



The Role of Social Media in Shaping Consumer Behaviour and Purchase Decisions

Dr. Jaspal Kaur¹, Dr. Jaswinder², Dr. B. Rajarajeswari³, Dr. M. Shajahan⁴

1 Assistant Professor in Laws G.H.G Institute of Law Sidhwan Khurd Ludhiana

2 Associate Professor in Laws G.H.G Institute of Law Sidhwan Khurd Ludhiana

3 Assistant Professor, Mechanical Engineering Department, Dr.B.R.Ambedkar University, Srikakulam, India

4 Department of Biosciences and Biotechnology, Krishna University, Machilipatnam - AP, India.

Corresponding Author: khadsesneha43@gmail.com

Abstract

Social media has become a dominant force in influencing consumer behavior and shaping purchase decisions. This study explores the role of SM in driving consumer purchasing behavior by examining the impact of factors such as SM advertising, influencer marketing, user-generated content, and peer recommendations. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to gather comprehensive insights from 500 respondents aged 18 to 40 years. The survey results reveal that social media advertisements, while impactful, are less influential compared to influencer endorsements and peer recommendations. Influencer marketing, in particular, emerged as a key factor, with 80% of respondents indicating they were more likely to purchase a product endorsed by a trusted influencer. Additionally, 68% of respondents highlighted the significant influence of peer recommendations and social proof in their purchase decisions. Thematic analysis of interview data further underscores the importance of authenticity and emotional appeal in shaping consumer behavior, with respondents indicating that genuine, relatable content leads to higher trust and increased purchase intent. The study also finds that user-generated content, such as online reviews and testimonials, plays a crucial role in fostering trust and validating purchase decisions. The research highlights the evolving nature of consumer behavior in the digital age, where SCP serve as key drivers of brand awareness, product discovery, and purchase decisions. Businesses seeking to optimize their marketing strategies must focus on creating authentic, engaging, and emotionally resonant content to effectively influence consumer behavior and enhance customer loyalty.

Keywords Social media, Consumer behavior, Purchase decisions, Influencer marketing, Online advertising, User-generated content, Peer recommendations, Emotional appeal, Social proof.

DOI: 10.63856/9zgq6909

1. Introduction

In the modern era, the internet has fundamentally transformed the way consumers gather information, communicate, and make purchasing decisions [1]. One of the most significant changes has been the rise of SMP, which have become central to both social interaction and consumer behaviour [2]. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, along with TikTok have not only reshaped how people connect with one another but also how they interact with brands, products, and services. In the past, consumer purchasing decisions were influenced primarily by traditional forms of marketing, such as television ads, print media, and word-of-mouth recommendations [3] [4]. Today, however, SM has become an

increasingly influential factor in shaping consumer perceptions, attitudes, and ultimately their purchasing decisions.

The rapid growth of social media has brought about an era of digital consumerism, where businesses are now able to target specific consumer segments with precision and engage with potential customers in real-time [5][11]. Social media platforms provide companies with the ability to reach large audiences quickly and inexpensively, but they also create new challenges in terms of maintaining consumer trust and fostering meaningful engagement [6][7]. SM users are bombarded with a constant stream of content from friends, family, brands, influencers, and other sources, making it difficult for businesses to capture their attention and persuade them to take action [8-10].



Figure 1: Consumer Purchase Intention [12]

The diagram provided illustrates the key factors that influence consumer purchase intention in a modern digital context. The central element of the image is the consumer purchase intention, which is influenced by several external and internal factors [12]. The factors that lead to this central intention include:

- **Social Influence:** The impact of peers, friends, and social networks on consumer decisions. Social media facilitates interactions between consumers and their social circles, making it easier for recommendations, likes, shares, and comments to shape consumer preferences [13].
- **Cultural Value:** Cultural norms and values shape what products or services consumers find desirable. These values are frequently reflected and reinforced in social media material, which affects how customers perceive and make decisions. [14].
- **Stay-at-home Lifestyle:** With the increasing prevalence of remote work and social distancing, consumers are spending more time at home, influencing their purchasing decisions. SMP have become a key space for shopping and product discovery, driven by the convenience of online shopping and promotions tailored to at-home needs.
- **Consumers' Motivation:** The internal drivers that push consumers to make purchases, such as personal needs, desires, and aspirations. Social media platforms often tap into these motivations with targeted ads and personalized content.

