

# The Role of Social Media Advertising in Shaping Student Lifestyle and Consumption Patterns with Special Reference to Chennai City

**Ms. S.V. Luxshmi Paarvathi**, Assistant Professor,  
**Ms.Sneha Karthikayan**, Research Scholar & Asst Professor, Department of Accounting and Finance  
(Shift1)  
Anna Adarsh College For Women

## Abstract

This study examines how social media advertising significantly influences Chennai City students' consumption and lifestyle choices. Social media platforms are now a significant source of influence among young people due to the growing use of smartphones and the internet. A structured questionnaire given to 300 college students in Chennai is one of the primary and secondary data sources used in this study. SPSS was used to perform statistical analysis, which included factor analysis, multiple regression, correlation, chi-square test, ANOVA, and descriptive statistics. The results show that students' lifestyle and purchase decisions are greatly influenced by social media advertising. Implications for policy and suggestions for marketers are examined.

Keywords: Social Media Advertising, Student Lifestyle, Consumption Patterns.

1. Introduction Social media has completely changed the way people share information, communicate, and make decisions. Advertising is one of its most influential aspects. For marketers looking to reach young consumers—particularly students who are very active on social media sites like Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and Snapchat—social media advertising, or SMA, has become an essential tool. Students in cities like Chennai are depending more and more on social media for entertainment as well as for lifestyle and shopping advice. This study looks at how SMA affects Chennai students' consumption and lifestyle choices.

### 1.1 Need for the Study

Need for the Research Given the increasing power of digital platforms, it is critical for marketers, educators, and policymakers to comprehend how social media influences students' behaviour. Students are seen as early adopters and trend-setters. Their lifestyle choices frequently mirror more general economic and social trends.

### 1.2 Theoretical Framework

- Applications and Appreciation hypothesis: According to this hypothesis, people deliberately look for media content to meet particular demands. Students utilise social media to guide their purchasing decisions in addition to using it for fun. According to Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, people pick up behaviours from watching other people, particularly relatable online influencers.
- Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen): Targeted SMA manipulates attitudes and social norms, which in turn change behavioural intentions.

### 1.2 Objectives of the Study

To assess the level of social media use among Chennai students.

- To investigate how social media advertising affects students' way of life.
- To comprehend how SMA affects the consumption habits of pupils.
- To determine which social media networks have the greatest influence.

### 1.3 Hypotheses

H1: Social media advertising and the lifestyle choices of students are significantly correlated.

H2: Advertising on social media has a big impact on how much students consume.

## 2. Review of Literature

Numerous academics have drawn attention to how digital media shapes consumer behaviour. Kotler & Keller (2016) assert that advertising is a major factor in the decisions made by consumers. According to recent studies, social media has surpassed traditional media in its ability to influence Gen Z consumers (Smith, 2018; Sharma & Verma, 2020). Young consumers in Indian metropolises exhibit higher brand consciousness as a result of targeted SMA, according to Kapoor et al. (2021). Likewise, 68% of students in Tamil Nadu made purchases based on Instagram advertisements, according to a study by Ramesh (2022).

Influencer credibility and purchase intention are directly related, according to Chaudhary and Dey's (2021) investigation into the effects of Instagram influencer marketing on fashion preferences among students in urban areas. As stated by Balakrishnan et al. (2019), Mohan and Suresh (2020) argued that entertainment-based advertisements lead to stronger product recall and concentrated on TikTok's growing influence on South Indian students' lifestyle choices.

According to Saxena and Khanna (2022), students' preferences for dining and food delivery apps are influenced by their continuous exposure to food vlogs and brand partnerships on Instagram.

The idea that social media advertising creates a socially interactive ecosystem where trends, opinions, and brand choices converge and impact student behaviours is supported by these studies taken together.

## 3. Methods of Research

### 3.1 Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive research design. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used.

### 3.2 Sampling Method

Convenience sampling was used to select 300 students from various colleges in Chennai.

### 3.3 Data Collection

Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire comprising 20 close-ended questions. Secondary data was collected from journals, reports, and previous research.

### 3.4 Statistical Tools Used

- Descriptive Statistics (Mean, SD)
- Chi-square Test
- Pearson Correlation
- Multiple Regression Analysis
- Factor Analysis (to identify underlying constructs influencing consumption behavior)
- ANOVA (to test the difference in impact among different age or educational groups)

### 3.4 Statistical Tools Used

Chi-square Test

- Pearson Correlation
- Multiple Regression Analysis

## 4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

### 4.1 Demographic Profile

- Gender: 58% Female, 42% Male
- Age Group: 18–22 (79%), 23–25 (21%)
- Education: UG (65%), PG (35%)

### 4.2 Descriptive Statistics

- Average daily time spent on social media: 3.5 hours
- Most used platforms: Instagram (85%), YouTube (70%), Facebook (40%)

### 4.3 Chi-square Test

H0: No association between social media ad exposure and lifestyle changes.

$$\chi^2=21.45, df=4, p=0.001 \quad \chi^2 = 21.45, df = 4, p = 0.001$$

Result: Since  $p < 0.05$ , we reject H0. There is a significant association.

