highest publication counts among a small number of authors indicates that the literature has identifiable recurring contributors, but it is not dominated by a single author. The presence of several authors with two or more documents also suggests a relatively broad contributing base.

***Sources' Production over Time***

**Figure 6:** Sources' Production over Time

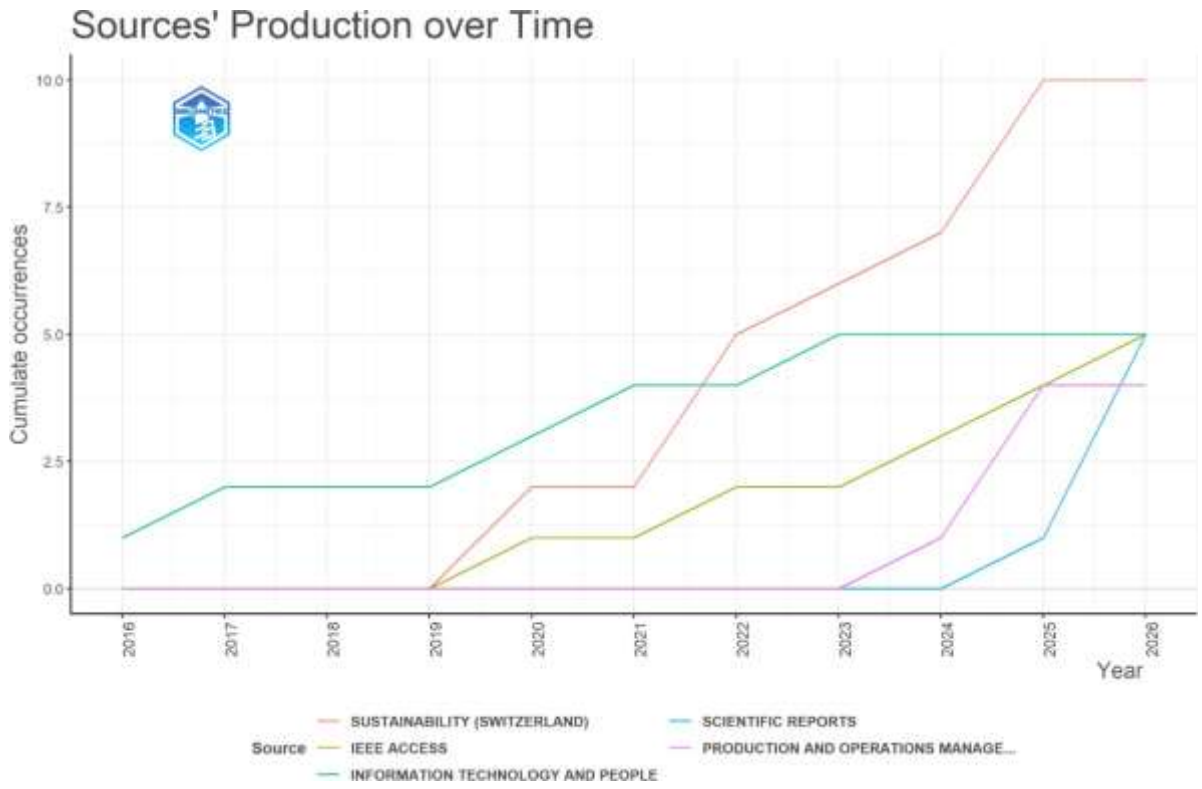



Figure 6 shows the cumulative production of the leading publication sources over time. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND PEOPLE has the earliest and most continuous presence among the sources displayed, rising from 1 occurrence in 2016 to 5 by 2023 and remaining at that level through 2026.

SUSTAINABILITY (SWITZERLAND) shows the strongest recent growth and becomes the leading source by 2025 and maintaining that level in 2026. IEEE ACCESS increases more gradually to 5 occurrences by 2026. PRODUCTION AND OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT reaches 4 by 2025 and remains at 4 in 2026, while SCIENTIFIC REPORTS rises sharply in the latest years to 5 occurrences in 2026.

