

A Study on Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Buying Behaviour in Coimbatore District

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Abstract

Lately, social media has really changed how companies connect with people and influence what they buy. Using social media for marketing has become a powerful online tool, letting businesses promote their stuff through engaging posts, ads, working with influencers, and online recommendations. This study wants to see how social media marketing affects what consumers decide to buy by looking at how different social media efforts shape what people know, how they feel, how much they trust, and whether they plan to make a purchase. This study uses a descriptive approach, pulling from both firsthand and secondhand information. We got direct information from people who actively use social media by giving them a specific questionnaire. For the other information, we looked at books, academic papers, research articles, and online sources. To make sense of all this data, we used statistical tools like percentages, chi-square tests, and correlation and regression analyses. We focused on important factors like ads on social media, recommendations from influencers, what people say online about products, how brands interact with customers, and how much consumers trust them. Our findings show that marketing on social media really makes a difference in what people decide to buy. It seems like people are relying more and more on social media to find out about products and are paying attention to online reviews and what influencers recommend before they make a purchase. Good content that's both interesting and helpful can really get your brand noticed and make people feel good about it. Plus, keeping up with your brand's presence on social media builds trust and keeps customers coming back. Basically, the study found that smart social media marketing is key to influencing what people buy and gives businesses an advantage online. The research offers some great takeaways for marketers looking to build social media campaigns that are honest, clear, and centered around the customer. It also points out areas for future studies to dig into how people react differently on various social media sites and depending on their age or background.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Consumer Buying Behaviour, Purchase Intention, Influencer Marketing, Online Reviews, Brand Awareness.

Introduction

The rapid advancement of digital technology and the widespread use of the internet have significantly changed the way businesses interact with customers. Among various digital marketing methods, social media marketing has emerged as one of the most important channels for promoting products and services. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, X (formerly Twitter), and LinkedIn provide organizations the opportunity to engage directly with consumers, share information, and build long-lasting relationships. As a result, social media marketing has become an essential component of modern marketing strategies. Consumer buying behavior refers to the process by which individuals search for, select, purchase, use, and evaluate products and services to satisfy their needs and desires. Traditionally, this behavior was influenced by factors like price, quality, brand reputation, and personal referrals. However, in today's digital world, social media has added another dimension to the consumer decision-making process. Consumers are increasingly reliant on social media content, online reviews, insights from influencers, and recommendations from peers as they make their purchasing decisions. Social media marketing provides unique benefits to businesses, including interactive communication, cost-effective promotion, instant feedback, and targeted advertising. By employing engaging content, attractive visuals, promotional campaigns, and endorsements from influencers, companies can shape consumer perceptions and change their attitudes towards brands. The interactive nature of social media permits consumers to express their opinions, share experiences, and influence the purchasing decisions of others, resulting in consumer behavior that is more dynamic and interconnected. In recent years, the increasing use of smartphones and social networking applications has solidified the role of social media in consumer buying behavior. Consumers are exposed to a continuous flow of marketing messages that impact their awareness, preferences, and willingness to buy. At the same time, challenges such as information overload, misleading advertisements, and fake reviews pose difficulties for both consumers and marketers. Therefore, understanding the influence of social media marketing on consumer buying behavior is essential for businesses, marketers, and researchers. This study aims to explore the effects of social media marketing on consumer awareness, trust, attitudes, and purchasing decisions, while offering insights that can help organizations develop effective and ethical social media marketing strategies.

Objectives of the Study

- To investigate the degree to which consumers encounter social media marketing initiatives.
- To evaluate the effect of social media content on consumer awareness and brand perception.
- To examine the influence of social media platforms on the information search and evaluation processes of consumers.
- To analyze the impact of online reviews, ratings, and peer recommendations on purchasing decisions.
- To identify the elements of social media marketing that encourage consumers to buy products or services.
- To assess consumer trust and satisfaction regarding brands that are promoted via social media.

