

# A Study on Impact of Social Media Marketing and Electronic Word of Mouth Towards Consumer Purchasing Behaviour

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## Abstract:

In today's digitally connected world, social media platforms have become powerful tools for businesses to communicate with consumers, promote products, and shape purchasing decisions. This study focuses on understanding the impact of social media marketing (SMM) and electronic word of mouth (eWOM) on consumer buying behavior. As modern consumers frequently rely on digital content, peer recommendations, and online reviews before making a purchase, this research aims to explore how brand messaging, influencer marketing, and user-generated content influence consumer trust, awareness, and decision-making. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to a diverse sample of respondents and analyzed using statistical techniques to examine the relationships between social media exposure and consumer responses. The results indicate that both SMM and eWOM have a significant positive influence on purchasing behaviour, with eWOM demonstrating a particularly strong effect due to its perceived authenticity and relatability. Trust, emotional appeal, social validation, and perceived value were identified as key factors contributing to the consumer's intent to purchase. The study highlights that brands which actively engage their audience through meaningful content and encourage positive user interactions are more likely to build loyalty and influence buying choices. These findings offer practical insights for marketers, emphasizing the importance of integrating honest, community-driven digital strategies to stay competitive in the evolving online marketplace.

**Keywords:** social media, electronic word of mouth(ewom), consumer trust, consumer behaviour, social proof.

## INTRODUCTION:

In recent years, the marketing landscape has undergone a dramatic transformation, driven largely by the rapid rise of digital technology and the widespread use of social media. Traditional methods of advertising are gradually being replaced or supplemented by more interactive, personalized, and consumer-driven strategies. Among these, social media marketing (SMM) and electronic word of mouth (eWOM) have emerged as two of the most influential forces shaping how consumers discover, evaluate, and purchase products or services. With billions of users actively engaging on platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, social media has become more than just a communication tool it has evolved into a critical space for brand visibility, customer engagement, and reputation management.

Consumers today are more informed and connected than ever before. Instead of relying solely on advertisements, they often turn to online reviews, social media posts, influencer recommendations, and peer feedback to guide their purchasing decisions. This shift in consumer behaviour highlights the growing relevance of eWOM, where opinions and experiences shared by others whether friends, influencers, or even strangers carry significant weight. The credibility and perceived

authenticity of eWOM often surpass that of brand-generated content, making it a powerful driver of trust and buying intention.

This study seeks to explore how SMM and eWOM together influence consumer purchasing behaviour, with a particular focus on the psychological and social factors that guide consumers from initial awareness to final purchase decisions. By examining elements such as trust, emotional engagement, online interaction, and social validation, the research aims to offer deeper insights into how brands can effectively connect with their target audiences in the digital age. The study also contributes to the broader understanding of digital consumer behaviour by highlighting the growing influence of peer recommendations and interactive content on buying patterns. Moreover, it delves into how online communities, influencers, and user-generated content shape public perception and create a sense of shared experience among consumers. As digital platforms continue to blur the lines between marketing and personal interaction, this research emphasizes the importance of authenticity and transparency in building long-term customer relationships. Ultimately, this study bridges academic perspectives with practical approaches, offering a comprehensive view of how social media and eWOM influence purchasing behaviour in today's evolving marketplace.

### Review of literature:

**Pradeep Agarwal and Dr. S.K. Dube (2010)** conducted a study titled "Impact of Celebrity Endorsement on Consumer Buying Behavior" in Varanasi. The research investigates the role of celebrity endorsements in advertising and their overall impact on brand perception. Primary data was gathered using a well-structured questionnaire administered to 400 respondents. The data was analyzed using the chi-square test. The study's findings suggest that celebrity endorsement is an effective strategy in influencing consumer decisions and that Bollywood celebrities continue to dominate the advertising sector in India.

**Kailasam Tamizhjothi and Samudhra Rajkumar (2011)** explored the topic "Profession as a Predictor of the Effectiveness of Multiple Celebrity Endorsement." This study focused on how demographic factors affect the effectiveness of multiple celebrity endorsements in advertisements. Primary data was collected through questionnaires from 53 respondents, while secondary data was gathered from articles, journals, and other sources. The analysis, which employed F-tests and ANOVA, revealed that consumers responded positively to advertisements featuring both film stars and sports figures, with a strong correlation between multiple celebrity endorsements and increased purchase intention.

**Dr. Parul Geol (2012)** conducted a study titled "Consumer Opinions About Celebrity Endorsements" in Delhi. The study aimed to examine how celebrities from various industries, such as film, sports, and politics, influence consumer purchasing behavior. Primary data was collected through questionnaires from 200 respondents, and the data was analyzed using ANOVA. The research findings indicated that celebrity endorsements significantly impact the likelihood of consumers purchasing a product.

**J.Srikanth, Dr.M.Saravanakumar and Dr.S.Srividhya (2012)**, "The Impact of Celebrity Advertisement on Indian Customers", Chennai. The main objective is to find out the pitfalls associated with the celebrity endorsement and the reduction techniques. The primary data through questionnaire were collected from 100 respondents. The data have been analyzed through ANOVA. The finding of the study on celebrity endorsement shows reasonable impact on customers as per their attitude and purchase intention.

### Statement of the problem:

This study investigates the influence of social media marketing (SMM) and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on consumer purchasing decisions, focusing on various factors as outlined in the questionnaire. It delves into how social media advertisements, influencer endorsements, brand interactions (such as likes, comments, and direct messages), and content types (including videos, posts, and promotions) shape consumer trust and their openness to exploring new products. Additionally, the research examines the impact of customer reviews, ratings, online recommendations, and user-generated content on shaping consumer perceptions and purchase intentions.

The study emphasizes popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and TikTok, where brands connect with consumers through digital marketing efforts. It also considers e-commerce and review platforms like Amazon, Flipkart, and Trustpilot, where consumers often rely on reviews and ratings before making purchasing decisions. The participants in the study are active social media users and online shoppers, ensuring that the findings accurately reflect real-world consumer behavior.

