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## IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING ON BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF CONSUMER

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### ABSTRACT

The advent of social media has brought remarkable changes to both marketing and consumer behaviour. Consumers have tremendous opportunities to engage in social interactions on the internet. Hence, understanding consumer behaviour in the context of social media marketing has become vital for companies that aim to better influence consumers and harness the power of social media. This study underscores the significant impact of social media, revealing that a staggering number of consumers are swayed by its influence when making purchasing choices and researching products on these platforms before making a purchase. Influencer marketing has emerged as a pivotal player in this dynamic landscape, captivating most of the younger consumers. Moreover, the rise of social commerce is undeniable, as consumers seamlessly transitioning from social media browsing to making direct purchases. Platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, YouTube have become synonymous with entertainment and lifestyle purchases, while Instagram reigns supreme in the fashion and beauty sectors. However, this burgeoning landscape presents ethical challenges. Transparency in influencer marketing remains a critical concern. This research unequivocally emphasizes the paramount importance of authenticity, transparency, and cultivating unwavering consumer trust for the long-term success of social media marketing strategies.

**KEYWORDS:** Social media, Consumer Behaviour, Ethical Marketing, Online sites, brand perception

### INTRODUCTION

The recent developments in digital and social media landscape have shown that marketers are more embracing social media to attract, engage and transact with their customers. Social media marketing has become more popular with the increased fame of websites such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube. Social media marketing refers to marketing done through social media or social networking websites. Presence on these social networking websites, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter helps the organizations to easily reach the users who does not know about it. As these social networking websites already have large established online communities, exposure is

gained by simply making their presence felt on these websites. Thus, it provides a low-cost opportunity to reach large numbers of users and gain the brand recognition. Although social media marketing is an influential online marketing tool, it is usually used to supplement other marketing methods rather than replace them. That's why most companies still rely on Web advertising and search engine optimization to generate traffic to their websites. Social media marketing strategy usually emphasizes on efforts to create content that attracts attention and encourages users to share it with their social networks. Social media is earned media instead of paid media, as the corporate message spreads from user to user and presumably reverberates because it appears to come from a trusted, third-party source, as opposed to the brand or company itself. Hence, this entirely new avenue of marketing has replaced the traditional word-of-mouth publicity to word-of-web. Consumers are progressively heading to social media sites before making a purchase decision, which greatly influences their buying behaviour. The feedback and reviews from existing customers found on these social networking sites are more influential with consumers than a one-sided website. Moreover, the human interaction that's the core of social media marketing has usurped advertisements in building a level of trust with the present and potential customers. Present consumer is more likely to trust those who give an impartial description of a product rather than a celebrity who is paid to endorse the product. Social media allows people all over the world to form a community of consumers. Thus, it would be a mistake to think that traditional marketing material will be enough to influence the way consumers think about the brand and products in the present social networking world.

Infact, Consumer behaviour through social media is the study of how a group of people or an individual uses social media platforms to discover, analyse, purchase and promote brands and businesses. It is fundamentally about consumer preferences in the digital world, which are guided by the content, influences and networking through social media.

Social media uses networking skills to help businesses market effectively, enhance their brand image, and succeed. As a result, social media has greatly influenced consumer behaviour and business marketing through its various strategies and has gained a high reputation in the business and consumer industries.

From a customer's perspective social media is a vital tool for researching companies and making purchase decisions. According to Global Web Index 54% social media user's use social media to research products and 71% are more likely to purchase goods and services based on social media referrals.

#### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE:**

**Bashar, Ahmad & Wasiq (2012)** have done research on the topic "Effectiveness of Social Media as

a Marketing Tool: An Empirical Study” to determine how well social media works as a marketing tool and has attempted to determine the degree to which social media influences customers' purchasing decisions. The study's findings indicated that although the medium is still in the developing stage in India, it is expanding quickly and has potential. To get a greater share of business through this groundbreaking medium and establish themselves as the forward-thinking corporations of the future, it is now necessary for enterprises to formulate and implement successful plans.