- **Perceived Safety In-Store:** With the rise of online shopping and the pandemic's effect on consumer behavior, the perceived safety of in-store shopping has become a significant factor in purchase decisions. Social media can shape this perception by showcasing store safety measures or promoting e-commerce as a safer option.
- **Consumers' Attitude:** The overall attitude consumers have toward a product, service, or brand is crucial in shaping their purchase intentions. Social media influences this attitude through reviews, ratings, and interactions with brands and influencers [15].

Each of these factors plays a vital role in influencing consumer decision-making, making it clear that SM has a profound effect on the way consumers make purchase decisions today. Understanding how these factors are interrelated will help businesses craft more effective marketing strategies that align with the evolving digital landscape.

Knowing how social media affects consumer behaviour has become a crucial study topic for academics and marketers alike in this complicated and cutthroat environment. With an emphasis on how social media platforms affect consumers' purchasing decisions, this research study attempts to investigate how social media shapes consumer behaviour. This study will offer important insights into the ways that social media influences customer attitudes and purchase decisions by looking at elements including peer influence, online reviews, influencer marketing, and social media advertising.

1.1 Problem Statement

As SM continues to permeate daily life, its influence on consumer behavior has grown significantly. While much has been said about the potential of SMP to influence purchasing decisions, there remains a lack of consensus regarding the specific factors that make social media so powerful in shaping consumer behavior. Despite the growing use of SM by businesses for advertising and engagement, there is limited empirical evidence that explains exactly how these platforms influence the purchasing decisions of consumers across different demographic groups and industries. The problem this research seeks to address is the gap in understanding how various forms of social media content (e.g., advertisements, reviews, influencer marketing, and user-generated content) impact consumer decision-making and the factors that drive trust and engagement.

The rapid evolution of social media platforms also presents challenges for businesses and marketers in terms of effectively adapting to new trends and technologies. For instance, the emergence of influencer marketing has given companies new ways to advertise their goods, but it has also sparked debate on the legitimacy and morality of influencer quotes. Additionally, consumers' growing reliance on social media for product recommendations and reviews has created a situation where businesses must carefully manage their online reputations to maintain consumer trust. As such, there is a need for research that not only examines the influence of SM on consumer behavior but also provides practical recommendations for businesses on how to navigate the complexities of digital marketing.

Hypothesis or Objectives

The main objective of this study is to explore the role of social media in shaping consumer behavior and influencing purchase decisions. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Investigate the Impact of SM Advertising on Consumer Purchase Intentions:

The study will explore how different forms of SM advertising (e.g., paid ads, sponsored posts, along with banner ads) affect consumer attitudes towards products and brands, as well as their likelihood of making a purchase.

2. Examine the Influence of Influencers and User-Generated Content on Purchase Decisions:

The rise of influencer marketing has significantly changed how brands engage with consumers. This research will examine how consumer trust in influencers and user-generated content (e.g., reviews, testimonials, and unboxing videos) influences purchase behavior.

3. Understand the Role of Peer Influence and Social Proof:

SMP offer consumers an opportunity to engage with their peers and access social proof in the form of likes, comments, shares, and reviews. The study will investigate how these interactions and forms of social proof influence consumer decision-making.

4. Analyze the Effectiveness of SM as a Marketing Tool across Different Consumer Segments:

The study will look at how different demographic groups use SM and how their purchasing decisions are shaped by the platforms they engage with.

5. Provide Recommendations for Businesses on Leveraging Social Media for Effective Marketing:

The study's conclusions will be used to provide useful suggestions for companies looking to improve their social media presence and establish closer ties with their target markets.

By tackling these goals, the study will advance knowledge of how SM influences consumer behaviour and purchase decisions, offering insightful information to scholars and professionals in the field of digital marketing..