Key areas of analysis include whether social media advertisements encourage consumers to explore new products, the influence of influencer endorsements on brand perception, and how brand engagement enhances consumer trust. Moreover, the study explores the role of online reviews, star ratings, and eWOM interactions in driving purchase decisions, as well as whether negative reviews lead consumers to avoid certain products.

Furthermore, the study aims to assess how the frequency and type of consumer interactions with brands on social media platforms impact their overall brand loyalty and engagement. It explores whether consumers are more likely to trust brands that actively engage in conversations and respond to feedback on platforms like Instagram and Twitter. The research also investigates whether personalized marketing efforts, such as targeted advertisements or tailored content based on user behavior, increase consumer interest and influence their purchasing decisions. By understanding these dynamics, the study offers valuable insights into how brands can effectively leverage social media and eWOM strategies to foster stronger relationships with their audiences, ultimately enhancing customer retention and driving sales growth.

### Objectives of the study:

- 1) To identify the key factors of social media marketing and EWOM that influence consumer behavior
- 2) To investigate the effect of social media marketing activities and consumer buying behavior.
- 3) To examine the impact of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on consumer purchase decisions.

### Research Design:

This study aims to explore the impact of Social Media Marketing (SMM) and Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) on consumer purchasing behavior. To achieve this, a descriptive research design will be adopted, which is ideal for understanding the current patterns in consumer behaviour as it relates to digital marketing strategies and online interactions. The study will specifically focus on how different social media activities, such as advertisements, influencer promotions, and online reviews, influence consumers' trust and decision-making processes.

The research will take a quantitative approach to data collection. This approach allows for the systematic collection of numerical data, which can be analysed statistically to identify trends and relationships between social media engagement, influencer endorsements, online reviews, and consumer purchasing behaviour. By utilizing structured questionnaires, the study aims to objectively measure the influence of these variables on consumer decisions.

Data will be gathered using a survey questionnaire, which will be designed to capture information about how social media advertising, influencer endorsements, and consumer-generated content (e.g., reviews, ratings) shape purchasing intentions. The questionnaire will also assess consumer trust in eWOM and the extent to which it impacts their willingness to try new products. The study will aim for a sample size of 135 respondents, which will provide a reliable basis for statistical analysis while maintaining manageable data collection. The participants will be selected from social media

platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and TikTok, as well as e-commerce sites like Amazon and Flipkart. These respondents will be active in both interacting with brands online and making online purchases.

### Limitations of the study:

**Self-reported data:** One of the key concerns is the reliance on self-reported data. As responses were collected through surveys, there is a chance that participants provided answers they believed to be socially acceptable rather than reflecting their actual behavior. Individual differences in perception may also influence the accuracy of the responses, potentially affecting the credibility of the results.

**Target population:** The study mainly focuses on active social media users and frequent online shoppers, which may not reflect the behaviors of consumers who prefer traditional marketing channels or offline shopping. As a result, the findings may not be generalizable to the broader consumer population.

**Digital consumer behaviour:** The study places greater emphasis on digital consumer behaviour, leaving out other significant influences such as physical retail experiences, traditional advertising mediums like print or television, and word-of-mouth through personal interactions. These omitted factors are also important components of the consumer decision-making process.

**platform-specific variations:** The research also does not account for platform-specific variations. Each social media and e-commerce platform operates with different engagement models, algorithms, and user demographics. By not examining these platforms individually, the study risks drawing overly broad conclusions.

**Dynamic nature of digital marketing:** Trends, consumer preferences, and platform algorithms are constantly evolving. Since this study captures consumer behavior at a single point in time, some of its findings may become outdated as the digital landscape continues to change.

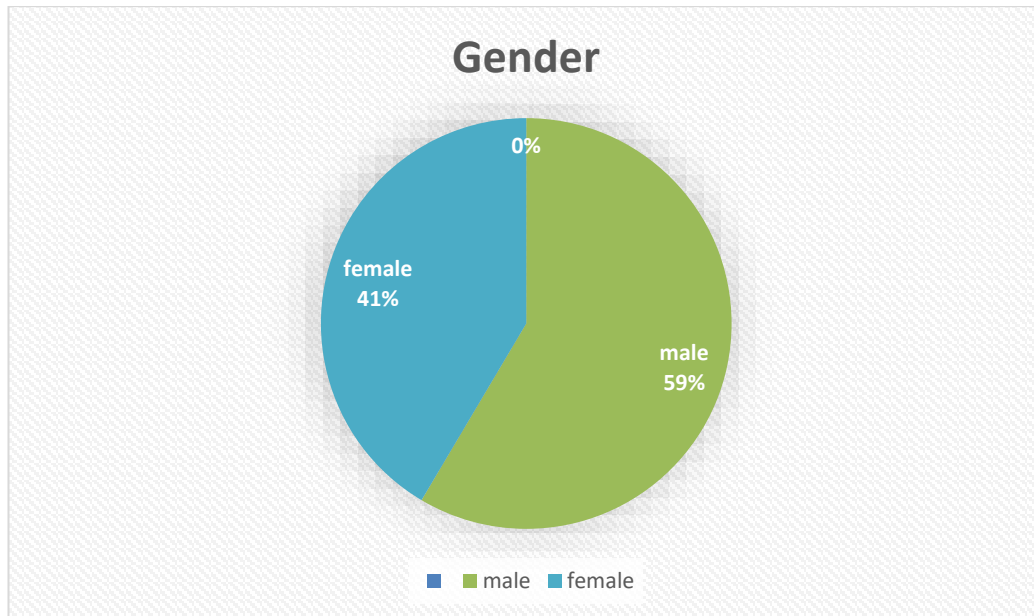
**Economic Climate:** there is limited consideration of external variables such as the economic climate, brand reputation, product pricing, and competitor strategies. These factors can significantly influence purchasing decisions and should be acknowledged as part of the broader context in which consumer behavior occurs.

