

The Impact of Social Media Marketing and Brand Image on Smartphone Purchase Intention among Generation Z Consumers

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Abstract

The increasing adoption of social media platforms has significantly transformed consumer purchasing behaviour, particularly among Generation Z consumers, who rely extensively on digital platforms for product information, reviews and recommendations. Smartphone manufacturers increasingly utilize social media marketing strategies such as online advertisements, influencer marketing, customer engagement and interactive content to influence consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions. Simultaneously, brand image has emerged as a critical factor that shapes consumer trust, perceived quality and overall purchase intention in the highly competitive smartphone market.

This study investigates the impact of social media marketing and brand image on smartphone purchase intention among Generation Z consumers. A quantitative research approach was adopted using a structured questionnaire to collect primary data from **207 respondents** through a convenience sampling technique. The study examines Social Media Marketing and Brand Image as independent variables, while Smartphone Purchase Intention is considered the dependent variable. Statistical techniques including descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, Pearson correlation, multiple regression analysis and one-way ANOVA were employed to analyse the relationships among the study variables.

The findings indicate that both social media marketing and brand image have a significant positive influence on smartphone purchase intention. Social media activities such as informative advertisements, influencer recommendations, customer engagement and positive online reviews encourage consumers to develop favourable attitudes towards smartphone brands.

Likewise, a strong brand image enhances consumer trust, perceived value and confidence, ultimately increasing purchase intention. The study contributes to the existing literature on digital marketing and consumer behaviour while providing practical insights for smartphone manufacturers and marketing professionals in designing effective social media strategies and strengthening brand image to improve customer engagement and purchase decisions among Generation Z consumers.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Brand Image, Smartphone Purchase Intention, Generation Z, Consumer Behaviour, Digital Marketing, Brand Trust, Influencer Marketing.

I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of information technology and the widespread use of the internet have transformed the way businesses communicate with consumers and promote their products. In recent years, social media has become one of the most influential digital marketing platforms, enabling organizations to establish direct communication with customers, build brand awareness and influence purchasing decisions. Platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, X and Snapchat have become essential marketing channels through which businesses engage with consumers by sharing advertisements, promotional campaigns, product reviews, influencer endorsements and interactive content. This digital transformation has significantly changed consumer buying behaviour, particularly among younger generations who actively depend on online information before making purchase decisions.

The smartphone industry is one of the fastest-growing and most competitive sectors in the global consumer electronics market. Smartphone manufacturers

continuously introduce innovative products while investing heavily in digital marketing strategies to strengthen their market presence. Unlike traditional marketing channels, social media provides organizations with opportunities to communicate directly with consumers, receive immediate feedback and create personalized experiences that strengthen customer relationships. As competition among smartphone brands intensifies, companies increasingly focus on developing effective social media marketing campaigns to differentiate themselves and influence consumer purchasing behaviour.

Generation Z consumers represent one of the most digitally connected population groups. Having grown up with smartphones and internet technology, they actively use social media platforms to search for product information, compare brands, read customer reviews, watch product demonstrations and seek recommendations from influencers before purchasing smartphones. Their purchasing decisions are largely influenced by digital content rather than conventional advertising methods. Consequently, understanding the factors that influence Generation Z's smartphone purchase intention has become an important area of research for marketers and business organizations.

Social media marketing encompasses various promotional activities including social media advertising, influencer marketing, customer engagement, electronic word-of-mouth, online communities and interactive communication. These activities enhance brand visibility, improve customer interaction and strengthen consumer relationships. Consumers who frequently engage with brand-related content on social media often develop positive attitudes towards brands, resulting in higher purchase intentions. Moreover, positive online experiences and customer interactions significantly contribute to consumer trust and satisfaction.

Brand image is another important factor influencing consumer purchase decisions. Brand image refers to the perceptions, beliefs and associations that consumers develop regarding a particular brand based on their experiences and marketing communications. A positive brand image creates confidence among consumers by reflecting product quality, reliability, innovation and trustworthiness. In the smartphone industry, strong brand image not only differentiates companies from competitors but also enhances customer loyalty and long-term purchasing behaviour.