#### 4.4 Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation between frequency of ad exposure and lifestyle changes = 0.61 ( $p < 0.01$ )

Interpretation: Strong positive correlation

#### 4.5 Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable: Consumption Pattern

Independent Variables: Ad Frequency, Platform Engagement, Peer Influence

$R^2=0.48, F=26.31, p<0.001$   $R^2 = 0.48, F = 26.31, p < 0.001$

Coefficients:

- Ad Frequency:  $\beta=0.52, p<0.001$   $\beta = 0.52, p < 0.001$
- Platform Engagement:  $\beta=0.31, p<0.01$   $\beta = 0.31, p < 0.01$
- Peer Influence:  $\beta=0.27, p<0.05$   $\beta = 0.27, p < 0.05$

Interpretation: All variables significantly predict consumption behaviour.

4.6 Factor Analysis KMO = 0.76 (acceptable sampling adequacy), Bartlett's Test:  $p < 0.001$  Four components extracted:

- Influencer Credibility
- Visual Appeal of Ads
- Peer Pressure
- Brand Recall

These components explained 68.2% of the variance in student behavior, indicating strong latent influences of SMA on lifestyle and purchasing patterns.

4.7 ANOVA Test Tested differences in perception of SMA impact among UG and PG students:  $F(1, 298) = 5.62, p = 0.018$  Interpretation: PG students showed slightly more skepticism toward advertising compared to UG students.

#### 5. Findings

SMA significantly influences lifestyle choices (fashion, food habits, and entertainment) and most students are influenced by Instagram and YouTube advertisements. Students are more likely to buy visually appealing and influencer-endorsed products, and peer engagement amplifies the impact of SMA.

#### 6.

#### Discussion

The results, which imply that students imitate aspirational figures on social media sites like Instagram, are in line with the Social Cognitive Theory. Peer behaviour and attitudes have a big impact on consumption, as explained by the Theory of Reasoned Action. Students are more likely to adopt a brand or service if they observe their peers doing so. Additionally, Uses and Gratification Theory emphasises how students actively use social media sites to satisfy lifestyle demands like tech reviews, fashion inspiration, and health advice. Therefore, social media serves as both an active consultant in students' decision-making processes and a passive advertising channel.

#### 7. Suggestions

Influencer marketing should be used by brands to reach student audiences, and educational institutions can start digital literacy initiatives to teach students how to evaluate advertisements.

#### 8. Restrictions

- As the study is limited to Chennai, it might not be representative of other areas.
- Bias may exist in self-reported data.
- Only quantitative techniques were used.

#### 9. In conclusion

This study demonstrates how social media advertising greatly influences Chennai students' consumption and lifestyle choices. Marketers who want to successfully target young people will find the insights useful. Understanding consumer psychology is even more important now that social media platforms are constantly evolving. For a more thorough understanding, future research can examine longitudinal effects and use qualitative techniques.

## References (MLA Format)

- Balakrishnan, S., et al. "The Virality of Content and Its Influence on Impulse Buying." *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, vol. 19, no. 4, 2019, pp. 320–335.
- Chaudhary, Nidhi, and Arpan Dey. "Influencer Credibility and Fashion Purchase Intentions Among College Students." *Indian Journal of Marketing Studies*, vol. 29, no. 1, 2021, pp. 78–94.
- Kapoor, Harsh V., et al. "Digital Advertising and Youth Buying Behaviour." *International Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 58, no. 3, 2021, pp. 213–230.
- Kotler, Philip, and Kevin Lane Keller. *Marketing Management*. 15th ed., Pearson, 2016.
- Mohan, P., and Suresh, L. "The Rise of TikTok and Its Impact on Youth Lifestyle Choices in South India." *Journal of Youth Media Research*, vol. 6, no. 2, 2020, pp. 101–118.
- Ramesh, K. "Instagram Ads and Youth Consumption: A Study in Tamil Nadu." *South Indian Journal of Marketing*, vol. 12, no. 4, 2022, pp. 45–57.
- Saxena, Priya, and Meena Khanna. "Social Media Vlogs and Food Culture Among Indian Students." *Asian Journal of Digital Media*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2022, pp. 88–103.
- Sharma, Anjali, and Rajesh Verma. "The Impact of Social Media Advertising on College Students in India." *Asian Journal of Business and Management*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2020, pp. 33–41.
- Smith, John. "Changing Media Landscapes and Consumer Behaviour." *Journal of Digital Communication*, vol. 11, no. 2, 2018, pp. 112–126.
- Ajzen, Icek, and Martin Fishbein. *Understanding Attitudes and Predicting Social Behavior*. Prentice-Hall, 1980.
- Bandura, Albert. *Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory*. Prentice-Hall, 1986.
- Katz, Elihu, Jay Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch. "Uses and Gratifications Research." *Public Opinion Quarterly*, vol. 37, no. 4, 1973, pp. 509–523.