### Analysis and interpretation

#### Table no: 1

#### Gender wise calculation of respondents

Gender	No of respondents	PERCENTAGE (%)
Male	79	59
female	56	41
total	135	100

**Figure: 1****Interpretation:**

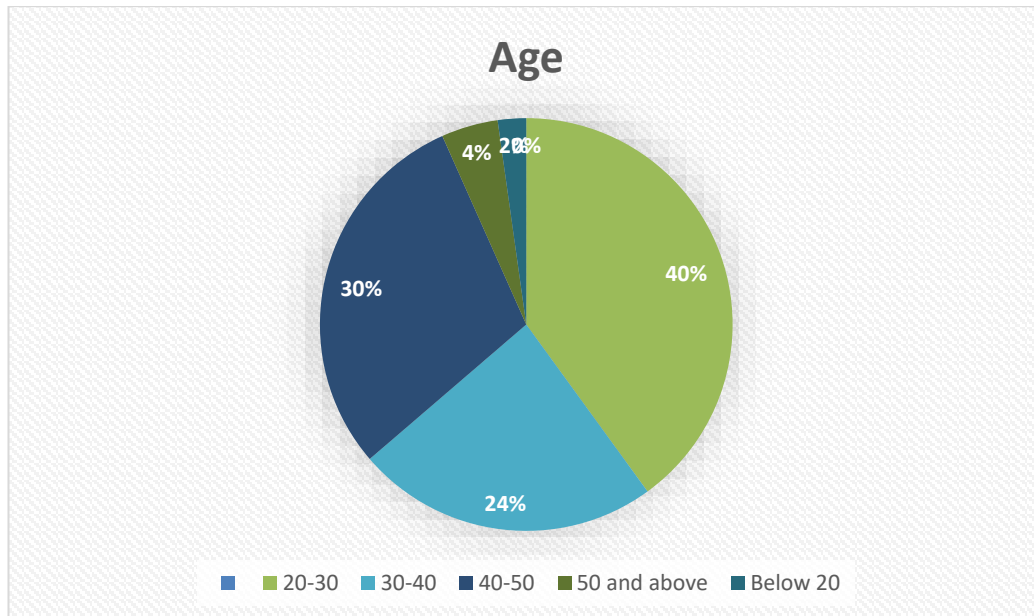
From the above data shows that 79(59%) of the respondents are male and 56(41%) are female respondents.

**Inference:**

The majority of the respondents are male respondents 79(59%)

**Table no: 2****Age wise calculation of respondents**

Age	No of respondents	PERCENTAGE (%)
Below 20	3	2.2
20-30	54	40
30-40	32	23.7
40-50	40	29.6
50 and above	6	4.4
Total	135	100



**Figure: 2**

### Interpretation:

The above data shows that 54(40%) of the respondents are aged from 20-30, 40(30%) are from 40-50, 32(24%) are from 30-40, 6(4%) are 50 and above and 3(2.2%) are below 20 respectively.

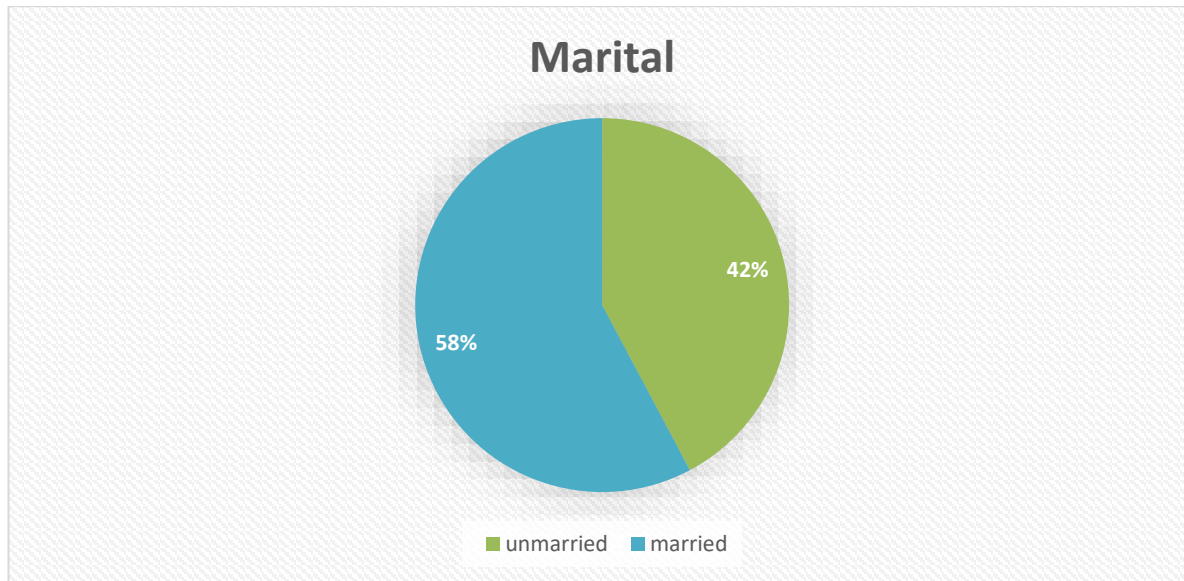
### Inference:

The majority of the respondents 54(40%) fall under the age group of 20-30

**Table no: 3**

### Marital status of the respondents

Marital Status	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
married	78	42.2
unmarried	57	57.8
total	135	100

