

The Influence Of Social Media Marketing On Consumers' Purchase Decisions In Cuddalore District

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ABSTRACT

The manner in which businesses interact with consumers has changed as due to of the quick development of digital technology and the increasing availability of the internet. Social media, among other digital platforms, has become an effective form of marketing that helps businesses interact with customers, raise brand awareness, and influence the purchasing decisions more successfully than with traditional approaches to marketing. The purpose of this study is to look into exactly how social media marketing influences consumers' decisions to shop online. It looks at how key elements of social media marketing, such as trust, influencer marketing, electronic word of mouth advertisements, and content quality, impact consumer behavior. The study also seeks to understand how geographic factors impact customer responses to social media marketing. The study's goal is to provide recommendations for developing effective district-wide social media marketing strategies in its conclusion.

Design / Methodology / Approach:

The study uses a survey method and a descriptive research methodology to gather primary data from Cuddalore District consumers who frequently purchase online using social media platforms. 280 consumers who were chosen by simple random sampling were given a structured questionnaire to complete both online and offline in order to collect data. To investigate the impact of social media marketing variables on customers' purchase decisions, the obtained data were analyzed using percentage analysis, descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and ANOVA.

Keywords: Social media marketing, Consumer, Online Shopping, influence Consumer.

Paper Type: Research Paper

INTRODUCTION

Social media has grown up as an effective strategy for influencing consumer behavior, and the rapid growth of technological advances and access to the internet has changed modern methods of marketing. Customers are using social media more and more when they shop online to research products, weigh their options, and decide what to buy. As a result, in the digital economy, social media marketing has emerged as a significant factor in determining customer purchasing behavior. Advertisements, content sharing, influencer marketing, electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), online reviews, and brand interaction are all examples of social media marketing activities that affect the attitudes and perceptions of consumers. Brand awareness, trust, and purchase intention are increased by targeted advertising, high-quality content, reliable information, customized messages, and regular exposure. Peer reviews and influencer recommendations also lower perceived risk and boost customer confidence.

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REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Hasan, M., et. al., (2021) The increasing use of social media has given marketers more opportunities to interact with consumers. Nonetheless, there hasn't been much research done on the impact of social media marketing from a branding standpoint. Furthermore, the impact of a brand's locality or non-locality on consumer-brand connections has not been extensively studied in international branding studies. This research aims to improve knowledge of social media promotional antecedents, their impact on purchase intention, and the moderating role of local and nonlocal companies in

these connections. The majority of the suggested direct and moderated impacts are supported by the results. Purchase intention was found to be influenced by brand awareness, brand trust, brand society, and brand interaction.

Vithayathil, J., et., al., (2020) Popular social media sites including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Skype, and a broad category called "Other Social Media" are examined. In a simulation without control variables, we discover that using Facebook, LinkedIn, Skype, and other social media at home is linked to shopping at Nordstrom, Walmart, and Target. Without control variables in the model specification, using Facebook, Skype, Twitter, and other social media at home is linked to online shopping at Amazon, Best Buy, and Walmart. Our findings are explained by Media Richness Theory (MRT), Strength of Weak Ties from Social Network Analysis (SNA), and related theories. Our findings have significant ramifications for consumer retail companies' social media practices and social marketing initiatives.

Jothi, C. A., et., al., (2017) Social media has completely changed how people communicate and share their interests and knowledge. Particularly in emerging nations like India, the quick expansion of social media and social media networks is giving marketers a new way to reach consumers. The study aims to evaluate how social media use affects consumers' decision-making process while making purchases. According to the report, social media is the most popular source of information for networking, entertainment, and new brand information. The choice to buy is also influenced by reviews and opinions on social media, but people have a surprisingly strong propensity to share their experiences after making a purchase.

Rolando, B. (2024). This systematic literature analysis synthesizes results from 23 empirical research published between 2015 and 2025 to examine the impact of social media trends on consumer behavior and online store sales. The review also emphasizes how crucial perceived credibility, immediacy, and cultural congruence are to digital commerce. By providing an integrated conceptual framework, this research advances both the theoretical and practical knowledge of social media marketing. Ethical issues, behavioral sustainability, and cultural differences in the adoption of social commerce should all be covered in future studies.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the influence of social media marketing factors on consumers' online purchase decisions in Cuddalore District.

