

Czech University of Life Sciences Prague

Faculty of Economics and Management

Department of Economics



Diploma Thesis

**The Influence of Social Network on Online Purchasing
Behaviour of Consumers**

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DIPLOMA THESIS ASSIGNMENT

Bc. Satish Kumar Sharmar

Economics Policy and Administration
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Thesis title

The Influence of Social Network on Online Purchasing Behavior of Consumers

Objectives of thesis

The main objective of this thesis is to study the influence of social network on the online purchasing behavior of consumers. The sub-goals of the thesis are mentioned below:

1. To evaluate and make recommendation regarding popular social media platforms.
2. To evaluate the factors that motivates buyers to shop through social media platforms.
3. To evaluate how social media affects the buying behaviour of consumers.
4. To identify the challenges associated with the use of social media in online shopping.

Methodology

The thesis is divided into two sections

First section will concentrate on the published literature that is currently accessible on this subject to provide a comprehensive picture of the current level of understanding on the present topic. Second section will concentrate on the primary data, a quantitative research will be conducted and the data will be obtained using the questionnaire survey method via google forms from country India. A link to the questionnaire will be circulated through the social media platforms like Whatsapp, Instagram, Facebook, Etc. A sample size of 160 is selected looking at the prevalent Covid-19 conditions and due to time and resource boundations. The data collected will be analyzed using SPSS software and Microsoft office excel.

The proposed extent of the thesis

60 – 80 pages

Keywords

Social Media Platform, Online Consumer Behavior, Buying Behavior, Social Media Influence, Information Search

Recommended information sources

An examination of the factors affecting consumer's purchase decision in the Malaysian retail market." PSU Research Review (2018)

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Declaration

I declare that I have worked on my diploma thesis titled "The Influence of Social Network on Online Purchasing Behaviour of Consumers" by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the diploma thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break copyrights of any their person.

In Prague on date of submission

_____ 23,11,2021

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Any assignment, even if conducted independently, cannot be finished without the assistance of a variety of sources who assist directly or indirectly in the completion of the project

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The Influence of Social Network on Online Purchasing Behaviour of Consumers

Abstract

The primary goal of this study is to look into the relationship between social media and online purchasing behaviour of consumers. This study defines various aspects of social media marketing that influence people's purchasing behaviour. This study's primary research approach is quantitative, and an online survey is conducted in country India, to evaluate the elements of social media influencing customer buying behaviour and decision making. In addition to the quantitative data analysis, the author attempted to analyse consumer behaviour shifts using the available literature related to the topic leading to some interesting revelations. The results gathered during this study demonstrate the importance of social media on purchase decisions and, in particular, information searching. Shoppers are keen to utilise social media as a platform and to access an infinite amount of information in the matter of seconds. Shoppers are also receptive to new ideas and pay attention to tailored marketing on social media platforms, and they are not frightened to buy them.

Keywords: Social Media Platform, Online Consumer Behaviour, Buying Behaviour, Social Media Influence, Information Search

Vliv sociální sítě na chování spotřebitelů při nákupu na internetu

Abstrakt

Hlavním cílem této studie je zaměřením se na vztah mezi sociálními médii a chováním spotřebitelů při online nakupování. Tato studie vymezuje různé aspekty, jak marketing sociálních médií ovlivňuje nákupní chování lidí. Ve studii je primárně využitý kvantitativní výzkum, online výzkum byl proveden v rámci Indie ke zhodnocení, jak součástí sociálních médií ovlivňuje nakupování spotřebitelů a jejich rozhodování. Dále v rámci kvantitativní analýzy se autor pokouší analyzovat posun ve spotřebitelském chování, je použita dostupná literatura ve vztahu k hlavnímu tématu, aby se došlo k relevantním vztahům. Výsledky, ke kterým se dospělo v rámci této studie, poukazují na význam sociálních médií při nákupních rozhodnutích, spotřebitelé si vyhledávají specifické informace. Zákazníci využívají sociální média jako platformu a mají během chvíli přístup k nekonečnému množství informací. Nakupující jsou také otevření novým nápadům a věnují pozornost marketingu na míru na platformách sociálních médií a nebojí se nakupovat.