**Figure:3****Interpretation:**

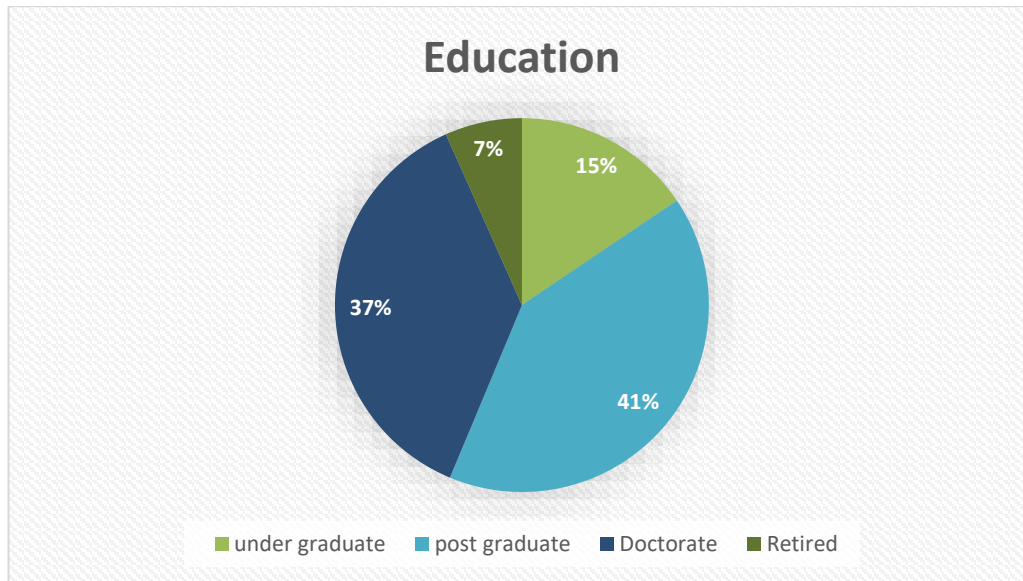
The above data shows that 78(57.8%) of the respondents are married and 57(42.2%) are unmarried respondents.

**Inference:**

The majority of the respondents are married respondents 78(57.8%)

**Table no: 4****Educational qualification of respondents**

Education	No of respondents	Percentage(%)
Undergraduate	21	15.6
Postgraduate	55	40.7
Doctorate	50	37
Retired	9	6.7
total	135	100

**Figure: 4****Interpretation:**

The above data shows that 55(41%) of the respondents are post graduates, 50(37%) are doctorates, 21(15%) are undergraduates, and 9(7%) are retired respondents respectively.

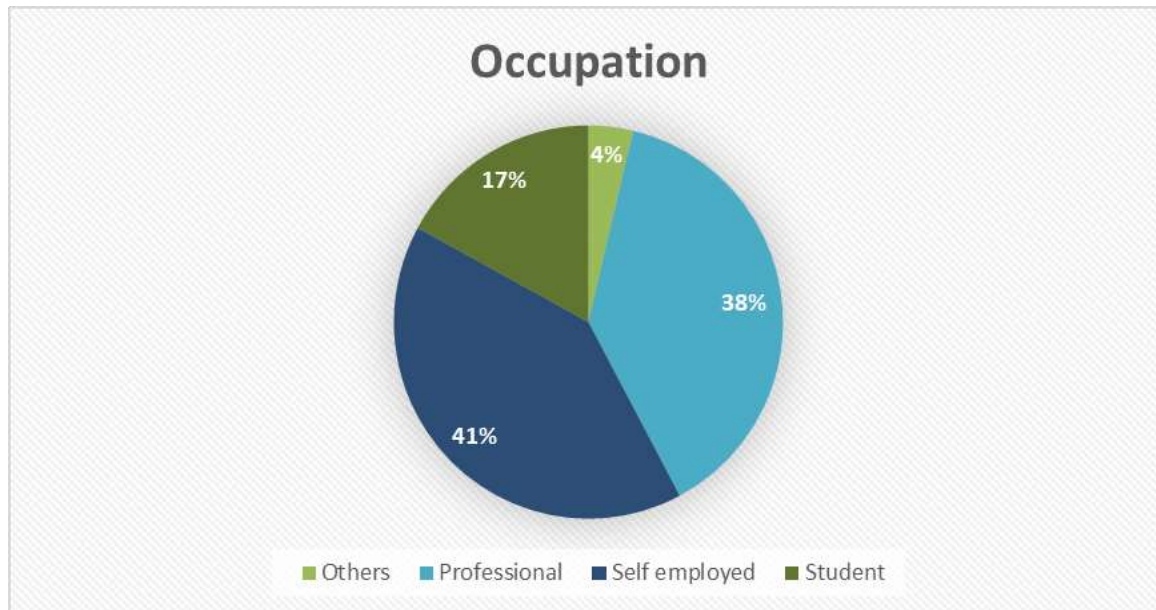
**Inference:**

The majority of the respondents 55(41%) are postgraduates.

**Table no:5****Occupation classification of the respondents**

Occupation	No of respondents	Percentage
Student	23	17
Professional	52	38.5
Self employed	55	40.7
others	5	3.7
total	135	100





**Figure: 5**

#### Interpretation:

The above data shows that 55(41%) of the respondents are self-employed, 52(38%) are professionals, 23(17%) are students, and 5(4%) opted to others respectively.

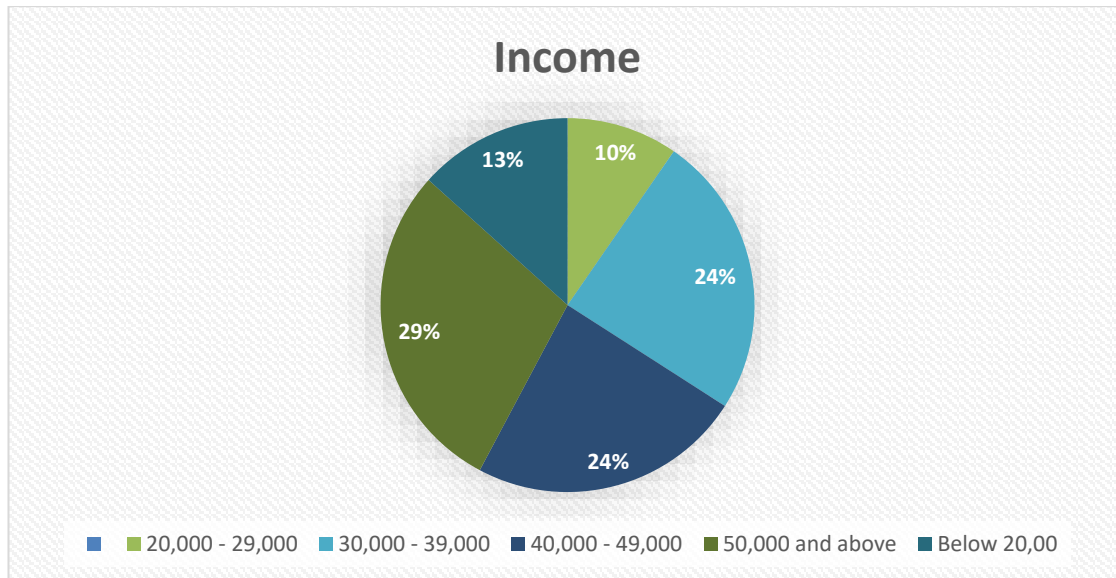
#### Inference:

The majority of the respondents 55(41%) are self-employed.