Previous research has independently established that both social media marketing and brand image positively influence consumer behaviour and purchase intention. However, limited empirical research has examined their combined influence on smartphone purchase intention among Generation Z consumers within the Indian context. Considering the rapid growth of digital marketing and the increasing dependence of young consumers on social media, understanding these relationships is essential for developing effective marketing strategies.

Therefore, the present study aims to examine the impact of social media marketing and brand image on smartphone purchase intention among Generation Z consumers. The study specifically investigates whether social media marketing activities and brand image significantly influence consumer's willingness to purchase smartphones. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for smartphone manufacturers, marketers and business organizations in designing effective digital marketing strategies, strengthening brand image and improving customer engagement to enhance purchase intention.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Deepika and Massand (2025) conducted a study titled "Influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intention of Gen Z." The study examined how social media marketing activities such as customer engagement, entertainment, interaction and trendiness influence Generation Z consumer's purchase intention. The findings revealed that effective social media marketing significantly enhances purchase intention by improving customer engagement and digital interaction.

Devi and Lavanya (2024) carried out a study on "Effectiveness of Social Media Advertisement on Purchase Intention towards Smartphones with Specific Reference to Gen-Y Customers." The research investigated the influence of social media advertisements based on informativeness, credibility and attractiveness. The results indicated that informative and trustworthy advertisements positively affect consumer's intention to purchase smartphones.

Iqbal, Khan, Malik and Faridi (2022) conducted a study titled "E-WOM Effect through Social Media and Shopping Websites on Purchase Intention of Smartphones in India." The research examined the influence of electronic word-of-mouth generated through social media platforms and e-commerce

websites. The study concluded that positive online reviews and customer recommendations significantly increase consumer's willingness to purchase smartphones.

Ali and Naushad (2024) examined "The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intention: The Mediating Role of Brand Image." The study investigated how social media marketing affects consumer purchase intention through brand image. The findings confirmed that brand image acts as a significant mediator between social media marketing activities and consumer's purchasing decisions.

Aggarwal and Mittal (2022) conducted a study titled "Impact of Social Media Marketing Activities on Purchase Intentions via Customer Equity Drivers: An Empirical Study on Smartphone Brands." The research focused on relationship equity, value equity and brand equity as determinants of purchase intention. The findings indicated that customer equity drivers significantly strengthen consumer's intention to purchase smartphone brands.

Divyaditya Singh (2023) investigated "The Impact of Influencer Marketing on Purchase Intention of Generation Z Consumers in India." The study examined the role of influencer credibility, trustworthiness and authenticity in shaping purchasing decisions. The results demonstrated that credible influencers positively influence Generation Z consumer's smartphone purchase intention.

Qaim and Gupta (2023) conducted an empirical study titled "Social Media Influencers and Purchase Intention of Generation Z Consumers towards Electric Vehicles." The study explored how social media influencers affect consumer's buying behaviour. The findings showed that influencer recommendations positively shape consumer attitudes and increase purchase intention among Generation Z.

Singh and Dagur (2023) carried out a study titled "Understanding the Influence of Social Media Marketing of Masstige Fashion Brands on Generation Z Female Indian Consumers." The research examined the impact of social media marketing on brand equity and purchase intention using Structural Equation Modelling. The results revealed that effective social media marketing significantly improves brand equity and purchase intention.

Putri and Nofri (2023) investigated "The Mediating Role of Brand Image on the Effect of Social Media

Marketing and Online Consumer Reviews on Purchase Intention in Generation Z." The study found that brand image significantly mediates the relationship between social media marketing, online consumer reviews and purchase intention, highlighting the importance of maintaining a strong brand reputation.

Ngian, Tie, Sim, Chiu et al. (2023) conducted a study titled "Smartphone Purchase Intention: Testing the Moderating Effect of Brand Image among Youths." The research examined the influence of brand image on smartphone purchase intention among young consumers. The findings suggested that a favourable brand image strengthens consumer confidence and positively moderates purchase intention.

