

Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Purchase Decision

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Abstract- The study is aimed at identifying the role of social media marketing and its influence on consumer buying behavior in modern digital environment. As social media sites move to the center of consumer communication, this paper discusses the effect of various marketing forms of influencer-based endorsements, targeted advertising, and user-generated content on consumer awareness, attitudes, and purchase intentions. The survey conducted on 60 varied respondents shows that social media marketing plays an important role in increasing the product visibility and credibility and hence consumer behavior is shaped by it. Yet, there are also such challenges as a low level of trust in sponsored content and inconsistent direct purchasing intentions. The results generate the significance of genuine, interesting, and platform-dependent marketing programs to maximize consumer interaction and conversion. The study offers useful information to marketers that aim at using the full potential of social media in purchase decision making.

Keywords- social media marketing, consumer purchase decision, influencer marketing, digital marketing, consumer behavior, purchase intention.

I. INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 History of the Study

The exponential growth in the number of social media platforms in the last one decade has completely changed the manner in which people communicate, share information as well as make decisions. Social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok have become powerful platforms not only in socializing but also in business, and more specifically, marketing. SMM has become an inevitable part of the contemporary marketing strategy as it allows business-related organizations to establish contact with the consumer on the basis of the interactive and personalized content. Compared to the conventional marketing channel, the social media provides a dynamic platform through which consumers are actively involved in the sharing of opinion, reviews, and experiences which could greatly influence brand perception and buy behavior.

The tools and strategies exploited through social media marketing consist of influence endorsements, targeted advertising, user-generated content material, and interactive promotions. These methodologies have provided the marketer with additional options to target certain groups of individuals and give them a personalized message that will connect with them on a more personal level than traditional advertising. More specifically, influencer marketing has become a popular practice where consumer attitudes and preferences are influenced by trusted social media personalities. Besides, the

ability to incorporate social commerce functionality in social media networks has enabled the seamless purchasing processes, thus closing the loop between the product exploration and purchase.

Within this digitized age, the choices that consumers make when buying products are becoming influenced by the information they get in social media. Peer reviews, the thoughts of influencers, and interactive brand content have become essential inputs in the decision-making processes by the consumers. This has forced marketers to redefine olden consumer behavior models, and transform their efforts to meet the changing electronic environment. With increasing investments by businesses in social media marketing, it is essential to determine the actual influence it has on consumer buying behavior in order to enhance the process of marketing and gaining competitive advantage.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Although social media marketing is becoming more and more utilized, the exact impact it has on consumer buying choices is still not quite clear. Companies are spending huge amount of money on social media campaigns and they are not able to quantify the success of these campaigns on the real sales as well as creating brand loyalty. The reaction of consumers to social media marketing is quite diversified and depends on such factors as the personal traits, the social media platform, and the marketing content.

Moreover, consumers have become skeptical and experience ad fatigue as a result of the widespread sponsored content, which may reduce the effectiveness of ads on social media. There is the problem of information overload or the situation when the user is subjected to too much promotional content and it makes the task of the consumer to make a wise buying decision very difficult. Also, the demographic moderators of age, gender, income, and education could also have a degree of moderating effects on how consumers receive and interact with social media marketing but the moderating effects are not clear.

Such gaps will be filled in this study, as it will precisely investigate the role of social media marketing on consumer awareness, attitude, and purchase intentions. By determining the main stimuli and obstacles in this relationship, the study aims at offering practical implications to marketers in order to develop more efficient social media strategies that meet consumer expectations and behaviour.

1.3 Study Goals

The main aim of undertaking this study will be to explore how social media marketing influences consumer buying behavior.

In order to do this, the paper aims at the following specific objectives:

To determine the level at which social media marketing contributes to the awareness of products and brands among the consumers.

To examine how different content types of social media marketing, including influencer posts, advertisements, and user-generated content, impact consumer opinion and buy intentions.

To determine the demographical attributes, which make consumers more or less responsive to social media marketing.

To determine the perceptions of the consumers on the authenticity and trust of social media marketing messages.

To find out the difficulties and obstacles which prevent consumers responding positively to social media marketing.

To provide useful suggestions to the Business and marketers on how to make the best use of social media marketing strategies so as to be influential in the purchase decision of consumers.

1.4 Research Questions

In order to offer direction to the study, the research asks the following research questions:

What impacts does social media marketing have on consumer product and brand awareness as well as knowledge?

What kind of social media marketing content can exert the greatest influence on the purchase intentions of the consumers?

In what ways do demographic factors of age, gender, income and education influence consumer reaction to social media marketing?