**Yadav and Rahman (2012)** in their study “Measuring consumer perception of social media marketing activities in e-commerce industry: Scale development & validation”. They attempted to emphasize the importance of social networks as an advertising medium. They evaluated the current advertising methods using case studies and concluded that social media is not just a tool for interacting with people but also a means of reaching potential customers.

**Vij & Sharma (2013)** has conducted a study on the social media experiences of consumers and marketers in the State of Punjab titled "An Empirical Study on Social Media Behaviour of Consumers and Social Media Marketing Practices of Marketers." The study was carried out by using two survey questionnaires, one with 200 respondents for marketers and one with 101 respondents for consumers. According to the report, social media marketing content should be interesting, informative, interactive, and reliable for SMM techniques to be effective. Marketers must adjust their social media strategies to reflect the shifting inclinations and likes of their target audience.

**Satish Kumar & Hari Krishna (2017)** in their research “A Study on Influence of Social Media Marketing on Buying Decisions of Customers” attempts to examine the extent of social media in making /influencing buying decisions of customers. The data from 120 social media users from Kurnool City was collected and analysed with the help of statistical tools like frequency distribution and the Chi-square test. The conclusions of the paper reveal that internet users are aware of and use social media, making it an efficient tool for brand promotion. Customers have a positive perception of social media marketing practices, considering them to be more interesting, innovative, informative and interactive than traditional advertising.

**Perumal Prasath and Archana Yoganathen (2018)** conducted a study on “Influence of social media marketing on consumer buying decision-making process”. The purpose of the study was to determine the relationship between Social Media Marketing (SMM) taken as an independent variable and the Consumer Buying Decision Making process (CBDM) taken as a dependent variable. A web-designed questionnaire from 220 respondents was used the research purpose. The study found that there is a statistically linear and positive relationship between SMM and CBDM. Consumers rely heavily on social media to make informed decisions about their purchases. This indicates that the buying behaviour of consumers can be predicted with social media marketing.

**Sony Varghese and Mansi Agrawal (2021)** conducted a study on “Impact of Social Media on Consumer Buying Behaviour”. The objective of the study was to understand how social media influences consumer purchasing behaviour and how organisations can use social media to improve

their brand value. Data was collected from 200 respondents and it was found that social media positively impacts consumer behaviour which increases the likelihood of purchasing products that are promoted through discounts and influencers. According to the study, consumers who are influenced by social media tend to spend four times more than their normal purchases. Companies should prioritize online marketing methods to effectively attract and engage a larger customer base, resulting in increased brand awareness.

**Samrin Sulaiman & Sreeya B (2022)** in their research on “The Impact of Social Media on Consumer Behaviour” aim to ascertain the frequency of ads seen by respondents on social media and the satisfaction level of consumers using descriptive research method. The study found that female respondents more frequently see advertisements on social media. They tend to buy products promoted by influencers as they believe it is a trustworthy source. The study concluded that social media marketing can be effective in offering attractive deals, discounts, and coupons to customers resulting in an increase in customer attention for businesses.

### **Objective of The Research**

Social media has become a crucial instrument for online consumers in this day and age. It's no surprise that all kinds of businesses have turned to social media to find and connect with their target market. There's a 71% more chance of users buying a product when it is referred to them through social media. The generation born in 2000s is considered as the generation that spends most of their time on social media websites/apps, more than 50% of their purchases are influenced by social media. Social media websites/apps are the foremost platforms for executing successful digital marketing campaigns. Changes in consumer behaviour due to social media are one of the most fascinating aspects in modern marketing. The objective of this research is to explain why, when, and how social media has impacted the consumer decision process. The study has been conducted by collecting primary data through questionnaires in Rewari, Haryana.

Research Questions:

1. How do consumers gather and process the information before a purchase?
2. How does social media affect consumers in different stages of their decision making?

### **Data Collection Method:**

The data collection method used is primary as well as secondary. We collected the primary data through surveys using the platform of Google forms, which is a free surveying web-based application. For secondary data we talked to some people about their buying decisions and went through other research papers having similar topics.

### **Sampling Design:**

Sample Universe: The sample universe includes the people of Rewari District & surroundings, Haryana region.

