



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

“A Study on Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Buying Behaviour”

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ABSTRACT:

Social media has become an integral part of consumers' daily lives, influencing their attitudes, preferences, and purchasing decisions. This study explores the impact of social media platforms on consumer buying behaviour, focusing on the dynamics of engagement, trust, and decision-making processes. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys and interviews with 500 consumers across diverse demographics. Key findings reveal that social media influences consumer behaviour by increasing brand awareness, facilitating peer recommendations, and providing personalized marketing content. Additionally, factors such as platform type, content credibility, and influencer marketing were found to significantly affect consumer trust and purchase intent. The study concludes by offering practical insights for businesses to optimize their social media strategies to align with evolving consumer preferences. This research contributes to the understanding of digital marketing trends and provides a foundation for further exploration of consumer behaviour in the digital era.

KEYWORDS: Brand awareness, Content credibility, Influencer marketing, Purchase intent, Digital marketing

INTRODUCTION

The advent of social media has transformed the way individuals interact, communicate, and make decisions in their daily lives. From connecting with friends to exploring new products, social media platforms have become an indispensable part of modern society. This digital revolution has also significantly influenced consumer behaviour, reshaping how consumers discover, evaluate, and purchase products and services.

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok serve as powerful tools for businesses to engage with their target audiences. These platforms offer opportunities for personalized marketing, influencer collaborations, and user-generated content, which have proven to be effective in shaping consumer perceptions. Moreover, the interactive and visually rich nature of social media enables consumers to make more informed purchasing decisions based on reviews, recommendations, and advertisements.

Despite the growing influence of social media, the extent to which it impacts consumer buying behaviour remains a subject of ongoing research. Key questions revolve around how social media influences trust, brand loyalty, and the decision-making process. Additionally, understanding the role of demographic factors,

such as age, gender, and socioeconomic status, in shaping consumer responses to social media marketing is critical for businesses aiming to optimize their strategies.

This study aims to investigate the impact of social media on consumer buying behaviour by analysing patterns, motivations, and outcomes associated with online interactions. By combining quantitative and qualitative research methods, this paper seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between social media and consumer decision-making. The findings will not only enrich academic literature but also offer actionable insights for marketers and business practitioners in the digital age.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In the digital age, social media has emerged as a transformative force in influencing consumer behaviour, serving as a platform for brand discovery, peer interaction, and purchasing decisions. Businesses increasingly rely on social media to engage with their target audience, but understanding its precise impact on consumer behaviour is essential for crafting effective marketing strategies. This study aims to explore the multifaceted relationship between social media and consumer buying behaviour, with specific objectives outlined below.

1. Analyse the influence of social media platforms on consumer awareness of products, services, and brands.
2. Investigate the role of content credibility, user reviews, and influencer endorsements in building consumer trust.
3. Assess the impact of social media interactions (likes, shares, comments, etc.) on consumer purchase intentions.
4. Identify demographic variations (age, gender, socioeconomic status) in consumer responses to social media marketing.
5. Evaluate the effectiveness of influencer marketing and user-generated content in shaping consumer attitudes and buying decisions.
6. Provide actionable recommendations for businesses to enhance social media marketing strategies based on consumer behaviour insights.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study holds considerable significance in understanding the evolving dynamics of consumer behaviour in the digital age. Social media platforms have become integral to how consumers discover, evaluate, and purchase products, making it crucial for businesses to adapt their strategies to this paradigm shift. By examining the impact of social media on consumer buying behaviour, this research provides valuable insights into the role of trust, engagement, and demographics in shaping purchase decisions.

For marketers and businesses, the findings of this study offer actionable recommendations to optimize social media marketing efforts, such as leveraging influencer collaborations, enhancing content credibility, and tailoring strategies to specific audience segments. Academically, the study contributes to the growing body of literature on digital marketing and consumer psychology, serving as a foundation for future research.

Ultimately, this study is significant not only for helping businesses remain competitive in a rapidly changing market but also for empowering consumers with a better understanding of how social media influences their decision-making processes.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is purely descriptive research as it concentrates on identifying the level of customer satisfaction regarding a certain product and service. The available literature review has been taken from the confer of knowledge to verify the nature, and the role played by social media in influencing the behaviour of the consumer.

LITERATURE REVIEW

MANJU AHUJA(2003) In her article, she targeted on searching the factors that change the buying behaviour of consumers during online shopping especially. The study has been done for the customers using business-to-business sites.

MUHAMMAD SHAFIQ GUL (2004) In the research, he focused on finding the relationship between social media and buying behaviour of customers. He asked the students of academic institutions and came to a decision that there is no strong relationship between social media and consumer buying behaviour.