How do consumers view the validity and legitimacy of social media marketing campaigns?

What are the challenges that are related to social media marketing that the consumers face and how does that influence their buying patterns?

What can marketers do to enhance effectiveness of social media marketing so that it can enhance consumer purchase decision?

1.5 Importance of the Study

The given research is rather important academically and practically. At an academic level, it will add to the existing research on digital marketing, since it will offer empirical data about the role of social media marketing in consumer behaviour. Due to the rapid development of social media, the principles and structures of marketing need to be revised with new studies, and according to the current situation of consumers.

In practical terms, the results provide important information to marketers, brand managers and companies interested in using social media as one of the main platforms to engage with consumers and to increase sales. With this information on the strategies that are useful in social media marketing in increasing awareness, developing trust and inspiring purchases, marketers will be able to design their campaigns in a manner that they appeal to the target markets. Moreover, with the realization of demographic variations in the consumer behavior, comes the opportunity to better segment the market and target it with personalized marketing activities, improving efficiency and marketing returns.

The paper also provides pointers to the possible obstacles and consumer attitudes against social media marketing so that a business may counter the problem of skepticism, information overload, and ad fatigue. In the end, the study feeds into best practices that can assist firms to develop genuine, believable, and effective social media marketing campaigns in a competitive online market.

1.6 Scope and Limitation

This research will endeavour to find out impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour within the limit of 60 respondents in urban and semi-urban locations. The study sample consists of popular social media applications, namely, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok, and examines the various forms of marketing content, namely, influencer posts, paid content, and user-generated content.

The research is representative in capturing demographic diversity though it fails to capture all geographic regions as well as new emerging platforms of social media. A non-probability convenience sampling method and self-reported data collection could lead to some biases, which would influence the external validity of the results. Also, the cross-sectional nature of the design means that perceptions of consumers are only seen at one particular time and not able to establish causality or behavioral changes over time.

In spite of these shortcomings, the research represents a thorough examination of the present day social media marketing activity and its impact on the consumer purchasing pattern. The results provide an excellent potential to be used in future studies and implemented into practice in the new digital marketing world.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Social media marketing (SMM) has become a revolution in the recent marketing environment, as it has significantly changed the way the brands can talk to the consumer, and impact their buying patterns. In comparison to the conventional advertising medium, the communication via social networks like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok occurs in both directions; thus, consumers can actively respond to content, post comments, and create reviews (Yang, 2024; Chu, 2024). This two-way communication aspect of SMM has given rise to the emergence of personalized and targeted marketing strategies that use the information about the user, their behavioral patterns to develop contextually relevant and timely messaging (Pei, 2024). Particularly, the concept of influencer marketing has become an effective phrase where social media celebrities with a large following

promote products, thus improving brand integrity and customer trust (International Research Journal of Management and Social Sciences, 2024). Some studies have emphasised that the credibility in the recommendations made by the influencers is a decisive factor in determining the purchase intention because buyers tend to view influencers as more real than the advertisements (Zhao et al., 2024; Ao et al., 2023). In addition, social media allows such phenomena of viral marketing, when due to the attractiveness of the content, it is actively shared, which exponentially expands the brand reach at a relatively inexpensive cost (Jabeen et al., 2024). Nevertheless, there are still some obstacles; the credibility crisis of explicitly promotional materials and information overload may decrease the efficacy of marketing, and the brands would have to focus on achieving authenticity and transparency to keep the attention of buyers (Rashmi, 2023; Jabeen et al., 2024). Social media platforms are constantly changing and require marketers to constantly switch up strategies to match the changing consumer preferences and platform algorithm (Kuniawati & Ariyanti, 2024).

Social media has had significant impact on the consumer purchase decision process and changes the traditional paradigms of information search, evaluation and purchase behavior. The traditional ones identify such steps as problem recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, purchase, and post-purchase assessment (Chu, 2024). Social media fits into these steps as it allows consumers to have easy access to the plethora of information about the product, peer-to-peer reviews, and brand communications, which makes the process of social proofing and decreases perceived risks during purchase (Pei, 2024; Bogdan et al., 2025). According to the research, the user-generated content (online reviews, comments, etc.) is a crucial factor in forming purchase intentions since consumers are becoming more attached to the feedback of peers than the brand messages only (Schivinski et al., 2016). Additionally, social commerce functionalities integrated into platforms provide a smoother purchase experience, even though the real conversion rates through social media are diverse and are regulated by such factors as trust, payment safety, and usability of the platforms (Wang et al., 2025). Technological videos pitching products can be elaborated based on theoretical models like Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which provide a convenient perspective on how consumers relate with social media marketing, with a focus on the perceived ease of use, usefulness, and intentions of behavior as determinants of consumer adoption and purchase intent (Yang, 2024; Jabeen et al., 2024). The Social Influence Theory will also explain the effects of credibility of the influencers and peer normative on the decision making process of the consumers (International Research Journal of Management and Social Sciences, 2024). Although the latter case is becoming increasingly evident, along with the warning signs of the negative consequences of social media, which include advertisement fatigue and losing trust due to over-commercialization (Rashmi, 2023; Ibrahim Halil Efendioglu & Durmaz, 2022). In this respect, the literature is quite consistent in its emphasis that although social media marketing is a powerful force behind the consumer behavior, its effectiveness relies on the sophisticated content approaches, platform-based interactions, and authenticity that enables trust-based relationships with the consumers, rather than one-time engagements.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