Klíčová slova: Platforma sociálních médií, chování spotřebitelů online, nákupní chování, vliv sociálních médií, vyhledávání informací

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List of abbreviations

SPSS - Statistical Package for Social Sciences

SNS - Social Networking Site
eWOM - Electronic Word-of-Mouth
URL - Universal Resource Locator
UI - User Interface
VR - Virtual Reality
AR - Augmented Reality

Chapter-1

Introduction

As social websites and applications grow and spread, social media is becoming an increasingly important part of online life. The majority of traditional online media include social features like comment fields for subscribers. Social media is used in business to market items, increase brand awareness, communicate with current clients, and generate new business. Social media marketing makes use of social media to assist a business build brand awareness and expand its consumer base. This gives marketers the chance to influence consumers' purchasing decisions through internet marketing and social media. Customer social involvement has a big impact on marketing efforts because marketers must be aware of the elements influencing consumer purchasing decisions.

1.1 Research Problem

Social media is the new communication platform that allows everyone to connect with one another, share information, and acquire knowledge. Social media includes social networking, discussion boards, and blogging, among other things. Social media includes Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Wikipedia, Pinterest, Google+, and Twitter, and it has undoubtedly become an integral part of our lives. Social media is commonly used in businesses to raise awareness about products and services, promote brands, retain existing customers, and find new prospects.

The method presents opportunity for numerous firms' marketing teams to capture the attention of segmentation customers to their products or services. It is most effectively accomplished by presenting extrusive features and photos of new products to the targeted clients. As a result, it is apparent that social media platforms play the most important roles in the creation of customer attraction towards any service or product.

Customers' purchasing behavior are strongly influenced by social media networks since there is a representation of an appropriate picture of the provided goods and services of various companies. It's not just that, but it has been seen that in many situations, clients are obtaining reviews of their chosen products through social networking sites. It assists organizations' marketing teams in creating their existing presence in the minds of current and potential customers by presenting positive reviews of their offerings.

The focus of this study is on the impact of social media on customers' online shopping habits. The topic's issue emphasizes how social networking has played a significant influence in shaping consumer behaviour. With the rise of social media platforms and digital technology, most companies have been attempting to gain consumer trust through social media marketing and advertising. Almost 93.6 percent of clients use social media sites around the world. As a result, the study's topic is the impact of social media on purchasing power.

The research study is also an essential growing issue because shopper behaviors have changed over time. Consumers' excessive usage of social media has limited their ability to venture outside their houses. Consumers can receive everything they desire from the comfort of their own homes. Because of the rise of social media, the scope of advertising and marketing has expanded. Social media's vast and extensive platforms have been the primary method via which online commerce has been able to reach customers' doors.

Because the rise of the pandemic has been another important source of online buying, research is now a serious issue. Consumers have been increasingly reliant on online purchasing in recent years because they do not want to risk their safety or venture outside of their safety zone. Thus, this research topic is relevant right now since it exposes current characteristics of client purchase behavior based on recent internet shopping sprees.

The study acknowledges that social media platforms are in charge of regulating consumer behavior on the internet. The study focuses on the characteristics that can be used to govern consumer behavior in response to shifts in the digital marketplace.

Chapter-2

Objectives and Research Methodology

2.1 Research Questions

The emergence of social media has resulted in new methods of searching and acquiring information on the market's vast array of items and services. It has made it possible for consumers to quickly and easily connect and discuss brands with one another. Social networking has empowered consumers, given that marketing companies have no authority over all the content, timing or frequency of consumer online discussions. This research aims to cover up the following questions:

- What are the different social media platforms used by consumers?
- What is the purpose behind usage of social media?
- What factors influence buyers' decisions to shop on social media platforms?
- How have social media channels influenced purchasing behaviour?
- What are the challenges faced by the consumers while using social media for shopping?
- Marketers are closely monitoring consumer's utilisation of social media, but little is known as to how it affects consumers' decision-making. Therefore, the study aims to fulfill the following objectives.

2.2 Research Objective

"The Influence of Social Network on Online Purchasing Behaviour of Consumers" diploma thesis aims to fulfill the following objectives.

1. To evaluate and make recommendation regarding popular social media platforms.
2. To evaluate the factors that motivates buyers to shop through social media platforms.
3. To evaluate how social media affects the buying behaviour of consumers.
4. To identify the challenges associated with the use of social media in online shopping.