The source dynamics therefore indicate a shift from a relatively established information-technology outlet toward a broader mix of sustainability, open-access, scientific and operations-management journals in the recent literature.

***Most Relevant Sources***

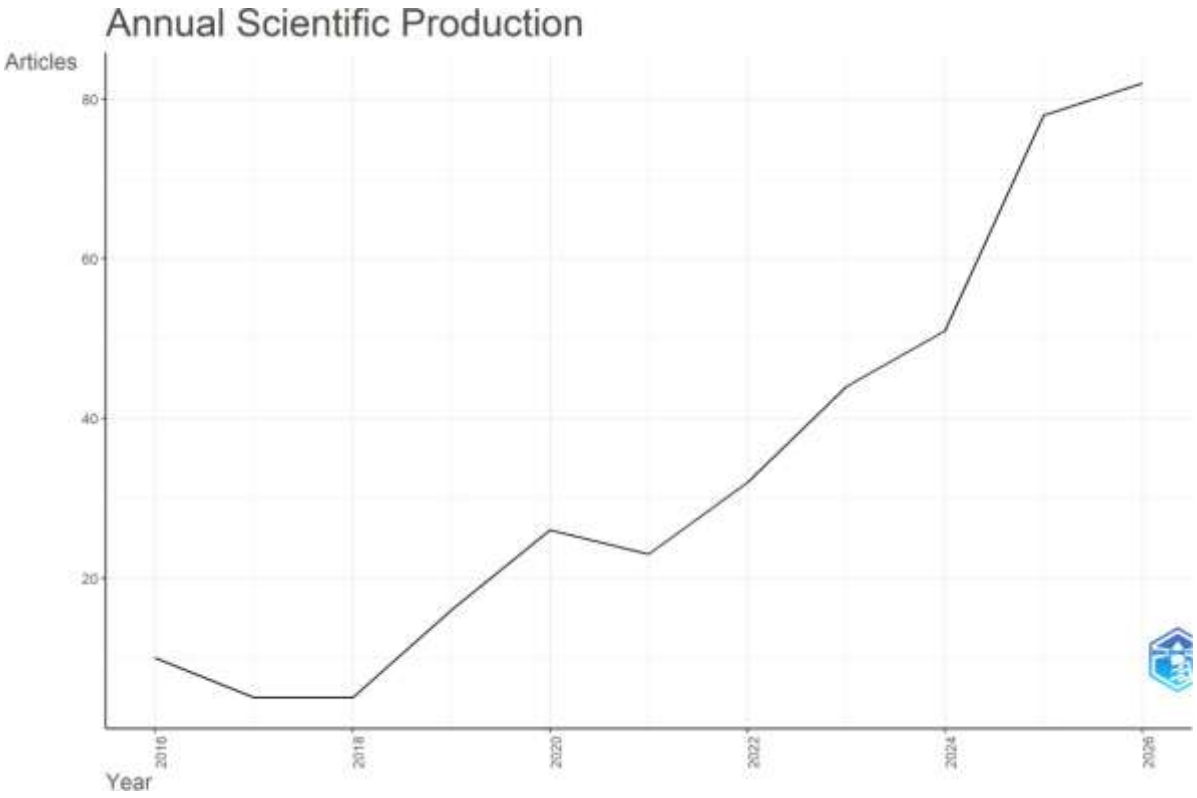
**Figure 7:** Most Relevant Sources




Figure 7 shows the concentration of publications across the core sources. SUSTAINABILITY (SWITZERLAND) is the most relevant source, with 9 documents. 'IEEE ACCESS,' 'INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND PEOPLE,' and 'SCIENTIFIC REPORTS' each
contributed 5 documents. 'PRODUCTION AND OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT' contributed 4 documents. Three journals each from different fields: Behaviour & Information Technology, IEEE Transactions on Computational Social Systems, Journal of Distribution Science, Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Communication, and Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction. This range shows the multidisciplinary nature of the research and its publication in journals covering sustainability, information systems, computational social science, distribution and human-computer interaction.