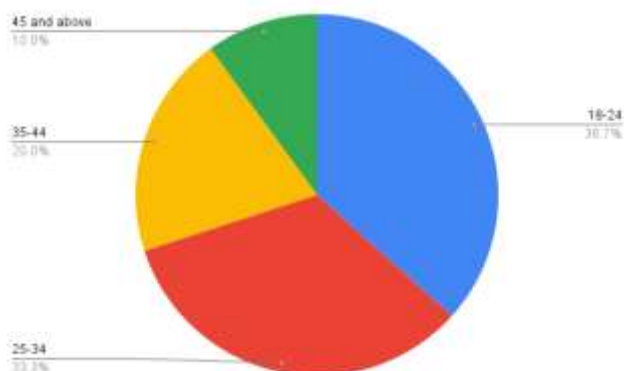
The research design used in this study is descriptive quantitative research design whose role is to systematically analyze the effects of social media marketing on the consumer purchasing decision. A quantitative method has been selected because it will allow gathering quantifiable data that can be used to examine patterns, relationships, and trends in the consumer population with regard to their perceptions and behaviors with regard to social media marketing strategies. A structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data; the questionnaires contained mainly closed-ended questions, which included Likert-scale questions, multiple-choice questions, and rating scales. The questionnaire used in this research was aimed to find out how often the respondents use social media, which platforms they prefer to use, whether they trust social media advertising and influencers, as well as whether user-generated content can influence their decision to buy a product. In order to guarantee the clarity, relevance, and validity of the instrument, the instrument was constructed through an extensive examination of preceding literature and the validated scales modified by the acknowledged research in the domain of digital marketing and consumer behavior (Yang, 2024; Chu, 2024). A small group of participants were used to pre-test the questionnaire, and any ambiguities or inconsistencies noted and corrected before the questionnaire was administered more widely. The research utilized non-probability convenience selection tool whereby 60 respondents were chosen based on the criteria that they were active on social media sites and thus the one group that is most inclined to be reached by social media marketing. Although convenience sampling restricts the possibility of using the results to make a generalized conclusion, it was suitable considering the resource availability and the exploratory aspect of the study. The data was collected both online (using google forms and similar services) and physically, distributed, which allowed to optimize both the accessibility of data collection and the participation rate among the urban and semi-urban population groups. Ethical aspects were followed closely; they includes, the subjects being informed of the purpose of study, confidentiality and anonymity being assured, and the study participation being voluntary with informed consent being signed before the questionnaire was filled. The accumulated data were computed with the help of descriptive and inferential statistical methods in order to present meaningful information. Descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages, means and Standard deviations were computed to present demographic data and sum up general responses. Inferential analysis Inferential analysis consisted of correlation and regression to determine the relationship between the independent variables (e.g., influencer endorsements, advertisement frequency, perceived authenticity) and the dependent variable- consumer purchase decision. To achieve accuracy and rigor statistical software packages were used such as Microsoft Excel to organize the data initially and IBM SPSS to analyze the data in detail. The instrument reliability was determined through Cronbach Alpha with the result obtaining acceptable internal consistency reliability ($\alpha > 0.7$) among major constructs. The validity was also determined by expert reviews, and factor analysis, which showed that questionnaire items were effective in measuring the variables of interest. Cross-sectional nature of the data (consumer perceptions are captured at one specific time without taking into consideration longitudinal changes) and use of self-reported measures (potentially distorted by various

biases, including social desirability or inaccurate recall) can be viewed as limitations of the methodology. Notwithstanding these shortcomings, the methodological framework offering excruciating details on the process of studying the effects of social media marketing on consumer behavior presents an exemplary guide on how this study should be conducted to yield empirical findings that can contribute to the academic discourse and marketing practice.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Age Distribution of Respondents

