

A Study on Analyzing the Impact of Social Media on Consumer Behavior

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Abstract: *With the growth in the use of Digital media in almost every aspect of society, social media marketing is a concept which has also become relevant in recent times. The ability of social media to make content viral is evaluated as a potential B2B growth marketing strategy. Increment of website traffic to build conversions, create brand awareness, make communication, select target audience, and fabricate customer loyalty- social media plays a vital role regarding the exposure of a brand. The growth of social media has also made an impact on consumer behavior where it has the power to influence potential customers from the start until the stage of the purchase and beyond as well. The continuous usage of social media has influenced people to purchase products whether they are required or not. This has led to Consumerism where the products are just purchased in the name of aesthetics and social media engagements. The increase in the number of Influencers, Algorithms has also had a negative effect and led to over consumption. This research paper is an attempt to study and analyze the impact of social media on consumerism and consumer behavior and provide suggestions to adopt a sensible approach towards consumption of products.*

Keywords: Social media, Consumerism, Consumer behavior, Influencers, Over-Consumption

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent times, the rise of social media platforms has transformed the marketing landscape, providing businesses with unparalleled opportunities to engage with consumers worldwide. With billions of users actively participating on various platforms, social media has become a potent resource for brands to connect with their intended audience, enhance brand visibility, and shape consumer habits. As a result, grasping the effects of social media marketing on consumer behavior has become crucial for businesses aiming to stay competitive in the digital market.

The influence of social media has obscured the distinction between conventional advertising and natural content. Consequently, companies are channeling significant resources into social media marketing strategies, which include sponsored posts, influencer collaborations, and targeted ad campaigns. Although the significance of social media marketing continues to rise, there is still a void in the current research regarding its definitive effect on consumer behavior. While a number of studies have investigated the effectiveness of different marketing tactics on social media platforms, a thorough analysis that combines perspectives from various fields— such as marketing, psychology, and sociology—is needed. By investigating the relationship between social media marketing activities and the decision-making processes of consumers, this research aims to clarify the fundamental mechanisms that influence consumer behavior in today's digital landscape. By gaining a deeper understanding of how social media influences consumer perceptions, attitudes, and purchasing intentions, businesses can optimize their marketing efforts to better engage with their target audience and achieve their marketing objectives.

Social Media and Social Media Marketing

Social media refers to online platforms and websites that facilitate the creation, sharing, and exchange of user-generated content and information in virtual communities and networks. These platforms enable individuals, groups, and organizations to interact, connect, and engage



with one another through various forms of multimedia content, such as text, images, videos, and audio. Examples of social media platforms include but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, TikTok, Snapchat, and Pinterest. Social media has become integral to modern communication, shaping the way people connect, share information, express themselves, and consume content on the internet.

Social media marketing is the use of social media—the platforms on which users build social networks and share information—to build a company's brand, increase sales, and drive website traffic. In addition to providing companies with a way to engage with existing customers and reach new ones, SMM has purpose-built data analytics that allows marketers to track the success of their efforts and identify even more ways to engage. According to Datar portal and Kepios, there were 5.31 billion social media identities across the world as of April 2025.¹ As a result, SMM has incredible reach to consumers.

The power of SMM is driven by the unparalleled capacity of social media in three core marketing areas: connection, interaction, and customer data.

Connection

Not only does social media enable businesses to connect with customers in previously impossible ways, but there is also an extraordinary range of avenues to connect with target audiences—from content platforms (like YouTube) and social sites (like Facebook) to microblogging services (like X).

Interaction

The dynamic nature of the interaction on social media—whether direct communication or passive liking—enables businesses to leverage free advertising opportunities from eWOM (electronic word-of-mouth) recommendations between existing and potential customers. Not only is the positive contagion effect from eWOM a valuable driver of consumer decisions, but the fact that these interactions happen on the social network makes them measurable.

Customer Data

A well-designed social media marketing plan delivers another invaluable resource to boost marketing outcomes: customer data. Rather than being overwhelmed by the 3Vs of big data (volume, variety, and velocity), SMM tools have the capacity not only to extract customer data but also to turn this gold into actionable market analysis—or even to use the data to crowdsource new strategies.

SMM and Consumer Behavior

Social media marketing (SMM) uses social media platforms to interact with customers to build brands, increase sales, and drive website traffic. As social media usage grows around the world, both via computer and mobile devices, the ability to drive sales from certain user populations is a growing business ripe with competition for views and clicks.