RAMSUNDER (2011) In his study, he says that consumers' are highly influenced by online brands. Opinion of one consumer will surely affect the behaviour of the other. This type of behaviour affects the repurchases. So, consumers are moving towards internet to get more information to make their final buying decision.

GARIMA (2013) In her analysis, she analysed the influence of social media on buying the product. Especially, there is a great impact of three factors called information search about the product, peer communication and the level of involvement of product on consumers buying intentions with respect to social media. The author states that because the product is purchased online, it cannot be examined, but it can be perceived through the information and reviews shared by the consumers and make it easier for the customer to make the decision about the product.

DR. SURBHI CHATURVEDI (2014) In her study, she indicated that more than 100 crore members are using social media. Social media has become an important platform for marketers and shoppers to communicate each other for the exchange of information about the product. She has also stated that consumer buying behaviour is also influenced by gender, education, income, age, etc.

WILLIAMS (2000) In his research, he clears that social media marketing changes perception, consumers selection behaviour towards a product, purchasing decision and attitude from pre-purchase to post-purchase phase.

ACHILLE (2008) This research indicates that due to various feedbacks and reviews posted by the online buyers on social media has increased the number of online buyers to forty percent in the past two years. People prioritize the online shopping over offline shopping.

MILLER(2010) In his research, he reveals that more than 11 billion people uses 70 percent social networking sites to make decision for buying a product. Also, they share their reviews and feedbacks over the social networking websites.

LEERAPONG (2013) In his research, he checked out the factors that encourage the purchasing decision of a consumer by social networking sites especially *Facebook*. In his study, purchasers graded the factors like trust, convenience, risk, etc. that encouraged or discouraged them from buying a certain product.

DRELL (2011) In his study, he analysed the online behaviour of consumers of social media and disclosed two main types of information shared online and categorized them as *high information shares* and *low information shares*. In this research, he found that out of 100 percent, 20% of the social media users were the teenagers, who were dedicated towards the brand and rest 80% were the commonly old people who were focused on quality instead of the brand.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Collaborate with authentic influencers who align with the brand's values to build trust and credibility.
2. Use micro-influencers for targeted marketing in niche markets.
3. Create visually appealing, engaging, and tailored content based on audience preferences.
4. Incorporate storytelling and user-generated content to strengthen emotional connections with consumers.
5. Utilize interactive features like polls, live sessions, and Q&As to boost consumer engagement.
6. Respond promptly to consumer interactions to foster trust and build relationships.
7. Employ data-driven strategies by analysing engagement metrics and segmenting audiences for personalized marketing.
8. Encourage critical evaluation of social media content, including influencer endorsements and reviews.
9. Raise awareness about potential biases in sponsored content and the need for informed decision-making.
10. Mandate transparency in advertising by requiring clear labelling of sponsored content and influencer partnerships.
11. Advocate for ethical practices among brands and influencers to maintain consumer trust.
12. Explore the impact of emerging platforms like TikTok and AI-driven tools on consumer behaviour.
13. Investigate the long-term effects of social media interactions on brand loyalty and retention.
14. Conduct cross-cultural studies to understand variations in consumer responses across different socioeconomic and cultural contexts.

These actionable recommendations aim to enhance social media marketing effectiveness, improve consumer awareness, and ensure ethical practices in the digital marketing landscape.

CONCLUSION

Social media has revolutionized the way consumers interact with brands, make decisions, and engage in the purchasing process. This study highlights the significant role social media platforms play in influencing consumer buying behaviour by enhancing brand awareness, fostering trust through user-generated content and influencer endorsements, and driving engagement through interactive features.

The findings underscore the importance of tailoring marketing strategies to align with the preferences and behaviours of target audiences while leveraging the unique strengths of each platform. Trust and authenticity, enabled by transparent advertising and credible content, remain critical factors in influencing purchase decisions. Additionally, demographic variations in social media usage emphasize the need for businesses to adopt segmented and data-driven approaches for greater impact.

This research provides actionable insights for businesses to optimize their social media marketing strategies, for consumers to make informed choices, and for policymakers to ensure ethical practices in the digital marketing ecosystem. As social media continues to evolve, future research is necessary to explore emerging trends, such as the integration of AI, and to address challenges posed by new platforms and shifting consumer expectations.

In conclusion, social media is not just a marketing tool but a dynamic platform that continues to reshape consumer behaviour. Businesses that effectively harness its potential while adhering to ethical practices are better positioned to thrive in the competitive digital landscape.

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