Sample Size: The sample size of the participants was of 200 people.

### **Questionnaire Design:**

The types of questions used in our Questionnaire are structured as multiple-choice questions. This is done so that the researcher is able to find the impact of social media on consumer buying behaviour.

### **How social media influences consumer behaviour?**

More buyers are now on social media networks than ever before. Consumers are looking for reviews and recommendations. Therefore, it's essential to have a prominent online presence on various social media platforms.

A constant dialogue between the customer and the brand is essential to keep the relationship strong. Attractive and informative content can glue the customers to a brand. The ways in which social media influences consumer behaviour are as below:

#### **1. Builds product awareness**

Social media has a huge influence on consumers when they are attempting to build awareness about a particular product. When people face a problem, they start searching for a solution. But most of the times people do not know which product or service will solve their problems.

A large section of the audience gets to know your brand through the content that is distributed on social media. The aim of every business is to influence and understand consumer behaviour. Using [customer experience analytics](#) will help to know your customers and their needs from social media conversations.

If the product/company do not have a brand presence on social media, they are missing out on an important opportunity to influence their consumer buying behaviour.

#### **2. Social proof as a greater force of buying decisions**

Social media has resulted in the evolution of social proof as a greater force for buying decisions. Happy customers tend to go about praising the products with likes, shares, reviews, and comments on social media. Marketers are making the social space more transparent by sharing reviews, comments, likes, tweets, and pins of their happy customers to generate brand trust and increase conversion rate. The [beauty and cosmetics industry](#) is one of the top industries that successfully utilize this customer presence in social media.

Sharing testimonials, case studies, pictures, comments, and videos of happy customers will build greater trust and will work well on your landing, page, consulting page and sign-up page as well.

#### **3. Promotions, discounts and deals on social media**

Many social media users have signed up for social media groups/forums that they are interested in.

When consumers see promotions, discounts, and deals on social media, it influences their buying behaviour. *64% of online consumers wait to buy things until they go for sale.*

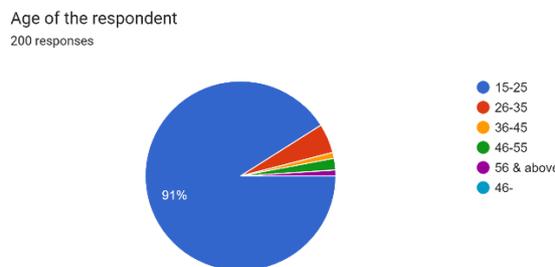
Social media is an inexpensive platform that gives brands instant reach to billions of active social media users. Brands should ensure that the target audience sees your products, likes them, and shares them on social media, which helps to influence consumer behaviour.

**4. Social media influencers**

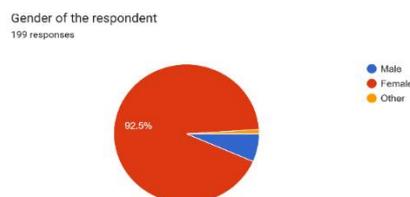
Consumers are more likely to buy when they get recommendations from a person they trust. Celebrities and popular people inspire their audience and influence their buying behaviour. *It is true that 49% of consumers seek guidance from social media influencers before making a buying decision.* Influencer marketing can work wonders for the brands by attracting more customers. Many marketers are replacing celebrities with YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat influencers. These online stars are providing unfiltered [feedback on products](#), and consumers love it.

**Data Analysis**

The present section presents analysis made on the data collected from the questionnaire. The set of questions were sent online to the individuals who are currently living in Rewari, Haryana. Since the survey was sent to 220 individuals, and the number of participants was 200, therefore the total percentage of responses was 91% approximately. In total the questionnaire contains 11 questions.



The above pie chart shows that the maximum no. of individuals from age group of 15-25 i.e. 90%. Whereas individual from the age group 26-35 is 8% and only 2% from the 56 & above. This shows young generation is more inclined to marketing through social media, but elder people are still preferring to buy in offline mode.