- **Sticky content-** Sticky content is the marketing term for attractive content that engages customers at first glance and then influences them to purchase products and share the content. **Viral Marketing-** Viral marketing is an SMM strategy that attempts to trigger the rapid spread of word-of-mouth product information—a very simple and inexpensive way to promote sales.
- **Earned Media-** Earned media is a marketing term for brand exposure from any method other than paid advertising, e.g., customer-created content ranging from product reviews and recommendations to shares, reposts, and mentions.
- **Techniques and Strategies-** Social media marketing has grown to include several techniques and strategies to engage users and market products and services. These include audience- targeted advertising, interactive chatbots, creating personalized experiences for customers online, social media influencers, and building an online audience.



Impact of SMM on Consumer Behavior

Social media marketing profoundly impacts consumer buying behavior by creating brand awareness, fostering social proof through user reviews and influencer endorsements, and driving direct purchases through targeted promotions and interactive content. It taps into consumers' psychological needs for belonging and esteem, shapes attitudes towards products, and facilitates e-word-of-mouth that is often more trusted than traditional advertising.

- **Product discovery-** Social media acts as a massive virtual marketplace where users discover new products or services through posts, reviews and recommendations from their connections. The ease of access to a wide array of offerings makes it a prime platform for product discovery.
- **Influencers-** Influencer marketing has the potential to sway consumer choices and behaviors. An influencer's endorsements and authentic reviews on social media can heavily influence purchasing decisions. When an influencer vouches for a product, their followers often listen.
- **Social proof-** Social media platforms are a hotbed of social proof, where consumers gauge the popularity and credibility of a product or service based on likes, shares and comments. Positive social proof can significantly impact purchase decisions.
- **Feedback and reviews-** Consumers take to social media to share their experiences with products and services.

These candid reviews and feedback serve as valuable resources for potential buyers, influencing their choices.

Fear of missing out (FOMO)- Social media is a breeding ground for FOMO. Scrolling through posts of friends enjoying new products or experiences can spark a sense of urgency, driving consumers to make impulsive purchasing decisions.

Objectives

- 1) To examine the overall impact of social media on consumer behavior and decision- making patterns.
- 2) To analyze how social media marketing strategies (advertisements, influencers, brand pages, etc.) influence consumer attitudes and preferences.
- 3) To analyze the relationship between social media and consumer behavior.
- 4) To evaluate how social media trends and viral content affect short-term consumer preferences.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The role of social media marketing in consumer behavior, Sayabek Ziyadin, Raigul Doszhan, Alex Borodin, Aizhan Omarova and Aigerim Ilyas- This article looks at recently published research on social media consumers. Five topics are highlighted: consumer digital culture, responses to digital advertising, the impact of social media on consumer behavior, mobile environments, and online rumors (WOM). The articles examine how consumers experience, are influenced and are influenced by the digital environment they are in as part of their daily lives. Much remains to be understood, and existing knowledge tends to focus disproportionately on WOM, which is only part of the digital consumer experience. Several avenues for future research have been proposed to encourage researchers to consider a wider range of phenomena.

The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Consumers' Behavior Guoqing Zhang- Social media, an essential part of social connection, is becoming an inevitable global communication tool. The popularity and availability of mobile phones have further fueled the importance of social media. Social media marketing activities carried out by enterprises help to attract more comprehensive customers and influence customers' purchase behavior. However, with the increasing investment of significant brands in marketing activities on social media platforms, marketing on social media is becoming increasingly competitive in building consumers' awareness about a particular product, customers' purchase behavior, and purchase decisions. Marketing research has focused on using social media to motivate consumers' purchase intentions and maintain consumer loyalty. The previous studies have shed some light on the significant impacts of social media on consumers' behaviors. However, few focus on consumers' purchase intentions and decisions. Through a literature review, this paper studies how consumer behavior changes due to social media. This paper explored how social media can ultimately market consumer behavior by influencing consumer psychology, attitude, and internal motivation for consumption through a literature review. Hopefully, this paper also can provide some ideas for



enterprises to better their strategy formulation, optimize marketing plans, and improve brand benefits and corporate earnings in the increasingly fierce social media marketing competition.