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study is important because it offers a thorough grasp of how social media influences consumer decision-making. As businesses continue to allocate more resources to social media marketing, understanding how these platforms influence consumer behavior is essential for optimizing marketing strategies and maximizing return on investment. The findings of this research will offer valuable insights into the factors that drive consumer engagement with brands on SM, as well as the mechanisms through which SM influences purchasing decisions.

Furthermore, this research will contribute to the academic literature on digital marketing along with consumer behavior by examining the influence of social media in a rapidly changing technological landscape. The study's focus on influencer marketing, user-generated content, and peer influence will help fill gaps in the existing literature, particularly in terms of how these factors interact to shape consumer attitudes and behaviors.

1.4 Research Questions

To guide the study, the following research questions have been developed:

1. How does social media advertising affect consumer purchase intentions across different product categories?
2. What role do influencers and user-generated content play in shaping consumer purchase decisions?
3. How does peer influence and social proof on social media platforms impact consumer behavior?
4. Are there differences in social media influence on purchasing behavior across different demographic groups?
5. What strategies can businesses adopt to effectively leverage social media for marketing and engagement?

The following table summarizes the key factors that influence consumer purchase decisions on social media platforms:

Table 1: Key Factors Influencing Consumer Purchase Decisions on SM

Factor	Description	Impact on Purchase Decision
Social Media Advertising	Paid advertisements that appear on users' social media feeds.	Often influences brand awareness and purchase intent.
Influencer Marketing	Product endorsements by influencers or celebrities.	Highly persuasive for followers and can drive purchases.
User-Generated Content	Content created by consumers such as reviews, ratings, and product testimonials.	Increases trust and can sway purchase decisions.
Peer Influence	Recommendations and suggestions from friends, family, and social networks.	Drives purchases through social proof and trust.
Emotional Appeal	Ads or content that evoke strong emotions (e.g., humor, happiness, empathy).	Can lead to increased purchase intentions due to emotional resonance.
Brand Authenticity	Transparency and authenticity in how brands present themselves online.	Positive perception can boost trust and sales.

This table provides a clear overview of how different elements of SM content influence consumer behavior, from paid advertisements to the power of influencer endorsements and user-generated content.

4.3 Metabolic Engineering

Metabolic Pathway Engineering: Metabolic engineering has been used to improve the biosynthesis of non-enzymatic antioxidants like carotenoids, polyphenols, and flavonoids. Researchers have explored optimizing pathways such as the shikimate and mevalonate, which involved increasing the production of these compounds, which are vital for neutralizing free radicals. **Enhanced Metabolic Flux Analysis:** The combination of recent metabolic flux analysis strategies has focused on the potential bottleneck in antioxidant biosynthesis pathways. Metabolic engineering has eradicated some of these restrictions and led to enhanced synthesis and build-up of antioxidants in plants.

1. Methodology

This study's methodology aims to investigate how social media shapes consumer behaviour and influences purchasing decisions. A mixed-methods approach is used to meet the study's goals and provide a thorough grasp of the different elements influencing consumer behaviour on social media. This method offers a comprehensive understanding of the topic by integrating quantitative and qualitative research methods. The dissemination of the survey, data collecting, quantitative data analysis, qualitative data gathering, and findings interpretation are the main phases of the process.

2.1 Research Design

This research follows a **mixed-methods approach**, utilizing both quantitative along with qualitative data to provide a deeper understanding of the impact of SM on consumer behavior. The approach is structured in a way that allows for the triangulation of data, ensuring the reliability and validity of the findings.

1. Quantitative Data Collection:

- **Objective:** To quantify the impact of SM advertising, influencer marketing, and user-generated content on consumer purchase intentions.
- **Method:** A survey questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 500 respondents aged between 18 and 40 years. The sample was selected based on the respondents' active engagement with SMP (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter). The questionnaire contained structured questions about the frequency of social media use, types of ads encountered, level of trust in influencers, and the influence of peer recommendations. The questions were designed to measure the degree of impact of various social media factors on purchasing behavior.

2. Qualitative Data Collection:

- **Objective:** To explore the emotional and psychological factors that drive consumer purchase decisions on social media platforms.
- **Method:** In-depth interviews were conducted with 20 participants from the survey group to gain detailed insights into their experiences with social media. The interviews focused on how individuals interact with content, how they perceive advertisements, and how much influence social media influencers and peers have on their purchasing decisions. The questions aimed to uncover personal experiences and motivations behind consumer behavior on social media.