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-24	22	36.67
25-34	20	33.33
35-44	12	20.00
45 and above	6	10.00
Total	60	100



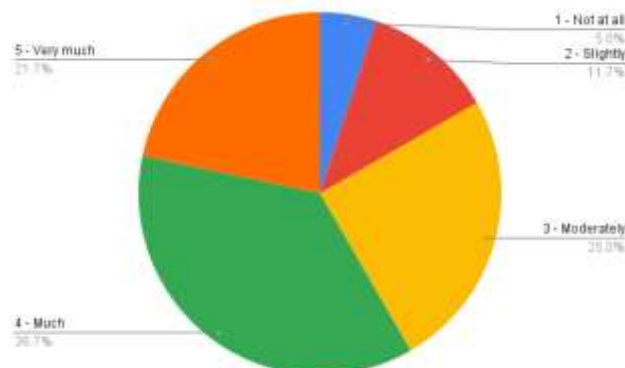
Graph 1: Age Distribution of Respondents (Pie Chart)

Interpretation:

Age distribution shows that most of the respondents are in the younger age groups with 36.67 percent falling between the age of 18-24 years and 33.33 percent between 25-34 years. The two groups make up 70 percent of the sample size, and it is worth noting that social media marketing mostly affects younger customers who tend to be more active on online platforms. The age category of 35-44 years contributes 20 percent and the percentage of those who are 45 years and above is low (10 percent). Such distribution conforms to the general trends on the international level where younger age groups prevail in social media use, making it important to focus on these groups and provide them with specific marketing content.

Table 2: Influence of Social Media Advertisements on Product Awareness

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1 - Not at all	3	5.00
2 - Slightly	7	11.67
3 - Moderately	15	25.00
4 - Much	22	36.67
5 - Very much	13	21.66
Total	60	100



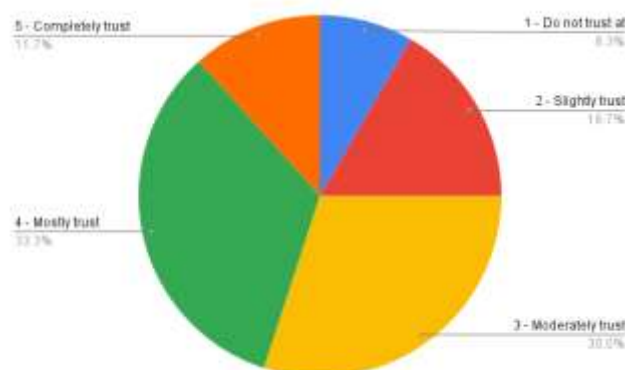
Graph 2: Influence of Social Media Advertisements on Product Awareness (Bar Chart)

Interpretation:

The statistics indicate that advertisements on social media have considerable effect on the awareness of products among the consumers. The total percentage of 58.33 who voted the influence as Much and Very much implies that such advertisements are effective in terms of capturing the attention of consumers and increasing the brand awareness. The one-quarter who answered in the middle imply that a very significant number of consumers are somewhat vulnerable to advertising, whereas a small part (16.67 percent) declared being somewhat immune or not affected at all perhaps because of ad fatigue or distrust. All these results indicate the effectiveness of properly aimed social media campaigns, at the same time, pointing to the relevance and authenticity of ads to keep consumer interest at the same level.

Table 3: Trust in Social Media Influencer Recommendations

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1 - Do not trust at all	5	8.33
2 - Slightly trust	10	16.67
3 - Moderately trust	18	30.00
4 - Mostly trust	20	33.33
5 - Completely trust	7	11.67
Total	60	100



Graph 3: Trust in Social Media Influencer Recommendations (Bar Chart)

Interpretation:

The level of trust on recommendations by the influencers is mid-high, at 44.99 percent of the respondents saying they trust

recommendations by the influencers mostly or completely. It shows that the influencers are still regarded as a credible source of product information by a significant part of consumers, which solidifies their marketing strategy utility. Nevertheless, a quarter of respondents expressed low trust, which could be attributed to the suspicion possibly caused by the feeling of inauthenticity or commercialization. When choosing the influencers, brands should pay attention to people who share values with the target audience and promote transparency to preserve and increase consumer trust.

Summary

The analytical report supports the idea that the younger generation of customers is the main target of social media marketing, and the social media advertising is among the key methods of promoting product awareness. Moreover, the endorsement by the influencers is a useful method of increasing trust and the desired attitude of consumers, despite a certain degree of skepticism. These findings can form a solid background to help marketers create more focused, genuine, and credible social media campaigns that can appeal to the major consumer groups.