**Table no: 6**

#### Income level classification of respondents

Income level	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Below 20,000	18	13.3
20,000-29,000	13	9.6
30,000-39,000	33	24.4
40,000-49,000	32	23.7
50,000 and above	39	28.9
total	135	100



**Figure: 6**

#### Interpretation:

The above data shows that 39(29%) of the respondents earn 50,000 and above, 33(24%) of the respondents earn 30,000-39000, 32(24%) of the respondents earn 40,000-49000, 18(13%) earn below 20,000 and 13(10%) earn around 20,000-29000

#### Inference:

The majority of the respondents 39(29%) fall under the income category of 50,000 and above

**Table no: 7**

#### Influence of Socia media on purchase decisions

Influence level	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	11	8.1
disagree	7	5.2
Neutral	16	11.9
Agree	26	19.3
Strongly agree	75	55.6
Total	135	100

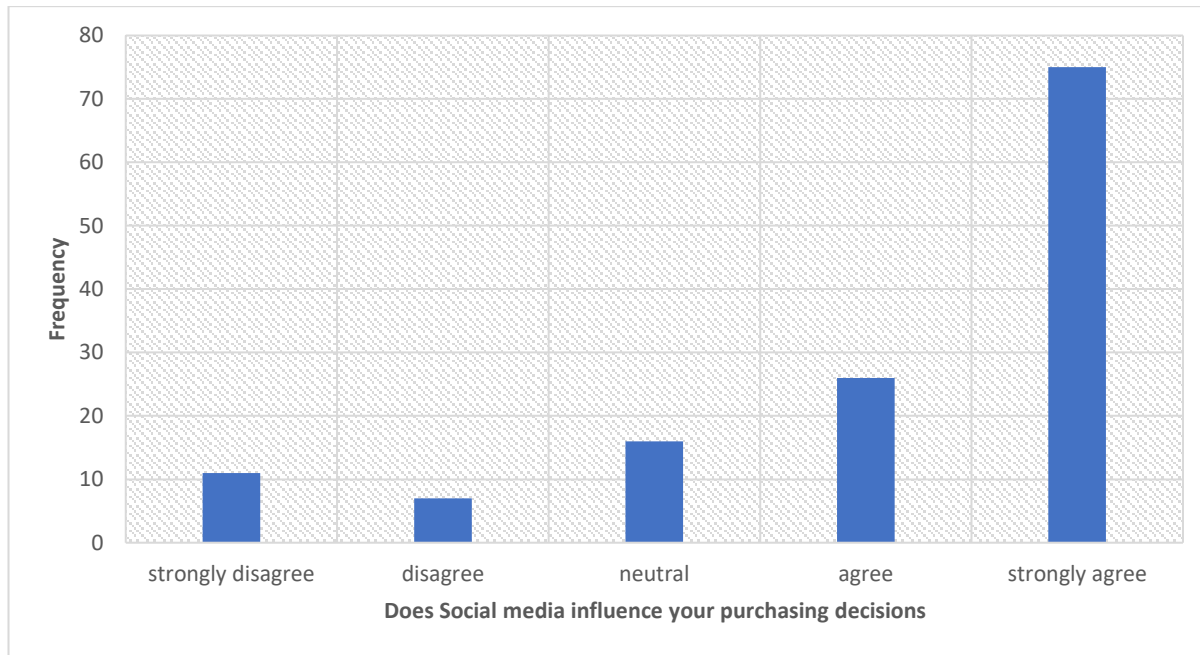


Figure: 7

### Interpretation:

Out of 135 respondents

- 75(55.6%) of the respondents strongly agree to the statement
- 26(19.3) of the respondents agree to the statement
- 16(11.9) are neutral neither agree nor disagree to the statement
- 7(5.2) of the respondents disagree to the statement
- 11(8.1) of the respondents strongly disagree to the statement.

### Inference:

The majority of the respondents 75(55.6%) strongly agree to the statement. hence it is inferred that social media influences purchase decisions.

Table: 8

### Social media on encouraging People to explore new products

Levels	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	11	8.1
disagree	23	17
Neutral	21	15.6
agree	29	21.5
Strongly agree	51	37.8
total	135	100