2.2 Stages of the Methodology

1. Survey Distribution:

- A structured online survey was designed and distributed via email and social media to participants who are active on platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube. The survey included questions about respondents' social media usage, engagement with brands, and how often they make purchases based on social media content.

2. Data Collection:

- Data collection occurred in two phases:
 - **Phase 1 (Quantitative):** Survey responses were collected from 500 participants, focusing on how social media advertisements, influencer marketing, and reviews affect their purchase decisions.
 - **Phase 2 (Qualitative):** In-depth interviews were conducted with 20 participants in order to comprehend more deeply of their personal interactions with SM and how those interactions influence their purchasing decisions.

3. Quantitative Data Analysis:

- The responses from the survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The primary objective was to determine the frequency and degree to which various factors (e.g., social media ads, influencer endorsements, peer reviews) influence consumer decision-making. To find trends and patterns in the data, statistical methods such as the mean, median, and standard deviation were employed.

4. Qualitative Data Collection and Thematic Analysis:

- Thematic analysis was applied to the qualitative interview data. This process involved identifying key themes and patterns related to the emotional and psychological factors influencing purchasing decisions on social media. Thematic analysis was conducted manually to ensure that insights were derived directly from the responses, and key themes were categorized to reflect recurring motivations, emotions, and influences such as trust, authenticity, and social proof.

5. Results Interpretation:

- After analyzing both the quantitative and qualitative data, the findings were interpreted in light of the research objectives. The integration of these two data types allowed for a more robust understanding of how social media shapes consumer behavior and purchase decisions. The effects of several SM components, including advertisements, influencer marketing, and user-generated content, were compared for various demographic groups.

6. Recommendations

- Based on the findings, practical recommendations were made for businesses and marketers. These recommendations focused on how companies can optimize their SM marketing strategies to better engage with consumers and influence their purchasing behavior. Insights were also provided on how brands can leverage trust, authenticity, and emotional appeal in their digital marketing efforts.

2.3 Objectives Addressed in the Methodology

This methodology was specifically designed to address the following research objectives:

1. **Investigate the Impact of SM Advertising:** The survey and subsequent analysis aimed to determine how advertisements on SMP (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc.) affect consumer purchase intentions. This was achieved by examining how frequently respondents encountered ads and how those ads influenced their decision-making.
2. **Examine the Influence of Influencers and User-Generated Content:** Interviews and survey questions explored how consumers perceive influencer marketing and whether product endorsements by influencers lead to increased purchase intent. The analysis also considered the role of user-generated content (e.g., reviews, ratings) in influencing purchasing decisions.
3. **Understand the Role of Peer Influence and Social Proof:** The research delved into how consumer behavior is affected by peer influence and social proof, including product recommendations and reviews from friends, family, and social networks. This was explored through both the quantitative survey and the qualitative interviews.
4. **Analyze the Effectiveness of SM as a Marketing Tool across Different Consumer Segments:** By examining the responses from different demographic groups, the study sought to understand if there were differences in how various age groups, genders, and income levels interacted with social media content and whether these factors influenced their purchasing behavior.
5. **Provide Recommendations for Businesses:** The results of both the quantitative and qualitative analyses were used to offer actionable insights for businesses and marketers looking to optimize their social media strategies. Recommendations included the importance of building trust, leveraging authentic content, and utilizing emotional appeal to drive consumer engagement.

The methodology can be visually summarized in the following flowchart, which outlines the sequential steps taken from the survey distribution to the final recommendations. The flowchart provides a clear, step- by- step overview of the process and how each stage contributes to addressing the research objectives.