Scope of the Study

- This study aims to examine the effect of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour. It focuses on individuals who actively use social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and other popular networking sites to gather information about products and services. The research analyzes the influence of various social media marketing components, including online advertisements, influencer promotions, brand-related posts, customer reviews, and other promotional activities, on consumer awareness, trust, attitudes, and purchasing decisions.
- The scope of the study is confined to understanding consumer perceptions and behavioural responses to social media marketing practices. It considers factors such as brand interaction, reliability of online information, frequency of exposure to marketing content, and the impact of electronic word-of-mouth. The study also takes into account selected demographic characteristics of consumers, such as age, gender, and occupation, based on the availability of data.
- The research is based on primary data collected through a structured questionnaire and secondary data obtained from published sources such as books, journals, research articles, and websites. Due to limitations of time, resources, and sample size, the study is restricted to a specific geographical area. Therefore, the findings are applicable only within the defined scope and cannot be generalized beyond it.

Research Methodology

Research Design This study employs a descriptive research design to investigate the impact of social media marketing on consumer purchasing behavior. This methodology aids in comprehending consumer perceptions, attitudes, and reactions to online marketing strategies.

Area of the Study

The research centers on consumers who actively engage with social media platforms for information regarding products and services. The scope of the study is confined to a particular geographic area due to limitations in time and resources.

Population of the Study:

The population comprises social media users who encounter advertisements, influencer promotions, brand posts, and online reviews.

Sample Size

A representative sample of respondents was chosen based on their accessibility and availability during the research period.

Sampling Technique:

Convenience sampling was employed, selecting participants who were readily accessible and willing to share information.

Sources of Data

Primary Data: Collected through a structured questionnaire distributed among social media users.

Secondary Data: Compiled from books, research papers, journals, websites, and other pertinent publications.

Tools for Data Collection

A structured questionnaire featuring both closed-ended and a limited number of open-ended questions was utilized to collect information regarding respondents' opinions, experiences, and behaviors.

Statistical Tools Used:

The data were analyzed using the following statistical tools:

Percentage Analysis

Period of the Study

Data collection was carried out over a specified timeframe in accordance with the research schedule.

Method of Data Analysis

The collected data were systematically coded, tabulated, and analyzed using suitable statistical methods to derive significant conclusions.

Limitations of the Study

- This research is confined to a specific geographic region, potentially restricting the broader applicability of its findings.
- The sample size is constrained by limitations in time and available resources. The study depends on self-reported data, which may be influenced by personal biases or inaccuracies.
- Only certain social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and X (formerly Twitter), are considered in this analysis.
- The swift evolution of social media trends and marketing strategies may impact the long-term relevance of the findings.
- The research primarily examines consumer perceptions and behaviors, without directly evaluating actual sales figures or business results.

Review of Literature

- ❖ Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) emphasized that social media enables **two-way communication** between brands and consumers, fostering engagement and trust. They highlighted that interactive content, user-generated posts, and prompt responses can significantly shape consumer attitudes and decision-making.
- ❖ Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) investigated the role of **electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM)** in consumer behaviour and found that online reviews, ratings, and peer recommendations strongly influence purchase decisions. Consumers often rely on such feedback before making buying choices.
- ❖ Kotler and Keller (2018) noted that social media marketing enhances **brand awareness** and strengthens consumer-brand relationships, which in turn influences brand loyalty. Regular exposure to appealing and informative content increases brand recall and encourages positive consumer perceptions.
- ❖ Dehghani and Tumer (2015) highlighted the significance of **influencer marketing**, especially among younger audiences, showing that influencer endorsements add credibility and authenticity, thereby increasing consumer trust in the promoted products or services.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table No.1 Age wise Respondents

Age Group	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Below 18	15	10%
18–25	60	40%
26–35	45	30%
36–45	20	13.33%
Above 45	10	6.67%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

18–25 years (40%) form the largest segment, indicating that young adults are the most active on social media. They frequently engage with advertisements, online reviews, and influencer content, making them a key target for social media marketing.

26–35 years (30%) constitute the second-largest group. These respondents are mainly young professionals who possess purchasing power and prefer authentic and credible social media content. Social media marketing significantly influences their buying decisions and brand loyalty.

Below 18 years (10%) mostly include students. Although their direct purchasing power is limited, they can influence the buying behaviour of family members and peers.