Alharthey (2024) conducted a study titled "Influencing Smartphone Choices: The Interplay of Social Media Marketing and Brand Image on Purchase Intentions." The research explored the combined influence of social media marketing and brand image on smartphone purchasing decisions. The findings indicated that both variables have a strong positive impact on consumer's purchase intentions.

Chowdhury and Ahmed (2024) examined "Social Media Advertising Dimensions, Trust and Customer Reviews in Online Purchase Intentions: The Mediating Role of Brand Image." The study concluded that customer trust, positive reviews and brand image significantly enhance online purchase intention by strengthening consumer confidence in digital marketing.

Ahmada and Putra (2024) conducted a study titled "The Effect of Social Media Marketing, Content Marketing and Brand Image on the Purchase Decision of Samsung and iPhone Smartphones among University Students." The research reported that social media marketing, quality content and positive brand image collectively influence student's smartphone purchase decisions.

Wang (2025) investigated "How Do Social Media Marketing Activities Affect the Purchase Intention of Generation Z?" The study analysed the mediating effects of brand trust, brand engagement and electronic word-of-mouth. The findings showed that these factors significantly strengthen the relationship between social media marketing and purchase intention.

Novilia, Harwida, Sudarmiatin and Hermawan (2025) conducted a systematic literature review titled "Understanding Purchase Intention in the Social Media Era: Social Media Marketing, eWOM, Brand Image and

Brand Trust." The review concluded that social media marketing, electronic word-of-mouth, brand image and brand trust are the primary factors influencing consumer's purchase intentions in the digital marketplace.

This study examined the impact of social media marketing and brand image on smartphone purchase intention among Generation Z consumers. The findings indicate that both factors significantly influence consumer's purchase intentions. Social media marketing activities such as advertisements, influencer marketing and online engagement positively affect buying behaviour, while a strong brand image enhances consumer trust and preference. The study highlights the importance of effective digital marketing and brand-building strategies for smartphone companies. Future research may consider larger sample sizes and additional variables such as brand trust, customer satisfaction and influencer credibility to further understand consumer purchase behaviour.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a quantitative research approach to examine the impact of Social Media Marketing and Brand Image on Smartphone Purchase Intention among Generation Z consumers. A descriptive and explanatory research design was employed to understand the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The study follows a deductive research approach, where hypotheses were developed based on existing literature and tested using statistical analysis.

The target population comprised Generation Z consumers aged between 18 and 27 years who actively use smartphones and social media platforms. A convenience sampling technique was adopted due to its suitability for collecting responses from easily accessible participants within the target population. A total of 207 valid responses were collected through a structured questionnaire designed using Google Forms and distributed via online platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram and email.

The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section collected respondent's demographic information, including age, gender, educational qualification, occupation and monthly income. The second section measured the study variables using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Social Media

Marketing and Brand Image were considered the independent variables, while Smartphone Purchase Intention served as the dependent variable.

Both primary and secondary data were used in the study. Primary data were obtained directly from respondents through the questionnaire, whereas secondary data were collected from journals, books, research articles, conference papers and other academic sources to support the theoretical framework and literature review.

The collected data were coded and analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize respondent's demographic characteristics. Cronbach's Alpha was employed to assess the reliability and internal consistency of the measurement scales. Pearson Correlation Analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between Social Media Marketing, Brand Image and Smartphone Purchase Intention. Multiple Regression Analysis was used to determine the impact of the independent variables on the dependent variable, while One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was applied to identify significant differences in purchase intention across demographic groups.

The research methodology adopted in this study provides a systematic approach to examine the impact of Social Media Marketing and Brand Image on Smartphone Purchase Intention among Generation Z consumers. The use of a quantitative research design, structured questionnaire, convenience sampling and appropriate statistical tools such as Cronbach's Alpha, Pearson Correlation, Multiple Regression and ANOVA ensures the reliability and validity of the findings. This methodology effectively supports the research objectives and enables a comprehensive analysis of the relationships among the study variables.

Based on the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Social Media Marketing has no significant impact on Smartphone Purchase Intention.

H2: Social Media Marketing has a significant impact on Smartphone Purchase Intention.

H3: Brand Image has no significant impact on Smartphone Purchase Intention.