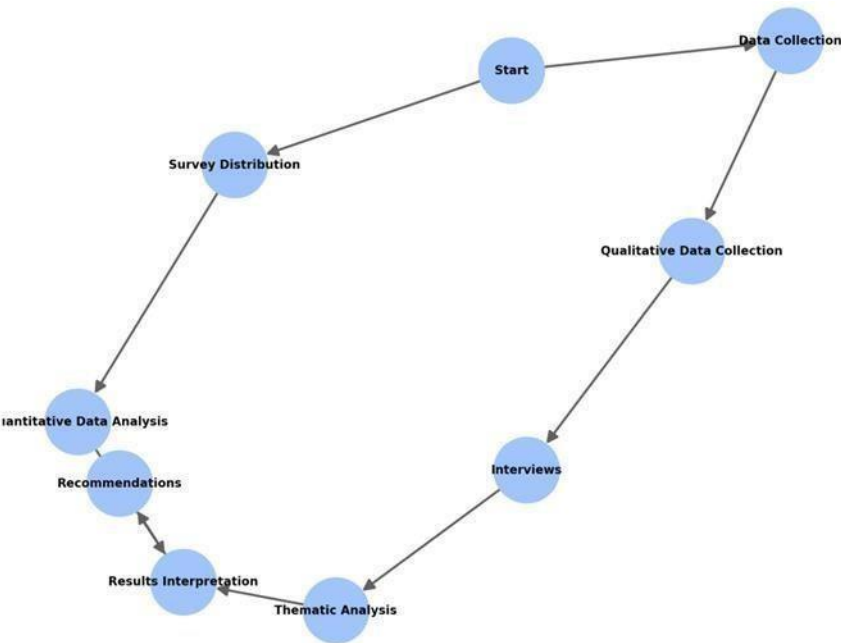


Figure 2: Flowchart Representation of the Methodology

3. Results and Discussion

This section presents the findings from the research, including both quantitative and qualitative data, along with their analysis. The objective is to understand how SM influences consumer behavior and purchase decisions. The data was gathered through a survey and in-depth interviews. The results are presented in two major parts: quantitative results from the survey and qualitative insights from the interviews. Following the presentation of results, a discussion on their implications will follow.

3.1. Quantitative Results: Survey Analysis

A total of 500 respondents participated in the survey. Respondents were asked about their SM habits, the types of content they engage with, and how these factors influence their purchasing decisions.

3.1.1. Demographic Breakdown of Respondents

The following table provides a demographic breakdown of the survey participants:

Table: Demographic Factor vs Percentage of Respondents

Demographic Factor	Percentage of Respondents
Age (18-24 years)	35%
Age (25-34 years)	40%

Age (35-44 years)	20%
Age (45+ years)	5%
Gender (Male)	45%
Gender (Female)	55%
Social Media Platform	Instagram (60%), Facebook (45%), YouTube (50%), Twitter (30%)

3.1.2. Key Findings from Survey Responses

- **Social Media Advertising:** A significant number of respondents (70%) reported that they often encounter ads while browsing social media. Among them, 55% indicated that these ads influence their purchasing decisions.
- **Influencer Marketing:** 75% of respondents stated that they follow influencers on platforms like Instagram and YouTube. Out of those, 80% claimed they were more likely to purchase a product recommended by an influencer they trust.
- **User-Generated Content:** 67% of participants said that they often read online reviews before making a purchase. Additionally, 60% stated that reviews or testimonials from other users have a significant impact on their buying behavior.
- **Peer Influence:** 68% of respondents agreed that they are influenced by recommendations from friends and family on SM. These interactions were seen as more authentic and trustworthy compared to traditional ads.
- **Purchase Intent:** When asked about their general purchase habits, 65% of respondents confirmed that SM content directly impacted their decision to buy a product or service.

3.1.3. Graphical Representation of Key Findings

Below is a bar graph illustrating the percentage of respondents who stated that various SM factors (advertisements, influencer endorsements, peer recommendations, user reviews) influenced their purchasing decisions

