

The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Buying Behaviour: Evidence From Coimbatore District

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Abstract. The rapid development of digital technology has transformed the marketing environment, with social media platforms becoming an important channel for communication between businesses and consumers. Social media marketing enables organizations to promote products, share information, and engage with customers in a more interactive manner compared to traditional marketing methods. This study examines the impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour in Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu, India. The objectives of the study are to analyze the level of social media usage among consumers, identify key social media marketing factors influencing purchase decisions, and examine the relationship between social media marketing activities and consumer buying behaviour. Primary data were collected from 150 respondents using a structured questionnaire. The study employed descriptive statistics, percentage analysis, mean score analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis to examine the relationship between social media marketing variables and consumer purchase behaviour. The findings reveal that social media marketing significantly influences consumer buying decisions. Among the various factors examined, online customer reviews were found to have the strongest influence on consumer purchase intention, followed by influencer marketing and promotional offers. The regression results indicate that social media marketing variables explain a considerable portion of the variation in consumer buying behaviour. The study highlights the growing importance of social media platforms as effective marketing tools for businesses. The findings suggest that organizations should focus on creating engaging digital content, encouraging customer reviews, and collaborating with social media influencers to enhance consumer engagement and purchasing decisions.

keywords: social media marketing, consumer buying behaviour, digital marketing, purchase intention, online reviews

I INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of internet technology has transformed the way businesses communicate with consumers. Social media platforms allow organizations to promote products, share information, and build relationships with customers. Unlike traditional marketing channels such as television or newspapers, social media enables direct interaction between companies and consumers. In recent years, platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube have become powerful marketing tools. Businesses use these platforms to share advertisements, promotional offers, and product information. Consumers also use social media to read reviews, watch product demonstrations, and compare different brands before making purchasing decisions. Consumer buying behaviour refers to the process through which individuals identify their needs, search for information, evaluate alternatives, and make purchasing decisions. Social media marketing influences this process by providing information, recommendations, and customer feedback.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The increasing use of social media platforms has significantly transformed the marketing landscape. Businesses now rely heavily on digital channels to communicate with consumers and promote products. Social media marketing has become a critical component of modern marketing strategies because it enables companies to interact directly with consumers and build long-term relationships. This section reviews previous studies related to social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) defined social media as internet-based applications that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. According to the authors, social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube provide businesses with new opportunities to communicate with customers in a more interactive way. They also emphasized that social media enables two-way communication between businesses and consumers, which was not possible through traditional marketing channels.

Mangold and Faulds (2009) explained that social media has become an important element of the promotional mix. The authors argued that social media platforms allow consumers to share their experiences and opinions about products with other users. As a result, companies no longer have full control over marketing messages because consumers also influence brand perceptions through online discussions and reviews.

Hajli (2014) examined the role of social media in social commerce and found that online communities play a significant role in building consumer trust. The study revealed that consumers often rely on online reviews and recommendations before making purchasing decisions. Social media platforms provide an environment where consumers can exchange information about products, which increases transparency and trust.

Duffett (2017) investigated the influence of social media marketing communication on young consumers. The study found that social media advertisements, promotional

content, and brand engagement significantly affect consumer attitudes toward products. The author concluded that social media marketing strategies can enhance brand awareness and encourage consumers to purchase products.

Alalwan et al. (2017) conducted a comprehensive study on the effectiveness of social media advertising. The research identified several factors that influence consumer responses to social media advertisements, including entertainment value, informativeness, credibility, and interactivity. The study concluded that advertisements that provide useful information and engaging content are more likely to influence consumer purchase behaviour.

Another important factor influencing consumer behaviour on social media is influencer marketing. Influencers are individuals who have a large number of followers on social media platforms and can affect consumer opinions through their recommendations. According to De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders (2017), influencer marketing has become an effective strategy for promoting products because consumers often trust the opinions of influencers they follow. The study found that influencer credibility and expertise significantly affect consumer purchase intentions.

In addition to influencer marketing, online customer reviews also play a major role in shaping consumer buying behaviour. Chevalier and Mayzlin (2006) examined the effect of online reviews on product sales and found that positive reviews significantly increase product demand. Consumers often rely on the experiences of other customers when evaluating product quality.

The concept of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) has also been widely studied in the context of social media marketing. Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) defined electronic word-of-mouth as any positive or negative statement made by consumers about products through the internet. The study highlighted that eWOM can strongly influence consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions.

Social media platforms also enable companies to create interactive marketing campaigns that encourage consumer participation. According to Tuten and Solomon (2017), social media marketing involves the use of digital technologies to create, communicate, and deliver marketing messages through online platforms. The authors emphasized that businesses must develop effective content strategies to attract consumer attention and maintain engagement.

Recent studies have also highlighted the growing importance of digital marketing in emerging economies such as India. Dwivedi et al. (2021) examined the future of digital and social media marketing and concluded that technological advancements will continue to shape marketing strategies and consumer behaviour. The authors emphasized that businesses must adopt innovative digital marketing approaches to remain competitive in the evolving market environment.

