



An empirical analysis of social media advertising on consumer decision-making behaviour with special reference to Cuddalore District

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Abstract

Purpose: The goal of this study is to experimentally examine the impact of social media marketing on customer purchase behaviour in online shopping platforms, concentrating on how digital interactions influence decision-making processes.

Design / Methodology / Approach: The study uses a quantitative methodology with a descriptive and analytical research design. A systematic questionnaire was used to gather primary data from 270 respondents. To analyse the data and find trends in customer behaviour about social media marketing, statistical techniques like percentage analysis were employed.

Findings: According to the report, social media has a big impact on how consumers make decisions. The most popular platforms are YouTube and Instagram, demonstrating the significance of visual and video content. Advertisements on social media do a good job of gaining attention, but customer reactions differ. Purchase decisions are heavily influenced by trust in marketed products as well as the influence of reviews and comments. The most effective incentives for purchasing behaviour are discounts and special offers. With some degree of consumer scepticism, influencer marketing has a moderate impact. In general, commercials alone are not as important in influencing consumer choices as trust, involvement, and promotional tactics.

Keywords: Social media marketing, consumer behaviour, online shopping, purchase decision, digital advertising, e-commerce

Introduction

Digital technology's explosive expansion has completely changed how companies interact with their customers, particularly on social media. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and Telegram have become effective tools for brand promotion and advertising in recent years. Businesses may reach a larger audience, produce tailored content, and interact with customers instantly with social media advertising. By affecting attitudes, preferences, and purchasing intentions, it has a significant impact on how consumers make decisions. Today's consumers rely a lot on the information, reviews, opinions of influencers, and promotional content found on these platforms. Social media's interactive features enable customers to actively engage in the marketing process, increasing their knowledge and discernment. In this regard, it is now crucial for researchers and marketers to comprehend how social media advertising influences customer choices.

The Cuddalore District offers a suitable environment for this kind of research due to its rising smartphone usage and internet penetration. The area is appropriate for empirical investigation since it exhibits a mix of urban and semi-urban consumer behaviour patterns. YouTube places more emphasis on video-based promotions, whereas Facebook and Instagram advertisements prioritise visual attractiveness and influencer involvement. While Telegram is becoming more and more popular for direct marketing and community building, Twitter is a platform for brand communication and real-time updates. Every platform has a unique impact on customer awareness and decision-making. The purpose of this study is to investigate how social media advertising affects different phases of consumer decision-making, such as need identification, information search, alternative evaluation, and purchase choice. Additionally, it looks for the platforms that have the greatest influence over

Cuddalore District consumers. By examining these elements, the report offers insightful information that helps companies create successful digital marketing plans. In the end, the study emphasises how social media is becoming increasingly important in influencing contemporary consumer behaviour.

Statement of the problem

There is no scientific evidence on how social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and Telegram affect consumers' decision-making in semi-urban areas like Cuddalore District, despite the quick expansion of social media advertising. Despite being exposed to a variety of advertising content, consumers' reactions and behavioural shifts are still confusing and inconsistent. The particular social media platform that has the biggest influence on various phases of the consumer decision-making process is not well understood. Additionally, marketers have difficulties due to differences in customer understanding, preferences, and trust regarding social media advertising.

Objectives of the study

1. To examine the impact of social media advertising on consumer decision-making behaviour in Cuddalore District.

Research methodology

The present research uses a quantitative research approach, concentrating on gathering and analysing numerical data to comprehend how social media advertising affects consumer decision-making behaviour. In order to assess consumer knowledge, attitudes, and purchasing behaviour about social media marketing in Cuddalore District, the study is descriptive in nature. In particular, it looks at how social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and Telegram affect how consumers make decisions.

Sample design

The primary data used in the study was gathered via a standardised questionnaire. The survey asks about customer perception, degree of trust, exposure to social media advertising, demographic profile, and the impact of commercials on purchasing decisions. 270 respondents, collected from various Cuddalore District zones, make up the study's total sample size.

S. No	Cuddalore Zone	No. of Respondents
1	Cuddalore Zone	70
2	Chidambaram Zone	65
3	Neyveli Zone	80
4	Panruti Zone	55
	Total	270

Based on Primary Data

The respondents' distribution shows diversity among the chosen zones. With 80 responses, Neyveli Zone has the largest presence, followed by Cuddalore Zone with 70. Panruti Zone has the lowest representation (55 responses), whereas Chidambaram Zone has a moderate presence (65 respondents). Variations in social media usage and population density between the zones are reflected in this fluctuation.

Statistical tools

To analyse the gathered data, the study uses simple statistical tools including percentage analysis. This approach aids in determining trends, patterns, and the degree of consumer reaction to social media advertising. Additionally, it makes it easier to comprehend how different platforms affect different phases of customer decision-making behaviour.