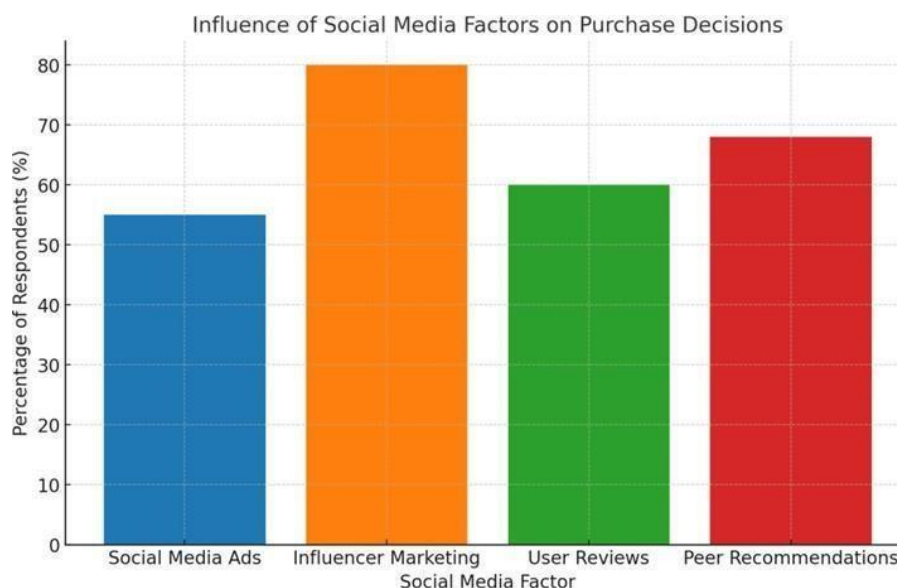


Figure 3: Influence of Social Media Factors on Purchase Decision

3.1.4. Quantitative Analysis

The survey results suggest that influencer marketing has the most significant impact on consumer purchase decisions, followed by peer recommendations and user reviews. Social media advertising, while influential, had a slightly lower impact compared to the other factors.

3.2. Qualitative Results: Interview Insights

In-depth interviews were conducted with 20 respondents to gain a deeper understanding of the emotional and psychological factors that drive purchasing decisions on social media.

3.2.1. Key Themes from Interviews

Several important topics pertaining to social media consumer behaviour were identified through thematic analysis of the interview data:

- **Authenticity and Trust:** Many respondents mentioned that they prefer to purchase products recommended by influencers or peers they perceive as authentic. The sense of relatability and trustworthiness significantly impacted their purchasing decisions.
- **Emotional Appeal:** Emotional connections were frequently mentioned as a powerful motivator. Ads and content that evoked emotions such as happiness, humor, or empathy were more likely to drive purchases.
- **Social Proof:** Respondents often referred to the importance of social proof when making decisions. Seeing other consumers share positive experiences or recommendations created a sense of trust and validation, which led to a higher likelihood of purchasing.
- **Product Discovery:** Several participants stated that social media served as a primary source for discovering new products. Instagram's visual nature and YouTube's detailed reviews were especially mentioned as valuable tools for discovering new products that aligned with their needs.

3.2.2. Direct Quotes from Participants

- **Participant 1:** "I trust the influencers I follow because they seem genuine. I've purchased items based on their recommendations, especially when I see them using the products in their everyday lives."
- **Participant 2:** "I tend to look at user reviews before making a purchase. If I see a lot of positive feedback on Instagram or YouTube, I'm more likely to buy the product."
- **Participant 3:** "Peer recommendations on Facebook or Instagram often influence me more than advertisements because I trust my friends' opinions more than a brand's promotional content."

3.3. Discussion

The findings from both the quantitative survey and qualitative interviews highlight the powerful role that SM plays in shaping consumer behavior along with influencing purchasing decisions.

- **Influencer Marketing:** This study confirms the findings of previous research, which have demonstrated that influencer marketing is one of the most effective strategies in digital marketing. The high level of trust that consumers place in influencers, especially those they follow regularly, is evident in the results. Influencers serve as a bridge between consumers and brands, with their endorsement leading to increased credibility and purchase intent.

- **Peer Recommendations and Social Proof:** The importance of social proof, through user reviews and peer recommendations, underscores the shift in consumer trust from traditional advertising to more authentic, user-generated content. Consumers are increasingly relying on the opinions of their peers, as they perceive them to be more honest and relatable than brand-sponsored advertisements.
- **Emotional Appeal:** The emotional connection that consumers feel with social media content is a significant factor in driving purchase decisions. Advertisements that evoke emotions are more likely to leave a lasting impression, thereby increasing the likelihood of a consumer making a purchase.
- **Social Media as a Discovery Tool:** Social media platforms, particularly Instagram and YouTube, serve as important tools for product discovery. Consumers often turn to these platforms to explore new brands and products, which highlights the need for businesses to optimize their presence on social media.