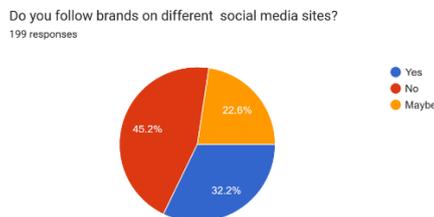
From the received responses, 92.5 % of the respondents were female, and 6.5% were male and 1%

others. Since the collected data covers people from different age groups, preferences and gender, therefore the following analysis is carried out in assessing the general consumer behaviour. By asking these two general questions we are able identify the diversity of the responses, which will help us give a more generalized analysis.

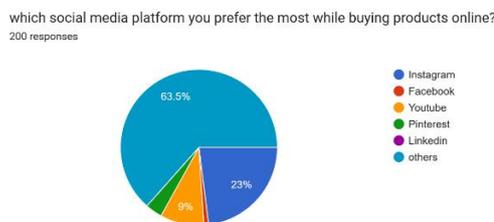
**Frequency of online shopping done by people:**



The above pie chart shows the frequency of online shopping done by people. It shows that 34.7% of the people did online shopping on a monthly basis, 5% of the people did online shopping on a weekly basis, 1.5% of the people did online shopping every day and 58.8% people did online shopping 1 or 2 times a year.



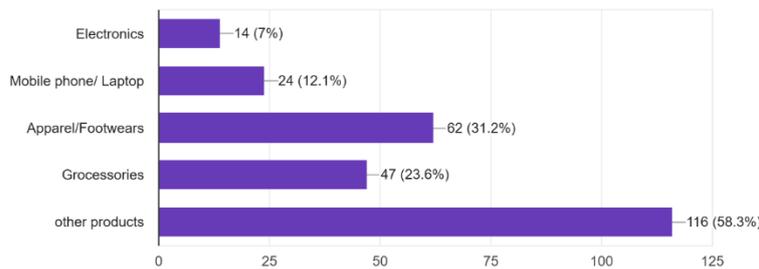
This pie chart shows that the people using social media sites for following brands are 32.2%, while 45.2% are not following the brands on social sites and 22.6% are following sometimes or they indifferent in following. This shows that in some areas still there are people who do not rely completely on social media for brand following.



Through a collective analysis it can be observed that Instagram and other apps are the most popular whereas Facebook and Pinterest are the least popular. However, in the group of 40 and above YouTube was the most popular. This makes Instagram and YouTube very attractive mediums for companies to

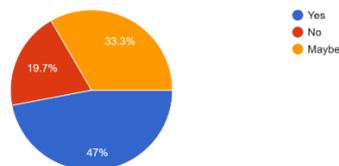
market their products and services. 130 million Instagram users engage with commerce posts each month. Instagram allows you to market your business and goods in a nice, real way to your customers without being pushy. Online feedback, when executed properly, can also help to promote and improve the efficacy of your social media strategy.

Which products you often purchase online?  
199 responses



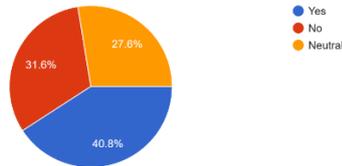
The above diagram shows that maximum 31.2% individuals are purchasing Apparel/footwears online followed by 23.6% individuals purchasing Groceries, 12.1% are purchasing mobile phone/laptop and the least no. of individuals are buying electronics. Whereas, it could be seen that 58.3% individuals are buying other products than mentioned in the diagram.

Do you think having a social media platform is essential for buying products?  
198 responses



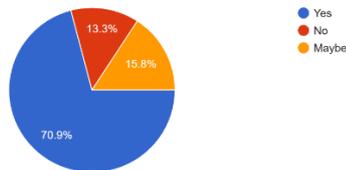
Above pie chart shows that 47% people go through the social media platform for buying any product to see its specifications and reviews, 33.3% people are indifferent as shown and the least no. of people 19.7% are still not visiting any social media platform before buying the products. These responses show people search the products on social media platform before buying as social media platforms help people in taking their decision and influence their buying behaviour.

