

# A Study on the Impact of Social Media in Consumer Buying Behavior in the Maharashtra

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**Abstract:** *This study examines consumer buying behavior in relation to social media usage in the Maharashtra, with a focus on factors such as trust, ease of access to information, and influence of online reviews and influencers. With the rapid growth of digital platforms, understanding how social media affects consumer decision-making has become essential for marketers and businesses. The study adopts a quantitative research design and collects primary data from 100 respondents through structured questionnaires. Multiple Linear Regression analysis is used to evaluate the relationship between social media factors and consumer buying behavior. The results indicate a significant positive impact of trust in social media content, ease of access to product information, and influence of reviews and influencers on consumer purchase decisions, with the model showing moderate explanatory power. The findings are consistent with the Technology Acceptance Model and consumer behavior theories, highlighting the importance of credibility, engagement, and user-friendly platforms. The study provides practical insights for businesses and digital marketers to enhance customer engagement and improve marketing strategies in the Maharashtra.*

**Keywords:** Social Media Platforms, Consumer Buying Behavior, Social media Reviews, Social Media Trends, Trust, Purchase Decision, Maharashtra

## I. INTRODUCTION

Social media has become one of the most important platforms for engagement, interaction, and information exchange in the digital era. Its influence extends beyond traditional human relationships, significantly shaping consumer behavior and purchasing decisions. In recent years, consumers in the Maharashtra have increasingly relied on social media platforms for product information, peer recommendations, and brand interactions.

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of social media on consumer buying behavior, focusing on how various platforms influence product selection, purchase intention, and overall shopping experience. The widespread use of social media has transformed consumer behavioral patterns, making online platforms a key factor in decision-making.

Consumers actively use platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter to share reviews, experiences, and product-related information. This user-generated content plays a vital role in influencing purchase decisions. The growth of digital technologies and internet accessibility has empowered consumers by providing easy access to product details, ratings, and peer feedback.

Recent literature, such as the foundational work by Chaur, Gautam, and Husain (2024) regarding Consumer Buying Behaviour: Selection of Fashion Apparels, emphasizes the shifting dynamics of the retail fashion market—a shift that is increasingly driven by the persuasive power of social media marketing.

Furthermore, social media has strengthened the voice of consumers, enabling them to express opinions, influence public perception, and hold companies accountable. As a result, businesses are increasingly adapting their marketing



strategies to engage customers effectively in the digital environment. Understanding this shift is crucial for marketers aiming to enhance customer satisfaction and improve marketing effectiveness.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Existing literature highlights the significant role of social media in influencing consumer buying behavior. **According to Matthew O. Jackson (2009)**, social interactions within networks strongly affect consumer decision-making across all stages, including problem recognition, information search, evaluation, purchase, and post-purchase behavior.

**Chintan H. Rajani and A. H. Solanki (2016)** identified networking, entertainment, feedback, and content sharing as key drivers of social media usage among Indian consumers. Their study revealed that users engage with social media for personal utility and information exchange, which indirectly influences purchase decisions.

**Studies by Smith and Johnson (2018)** emphasize that social media shapes consumer attitudes and demand patterns by facilitating interaction with content and peer opinions. Similarly, Brown et al. (2019) highlighted the importance of authenticity, transparency, and consistent messaging in building consumer trust.

**Research by Kim and Lee (2020)** demonstrates how social commerce integrates product discovery and purchasing, enhancing consumer convenience. Garcia and Rodriguez (2017) found that micro-influencers have a stronger impact on niche audiences due to higher credibility and engagement.

**Chen and Wang (2016)** discussed both challenges and opportunities of social media, including reputation management and targeted marketing. Li and Zhang (2015) concluded that social media influences all stages of the consumer decision-making process.

In the Indian context, **Das and Mishra (2019)** emphasized the role of cultural and regional diversity in shaping social media usage. **Singh and Kapoor (2020)** found that visual platforms significantly influence consumer preferences, especially in the fashion industry.

Further studies highlight the growing importance of user-generated content, ethical considerations, and mobile usage. **Yang and Wu (2018)** showed that reviews and shared experiences build trust and impact purchase decisions. **Miller and Anderson (2017)** emphasized the role of privacy and authenticity in shaping consumer perceptions. Additionally, **Nguyen and Phan (2016)** highlighted the growing influence of mobile-based social media on real-time decision-making.

Overall, the literature suggests that social media has a profound impact on consumer buying behavior by enhancing information accessibility, building trust, and facilitating interaction. However, there is a need for region-specific studies, particularly in semi-urban areas like to better understand localized consumer behavior patterns.

## III. RESEAECH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a mixed-method research design, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches to comprehensively examine the impact of social media on consumer buying behavior in the Maharashtra. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed via Google Forms to respondents aged 18–45 years. A total of 100 responses were collected using a simple random sampling technique.

Secondary data were gathered from journals, research articles, books, and online sources to support and validate the primary findings. The questionnaire was designed using a Likert scale to measure consumer perceptions, trust, and behavioral responses. Data analysis was conducted using statistical tools to identify patterns and relationships between variables.

The geographical scope of the study is limited to Maharashtra, allowing for a focused understanding of regional consumer behavior. The use of both primary and secondary data enhances the reliability and depth of the research findings.

### Problem Statement

Although social media has a well-established influence on consumer behavior globally, there is limited research focusing on its impact within semi-urban regions like Maharashtra. The unique socio-cultural and economic



characteristics of this region may influence how consumers interact with social media and make purchasing decisions. Therefore, this study aims to bridge this gap by analyzing the role of social media in shaping consumer buying behavior in the Maharashtra.