***Annual Scientific Production***

**Figure 8:** Annual Scientific Production




In 2016, the dataset registered 10 articles, which dropped to 5 in the subsequent years. The figures for 2017 and 2018 remained constant at 5. The graph then recorded a surge in 2019, with 16 articles, while 2020 recorded a massive rise to 26 articles, as shown in Figure 8. According to the line graph, around 26 articles were produced in 2020. However, in 2021, the production of these articles fell to around 23. Over the following years, production increased to around 32, 44, 51, 78 and 82 in 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025 and 2026, respectively. The graph shows a clear increase in research activity in the latter period and should be interpreted with caution. If the bibliometric data were compiled before the end of 2026, the year may be affected by database indexing and the timing of data extraction. Nevertheless, the graph provides strong evidence of considerable growth in the literature in recent years. It can thus be concluded from the data on the seven figures that the field is rapidly expanding worldwide, driven by social media, digital advertising, customer engagement, and technology-enabled communication. At the same time, AI, chatbots and NLP remain less developed and less central, while sustainability and publication in multidisciplinary sources have become increasingly prominent. The information provided on authors, sources, and annual publications supports the conclusion that, over time, the research base has expanded considerably.

***Integrated Findings***

The bibliometric analysis shows a growing and diversified number of publications, in terms of themes, authors and publication sources, in this field. The growth rate for scientific publications per year increased from approximately 10 in 2016 to 82 publications in 2026. Although the number of publications decreased slightly in 2021, the number has increased steadily since then, suggesting that the field is becoming more popular among academics at this time.

The themes that are most prevalent in the motor category in the thematic maps are social media platforms, influencer marketing, customer engagement, virtual influencers, social-commerce, digital marketing and consumer behaviour. Platform communications (TikTok, Instagram and Facebook) reflect the increasing importance of platform communication, and influencer marketing and Consumer engagement highlight consumer interaction. Technology and transparency are also becoming more and more associated with the wider research landscape and the digital transformation.

Social Media Analytics, on the other hand is perceived as a smaller and narrower research theme as well as Disaster Management and Machine Learning. Social media and machine learning are basic themes, as they are relevant to the field and have relatively less development. Conversely, AI, Chatbots, Big data and NLP appears to be in the Emerging/Declining Quadrant. The position of these technologies indicates that they are still under development within the research landscape, but it is not easy to see clearly the difference between the emerging and the declining ones based on the map only.

These results are reinforced by the keyword co-occurrence network, showing that there is a high density of keywords in the center of the social media and digital marketing sphere, along with smaller and more niche groupings. It's not about siloed fields, technology-driven content from a shared research base, engagement-driven content from a shared research base, nor is it about platform-driven content from a shared research base or trailblazing content driven by influencers from a shared research base.

At the author level, the most relevant author is WANG Y who has 4 documents, closely followed by YANG Y and ZHANG S with 3 documents each. There are 2 documents each from several other authors, so there should be a fairly large range of authors. Over the years, they also demonstrate more vigor from some of the authors in the later years, in line with the overall growth of the industry.

Diversification is also reflected in the source analysis. SUSTAINABILITY (SWITZERLAND) has the greatest number of documents (9) related to the topic, followed by IEEE ACCESS (5), INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND PEOPLE (5) and then by SCIENTIFIC REPORTS
(5). The source-production trends suggest that Sustainability (Switzerland) is highly active over the past few years and other sources such as IEEE Access and Scientific Reports have also shown greater activity.