H4: Brand Image has a significant impact on Smartphone Purchase Intention.

H5: There is no significant relationship between Social Media Marketing and Brand Image.

H6: There is a significant relationship between Social Media Marketing and Brand Image.

The selected hypotheses are aligned with the research objectives and are tested using statistical analysis to evaluate the impact of Social Media Marketing and Brand Image on Smartphone Purchase Intention among Generation Z consumers.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The collected data from 207 respondents were analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics to examine the impact of Social Media Marketing and Brand Image on Smartphone Purchase Intention among Generation Z consumers. Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, Pearson correlation, multiple regression and one-way ANOVA were employed to test the research hypotheses and achieve the study objectives.

A. Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scale. The reliability coefficient exceeded the acceptable of 0.88, indicating that the questionnaire items were reliable and suitable for further statistical analysis.

B. Correlation Analysis

Pearson Correlation Analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between Social Media Marketing, Brand Image and Smartphone Purchase Intention. The results revealed a positive and statistically significant relationship among the variables, indicating that higher levels of social media marketing activities and a stronger brand image are associated with greater smartphone purchase intention among Generation Z consumers.

C. Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple Regression Analysis was performed to determine the effect of Social Media Marketing and Brand Image on Smartphone Purchase Intention. The results indicated that both independent variables significantly influence smartphone purchase intention. Social Media Marketing positively affects consumers through digital advertisements, influencer marketing, customer engagement and Brand Image strengthens consumer trust and preference by increasing purchase intention.

D. ANOVA Analysis

One-Way ANOVA was conducted to examine whether significant differences exist in smartphone purchase

intention across demographic groups. The analysis supported the overall regression model, confirming that the independent variables collectively explain a significant proportion of the variation in smartphone purchase intention.

The results demonstrate that Social Media Marketing and Brand Image are significant predictors of Smartphone Purchase Intention among Generation Z consumers. These results are consistent with previous studies reviewed in the literature, which reported that effective social media marketing enhances customer engagement and brand awareness, while a positive brand image strengthens consumer trust and purchase intention. Therefore, smartphone manufacturers should focus on developing engaging digital marketing strategies and maintaining a strong brand image to improve consumer purchase decisions.

V. CONCLUSION

The rapid growth of digital technology and social media platforms has significantly transformed consumer purchasing behaviour, particularly among Generation Z consumers who actively depend on online platforms for product information, reviews and recommendations. The present study examined the impact of Social Media Marketing and Brand Image on Smartphone Purchase Intention among Generation Z consumers. The findings indicate that both Social Media Marketing and Brand Image have a significant positive influence on consumer's intention to purchase smartphones. The proposed research objectives were successfully achieved and the statistical analysis supported the hypotheses that these variables play an important role in shaping consumer purchase decisions.

The study revealed that social media marketing activities such as informative advertisements, influencer marketing, customer engagement, interactive content and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) positively influence consumer's awareness and perceptions of smartphone brands. These digital marketing activities enable companies to communicate directly with consumers, build stronger relationships and create greater brand visibility, ultimately increasing purchase intention. In addition, the findings confirm that Brand Image is an important determinant of consumer behaviour. A strong brand image enhances consumer trust, perceived quality, brand preference and confidence, making consumers more likely to choose a particular smartphone brand over competing alternatives.

The study also highlights that Generation Z consumers actively seek information through social media platforms before making purchasing decisions. Therefore, smartphone manufacturers should invest in innovative social media marketing strategies, collaborate with credible influencers, encourage positive customer engagement and maintain a consistent brand image to strengthen customer relationships and improve market competitiveness.

Overall, this research contributes to the growing literature on digital marketing and consumer behaviour by providing empirical evidence on the combined influence of Social Media Marketing and Brand Image on Smartphone Purchase Intention. Although the study is limited to 207 respondents from the Generation Z population, the findings provide valuable insights for marketers and business organizations. Future research may expand the sample size, include consumers from different age groups and regions and examine additional variables such as brand trust, perceived value, customer satisfaction and influencer credibility to further understand smartphone purchase behaviour in the evolving digital marketplace.

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