2.3 Research Methodology

Research methodology is referred to as the practical “how” of the given research. It is a set of unique method or technique used to describe, detect, examine and interpret the information gathered on the topic. The methodology portion of the research aids the reader in determining the accuracy and consistency of the data obtained for the analysis purpose.

The research study is exploratory and descriptive in nature. An exploratory research helps in throwing light on the nature of research problem and finding its solutions and descriptive research helps in identifying and defining the characteristics thus helping in finding solutions to the research questions. In order to get insights about the influence of social media networks on the online purchase behaviour of the consumer the study is divided into two sections, where the first section focuses on the literature review for which secondary data is collected for the whole nation. Data from research papers, websites of public government, reports, publications, journals etc. is collected. In the literature review section of the investigation, the data collected will be presented under different headings.

In the second section of the research, primary data are collected from 160 respondents using the semi-structured questionnaire. Answers are collected through an online questionnaire via google forms circulated on various social networking platforms. The study is limited to India and suffers from resource constraints and the current situation of Covid-19 pandemic worldwide. Non-probability sampling method is used for the purposes of this research. Samples will be chosen according to the convenience of the investigator and their ability to supplement the research by providing relevant information. To draw conclusions for the study, the collected data is analysed and interpreted using the appropriate statistical tools and techniques.

2.4 Population & Sampling

The main objective of the research is to find out the influence of social media networking on the online purchasing behaviour of consumers. For this purpose, data is gathered by making use of semi-structured questionnaire. Non probability sampling method is used which allows researchers to select samples according to convenience as per their ability to give responses relating to the survey. A sample size of 160 respondents will be selected for the purpose of carrying out research in India.

2.5 Data Collection

Relevant Secondary data is collected for theoretical section of the thesis. The source for this secondary data is from government websites, magazines, publications, reports, journals, published research papers & articles, books, etc. Whereas primary data for the study is collected with the help of questionnaire survey via google forms, making it available on social networking sites. Data is collected from 160 respondents from country India.

2.6 Procedures & Measures

In order to gain better insights regarding the research questions and objectives A survey is conducted with the help of semi-structured questionnaire, created with the help of google forms. It contains closed ended questions, open ended questions and questions based on Likert scale. Open ended questions include questions where the survey participants express their own views, Close-ended questions include questions where the respondent ticks the correct response from the alternatives offered as these questions allow easy coding of data gathered. Likert scale questions help to get the holistic view of the respondent's opinion. The link to the google form is made available for the respondents through various social media networking sites like, WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram. Data from 160 respondents is collected and analysed making use of SPSS software and Microsoft Excel. Appropriate statistical tools are used to draw relevant conclusions and recommendations for the research.

2.7 Limitations

Every research project has constraints, which can be time, money, or others. There are a few limitations to the current study as well, as listed below:

1. The research is based on respondents' opinions (questionnaires), which can be biased.
2. Due to the present Covid-19 Pandemic situation, primary data is acquired online, with no physical interviews or meetings conducted due to geographic divide.
3. Data is only collected from 100 responders due to a lack of time and resources. This figure may not be representative of the entire population.
4. The study is limited to geographical boundaries as it is carried out only in country India, which may not portray accurate picture of consumer buying behaviour worldwide.
5. Depending on the literature available, secondary research is carried out.

Chapter-3

Literature Review

3.1 Social Media Networks

A website or programme that allows users to produce and share content while interacting with other users is known as social media. Users of social media can exchange content quickly and in real - time basis via smartphones, tablets, and desktops. As smartphones have 3,5 billion users worldwide, it has become an important component of people's daily life. Anyone with internet connection may establish an account on a social networking site. Users may share any content they like, everybody who visits their webpage or profile will be able to see it.

Image sharing, blog writing, social gaming, online communities, streaming video and file sharing, business connections, interactive experiences, reviewing, and other tech-enabled activities are examples of social media.

Social networking sites are becoming an important aspect of human interaction and exchange, influencing people's behavior and communication in a variety of ways (Cheung and Lee, 2010).