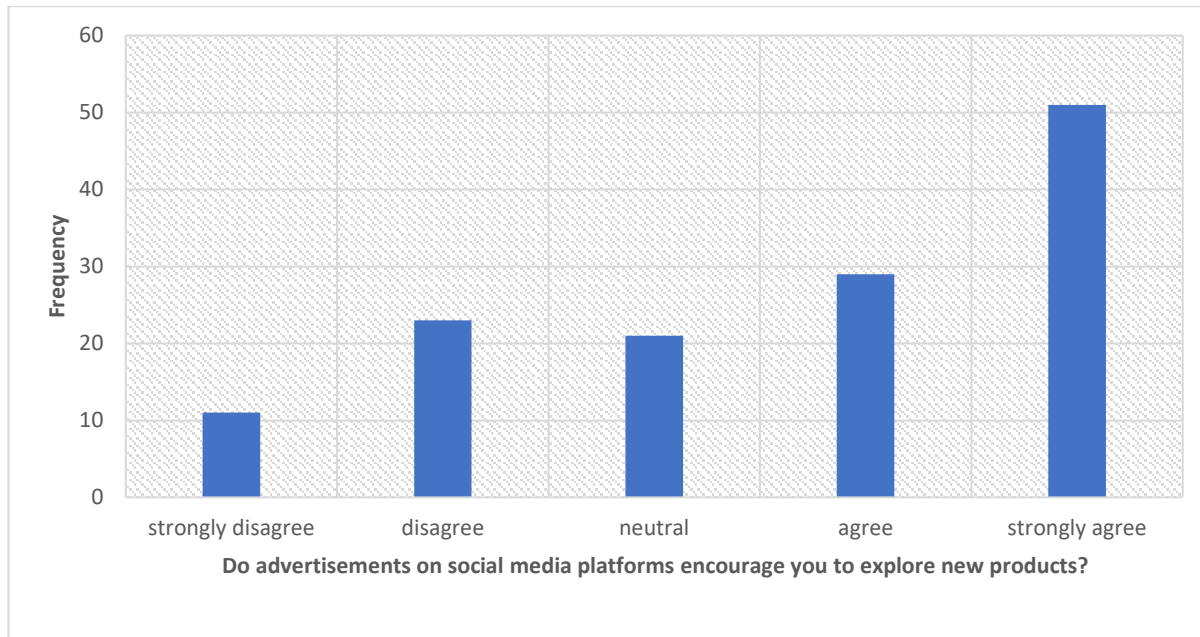


Figure: 8

### Interpretation:

Out of 135 respondents

- 51(37.8%) of the respondents strongly agree to the statement
- 29(21.5) of the respondents agree to the statement
- 21(15.6) are neutral neither agree nor disagree to the statement
- 23(17%) of the respondents disagree to the statement
- 11(8.1) of the respondents strongly disagree to the statement.

### Inference:

The majority of the respondents 51(37.8%) strongly agree to the statement. hence it is evident that social media encourages people to explore new products.

Table no: 9

### Trustworthiness of product reviews and recommendations on social media

Levels	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	13	9.6
disagree	30	22.2
Neutral	22	16.3
agree	26	19.3
Strongly agree	44	32.6
total	135	100



**Figure: 9**

#### Interpretation:

Out of 135 respondents

- 44(32.6%) of the respondents strongly agree to the statement
- 26(19.3) of the respondents agree to the statement
- 22(16.3) are neutral neither agree nor disagree to the statement
- 30(22.2%) of the respondents disagree to the statement
- 13(9.6) of the respondents strongly disagree to the statement.

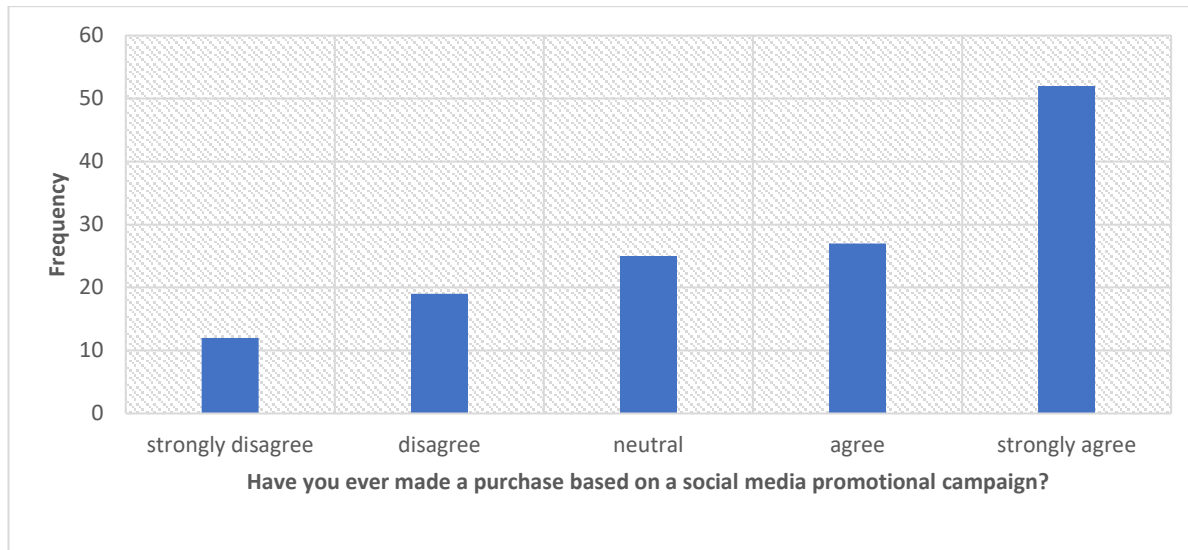
#### Inference:

The majority of the respondents 44(32.6%) strongly agree to the statement. hence it is inferred that the respondents trust product reviews and recommendations on social media.

**Table no: 10**

#### Purchase based on social media promotional campaign

Levels	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	12	8.9
disagree	19	14.1
Neutral	25	18.5
agree	27	20
Strongly agree	52	38.5
total	135	100



**Figure: 10**

### Interpretation:

Out of 135 respondents

- 52(38.5%) of the respondents strongly agree to the statement
- 27(20%) of the respondents agree to the statement
- 25(20%) are neutral neither agree nor disagree to the statement
- 19(14.1%) of the respondents disagree to the statement
- 12(8.9) of the respondents strongly disagree to the statement.