A Study On Impact of Social Media Marketing in Consumer Behavior, Naveena R- The goal of this paper was to research empirically the role of social media in consumers' decision- making processes. A quantitative survey investigates up to what degree experiences are altered by the use of social media. Customer sentiments on items and administrations are progressively overwhelmed by outsiders in advanced spaces, which thus impact conclusions in the disconnected space. Web-based social networking has engaged purchasers, as advertisers have no control over the substance, timing, or recurrence of online discussions among shoppers. Results show that social media usage influences consumer satisfaction in the stages of information search and alternative evaluation, with satisfaction getting amplified as the consumer moves along the process towards the final purchase decision and post-purchase evaluation. Social media marketing puts consumers back to the center of the business world and provides marketers a new set of tools to interact with consumers and to integrate them into the brands through innovative ways. In essence, marketers have to understand how social media has influenced consumer buying behavior. Social media marketing is the contemporary style of marketing as it concentrates on opening new horizons for marketers in order to promote a product or service as compared to conventional media. In recent times, consumer behavior and satisfaction has become an important asset for any organization to attain its position in the market and to increase its profitability. For this purpose, organizations are employing social media techniques. From research, it is evident that companies are employing social media marketing in order to interact with the consumers. Social media marketing has given organizations a new way of dealing and changing the buying behavior of the consumers. People use social media to share their experiences, reviews, information, advice, warnings, tips and any kind of issues that are interesting to their "connection" or friends. Social media is used as advertising for the marketer.

A Study on Impact of Social Media Marketing in Consumer Behavior International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research (IJFMR) Volume 6, Issue 2, March-April 2024 - This master's thesis explores how social media marketing affects customer behavior in the modern digital environment. Businesses looking to succeed in the digital marketplace must now comprehend social media's impact on consumer behavior due to its widespread use and crucial position in marketing tactics. Using a mixed-method approach, this study explores the intricate relationships between social media marketing initiatives and customer decision-making processes through the use of both quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. The study looks into a number of topics, such as the usefulness of various social media platforms, the importance of user-generated content, the influence of influencers, and the effects of targeted advertising on customer perceptions and purchase intentions. This thesis aims to offer useful insights for companies looking to improve their understanding of consumer behavior in the digital era and optimize their social media marketing strategies through a thorough analysis of empirical data and theoretical frameworks drawn from marketing, psychology, and sociology literature.

Impact of social media advertising on consumer behavior: role of credibility, perceived authenticity, and sustainability Hemant Kothar Avinash Choudhary Apurva Jain U. K. Vani- To measure the impact of the social media advertising effect on consumer behavior, eight reflective constructs, namely, credibility, sustainability, perceived authenticity, social media advertising effectiveness, satisfaction, purchase intentions and perceived value, were assessed. For the mediation analysis, consumer behavior was modeled as a higher-order construct with three sub-dimensions: satisfaction, perceived value and purchase intentions. Furthermore, the construct social media effectiveness is also modeled as a higher-order construct with four sub- dimensions: credibility, sustainability, authenticity and social media advertisement effectiveness. The data were collected from active social media users who engage in brand advertising and online shopping. A total of 500 valid responses were subjected to exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, and the hypotheses were tested via structural equation modeling.

III. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

An online survey was conducted consisting of closed ended questions for easy analysis. The questionnaire was shared through social media platforms, email lists, and messaging apps to reach a wide range of respondents. The sections may include Demographic Information (age, gender, education, income, frequency of social media use), Social Media Usage



Patterns (preferred platforms, daily usage time), Influence on Consumer Behavior (impact of ads, reviews, influencers, peer recommendations), Purchase Behavior (frequency of online purchases, impulse buying tendencies, brand loyalty). A total of 76 responses were collected.

Age of the Respondents

Age

76 responses

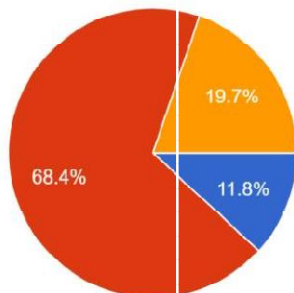


Figure 1

Gender of the respondents

Gender

76 responses

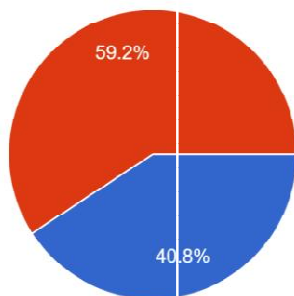


Figure 2

Occupation of the respondents

Occupation

76 responses

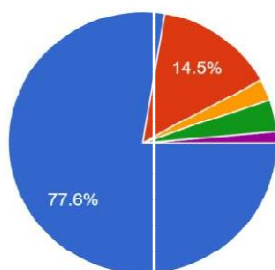


Figure 3



Demographic Interpretation (Figure 1 to 3)

Most of the respondents are young adults (students or early professionals) who are the heaviest social media users. Gender distribution may show a slightly higher female participation, which is common in influencer-related surveys.