The results are overall positive for a field of rapid growth, and rather new and technologically oriented. In addition to social media, digital marketing, consumer behaviour and customer engagement, AI, machine learning, chatbots, big data and NLP are technology areas that remain less developed pertaining to technology. The growing number of publications, the growing number of authors, and the increasing diversity of journals all indicate a growing interdisciplinary research field, which is dedicated to the concept of digital transformation, the development of technologies based on artificial intelligence, consumer involvement, and using data for marketing.

## 6. FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA

The bibliometric study indicates that the emerging discipline represents a rapidly developing, technology-driven area based on social media and digital marketing/consumer engagement. Yearly publication rate increased from about 10 papers in 2016 to some 82 papers in 2026, and the thematic map, keywords' network, authors' patterns and sources' patterns demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of this discipline in terms of development. Social media, influencer marketing and customer engagement have been developed and are central topics; social commerce, digital marketing and consumer behavior are central but not very developed topics; artificial intelligence and related technologies are peripheral topics. This situation suggests several areas for further investigation as follows.

**Table 2:** Summary of the future research agenda

| Direction | Evidence from the analysis | Future research focus |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Develop the basic themes | Social commerce, digital marketing and consumer behaviour are in the basic-theme quadrant (high centrality, lower density). | Integrated, theory-driven models from platform exposure and engagement to purchase and loyalty. |
| 2. Bring AI, chatbots, big data and NLP into the core | These themes lie in the emerging or declining quadrant; technology and transparency sit near the centrality boundary. | Track the themes over time; study AI personalisation, chatbots, NLP of user content, and transparent AI. |
| 3. Connect niche streams to the core | Social media analytics, machine learning, disaster management, system dynamics and value co-creation are niche themes (developed but less central). | Apply analytics and machine learning to engagement and social commerce outcomes; study value co-creation. |
| 4. Compare platforms and influencer formats | TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, influencer marketing and virtual influencers are motor themes; Twitter sits in a separate basic cluster. | Cross-platform comparisons; virtual influencers; disclosure and transparency. |
| 5. Link to sustainability and business performance | Sustainability (Switzerland) is the top source (9 documents) and fastest-growing; sustainability, business performance and marketing strategy lie in the lower-central area. | Connect social media and social commerce to sustainability and measurable business outcomes. |
| 6. Widen context and strengthen collaboration | Jordan appears as an isolated theme; the top author has only 4 documents; the purple and orange clusters are peripheral. | Cross-country comparisons; larger collaborations and sustained research programmes. |

### *Developing the Basic Themes Further*

Digital marketing, social commerce and consumer behavior are located in the basic theme cluster. Their high centrality means that these concepts are significant components of the academic field, while their low density indicates that they are still being shaped from multiple perspectives. Further research should be conducted in order to develop theory-based integrated models explaining the way in which consumers move from platform usage to purchase decisions and loyalty, rather than treat them as general background for the technical or descriptive research. Examples of such research questions could be: what are the engagement behaviors (e.g., likes, shares, comments, follows) that best predict purchase on social media platforms, how much trust in influencers and brands transfers into purchase behavior and how does that transfer depend on consumer group? The inclusion of platform data together with surveys/experiments will let the researchers not only observe but also test the correlations..

### *Bringing AI, Chatbots, Big Data and NLP into the Core*

AI, chatbots, big data and NLP are present in either the emerging or declining zone of the map. It must be noted that the map itself does not give any information about whether the emerging or declining zone is the right one – it can say only that these themes have now become less important compared to others. Future studies should track the development of these themes over time (for example, by using thematic evolution analysis) and test their applicability within consumer research. Relevant topics may include influence of chatbots, personalization by means of AI and NLP analysis of user-generated content on engagement, trust and buying behavior of consumers, as well as consumer reactions to AI application in marketing communication. Technology and transparency are located close to the zone of centrality and further research on transparent and explainable AI in marketing is natural.