**Objectives of the Study**

- To identify the most widely used social media platforms among consumers in Maharashtra.
- To examine the influence of social media on consumer purchase decisions.
- To study consumer perception and trust towards social media marketing.
- To analyze the impact of social media advertising on brand awareness.
- To assess the influence of social media on post-purchase behavior.

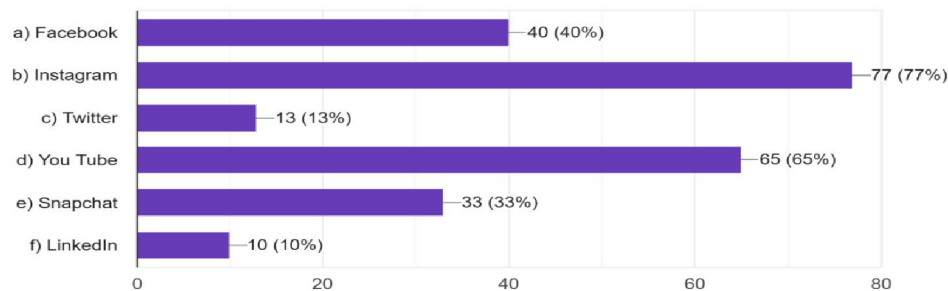
**Limitations of the Study**

- The study is limited to 100 respondents in Maharashtra.
- Findings are based on self-reported data, which may include bias.
- The sample may not fully represent the entire population.
- The cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish long-term causal relationships.

**IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

The analysis of collected data reveals the following key observations:

**Q.1.Which social media platforms do you use most frequently?**

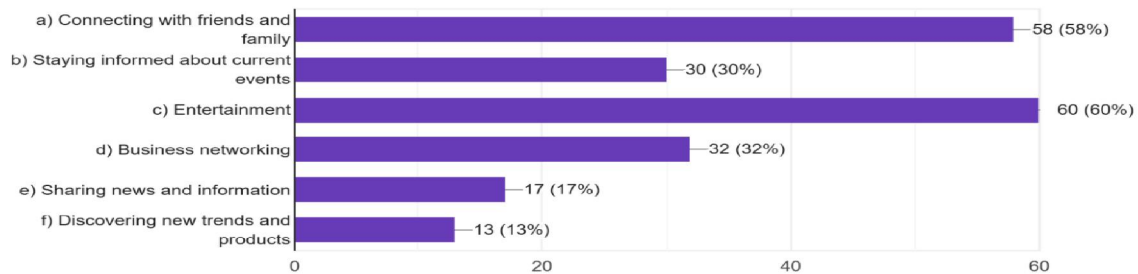


**Interpretation:**

The platform most people prefer is used by 77% of respondents who answered the survey. The data demonstrates that this platform achieves maximum user interaction while demonstrating strongest user impact. YouTube follows closely with 65% (65 respondents), showing strong preference for video-based content. Facebook is used by 40% (40 respondents), suggesting moderate popularity compared to newer platforms. Snapchat has 33% (33 respondents) usage, indicating it is moderately popular, especially among younger users. Twitter has a user base of only 13% which results in low levels of user interaction according to the data. The platform which people use the least is LinkedIn because 10% of respondents use it, which occurs because LinkedIn focuses more on professional development than on providing entertainment.



**Q.2.What are your primary reasons for using social media?**



**Interpretation:**

The chart tells us why people use media. People use media for entertainment the most, with sixty percent of the people who answered, making entertainment the main reason. Connecting with friends and family is also a reason, with fifty eight percent of the people which means people like to use social media to bond with friends and family. Some people use media for business like thirty two percent and to know what is happening in the world like thirty percent, which shows that people also use social media for work and to get information but not as much. On the hand not many people use social media to share news only seventeen percent and to find out about new things, only thirteen percent, which means these are not the favorite things to do on social media.

**V. CONCLUSION**

The study concludes that social media has a significant yet moderate influence on consumer buying behavior in the Maharashtra. Younger consumers are more actively engaged, while older age groups show relatively lower participation. Platforms such as Instagram and Facebook are widely used, whereas LinkedIn has minimal usage due to its professional focus.

The findings indicate that peer influence, advertisements, and customer reviews play a more important role in shaping purchase decisions than traditional brand communication or influencer recommendations. Although most respondents acknowledge the impact of social media, the level of strong influence remains limited, suggesting a balanced effect rather than a dominant one.

Furthermore, consumers are more likely to encounter product information passively, highlighting the importance of engaging and visible content. Social media is primarily used for entertainment and interaction rather than information seeking.

Overall, the study emphasizes that businesses should focus on building trust, encouraging user-generated content, and creating engaging digital strategies to effectively influence consumer behavior in the evolving digital landscape.

**VI. SUGGESTION**

The study suggests that businesses should create social media content which attracts consumer interest through its engaging and relevant characteristics. Transparency and honesty in communication are essential to build trust and maintain a positive brand image.

Customer reviews and user-generated content serve as essential factors which affect purchase decisions; thus, companies need to monitor customer feedback while they encourage customer feedback. Marketing efforts require focus on Instagram and Facebook because these platforms generate the most consumer engagement.

Businesses need to establish interactive communication methods which include customer query responses and feedback collection to build stronger consumer connections. Influencer collaborations should choose credible and relevant partners instead of selecting partners based on their follower counts.



Companies need to establish product visibility through targeted content distribution because customers tend to discover product details through passive methods rather than active product searches. The implementation of these methods will improve marketing performance while they create favorable impacts on consumer purchasing patterns.

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