Does an advertisement on social media influence you to buy a product?  
196 responses



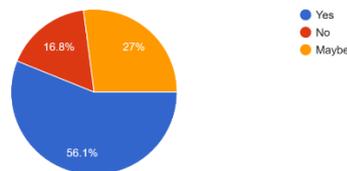
Young adults, in particular, are heavily influenced by social media due to their high digital engagement and constant exposure to product discovery and purchasing options. The ease of accessing product information and making purchases directly from social media platforms encourages more frequent and impulse buying. This is clear from the above pie chart as maximum 40.8% people influence to buy product through social media and 27.6% are still indifferent as advertisement on social media may or may not influence them to buy products.

Does negative reviews on products change your decision of buying that product?  
196 responses



The above pie chart shows that 70.9% respondents' decision is affected by the negative reviews and 13.3% respondents do more research and findings on getting negative reviews on products. As we all know that humans naturally tend to give more weight to negative information, especially if they believe it to be more genuine than overly positive or fake reviews. Negative reviews can undermine a brand's credibility and can alter the consumer's purchase journey by causing them to pause, gather more information, or even abandon the product or company altogether.

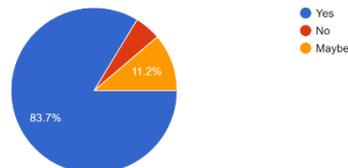
Does visual appearance of brands/products on social media affect your purchasing decision?  
196 responses



Social media is like megaphone to generate information about the brands to the customers, brands can shine and create an advantage through this medium by generating positive information about their products and services. It is clearly visible from the responses as 56.1% people said that appearance of brands/products on social media affect their purchasing decision while 16.8 % people are not affected

by the appearance of products on social media.

Do you think social media plays an important role in promoting a brand?  
196 responses



it can be observed that the respondents are in the positive spectrum where social media may influence them to buy a product, however the interesting point is that a very small percentage of the respondents i.e. only 5.1%, could assert with confidence that they do not get influenced by social media advertisements. Consumers who use social media during their shopping process are four times more likely to spend more than those who do not, according to a Deloitte survey.

## FINDINGS

1. The maximum number of the respondents were from the age group of 15-25 as this is the age group which spends maximum number of hours on social media.
2. Data from survey shows that most of the people tend to do online shopping once or twice in a month. This may suggest that they belong to working class which do not have a lot of free time and they tend to buy in large quantities but less frequently from Online platforms.
3. The data from the survey shows that almost half of the people spend 0-2 hours every day on social media platforms. Social media plays a crucial role in connecting people and developing relationships which enables us to grow in our careers and have more opportunities.
4. The data from the survey shows almost 45.2% of the respondents follow brands on social media. People follow brands on social media as they want to know about sales, new products etc.
5. The data from the survey shows that almost 70.9% take social media as the electronic word of mouth as many people make purchase related decisions according to Social Media referrals.
6. The data from the survey suggests that almost 56.1% of the respondents believe that social media page/website affected their vision of the brand. As most of the consumers who shop online read reviews about the brands of the products, they are buying which might affect their vision of that particular brand.
7. The data from the survey shows that 40.8% of the respondents believe that their decision was influenced by social media. It is because many people tend to see online reviews and comments about that particular product to choose the perfect brand and price.
8. The data from the survey shows that almost 83.7% of the respondents believes social media plays an important role in promoting a brand as it helps increase the amount of exposure which enables the brand to generate leads and increase sales.

## CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from this research that consumers in India are actively utilizing social media platforms as a tool in validating their purchase decisions. Social media is taken as the electronic word of mouth by majority of the respondents. Reviews and preferences by the past consumers on social media platforms affect the decision process of potential customers. The effects of social media on consumer behaviour cannot be ignored by brands and businesses.

Social media users found decision-making to be easier and enjoyed the process more, when compared to those who used other information sources. Those who perceived the information on social media to be of higher quality and greater quantity than expectations were more satisfied overall. The results overall show that social media has a strong impact on the consumer decision-making process. A [Deloitte report](#) highlighted that consumers who are influenced by social media are 4 times more likely to spend more on purchases.

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