Social media began as a means for people to communicate with family and friends, but it was eventually embraced by companies looking to reach out to clients through a popular new communications platform. The strength of social media lies in its capacity to connect and exchange information with everyone on the planet or a large group of people who also utilize social media.

People create public accounts on online social networks (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, networking sites, etc.) to express their experience and knowledge, publish content regarding themselves, and communicate with people that share and discuss common interests (Cheung and Lee, 2010).

Everyday lakhs of account are being created by the people all around the world which have led to the usage and the total number of active users on various social networking platforms. According to (Cooper, 2021), In 2020, social platforms added 1.3 million new users every day, or 15.5 new users per second. Social media is used by 90% of individuals who have access to the internet. This creates a great opportunity for a brand to build its image and promote its offerings via different social media networking platforms. The use of social

media platforms around the world have been given in the below figure which highlights the importance of social media for the marketers as they can create a favourable environment for their businesses via offering products and its suggestions online and thus prompting them to make a purchase.



Fig. 3.1 Social Media Use Around the World

Source: (Global Social Media Stats — DataReportal – Global Digital Insights, 2021)

The overall number of individuals who actively utilize social media networks and messaging services is indicated in the graph above. The study was completed in July, 2021, and it provides up-to-date statistics on global usage. It can be seen from the above figure that total number of active social media users are 4.48 billion which comprises of 56.8% of the global population. It can also be noted that annual change in the number of global social media users is +13.1% which comes to 520+ Million users. Amongst them users accessing social media via mobile phones comprises of 99% and the average amount of time spent in a day using social media is 2h 24min.

It was also found out by (Cooper, 2021), that countries like India, Phillipines and China were amongst the top countries to add the number of social media users in the year 2020 followed by the nations Indonesia, United States and Brazil each witnessing 10 millions new social media users.

As stated earlier that people make use of social media for variety of pruposes like uploading images, videos, blog writing, etc. It is also found out that they make use of social media for brand research. Searching for information about the product like, health

information, pricing of the product, specification of the product, origin of the product, feedbacks from the users of such products and services, etc. The data by (Cooper, 2021) shows that what percentage of people belonging to different age group utilize social media for brand research purpose.

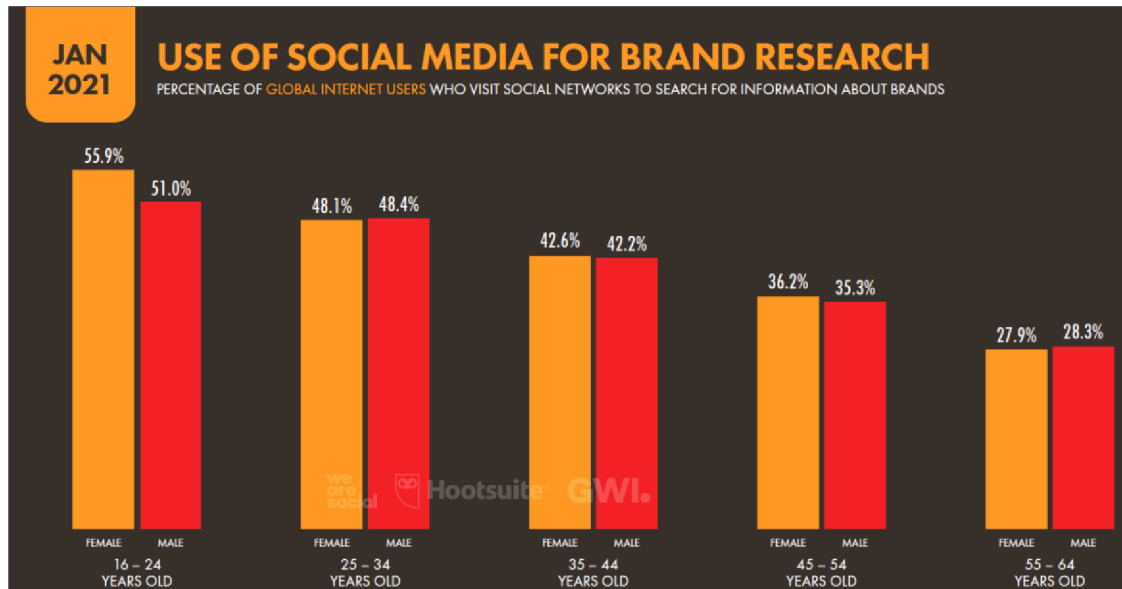


Fig. 3.2 Social Media Use Around the World for Brand Research

Source: (Global Social Media Stats — DataReportal – Global Digital Insights, 2021)