Review of literature

Ziyadin, S., *et al.*, (2021) ^[1] This article examines newly released studies on social media users. Five subjects are emphasised: mobile settings, online rumours (WOM), consumer digital culture, reactions to digital advertising, and the influence of social media on consumer behaviour. The essay looks at how customers interact with, are impacted by, and are affected by the digital world they live in on a daily basis. There is still much to learn, and the knowledge that is now available tends to concentrate disproportionately on word-of-mouth (WOM), which is only one aspect of the digital customer experience. To urge researchers to take into account a broader spectrum of occurrences, a number of study directions have been suggested. Akayleh, F. A. (2021) ^[2] This study aims to examine how e-marketing affects

customers in Riyadh City, Saudi Arabia. Simple random sampling is used in the quantitative research methodology. A questionnaire was given to a sample of 1,425 social media users in order to gather data. The study's variables include social media advertising as a separate variable and consumer purchasing decisions as a dependent variable. Moderating factors included age, gender, income, education level, and culture. The study's findings show that social media advertising has a big impact on consumers' purchasing decisions. The association between consumer purchasing decisions and social media advertising is significantly moderated by consumer gender, age, and culture, while income and education have little influence. This study is groundbreaking since it examines how social media marketing influences customers' purchasing decisions in the setting of Riyadh City.

Varghese, S., *et al.*, (2021) ^[3] This study examines how consumers make difficult purchases, with a focus on how social media use affects this process. In this case, the term "complex buying behaviour" refers to the consumer's occasional but highly involved purchases that significantly impact the brand. Social media is starting to gain popularity. User-generated web technologies, such as blogs, social networks, and social media websites, have grown significantly during the past ten years on the World Wide Web. All in all, this is referred to as social media, and these technologies are the real cause of the growth of user-generated content, a global community. Online platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter have emerged as a result of social media, allowing individuals to interact with one another and exchange ideas and content.

Sheela, E., *et al.*, (2025) ^[4] The study used a self-administered questionnaire to collect data using a quantitative descriptive study methodology. People who frequently use social media in the Western Province make up the study's population. To represent the community, a sample of 200 customers was chosen. Since the study's goal is to comprehend how each independent variable affects the selected dependent variable, regression and correlation analysis were used to investigate the theories. The study's conclusions showed that using social media for advertising had a positive effect on consumers' purchasing decisions in the clothing sector. Four of the variables are independent of one another. Buyer behaviour has been proven to be significantly influenced by three factors: platform used, frequency of consumption, and type of content. The fourth parameter, engagement rate, has no statistically meaningful impact. The discovery has important ramifications for the clothing sector as well.

Table 1: Respondents Based on the Gender

S. No	Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Male	160	59
2	Female	65	24
3	Trigender	45	17
	Total	270	100

Source: Primary data

According to the table 1, The distribution of respondents by gender in the Cuddalore District survey is displayed in the table. Male participants are more prevalent in the survey, as seen by the fact that 160 respondents, or 59% of the total, are male.

65 responders, or 24% of the total, are female, indicating a relatively low level of involvement. In the meantime, 45 respondents (17%) fall into the transgender category, indicating a noteworthy representation of a variety of gender categories.

Table 2: Social Media Users

S. No	Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Facebook	42	15
2	Instagram	74	27
3	Twitter	48	18
4	Youtube	66	24
5	Telegram	40	15
	Total	270	100

Source: Primary data

From the table 2, The flow of respondents according to how they use various social media platforms in Cuddalore

