

A STUDY ON IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PALAKKAD DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

This study analyses the impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour in Palakkad District. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analysed using percentage analysis and chi-square tests. The findings show high social media engagement among young consumers, a strong preference for online shopping, and significant influence of platforms like Instagram and YouTube. The study highlights the effectiveness of social media marketing in shaping consumer perception and purchase decisions.

INTRODUCTION

In the digital era, social media has become a powerful tool influencing consumer buying behaviour. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter are widely used by businesses to promote products, engage customers, and build brand awareness. Consumers today actively interact with brands through advertisements, reviews, influencer content, and peer recommendations, which significantly shape their purchase decisions. This study focuses on understanding the impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour in Palakkad District, where increasing internet penetration and smartphone usage have transformed traditional shopping patterns.

Key words: Social Media Marketing, Consumer Buying Behaviour, Online Shopping, Digital Advertising, Brand Influence

Research background

The rapid growth of social media has changed how businesses interact with consumers and influence buying behaviour. With increased internet and smartphone usage, consumers depend on social media for product information and reviews. In semi-urban areas like Palakkad District, social media marketing is gaining importance, but limited research exists on its impact.

Objectives of the study

- To analyse the impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour.
- To examine how social media content and engagement influence consumer perception.
- To identify the factors that motivate consumers to purchase products through social media platforms.

Statement of the problem

Despite the growing use of social media marketing by businesses in Palakkad District, there is limited understanding of how these marketing efforts influence consumer buying behaviour. Many local businesses face challenges in identifying effective social media strategies that convert engagement into actual purchases. Hence, this study attempts to analyse the relationship between social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour to provide insights for improving marketing effectiveness.

Scope of the study

The study focuses on consumers in Palakkad District and examines the role of major social media platforms in influencing buying behaviour. It covers aspects such as social media usage, online shopping preferences, brand following, impulse buying, and perception changes. The findings may also be useful for businesses in other semi-urban regions with similar consumer characteristics.

Limitations of the study

- The study is restricted to Palakkad District, limiting generalisation to other regions.
- The sample size is limited and may not represent all consumer segments.
- Responses are based on consumer perception and may involve personal bias.
- Time constraints restrict the study of long-term behavioural changes.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sampling plan

The study uses a Convenience sampling technique. A sample size of 150 respondents was chosen to ensure fair representation. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire, providing unbiased and reliable information for analysing training and development effectiveness.

Convenience sampling

The type of research used in this project is convenience in nature. The main goal of this type is to describe the data and characteristics about what is being studied. Convenience sampling is a type of non-probability sampling that involves the sample being drawn from that part of the population that is close to hand.

Methods of the study

Data was gathered from both primary and secondary sources of information. The questionnaire is the source of collecting primary data and the secondary data are collected from various books, journals, websites.

1. **Primary data** – Primary data refers to information collected first hand for the first time. In this study, primary data was gathered using a well-designed structured questionnaire, and the required information was collected through Google Forms.

2. **Secondary data** – secondary data is a type of data that has been collected in the past. It includes various information's from books, websites etc.

Statistical tool

- Percentage Analysis
- Chi square

Percentage Analysis

Percentage analysis is a statistical tool used to analyse and interpret the data collected from respondents. It helps in understanding the distribution of responses and comparing different categories in a simple and meaningful manner.

The formula used for percentage analysis is:

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{Total Number of Respondents}}{\text{Number of Respondents}} \times 100$$

Chi- square

Chi-square is a statistical test commonly used to compare observed data with data one would expect to obtain according to specific hypothesis. The chi-square test is always testing what scientists call the null hypothesis, between the expected and observed states that there is no significant difference result.

The formula for calculating:

$$\text{Chi-square} = (O-E)^2/E$$

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Percentage Analysis

- The majority of respondents are young adults (18–30 years), indicating higher social media engagement among youth.
- Online shopping is preferred by most respondents, showing a strong shift towards digital purchasing.
- Instagram and YouTube are the most influential social media platforms affecting buying decisions.
- A significant proportion of respondents reported changed perception and impulse purchases due to social media marketing.
- Most consumers follow brands on social media and discover new products through online platforms, highlighting the effectiveness of social media marketing.

Chi-square Analysis

Chi-square analysis between age and change in perception due to social media marketing

Null hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant relationship between age and change in perception due to social media marketing.

Alternative hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant relationship between age and change in perception due to social media marketing.

Test	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.465	8	0.902
Likelihood Ratio	3.433	8	0.904
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.225	1	0.635
N of Valid Cases	150		

Interpretation: Since $p = 0.902 > 0.05$, H_0 is accepted, indicating that age does not significantly influence perception changes due to social media marketing. Respondents across all age groups react similarly, allowing marketers to apply uniform strategies.

Chi-square analysis between Gender and change in perception due to social media marketing

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant relationship between gender and change in perception due to social media marketing.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant relationship between gender and change in perception due to social media marketing.

Test	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.490	2	0.003
Likelihood Ratio	11.964	2	0.003
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.059	1	0.080
N of Valid Cases	150		

Interpretation: Since $p = 0.003 < 0.05$, H_0 is rejected, showing that gender significantly influences perception changes due to social media marketing. Male and female respondents respond differently, indicating the need for gender-specific marketing strategies.

Findings

- The majority of respondents are young adults (18–30 years), showing higher engagement with social media platforms.
- Most respondents prefer online shopping, indicating a strong shift toward digital purchasing behaviour.
- Instagram and YouTube are the most influential platforms affecting consumers' buying decisions.
- Age does not significantly influence changes in consumer perception due to social media marketing, suggesting similar responses across all age groups.
- Gender significantly influences perception changes, indicating that male and female consumers respond differently to social media marketing strategies.

Suggestions

Businesses should focus more on visually engaging platforms like Instagram and YouTube to influence consumer buying decisions. Since gender affects perception changes, marketers should adopt gender specific promotional strategies. Emphasis should also be placed on trust-building elements such as genuine reviews, transparent product information, and consistent engagement to convert social media users into loyal customers.

Conclusion

The study concludes that social media marketing plays a significant role in influencing consumer buying behaviour in Palakkad District. Young consumers show high engagement, and online shopping preferences are strongly shaped by social media platforms. While age does not affect perception changes, gender differences highlight the need for targeted marketing strategies. Overall, effective use of social media marketing can enhance brand awareness, influence purchasing decisions, and improve business performance.

Review of literature

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