From the above figure it can be observed that the users belonging to the age group of 16-24 of them 55.9% of the female as well as 51% of male use social media for brand research purpose. Users of social media belonging to the age group of 25-34 of them 48.1% of female and 48.4% of male are found to use social media for brand research purpose. From the age group of 35-44, it can be observed that 42.6% female and 42.2% male are utilizing social media for brand research. For the age group 45-54 years the number of user seems to be declining i.e. 36.2% female and 35.3% male and for the age group 55-64 it is 27.9% female and 28.3% male users are found to be making use of social media for brand research.

3.1.1 Social Media Platforms

Social networking existed long before cellphones, but Facebook, YouTube, & Myspace became difference makers who introduced new ways of engagement and interaction into our lives. Following the initial significant advances, numerous new social media sites, such as Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, & TikTok, emerged. Any service, application, or platform linked to social media is referred to as a social media platform.

The social media sphere has evolved into a popular location for communication, networking, and information exchange. Many businesses use these platforms to find marketing and business possibilities. The study found that 'followers' and 'likes' have a beneficial impact on a company's share value, but only when a sufficient number of followers is reached. According to our estimations, Twitter is a more potent instrument for improving company success than Facebook.

Facebook:

Facebook isn't only the most popular social media site, but it really is the network over which individuals spend most of the time, with an average of 58 minutes a day spent on it (Ospina, 2021). Facebook Enables you to communicate with friends and family by sending messages and updating your status. You may also share a variety of material kinds, such as images and links. However, sharing anything on Facebook is not the same as other forms of online interaction. Unlike text and email, which are quite private, the information you give on Facebook is more accessible, meaning it will usually be viewed by a large number of people (GCFGlobal, n.d.). According to Khalid Saleh, CEO of the Invesp website, 92 percent of social media marketers use Facebook for promotion, and Facebook advertisements account for 18.4 percent of worldwide mobile digital advertising.

YouTube:

YouTube is a website dedicated to streaming video. Millions of individuals from all over the globe have registered accounts here on site, allowing users to submit videos which anyone can view. Over 35 hours of video are posted to YouTube each minute of each day. These files can be quite huge and are frequently too large to send through email to another person. One may share a YouTube video merely by emailing the other individual a URL link that is, the address of the appropriate internet page. YouTube was founded in 2005 with the intention of allowing users to publish and share unique video content. But, since then, it's evolved into both a repository for favourite clips, music, and jokes, as well as a promotional tool for businesses. 'Viral video' is a phrase that is commonly used nowadays for a video clip which people enjoyed so much that they've spread the URL with millions of many other people worldwide via email - in effect, it's rapidly spread like virus. Organizations have realized how they can make use of this capacity to connect out with potential buyers and have set up their own YouTube channels to upload adverts and other promotional videos (Neill, 2021).

Whatsapp:

WhatsApp and WeChat both provide similar services to its users as chat apps; the main difference is that WeChat is a Chinese version of WhatsApp. WhatsApp is utilised globally, which is why it has somewhat over 2 billion active monthly users over WeChat. WhatsApp is by far the most widely used messaging app on the planet. In 2020, its monthly viewership has swelled to 2 billion active users. For organisations looking to engage with audiences in underdeveloped nations, this marketing channel is a must-have (What is WhatsApp Marketing: Ideas, Tips, Examples - Definition | SendPulse, 2021).

For example, India has 340 million monthly WhatsApp users while Brazil has over 100 million. However, in the US market, WhatsApp is a good alternative for marketing, as 68 million Americans use it at least once a month. Over 50% of WhatsApp users open the application daily, thus WhatsApp marketing helps you to keep in contact with the consumers (What is WhatsApp Marketing: Ideas, Tips, Examples - Definition | SendPulse, 2021).

Instagram:

Instagram is a free social media platform that focuses on photography and video sharing. It was initially released for the iPhone in October 2010, and then on Android in April 2012. Facebook bought the business in April 2012 and has been the sole owner since then (Stegner, 2021).