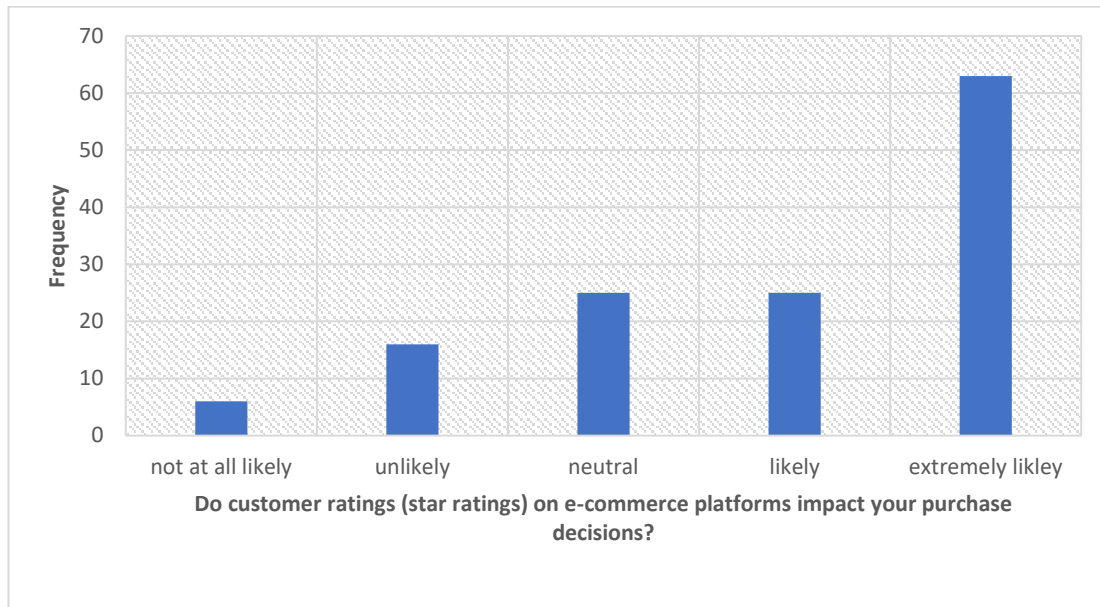
### Inference:

The majority of the respondents 52(38.5%) strongly agree to the statement. hence it is clear that social media promotional campaigns induce purchase decisions.

**Table no: 11**

### Impact of ratings (star ratings) on e- commerce Platforms on Purchase decisions

Levels	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Not at all likely	6	4.4
Unlikely	16	11.9
Neutral	25	18.5
Likely	25	18.5
Extremely likely	63	46.7
total	135	100



**Figure: 11**

#### Interpretation:

Out of 135 respondents

- 63(46.7%) of the respondents are extremely likely towards the statement
- 25(18.5%) of the respondents are likely towards statement
- 25(18.5%) are neutral neither agree nor disagree to the statement
- 16(11.9%) of the respondents are unlikely towards the statement
- 6(4.4) of the respondents are not at all likely towards the statement.

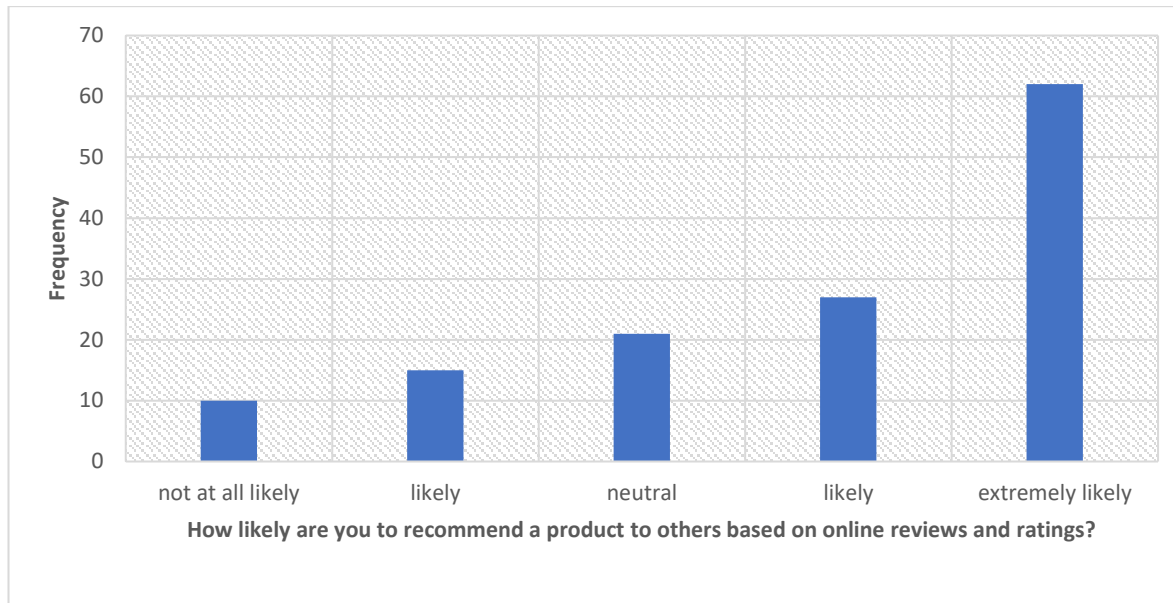
#### Inference:

The majority of the respondents 61(46.7%) are extremely likely towards the statement. hence it is inferred that Ratings on e- commerce platforms play a vital role in making purchase.

**Table no: 12**

#### Likelihood of respondents to recommend a product to others based on reviews and ratings

Levels	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Not at all likely	10	7.4
Unlikely	15	11.1
Neutral	21	15.6
Likely	27	20
Extremely likely	62	45.9
total	135	100



**Figure: 12**

### Interpretation:

Out of 135 respondents

- 62(45.9%) of the respondents are extremely likely towards the statement
- 27(20%) of the respondents are likely towards statement
- 21(15.6%) are neutral neither agree nor disagree to the statement
- 15(11.1%) of the respondents are unlikely towards the statement
- 10(7.4) of the respondents are not at all likely towards the statement.