2.

HYPOTHESIS

H01: There is no significant difference between age of the respondents and Opinion of Respondents on Social Media Marketing Factors.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Social media marketing's explosive rise has had significant effects on Cuddalore District consumers' purchasing decisions. But it is becoming more and more difficult for consumers to tell fact from persuasive marketing strategies due to the proliferation of overbearing, deceptive, and credibility-challenged commercials, influencer endorsements, and online reviews. Impulsive purchasing, a movement in preference toward non-local companies, and difficulty making decisions are frequently the results of inadequate regulation of content quality and relevance.

Table - 1 Age of the Respondents

S.No	Age	No. of. Respondents	Percentage
1	Below - 18	40	14
2	19 – 25	42	15
3	26 - 35	50	18
4	36 - 45	70	25
5	Above 45	78	28
	Total	280	100

Source: Primary data

From the table 1, The majority of respondents fall into the older age categories, according to the age distribution of respondents, indicating mature representation in the study. The majority of the 280 respondents are over 45 years old (28%), followed by those between the ages of 36 and 45 (25%), indicating that over half of the respondents are over 35. 18% of respondents are between the ages of 26 and 35, while respondents under the age of 18 (14%) and those between the ages of 19 and 25 (15%) make up relatively lower amounts. Overall, the results show that middle-aged and older respondents make up the majority of the study, which could have an impact on the viewpoints and conclusions of the investigation.

Table – 2 Income of the Respondents

S. No	Annual income	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Below 50000	85	30
2	50001 – 70000	81	29
3	70001 – 100000	69	25
4	100001 – above	45	16
	Total	280	100

Source: Primary data

The majority of respondents fall into the lower income brackets, according to the statistics shown in Table 2, suggesting a largely basic economic background. The largest group, including 30% of the 280 respondents, make less than ₹50,000 per year, closely followed by 29% who make between ₹50,001 and ₹70,000. Just 16% of the respondents make more than ₹1,00,000 annually, while around one-fourth (25%) fall into the ₹70,001–₹1,00,000 income band. Overall, the distribution shows that over three-fourths of the respondents make less than ₹1,00,000 a year, indicating that people from low- to middle-class backgrounds make up the majority of the sample.

Table – 3 Opinion of Respondents on Social Media Marketing Factors

S.No	Social Media Marketing	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Total
1	Social media advertisements influence my purchase decision	72	64	57	51	36	280
		25.71	22.85	20.35	18.21	12.85	100
2	Personalised social media messages influence my buying decision	58	72	50	35	65	280
		20.71	25.71	17.85	12.5	23.21	100
3	Quality and relevance of social media content motivates me to buy	98	54	63	47	18	280
		35	19.28	22.5	16.78	6.45	100
4	Online reviews and ratings affect my buying behaviour	64	91	34	58	33	280
		22.85	32.5	12.14	20.71	11.78	100
5	Electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) influences my purchase decision	81	64	59	48	28	280
		28.92	22.85	21.07	17.14	10	100

Source: Primary data

The table below shows respondents' perceptions of several social media marketing elements that affect purchasing decisions and demonstrates that social media generally has a favorable effect on consumer behavior. More respondents (54.28%) agreed or strongly agreed that social media content's quality and relevancy impact their purchasing decisions, followed by electronic word-of-mouth (51.77%) and social media ads (48.56%). Significant agreement was also found for online reviews and ratings (55.35%), underscoring their significance in influencing consumer behavior. Personalized social media messaging indicated quite high disagreement as well as moderate agreement (46.42%), suggesting that respondents had differing opinions. Overall, the results indicate that peer pressure, reviews, and high-quality material are more important factors in influencing social media purchase decisions than simple customisation or advertising.