Instagram, like most social networking applications, allows users to track people they're interested in. This adds a feed to the homepage that displays the most current postings from everyone they follow. One may interact with posts by liking them, commenting on them, and sharing them with others (Stegner, 2021).

Instagram enables stories in addition to ordinary images and videos that stay on the feed indefinitely. One'll recognise these if they've used Snapchat or any other social media network. One may use Stories to upload a sequence of photographs and video snippets. These can be seen for 24 hours before they vanish. IGTV and Reels are also available on Instagram. Reels feature short video segments that seem to be easier to share and locate than stories, similar to what one'll find on TikTok (Stegner, 2021).

As per the statistics by (Cooper, 2021) Instagram has 1.2 billion monthly users, Instagram advertisements cover 20% of the global population above age of 13. 63 percent of Instagram users are between the ages of 18 and 34. About 30% of Instagram users are over the age of 35 years old.

Facebook Messenger:

Facebook Messenger is a built-in messaging service on the social media platform. Messenger was first released in 2011, and its success prompted the creation of a separate app and website in 2014. The app and website are an instant messaging platform that links to Facebook's databases and has taken the role of Facebook's in-app conversation function. It lets Facebook users to interact with one another and share instant messages, emoticons, photographs, and videos, among other things (Kroh, n.d.).

Customers may connect with your company on their own terms by including Messenger into a customer service plan. There will be no more queuing on hold or having to keep website windows open. And the chat is saved in Messenger, making it easy to pose questions and re-engage.

Messenger makes client acquisition easier by giving consumers a direct, interactive method to act decisively were they currently spend their time (Kroh, n.d.).

Twitter:

Twitter is a social networking and news website where users exchange short messages known as tweets. Tweeting is the practise of sending short messages to everyone who follows someone on Twitter in the hopes that the comments may be beneficial and entertaining to someone among their followers. Microblogging may also be used to describe Twitter and tweeting. Some individuals use Twitter to find fascinating people and businesses on the internet, and then choose to follow their tweets (Gil, 2021).

Twitter's best feature is how easy it is to scan. Millions of interesting Twitter users may be followed and their material viewed at a glimpse, which is excellent in today's attention-deficit environment (Gil, 2021).

Thousands of individuals use Twitter to promote their recruiting services, consulting firms, and retail establishments, and it works. The current internet-savvy consumer is sick of commercials on television. People like advertisements that are quick, unobtrusive, and can be switched on and off at any time.

As per the statistics by (Cooper, 2021) twitter has 353million users, it 11th of the most visited website. Women make up less than a third of Twitter users (68.5 percent of Twitter users are men).

With 50.9 million members, Twitter is the most popular social media site in Japan. 42% of Twitter users have a college diploma, while 25% have never attended college.

Google+:

Google+ is a social media site owned by Google. The Google+ creative team attempted to imitate how individuals engage physically more precisely than some other online communities, such as Facebook and Twitter.

Google+ includes features like Circles which are similar to sections for your contacts, allowing you to selectively share updates with various groups. Family, friends, office colleagues, and individuals with whom you have a mutual interest are illustrations of such groupings. Ideas that you desire to share with others are referred to as sparks. The UI is based on Google search. Google+ has 395 million monthly active users, 2 billion registered users as per the social media statistics report, 2021