Average time spent on social media per day

Average time spent on social media per day

76 responses

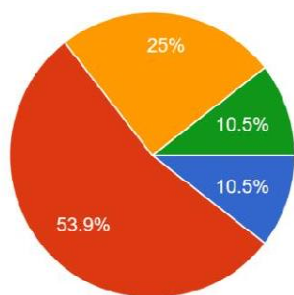


Figure 4

Most frequently used social media platforms

Most frequently used social media platforms (S

76 responses

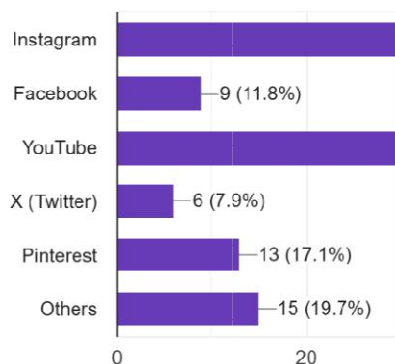


Figure 5

Social Media Usage Patterns (Figure 4 and 5)

The majority spend 2–4+ hours daily, suggesting high exposure to influencer content. Instagram and YouTube dominate, with some usage of Facebook, Twitter, or Snapchat.



Do you follow any social media influencers?
Do you follow any social media influencers?
76 responses

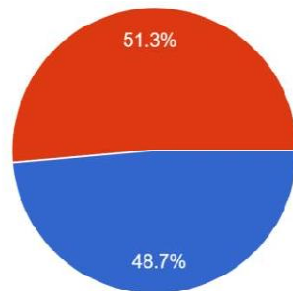


Figure 6

Have you ever purchased a product or service recommended by a social media influencer?
Have you ever purchased a product or service re
76 responses

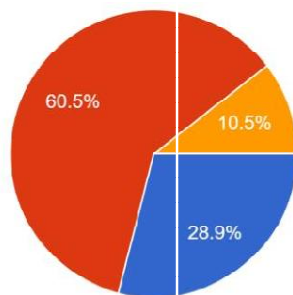


Figure 7

On a scale of 1–5, how much do social media influencers impact your purchasing decisions? (1 being lowest and 5 being highest)

On a scale of 1–5, how much do social media influe
76 responses

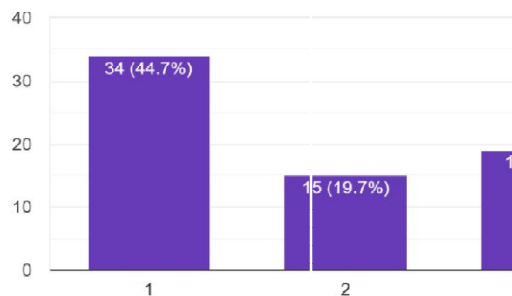


Figure 8



Influencer Engagement (Figure 6 to 8)

Many respondents have purchased products recommended by influencers, showing a clear link between exposure and action. On a 1–5 scale, the impact of influencers often falls around 3–4, meaning moderate to high influence.

What type of influencers are you most likely to trust for product recommendations?

What type of influencers are you most likely to t

76 responses

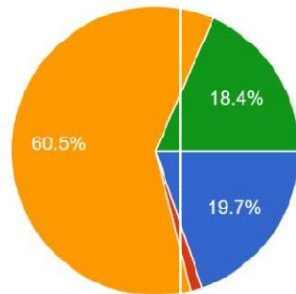


Figure 9

What kind of products are you most likely to purchase based on influencer recommendations?

What kind of products are you most likely to purcl

(Select all that apply)

76 responses

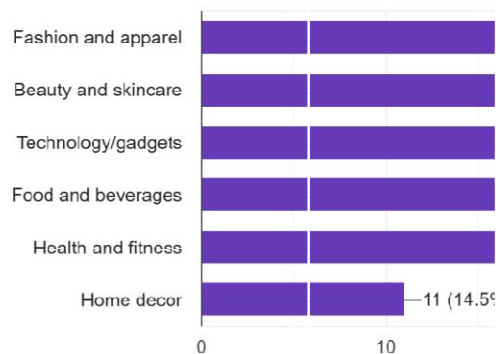


Figure 10

Trust in Influencers (Figure 9 and 10)

Respondents typically trust subject-matter experts or micro-influencers over celebrities, because they seem more authentic. Trust is strongest in categories like fashion, beauty, lifestyle, and tech gadgets.