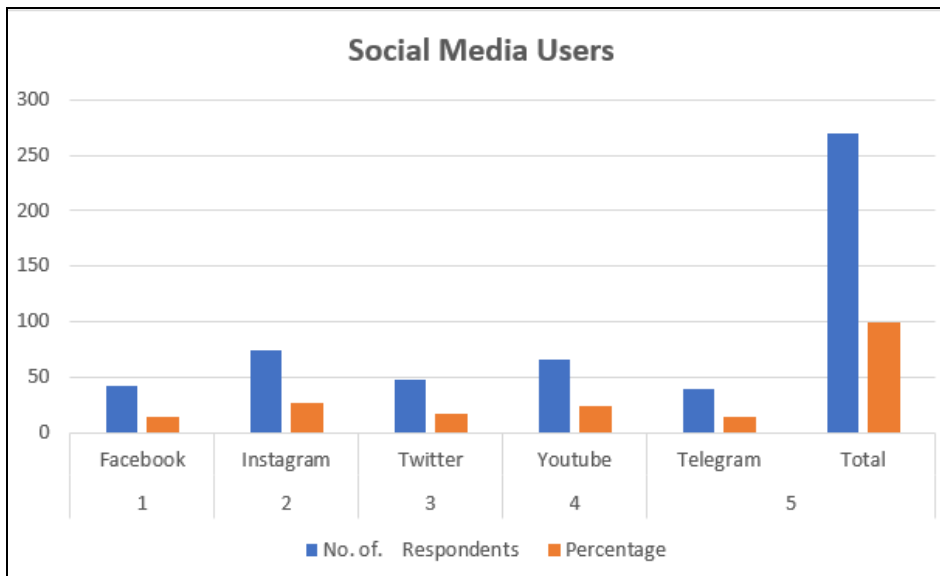


Table 3: Consumer Decision-Making Behaviour

S. No		SA	A	N	DA	SDA	TOTAL
1	Social media advertisements attract my attention.	68	64	55	50	88	270
		25	24	20	19	12	100
2	Influencer promotions affect my buying behaviour.	58	68	48	33	63	270
		22	25	18	12	23	100
3	I trust product advertised on social media platforms	96	53	60	45	16	270
		34	20	23	17	6	100
4	Reviews and comments on social media platforms	63	88	33	55	31	270
		23	33	12	20	12	100
5	Discounts and offers in ads motivate me to buy products.	78	63	57	47	25	270
		29	23	21	18	9	100

Source: Primary data

From the table 3, which offers a clear example of how social media influences customer decision-making in the Cuddalore District. With 68 respondents (25%) strongly agreeing and 64 respondents (24%) agreeing, the data demonstrates that social media ads play a significant role in drawing in consumer attention. However, a sizable portion (31%) expressed neutral to negative opinions, indicating mixed perceptions about ad effectiveness. Regarding influencer promotions, 35% of respondents were ambivalent or disagreed, indicating some scepticism, whereas 58 respondents (22%) strongly agreed and 68 respondents (25%) agreed that influencers had a moderate but significant impact on their purchasing habits. More than half of the respondents rely on social media marketing when evaluating products, as evidenced by the biggest percentage of respondents—96 (34%)—strongly agreeing and 53 (20%) agreeing. With 63 respondents (23%) strongly agreeing and 88 respondents (33%) agreeing, reviews and comments have

District is shown in the table. With 74 respondents (27%), Instagram has the most users, demonstrating its high level of consumer popularity and influence. With 66 respondents (24%), YouTube comes in second, indicating a strong desire for video-based material. 48 respondents (18%) use Twitter, indicating a moderate level of information and update usage. Facebook and Telegram, on the other hand, had 42 (15%) and 40 (15%) answers, respectively, showing relatively lower but nonetheless noteworthy usage. Overall, the results indicate that, in comparison to other platforms, visually appealing and content-rich sites like YouTube and Instagram have a greater influence on customer behaviour.

a major impact on consumer attitudes and buying decisions. Lastly, 78 respondents (29%) strongly agreed and 63 respondents (23%) agreed that discounts and offers in advertisements appear to be a powerful motivating element, indicating that price incentives are highly effective in pushing customer purchases. Overall, the results reveal that while influencer marketing has a moderate impact on customer decision-making, trust, peer evaluations, and promotional incentives (such as discounts) have a greater influence than commercials alone.

Finding

1. Compared to other gender categories, men make up the majority of responses (59%), suggesting more participation and potentially greater engagement with social media sites.
2. The largest user bases are seen on Instagram (27%) and YouTube (24%), indicating that platforms with visually

- appealing and video-based content have a greater impact on consumer behaviour.
3. While Facebook (15%) and Telegram (15%) have relatively less user influence, Tweet (18%) exhibits considerable usage, primarily for updates and information.
 4. There is scepticism because a sizable portion of respondents are ambivalent or disagree, despite the fact that influencer promotions have a somewhat good impact on purchasing behaviour (47% positive reaction).
 5. Products advertised on social media are trusted by more than half of the respondents (54%), indicating that trust is a significant factor affecting purchasing decisions.
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Suggestions

1. As YouTube and Instagram have the highest user engagement, businesses should focus their advertising efforts there. Producing visually engaging and video-based content has the potential to greatly increase consumer attention and impact purchasing decisions.
2. Businesses should promote honest customer evaluations, give correct product information, and refrain from misleading marketing since trust and reviews have a significant impact on consumer behaviour. Reducing consumer scepticism can also be achieved by working with reputable influencers.
3. Discounts, special deals, and promotional activities should be highlighted by marketers because they are powerful inducers of purchases. Furthermore, interactive tactics like comments, feedback, and customer engagement initiatives can increase client interest and loyalty.

Conclusion

The study comes to the conclusion that social media advertising significantly affects Cuddalore District consumers' decision-making behaviour at many phases, including awareness, assessment, and purchase decisions. Due of their visually appealing and captivating content, which draws a greater number of users, platforms like YouTube and Instagram play a prominent role. Social media ads do a good job of grabbing consumers' attention, but their effects vary because some consumers are indifferent or dubious. Consumer impressions and buying intentions are significantly influenced by social media marketing, reviews, and comments. Influencer marketing has a moderate impact, which suggests that greater authenticity and credibility are required. Furthermore, it has been discovered that discounts and promotional offers are powerful inducers that influence consumer purchasing decisions. Overall, the study shows that social media is a useful marketing tool, although its efficacy is mostly dependent on interaction tactics, content quality, and trust.

References

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