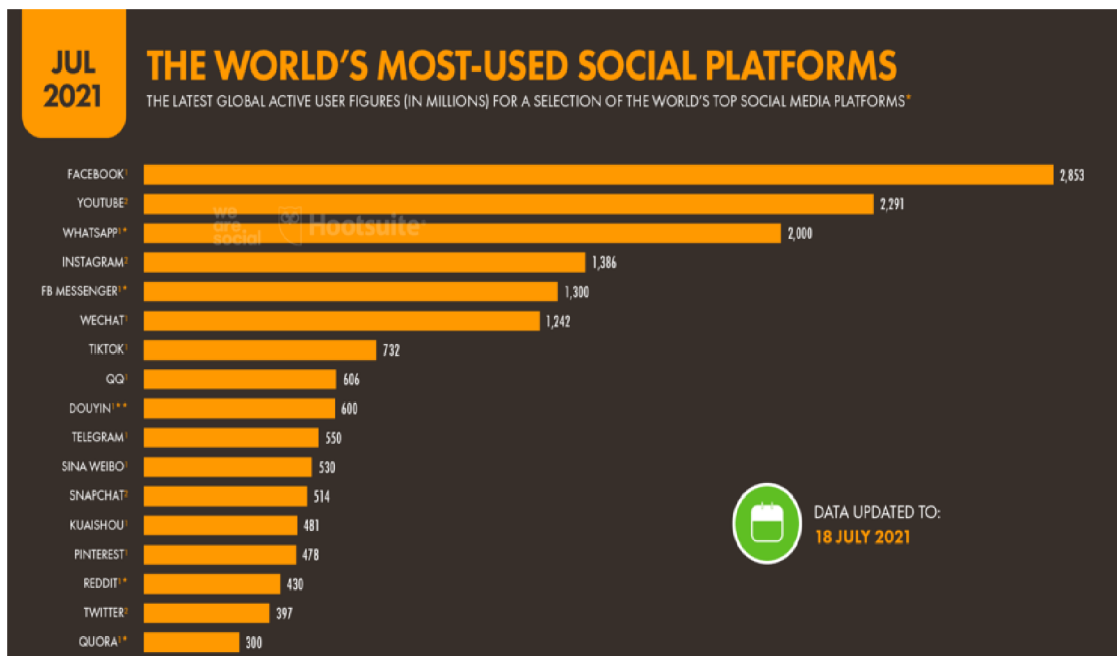


Fig. 3.3 World's Most Used Social Platforms

Source: (DataReportal – Global Digital Insights., 2021)

From the above figure it can be observed that Facebook is the most used social platforms with 2853 million users worldwide. Second comes youtube with 2291 million active users followed by whatsapp with 2000 million active users. Instagram is at the fourth rank with 1386 million users and facebook messenger at the fifth with 1300 million user worldwide for the month July, 2021. Thus it can be concluded that these top five social networking platform play a significant role in redefining and influencing the buying behaviour of the consumers with the upcoming new social media trends which are dynamic and the marketers need to alter their promotion and business strategies accordingly.

3.2 Social Media Trends

The importance of social media has increased to become a significant element of any organization's marketing plan over the previous decade. Year after year, recent advancements emerge and old ones fade away. While social networking is always developing, new developments emerge at a rapid pace. Staying up to speed on the most recent social media trends may help brands and businesses enhance their social media marketing strategy and stand out from the competition.

According to a SocialInsider research, pictures in Stories have a 5.65% greater tap-forward frequency over videos. The number of individuals that watched the Story but went on to another one without completing it is known as the tap-forward frequency. The same study discovered that photographs in Stories had larger drop rates than videos, indicating that consumers prefer to watch videos. It's no surprise that 51% of businesses are currently utilising videos in Stories, and that figure is expected to rise in 2021 (Sprout Social, 2021).

AR filters are fast becoming a popular way for brands to promote new items or stimulate fan involvement on social media. This keeps your audience interested and amused, and with the appropriate advertising, it may even help you attract new consumers (Sprout Social, 2021).

People are looking for more meaningful virtual connections in the midst of stay-at-home directives and the necessity for social distance. One of the current technology advancements that can supply them with those encounters is virtual reality (VR). When you interact with people through virtual reality, you get the feeling that you're truly there with them, even if they're halfway across the globe. This is the type of exposure that people are seeking when they must socially separate themselves. As platforms press forward with adopting this technology, virtual reality is anticipated to acquire greater popularity on social media in 2021 (Sprout Social, 2021).

Because of the dynamic environment of Social Media and ever-changing preferences of the users, following are the some of the popular trends of social media for the year 2021, selected by the author for this research:

3.2.1 Temporary Content

Temporary material on social media is referred to as ephemeral content. It's just transitory since it's only available for public viewing for a maximum of 24 hours or even

less once it vanishes. Many social media sites, such as Snapchat, Instagram, Whatsapp and Facebook, employ ephemeral material. The way people consume content has changed, which is why content has changed as well. Stories seems to have become a widely used format (Geysler, 2021). Online media stages support this pattern by presenting new elements like shoppable-posts and Instagram's Storefronts and this way organizations are becoming the new retail stage. Social business is advancing to be a huge part of advertiser's business methodologies. As per a latest research by Hootsuite, 64% of marketers have indeed implemented or intend to implement Instagram Stories within their social media advertising plans.