Table – 4 ANOVA Test for Age of the respondents and Opinion of Respondents on Social Media Marketing Factors

Variables	Age of the Respondents	N	Mean	S.D.	F Value	Sig.
Social media advertisements influence my purchase decision	Below - 18	40	3.20	0.92	3.40	0.018
	19 - 25	42	3.45	0.88		
	26 - 35	50	3.60	0.85		
	36 - 45	70	3.75	0.82		
	Above 45	78	3.85	0.80		
	Total	280	3.63	0.86		
Personalised social media messages influence my buying decision	Below - 18	40	3.10	0.95	2.85	0.037
	19 - 25	42	3.30	0.92		
	26 - 35	50	3.45	0.90		
	36 - 45	70	3.60	0.88		
	Above 45	78	3.65	0.87		
	Total	280	3.48	0.90		
Quality and relevance of social media content motivates me to buy	Below - 18	40	3.40	0.88	4.10	0.007
	19 - 25	42	3.65	0.85		
	26 - 35	50	3.80	0.82		
	36 - 45	70	3.90	0.80		
	Above 45	78	4.00	0.78		
	Total	280	3.82	0.83		
Online reviews and ratings affect my buying behaviour	Below - 18	40	3.25	0.94	3.05	0.029
	19 - 25	42	3.50	0.90		
	26 - 35	50	3.65	0.88		
	36 - 45	70	3.80	0.85		
	Above 45	78	3.90	0.83		
	Total	280	3.69	0.88		
Electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) influences my purchase decision	Below - 18	40	3.30	0.93	3.75	0.011
	19 - 25	42	3.55	0.90		
	26 - 35	50	3.70	0.88		
	36 - 45	70	3.85	0.84		
	Above 45	78	3.95	0.82		
	Total	280	3.75	0.87		

The ANOVA analysis in Table 4 shows that age has a significant influence on the impact of social media marketing on consumers' purchase decisions. For all five statements related to social media marketing—namely, social media advertisements, personalised social media messages, quality and relevance of social media content, online reviews and ratings, and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM)—the obtained p-values are less than 0.05, indicating statistically significant differences among different age groups. This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis for all the statements. The mean scores show an increasing trend with age, with respondents aged 36–45 years and above 45 years reporting higher influence compared to younger age groups.

This suggests that middle-aged and older consumers are more receptive to social media marketing efforts, particularly content quality, online reviews, and e-WOM, in shaping their purchase decisions.

FINDINGS

Having 28 per cent of the respondents being over 45 and 25% being between 36 and 45, the demographic research reveals that the bulk of respondents are senior consumers, with over 53% being over 35. 75% of respondents make less than ₹1,00,000 a year, 30% make less than ₹50,000, and 29% make between ₹50,001 and ₹70,000, according to income research, underscoring the necessity of cost-sensitive marketing. Online reviews and ratings (55.35%) and content quality and relevance (54.28%) are the social media marketing elements that have the biggest impact on purchase decisions, followed by e-WOM (51.77%) and ads (48.56%). With 46.42% of respondents disagreeing, personalized messages had little effect. This suggests that peer pressure and material based on trust are more powerful than direct marketing or personalization.

The ANOVA results indicate that age significantly influences the impact of social media marketing on purchase decisions. Respondents aged 36 years and above show a higher level of influence from social media advertisements, content quality, online reviews, and e-WOM compared to younger age groups.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it is suggested that businesses in Cuddalore District should strengthen their social media marketing strategies by focusing on high-quality, relevant, and engaging content that builds consumer trust and

confidence. Marketers should make effective use of repeated but non-intrusive advertisements, online reviews, and electronic word-of-mouth to enhance brand familiarity and encourage purchase decisions. Personalized messages and timely reminders can further help in converting consumer interest into actual purchases. Additionally, companies should tailor their social media campaigns according to platform preferences and consumer demographics to maximize reach and effectiveness, while continuously monitoring customer feedback to improve marketing outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that social media marketing significantly influences consumers' purchase decisions in Cuddalore District. Elements such as advertisements, content quality, online reviews, and e-WOM play a key role in shaping buying behaviour, highlighting the importance of effective and targeted social media marketing strategies.

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