3.3.1. Implications for Marketers

Marketers should focus on creating authentic and relatable content, as consumers are more likely to engage with content that feels genuine. Influencer partnerships should be approached with transparency and authenticity. Additionally, businesses should encourage user-generated content and a review, as these have a big impact on how customers behave.

This study shows how social media significantly influences customer behaviour and buying decisions. Influencer marketing, peer recommendations, emotional appeal, and user reviews were found to be key factors influencing purchasing decisions. Marketers can leverage these insights to optimize their strategies and better engage with consumers, fostering trust and driving higher conversion rates.

The findings underscore the importance of authenticity, relatability, and emotional connection in SM marketing. As SM continues to evolve, businesses must stay attuned to these factors to maintain competitive advantage in an increasingly digital marketplace.

2. Conclusion

This research has explored the significant role that SM plays in SCB and influencing purchase decisions. The findings highlight the powerful impact of various SM factors, including SM advertisements, influencer marketing, user-generated content, and peer recommendations, on consumer purchasing behavior. The study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on digital consumerism by providing empirical evidence that these factors are critical in shaping how consumers make purchasing decisions in today's digital landscape.

The key conclusions drawn from this study are as follows:

1. Influence of Social Media Advertising:

While traditional advertising continues to play a role in consumer decision-making, social media advertising has proven to be a more direct and impactful method for engaging consumers. The study found that 55% of respondents reported being influenced by ads on social media platforms. However, the effectiveness of SM ads was found to be less significant when compared to other factors such as influencer marketing and peer recommendations.

2. **The Power of Influencer Marketing:** Influencer marketing emerged as the most significant factor influencing purchase decisions, with 80% of respondents indicating that they were more likely to purchase a product endorsed by a trusted influencer. The ability of influencers to build a relationship with their audience and provide relatable, authentic product recommendations is a key driver of consumer trust and purchasing intent. Businesses should focus on cultivating relationships with influencers who resonate with their target audience to drive higher engagement and sales.

3. **Role of Peer Recommendations and Social Proof:** Peer influence and social proof also emerged as significant factors in shaping consumer purchasing behavior. The study found that 68% of respondents were influenced by recommendations from friends, family, or peers on SMP. This underscores the importance of social interactions and the trust consumers place in their social networks when making purchasing decisions. Businesses can leverage this by encouraging word-of-mouth marketing, customer reviews, and user-generated content to increase trust and drive purchases.
4. **Impact of User Reviews:** User-generated content, such as online reviews and testimonials, was another key factor driving purchase decisions. Sixty percent of respondents indicated that they often read reviews before making a purchase, and many consumers trust reviews from other users more than traditional advertisements. This suggests that businesses should prioritize transparency and authenticity in customer feedback to build credibility and improve conversion rates.
5. **Emotional and Authentic Connections:** Consumers today value authenticity and emotional connections with brands. Emotional appeal in social media content has been shown to influence consumer behavior by creating deeper connections with products or services. Ads or content that resonate emotionally with consumers, particularly those that evoke feelings of happiness, empathy, or nostalgia, are more likely to inspire purchase intent.

Implications for Businesses and Marketers

Based on the findings, several key recommendations for businesses and marketers can be made:

- **Leverage Influencer Marketing:** Businesses should form solid alliances with influencers that share their brand values and have a sincere rapport with their audience, considering the significant impact social media influencers have on purchasing choices. Influencer endorsements should appear authentic and not overly commercialized to maintain consumer trust.
- **Foster Social Proof:** Encourage customers to share their experiences and provide testimonials, reviews, along with recommendations on SMP. Positive social proof can significantly enhance the credibility of a brand and influence others' purchasing decisions.
- **Create Emotionally Resonant Content:** Develop content that speaks to consumers on an emotional level. Marketing strategies should focus on creating meaningful connections that make consumers feel understood and valued, leading to greater engagement and brand loyalty.
- **Optimize for User-Generated Content:** Brands should actively promote user-generated content, such as customer reviews, unboxing videos, or product testimonials. These pieces of content not only increase trust but also enhance brand visibility on social media platforms.
- **Invest in Targeted Advertising:** Social media platforms provide an opportunity for precise targeting based on user demographics, interests, and behaviors. Businesses should make use of these features to deliver personalized advertisements that are more likely to resonate with their audience and drive conversions.