Furthermore, research by Appel et al. (2020) suggested that social media platforms allow brands to build stronger relationships with consumers by encouraging interaction and engagement. Consumers are more likely to trust brands that actively communicate with them through social media channels.

Although several studies have examined the role of social media marketing in influencing consumer behaviour, many of them focus on developed countries or large metropolitan areas. There is still limited research examining how social media marketing affects consumers in regional markets such as Coimbatore District. Understanding consumer behaviour in such contexts is important because social media usage patterns and purchasing preferences may vary across different geographic regions.

Therefore, the present study aims to address this research gap by examining the impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour in Coimbatore District. The study focuses on key social media marketing factors such as advertisements, online reviews, influencer marketing, and promotional offers. By analyzing these factors, the study seeks to provide insights into how social media marketing strategies influence consumer purchase decisions.

Objectives of the Study

The study is conducted with the following objectives:

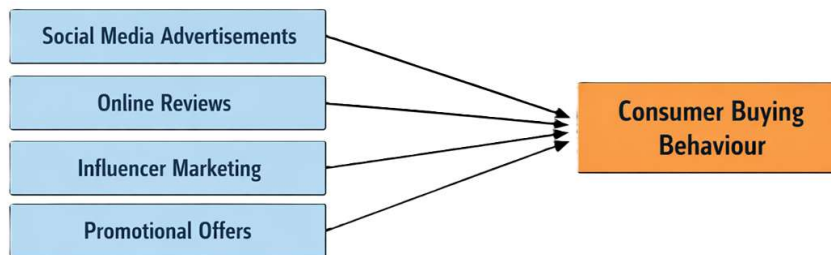
- To examine the level of social media usage among consumers in Coimbatore District.
- To analyze the influence of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour.
- To identify the major factors that motivate consumers to purchase products through social media platforms.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework explains how different social media marketing factors influence consumer buying behaviour.

Independent Variables: Social Media Advertisements, Online Reviews, Influencer Marketing and Promotional Offers

Dependent Variable: Consumer Buying Behaviour



Social media platforms provide various marketing tools that influence consumers. Advertisements increase product awareness, online reviews build trust, influencer marketing creates product credibility, and promotional offers attract consumers to purchase products.

Hypotheses of the Study

Based on the literature review, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- H1: Social media advertisements significantly influence consumer buying behaviour.
- H2: Online customer reviews positively influence consumer purchase intention.

- H3: Influencer marketing significantly affects consumer buying decisions.
- H4: Promotional offers on social media platforms increase consumer purchase intention.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design: The study follows a descriptive research design to understand consumer perceptions and behaviour regarding social media marketing.

Data Collection: Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to consumers in Coimbatore District.

Sample Size: A total of 150 respondents participated in the survey.

Sampling Method: A convenience sampling technique was used for selecting respondents.

Tools for Analysis: The collected data were analyzed using Percentage analysis, Mean score analysis, Correlation analysis and Multiple regression analysis. These statistical tools were used to examine the relationship between social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1: Gender Classification

Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Male	82	54.7
Female	68	45.3
Total	150	100
<i>Source: Primary Data</i>		

The table shows that 82 respondents (54.7%) are male and 68 respondents (45.3%) are female. This indicates that both male and female consumers actively participate in social media platforms, though male respondents slightly dominate the sample.

Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Group	Number of Respondents	Percentage
18 – 25 years	60	40
26 – 35 years	48	32
36 – 45 years	26	17.3
Above 45 years	16	10.7
Total	150	100
<i>Source: Primary Data</i>		

The table shows that 40% of respondents belong to the age group of 18–25 years, followed by 32% in the 26–35 age group. This indicates that young consumers are more active on social media platforms and are more influenced by social media marketing activities.

Table 3: Most Frequently Used Social Media Platform

Social Media Platform	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Instagram	57	38
Facebook	43	28.7
YouTube	33	22
Twitter (X)	17	11.3
Total	150	100

Source: Primary Data

The table indicates that Instagram is the most widely used social media platform with 57 respondents (38%), followed by Facebook with 43 respondents (28.7%). Businesses can therefore focus more on Instagram marketing strategies to attract consumers.

Table 4: Influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decision

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	46	30.7
Agree	54	36
Neutral	25	16.7
Disagree	15	10
Strongly Disagree	10	6.6
Total	150	100

Source: Primary Data

The table shows that 100 respondents (66.7%) agree or strongly agree that social media marketing influences their purchase decisions. This confirms that social media plays an important role in shaping consumer buying behaviour.

Table 5: Influence of Online Reviews on Buying Behaviour

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	52	34.7
Agree	48	32
Neutral	20	13.3
Disagree	18	12
Strongly Disagree	12	8
Total	150	100

Source: Primary Data

The table indicates that 100 respondents (66.7%) believe that online reviews influence their buying behaviour. Consumers tend to trust feedback from other users before purchasing products online.