### *Connecting Niche Streams to the Core*

Social media analytics, machine learning, disaster management, system dynamics, and value co-creation are in the niche quadrant as they are well established internally but are not so important in the field. The co-occurrence network also demonstrates the same trend, where the purple and orange clusters are separate from the central cluster. Further research is required to integrate these topics into the core streams. Social media analytics and machine learning can be used for analysis of outcomes like engagement and social commerce results, such as conversion and retention. Value co-creation can be researched as a process that is associated with brands, influencers, and consumers. Disaster management and system dynamics are more specific areas, and further investigation on their connection to the social commerce topic is required prior to including them into the core.

### *Comparing Platforms and Influencer Formats*

TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook represent the most visible social-media cluster, and influencer marketing, customer engagement, and virtual influencers are also part of the motor quadrant, while Twitter is located in another basic cluster along with social media and machine learning. Such positioning demonstrates that platform-specific research is quite popular, although cross-platforms comparisons are not as frequent. In future studies, one can focus on how the format of content, audience, and characteristics of the platform affect engagement and purchase behavior, for instance, short videos vs. images vs. textual platforms. Another important topic is virtual influencers, who represent a relatively new phenomenon of influencer marketing. It is worth exploring how consumers perceive credibility of such influencers and how the information about their artificiality influences their perceptions. Such themes are relevant for the current discussion of future research on the marketing in the age of social and digital media (Appel et al., 2020; Dwivedi et al., 2021). At the same time, the issue of influencer marketing is rather well-researched (Abhishek & Srivastava, 2021; Tanwar et al., 2021).

### *Linking to Sustainability and Business Performance*

Most relevant is Sustainability (Switzerland) with 9 documents, demonstrating the most recent growth, while the source analysis suggests the trend of switching to sustainability, open-access, science and operations management journals.

However, sustainability, business performance and marketing strategy are located at the lower-central position in the thematic map, suggesting that they are still far from being linked to the key social media themes. The future research could focus on exploring relationships between social media and social commerce practices and sustainability goals, including sustainable consumption, as well as business performance metrics, like sales, customer loyalty and branding results. The studies with the reporting of business results would be especially beneficial for practice.

***Widening Context and Strengthening Collaboration***

For instance, country-specific issues such as Jordan are treated as standalone cases on the map, indicating that there exist individual studies in relation to one country's context. The cross-country comparison will prove whether the results related to engagement, influencers and platforms application are applicable to other markets. In terms of authorship, the most prolific authors in this field (WANG Y) have contributed only four documents, meaning that there is no dominating author in this field, hence many researchers in brief active period contribute to this domain.

***Methodological Note***

The results for 2026 should be treated with caution because the data may have been extracted before the end of the year and may be affected by indexing delays. Future studies should repeat the analysis with a complete year of data and, where possible, add a thematic evolution analysis so that the movement of themes between quadrants can be seen directly. Even so, the pattern is consistent: the field has grown quickly, and the main opportunity is to connect its technology-driven, platform-driven and consumer-driven strands.

## 7. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

This study intends to be a useful piece of work for faculty members, researchers and students of operations research, and for anyone who wants to understand how analytics is used in social commerce. It shows that research in this field has grown quickly, from about 10 articles in 2016 to 82 articles in 2026. Most of this research focuses on social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram and Facebook, influencer marketing and customer engagement. Analytics tools such as artificial intelligence, chatbots, big data and natural language processing (NLP) are still at the edges of the field.

As more people discover, discuss and buy products on social media, businesses are collecting more data than ever on what customers like, share and buy. More research is needed on how this data can be used, especially through AI, chatbots and NLP, so that businesses can make better decisions and customers can trust the platforms they buy from.

Therefore, there is a huge scope for further research in this field. The main limitation of this study is that it uses only one database, Elsevier's Scopus, and one search term, "Social Commerce AND Analytics", which limits the number of documents that could be analysed. Conference papers and non-English articles were also left out, and the data for 2026 covers only part of the year.

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