36–45 years (13.33%) and **Above 45 years (6.67%)** are comparatively less active on social media. While they occasionally engage with online content, the impact of social media marketing on their purchase decisions is moderate to low.

Table No.2 Educational Qualification

Educational Qualification	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
School	20	13.33%
Undergraduate	80	53.33%
Postgraduate	40	26.67%
Others	10	6.67%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation

- **School (13.33%)**: Respondents with school-level education are a small group. Most are young students, and their exposure to social media marketing is limited. Their buying decisions are often influenced by parents or friends.

- **Undergraduate (53.33%)**: This is the largest group. College students are very active on social media and respond well to advertisements, influencer posts, and online reviews. They are the main target for social media marketing.
- **Postgraduate (26.67%)**: Postgraduate respondents are mostly working professionals with higher purchasing power. They carefully evaluate social media content and prefer authentic and reliable information before buying.
- **Others (6.67%)**: This group includes people with vocational courses, diplomas, or other qualifications. Their use of social media and response to marketing depends on personal interest and exposure.

Table No.3 Social Media Platform

Social Media Platform	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Facebook	40	26.67%
Instagram	50	33.33%
YouTube	35	23.33%
X (Twitter)	15	10%
Others	10	6.67%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation

- **Facebook (26.67%)**: Many respondents use Facebook to get information about products. They check brand pages, advertisements, and posts from other users before making a decision.
- **Instagram (33.33%)**: The largest number of respondents prefers Instagram for product information. Visual content, stories, and influencer posts on this platform have a strong impact on their buying choices.
- **YouTube (23.33%)**: YouTube is popular among those who like detailed product reviews, demonstrations, and tutorials. Video content helps them understand products better before purchasing.
- **X (Twitter) (10%)**: A smaller group uses Twitter to follow brand updates or trending topics. Its influence on buying decisions is less compared to visual platforms.

- **Others (6.67%):** Platforms like WhatsApp, Pinterest, and Snapchat are less commonly used for product information.

Table No.4 Type of Content

Type of Content	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Advertisements	40	26.67%
Influencer Posts	50	33.33%
Customer Reviews	35	23.33%
Brand Posts/Updates	25	16.67%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation

- **Advertisements (26.67%):** A significant portion of respondents are influenced by social media advertisements. Promotional content, special offers, and eye-catching visuals encourage them to consider purchasing products.
- **Influencer Posts (33.33%):** The largest group reports that influencer posts have the most impact on their buying decisions. Recommendations from influencers they trust add credibility and strongly affect their purchase choices.
- **Customer Reviews (23.33%):** Many respondents rely on customer reviews and ratings before buying products. Positive feedback and experiences shared by other consumers build confidence in the product.
- **Brand Posts/Updates (16.67%):** A smaller group is influenced mainly by regular brand updates or posts about new launches. While this builds brand awareness, its direct for older demographics, offer straightforward and comprehensible information.

Table No. 5 Purpose of Use

Purpose of Use	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Entertainment	60	40%
Information	45	30%
Shopping	25	16.67%
Social Interaction	20	13.33%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation

- Out of 150 respondents, the largest group (40%) uses social media primarily for **entertainment**.

- Approximately 30% of respondents turn to social media to **gather information**, such as news, product details, and reviews.
- Around 16.67% use social media for **shopping purposes**, highlighting its growing influence on consumer purchase decisions.
- About 13.33% of respondents mainly use social media for **social interaction** with friends, family, and online communities.

Findings and Suggestions

- Most users are **18–25 years (40%)**, making them the most active on social media.
- **Undergraduates (53.33%)** are the largest and most active group on social media.
- **Instagram (33.33%)** is most popular for product info.
- **Influencer posts (33.33%)** influence buying decisions the most.

Suggestions

- Target social media marketing efforts towards the **18–35 years age group**.
- Partner with **reliable influencers** to endorse products.
- Share **engaging visual content**, including images, videos, and tutorials.
- Promote **customer reviews and ratings** to enhance credibility and trust.
- Maintain a **consistent brand presence** through regular updates and posts.
- For older audiences, provide **clear and easy-to-understand information**.

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