Table 6: Influence of Influencer Marketing

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	41	27.3
Agree	50	33.3
Neutral	28	18.7
Disagree	19	12.7
Strongly Disagree	12	8
Total	150	100

Source: Primary Data

The table shows that 91 respondents (60.6%) agree that influencer marketing affects their purchase decisions. Influencers play a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions and product preferences.

Table 7: Mean Score Analysis of Social Media Marketing Factors

Factors	Mean Score	Rank
Online Reviews	4.21	1
Influencer Recommendations	3.98	2
Promotional Offers	3.85	3
Social Media Advertisements	3.74	4
Sponsored Content	3.6	5

Source: Primary Data

The results indicate that online reviews rank first with the highest mean score (4.21). This shows that consumers rely heavily on other users' experiences when making purchasing decisions.

Table 8: Correlation Analysis

Variables	Correlation Coefficient (r)
Social Media Marketing and Consumer Buying Behaviour	0.62

The correlation coefficient $r = 0.62$ indicates a moderate positive relationship between social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour. This suggests that increased exposure to social media marketing leads to higher purchase intention among consumers.

Table 9: Regression Analysis

Variable	Beta Value	Significance
Social Media Advertisements	0.32	Significant
Online Reviews	0.41	Highly Significant
Influencer Marketing	0.29	Significant
Promotional Offers	0.25	Significant

Source: Primary Data

The regression results indicate that online reviews have the strongest influence on consumer buying behaviour, followed by social media advertisements and influencer marketing. This confirms the importance of consumer-generated content in shaping purchase decisions.

Table 10: Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Statement	Result
H1	Social media advertisements influence consumer buying behaviour	Accepted
H2	Online reviews influence consumer purchase intention	Accepted
H3	Influencer marketing affects buying decisions	Accepted
H4	Promotional offers increase purchase intention	Accepted

All four hypotheses were accepted, indicating that social media marketing activities significantly influence consumer buying behaviour.

Table 12: Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Model 1	0.68	0.46	0.44

The R Square value of 0.46 indicates that 46% of the variation in consumer buying behaviour is explained by social media marketing variables such as advertisements, online reviews, influencer marketing, and promotional offers. This shows that social media marketing has a significant impact on consumer buying decisions.

Table 12: ANOVA Test for Model Significance

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	182.41	4	45.6	18.72	0
Residual	217.36	145	1.49		
Total	399.77	149			

The significance value (0.000) is less than 0.05, indicating that the regression model is statistically significant. This means that the independent variables collectively influence consumer buying behaviour.

Findings of the Study

The major findings of the study are as follows:

- The majority of respondents belong to the 18–35 age group, indicating that younger consumers actively use social media.
- Instagram is the most widely used social media platform among respondents.
- 66.7% of respondents agree that social media marketing influences their buying decisions.
- Online reviews have the strongest influence on consumer purchase intention.
- Influencer marketing significantly affects consumer product preferences.

- Promotional offers on social media encourage consumers to make purchasing decisions.
- The regression analysis shows that social media marketing explains 46% of consumer buying behaviour

Suggestions

- Based on the findings, the following suggestions are proposed:
- Businesses should focus on creating engaging content on social media platforms, particularly Instagram.
- Companies should encourage positive customer reviews, as they significantly influence consumer trust.
- Collaboration with reliable social media influencers can increase product visibility.
- Businesses should provide attractive promotional offers and discounts through social media marketing.
- Firms should monitor customer feedback and respond promptly to maintain brand reputation.

V. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour in Coimbatore District. With the rapid growth of digital technology and increased use of smartphones, social media platforms have become important channels for businesses to promote their products and interact with consumers. This study attempted to understand how different social media marketing factors influence consumer purchasing decisions.

The results of the study reveal that social media marketing plays a significant role in shaping consumer buying behaviour. The analysis shows that a large proportion of respondents actively use social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube for obtaining product information and evaluating brands. Among the various factors examined, online customer reviews were found to have the strongest influence on consumer purchase intention. Consumers tend to trust the experiences and opinions shared by other users before making purchasing decisions.

The study also identified that influencer marketing and social media advertisements have a positive impact on consumer behaviour. Influencers act as opinion leaders who can shape consumer perceptions and increase product awareness. Promotional offers and discounts shared through social media platforms also encourage consumers to purchase products.

The regression analysis further confirms that social media marketing variables significantly explain consumer buying behaviour. This indicates that businesses can effectively influence consumer decisions by using strategic social media marketing techniques.

Overall, the study highlights the growing importance of social media as a marketing tool in the modern business environment. Companies should focus on creating engaging content, encouraging positive customer reviews, and collaborating with trusted influencers to improve consumer engagement and purchase intention.

This research contributes to the existing literature on digital marketing by providing empirical evidence from Coimbatore District. The findings can help businesses, marketers, and researchers better understand the role of social media marketing in influencing consumer buying behaviour.

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