### Inference:

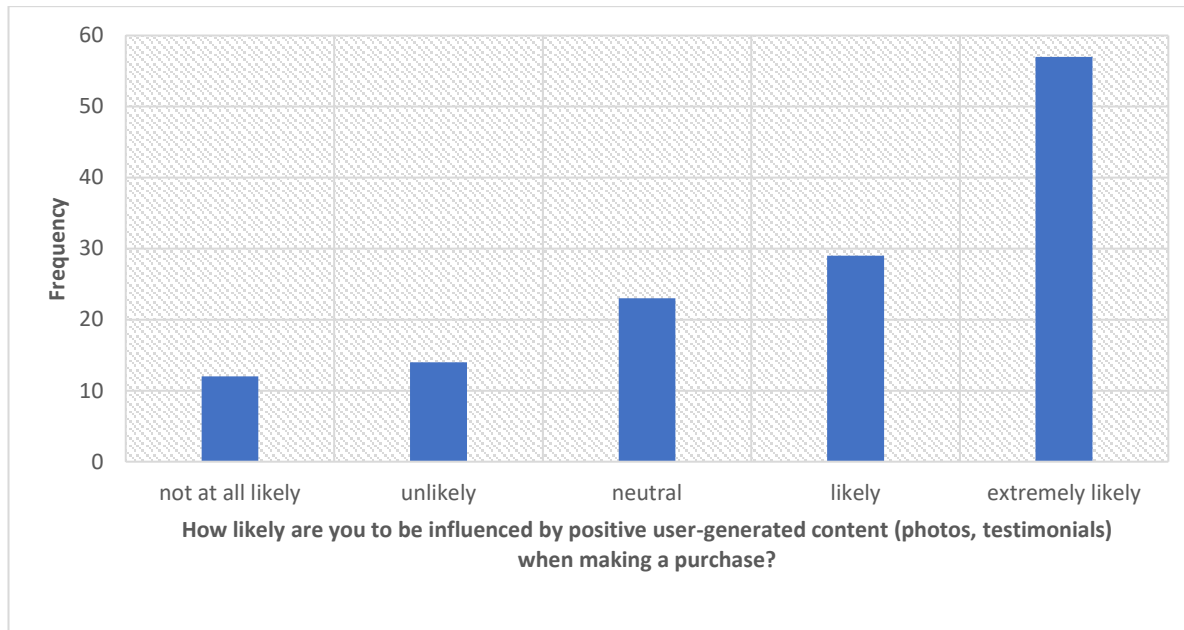
The majority of the respondents 61(46.7%) are extremely likely towards the statement. hence it is clear that respondents are Extremely likely to recommend a product to others based on online reviews and ratings.

**Table no: 13**

### Likelihood of respondents towards positive user generated content when making purchases

Levels	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Not at all likely	12	8.9
Unlikely	14	10.4
Neutral	23	17
Likely	29	21.5
Extremely likely	57	42.2
total	135	100





### Interpretation:

Out of 135 respondents

- 57(42.2%) of the respondents are extremely likely towards the statement
- 29(21.5%) of the respondents are likely towards statement
- 23(17%) are neutral neither agree nor disagree to the statement
- 14(10.4%) of the respondents are unlikely towards the statement
- 12(8.9) of the respondents are not at all likely towards the statement.

### Inference:

The majority of the respondents 57(42.2%) are extremely likely towards the statement. hence it is clear that respondents are extremely likely towards influence by positive user generated content (photos, testimonials) when making a purchase

### FINDINGS:

- The majority of the respondents are male respondents 79(59%)
- The majority of the respondents 54(40%) fall under the age group of 20-30
- The majority of the respondents are married respondents 78(57.8%)
- The majority of the respondents 55(41%) are postgraduates.
- The majority of the respondents 55(41%) are self-employed.
- The majority of the respondents 39(29%) fall under the income category of 50,000 and above
- The majority of the respondents 75(55.6%) strongly agree to the statement. hence it is inferred that social media influences purchase decisions.
- The majority of the respondents 51(37.8%) strongly agree to the statement. hence it is evident that social media encourages people to explore new products.
- The majority of the respondents 44(32.6%) strongly agree to the statement. hence it is inferred that the respondents trust product reviews and recommendations on social media.

- The majority of the respondents 52(38.5%) strongly agree to the statement. hence it is clear that social media promotional campaigns induce purchase decisions.
- The majority of the respondents 61(46.7%) are extremely likely towards the statement. hence it is inferred that Ratings on e- commerce platforms play a vital role in making purchase.
- The majority of the respondents 61(46.7%) are extremely likely towards the statement. hence it is clear that respondents are Extremely likely to recommend a product to others based on online reviews and ratings.
- The majority of the respondents 57(42.2%) are extremely likely towards the statement. hence it is clear that respondents are extremely likely towards influence by positive user generated content (photos, testimonials) when making a purchase

## SUGGESTIONS

Based on the key findings of the study the following suggestions providing for the consumers who are using social media applications in Chennai District.

- The social media application needs to take steps to improve their services to enhance the satisfaction level of their users.
- Social media application should take necessary steps to educate the users about the social media application services offered by them.
- The other information sharing apps can speed up their service. Also, can make a collaboration with companies and offer a free hour to the users. Many extra features such as voice chat, video chat, etc., can be offered as in WhatsApp and Facebook.
- The college students should reduce the spend many hours for social networks in every day because it might affect their health.
- College students should be aware while selecting friends in social networks.
- Students should read the terms of use and privacy policy while creating the social network account because to avoid the problems in social networks.
- Students should be aware of providing the personal information in social networks because personal information can be misused by criminals.
- Social network developers and companies must improve the security and privacy that they are given to professional students to promote a safe environment especially for children and teenagers.

## CONCLUSION

From the analysis, it's clear that social media has a strong influence on consumer behavior. Most of the respondents in this study are males between the ages of 20 and 30, many of whom are married, postgraduates, and self-employed. A considerable number also earn ₹50,000 or more per month.

The responses clearly show that people rely heavily on social media when it comes to making purchasing decisions. Many strongly agree that social media encourages them to try out new products, and they trust the product reviews and recommendations they see online. Promotional campaigns on these platforms also seem to play a key role in influencing what people buy.

Ratings and reviews on e-commerce websites are particularly important, with many respondents saying they are extremely likely to be influenced by them. In addition, people are more likely to recommend products to others if they see good reviews and ratings online. Positive content created by other users—such as photos and testimonials—also significantly affects their decisions.

Overall, it can be concluded that social media is not just a space for interaction but a major driver of consumer choices. Brands that actively engage on these platforms and focus on building trust through reviews, ratings, and authentic user content can have a significant impact on their audience.

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