Does the visual appeal (aesthetic) of social media content influence your interest in a product?

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76 responses

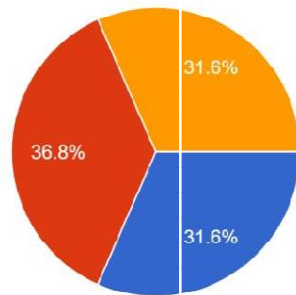


Figure 11

On a scale of 1–5, rate how important aesthetics (e.g., photography, filters, color palette) are in influencing your buying decision

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76 responses

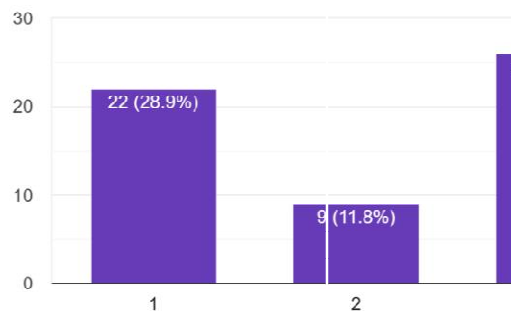


Figure 12

Have you ever bought a product mainly because it “looked good” in social media content?

Have you ever bought a product mainly because it “looked good” in social media content?

76 responses

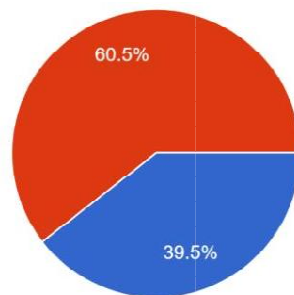


Figure 13



Do you associate aesthetically pleasing products or content with higher quality or value?

Do you associate aesthetically pleasing product

76 responses

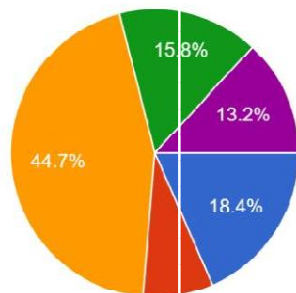


Figure 14

Role of Aesthetics in Purchase Decisions (Figure 11 to 14)

A large proportion agree that visual appeal (filters, photography, color themes) directly increases interest in products. Many admit to buying something mainly because it “looked good” on social media. There’s also a psychological link where aesthetic = higher quality/value perception.

Do you believe that Social Media is leading to Over Consumption and consumerism?

Do you believe that Social Media is leading to O

76 responses

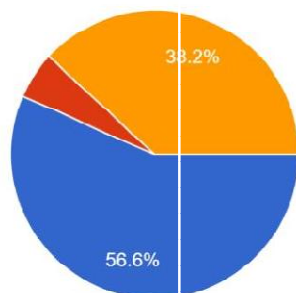


Figure 15

Consumerism & Overconsumption (Figure 15)

A noticeable segment agrees that social media drives overconsumption and materialism. This highlights the double-edged role of influencers: shaping trends but also fueling unnecessary spending.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study reveals that social media plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer behavior, particularly among young adults who spend significant time on platforms such as Instagram and YouTube. Influencers emerged as key drivers of purchase decisions, with many respondents admitting to buying products recommended by them. Interestingly, micro-influencers and subject-matter experts were found to be more trusted than celebrities due to their authenticity and



reliability. The research also highlights the strong impact of aesthetics, as visually appealing content often leads consumers to associate products with higher quality and value, sometimes resulting in purchases made solely for their appearance on social media. Furthermore, social proof in the form of likes, shares, reviews, and peer recommendations greatly influences consumer trust and decision-making. However, the findings also underline the downside of this trend, as social media fosters overconsumption and impulsive buying driven by fear of missing out and constant exposure to influencer promotions. In conclusion, while social media has become an effective and indispensable tool for businesses to connect with consumers, it has also contributed to materialism and unnecessary consumption. Thus, marketers should focus on authenticity, ethical responsibility, and sustainable strategies, while consumers must adopt a more conscious approach to their purchasing behavior to balance the opportunities and challenges presented by social media.

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