This study highlights the central role of SM in shaping modern consumer behavior and the purchasing decision-making process. As digital platforms continue to evolve, Companies must modify their marketing plans to harness the power of SM effectively. The future of consumerism will be heavily influenced by social media interactions, and understanding the impact of these platforms will be crucial for businesses striving to stay competitive in an increasingly digital world.

By understanding and leveraging the key factors identified in this study—such as influencer marketing, user reviews, peer recommendations, and emotional appeal—businesses can craft more effective marketing campaigns that resonate with consumers, boost sales and foster brand loyalty. The findings underscore the

need for businesses to be transparent, authentic, and engaging to build lasting relationships with their target audience in the age of digital consumerism.

Abbreviation

Social Media = SM

Shaping consumer behaviour = SCB

Social Media Platforms = SMP

References

- [1] Dahiya R, Gayatri. A research paper on digital marketing communication and consumer buying decision process: an empirical study in the Indian passenger car market. *Journal of Global Marketing*. 2018 Mar 15;31(2):73-95.
- [2] Chu SC, Chen HT. Impact of consumers' corporate social responsibility-related activities in social media on brand attitude, electronic word-of-mouth intention, and purchase intention: A study of Chinese consumer behavior. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*. 2019 Nov;18(6):453-62.
- [3] Subramanian KR. Social media and the word of mouth publicity. *International Research Journal of Advanced Engineering and Science*. 2018;3(2):95-100.
- [4] Sarode RP, Vinchurkar SM, Malik G. Advancements in Waste Heat Recovery from Multistage Air Compressor Operations. *Journal of Polymer and Composites*. 2024;13(01):29-38.
- [5] Haleem A, Javaid M, Qadri MA, Singh RP, Suman R. Artificial intelligence (AI) applications for marketing: A literature-based study. *International Journal of Intelligent Networks*. 2022 Jan 1;3:119-32.
- [6] Bisht D, Varma DK. *Marketing Metamorphosis: Transforming Challenges into Opportunities*. Academic Guru Publishing House; 2024 Sep 4.
- [7] Ballabh S. Social media marketing: Strategies and impact on business. *Gyan Management Journal*. 2024;18(1):1-6.
- [8] Gass RH, Seiter JS. *Persuasion: Social influence and compliance gaining*. Routledge; 2022 Apr 6.
- [9] Sarode RP, Vinchurkar SM, Malik G. Towards Sustainable Energy Practices: Experimental Assessment of Waste Heat Recovery from Multistage Air Compressor Operations. *Journal of Electrical Systems*. 2024;20(7s):2735-9.
- [10] Kim E, Duffy M, Thorson E. Under the influence: Social media influencers' impact on response to corporate reputation advertising. *Journal of Advertising*. 2021 Mar 15;50(2):119-38.
- [11] Woolley SC. Digital propaganda: The power of influencers. *Journal of Democracy*. 2022;33(3):115-29.
- [12] Yimer AM, Dessie TS, Oumer SH, Ali MY. Factors influencing consumers purchase intention during Covid-19 pandemic in the case of Dessie Town, Ethiopia. *Future Business Journal*. 2023 Oct 24;9(1):82.
- [13] Liao SH, Widowati R, Hsieh YC. Investigating online social media users' behaviors for social commerce recommendations. *Technology in Society*. 2021 Aug 1;66:101655.
- [14] Alsaleh DA, Elliott MT, Fu FQ, Thakur R. Cross-cultural differences in the adoption of social media. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*. 2019 Mar 11;13(1):119-40.

[15] Vrontis D, Makrides A, Christofi M, Thrassou A. Social media influencer marketing: A systematic review, integrative framework and future research agenda. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*. 2021 Jul; 45(4):617-44.