V. DISCUSSION

The results of the present research provide valuable information on the complex functions of social media marketing as the tool of shaping consumer buying choices. The demographic picture, where young adults between 18 and 34 years old prevail, correlates with the overall trends, where the social media are most actively used by the representatives of this age group, who, in turn, are the major focus of the digital marketing campaigns. The prevalence of social media usage by the respondents stresses the fact that consumers are bombarded with marketing messages so much so that there are numerous touchpoints that ultimately have compound effect on awareness and purchase intentions. The review substantiates the assertion that social media advertising is exquisite in escalating the product and brand consciousness among most customers, with more than half of the interviewees showing that it had a vehement impact. That proves the power of social media as a vibrant marketing platform, surpassing one-way communication of the traditional advertising by customizing and interactively involving users. Moreover, the reliability of the endorsement by the influencers became one of the key aspects determining the attitude of consumers, which also indicates the rise of the significance of the influencer marketing as the reliable alternative to the traditional advertising business. Nevertheless, the expressed distrust by a certain group of respondents points to the fact that marketers should focus on genuine and transparent relations with influencers to reduce suspicions of commercial intention. The importance of user-generated content, especially reviews, additionally confirms the role of social proof in decreasing the purchase risk and inspiring confidence, supporting theoretically claimed consequences of the Technology Acceptance Model and Social Influence Theory on behavioral intentions formed by a perception of trustworthiness and normative influences. Along with these positive effects, the relative lack of direct purchases via social media sites implies that, although social commerce is emerging, trust, payment security and user experience-related obstacles still restrict its potential. This means that social media marketing is that as of now, is more useful as a stimulus to information search and consideration stage more than it is the ultimate point of purchase. Marketers therefore need to supplement social media campaigns with availability

of complete product details and transactions to realise the engagement into actual sales. The results also indicate the inconsistent (heterogeneous) response of the consumers which is moderated by demographic and perceptual variables and requires segmented approach in the marketing strategy which should appeal to the particular preferences and/or issues of the audiences. Overall, the findings of the presented study support the revolutionary impact of social media marketing on consumer behaviour but warns marketers against the innovative engagement without focusing on establishing credibility and consumer-centric approach to the business to maximise results in a rapidly growing competitive digital space.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research paper was able to effectively analyze the role of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour and found out that social media has emerged as an essential component of consumer awareness, credibility, and purchase behaviour in the modern electronic market. The results affirm that social media networks, especially Instagram and Facebook, are the most powerful vehicles where the young age groups mainly get exposed to brand contents, ads, and influencer promotion, thus strongly influencing their intentions to buy. The relevance of trust in influencers of the social media as a brand-strengthening factor was discovered, yet a significant minority of customers turned out to distrust them, which highlights the continued importance of authenticity and transparency in influencer marketing. Besides, UGC (user-generated content) reviews and comments in particular have a significant influence on the consumer decision-making processes by offering a social proof that can reduce the perceived risk of purchase. Along with these positive influences, the direct buying with the help of social media platforms is not widespread yet, which means that whereas the social commerce features are shifting, the issues like the security of payment and convenience of use of the platforms remain the obstacles to the frictionless conversion. These lessons point to the fact that social media marketing is today more of an awareness tool and information-gathering exercise than a sales generated tool and requires marketers to supplement the social media interactions with easy to get, credible product data and convenient buying mechanisms. It is on the basis of these inferences that it can be suggested that businesses should customize their Approaches to social media marketing so as to appeal to the younger consumers through visual and interactive content that appeals to their sensibilities and tastes. To create and preserve consumer trust, marketers ought to establish genuine relationships with trustworthy influencers that fit the brand identity and viewer assumptions and are open and transparent. What is more, brands should actively promote and moderate positive user-generated content so that to be able to use the persuasive power of peer influence. Businesses and platform developers ought to invest in improving security, streamlining payment processes, and generally facilitating an uncomplicated user experience in order to turn interest into transaction in maximizing the potential of social commerce. Social listening tools and consumer feedback in regards to campaigns are critical as well in terms of monitoring and making adjustments quickly to campaigns to ensure that concerns are being addressed and ad fatigue is being avoided in order to keep people engaged and associate positively with brand. Lastly, due to the dynamic social media and consumer behaviour, further research using a bigger sample size with more variety, as well as longitudinal

studies, should be conducted to enhance the knowledge and inform flexible marketing approach. With these recommendations in place, marketers will be able to harness the enormous potential of social media in influencing the consumer buying behaviour so as to create better brand-consumer relationships to ensure sustainable growth in the business in the digital age.

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