3.2.2 Social Media as Commerce

With the rise of social media, end-users have become empowered, and power has shifted from vendors to buyers. Consumers are now able to create content and share it with their social networks. Individually created digital material has monetary worth. Businesses must now consider economic consequences in the form of product sales resulting from individual social connection. Social commerce, a significant advancement in e-commerce, has emerged as a result of this.

Social media platforms are bolstering this trend by providing new features such as user-generated posts and Instagram Shopfronts, and as a result, social media is transforming into a retail business.

Customers' experiences on social commerce platforms, a new branch of e-commerce, differ from those in traditional contexts because consumers have social interactions with one another. Consumers on such networks are also more likely to engage in impulsive buying as a result of their social connections, according to growing data (Xiang, Zheng, Lee and Zhao, 2016)

According to the findings of a Facebook user study, confidence in a social networking site (SNS) encourages information seeking, which improves engagement with the social media network and a sense of social participation. Furthermore, familiarity and social presence enhance the likelihood of making a purchase (Hajli, Sims, Zadeh and Richard, 2017).

3.2.3 Video Content

Brands must no longer rely on textual and visual content. Although this is one way, customers who might have accessibility to interactive 360 films, virtual reality, and streaming live may find it dull and unengaging.

Online video marketing is becoming the latest trend, with consumers streaming more than billion hours of material on YouTube alone every day. Furthermore, 500 hours of video are posted to YouTube every minute. More firms are developing excellent video marketing strategies as a result of growing competition, rising client demands, and the need to stay up with trends (Singh, 2021).

Internet celebrity endorsements have become a common way to content marketing for e-commerce businesses, thanks to the prevalence of social media and, more lately, live streaming (Geng et al., 2020). Marketers are now attempting to create far shorter video segments in order to market their content across several digital platforms.



Fig. 3.4 Video Marketing Worth the Effort?

Source: Elitecontentmaker

From the above figure it can be inferred that 91% of the marketers are satisfied with the Return on Investment if video marketing on social media. It can also be observed that 85% of the marketers say that video is an effective way to get attention online. Moreover, 93% of the businesses landed a new customer because of a video on social media highlighting the importance of social media for a business.

The future of social media content will be different sorts of video material, such as Instagram Stories or WhatsApp Stories, often known as short-form videos, and YouTube

Shots for short-form films. By 2022, video content will account for 82 percent of all social media and advertising material, according to a Cisco study (Cisco Annual Internet Report 2020). It clearly demonstrates the need of including video content into a brand's marketing plan in order to stay competitive in social media marketing.



Fig. 3.5 Video Marketing Statistics

Source: filmora

From the above figure it can be inferred that 90% of the users say that product videos are helpful in the decision making process. It can also be seen that 92% of the mobile video consumers share videos with their family, friends and others thus generating more publicity for the brand. Also, 80% of the online viewers recall a video ad they viewed in the past 30 days which can be inferred that it helps in remember the brand and its offerings by the viewers. It is also observed that 50% of the internet users look for video related to a product or service before visiting a physical store, which shows that it helps in getting product related details and helps in easy decision making. Also, 75% of the executives' watch work related videos on business websites at least once a week thus enhancing their productivity and helping them to stay motivated towards their work.

Videos are not the only method to generate income from social media, but they are a wonderful way to build traction and connect with your audience.

3.2.4 Influencer Marketing

The advertising business has been compelled to create creative tactics as internet and social media traffic and promotional expenses continue to rise. Influencer marketing is one such technique, in which online identities are linked to companies or services that

prospective consumers trust and interact with on a regular basis (Childers, Lemon and Hoy, 2018).

With their amazing effort and visibility, social media influencers are conquering the Internet. Their views have a significant influence on individuals, particularly the younger generation. They are a recent phenomenon that has experienced a significant surge in collaboration with marketing companies in recent years. People are increasingly following these influencers to ensure that they stay up-to-date with their excellent stuff. Brands want comments, ratings, and endorsements from such influencers. Despite the fact that influencer marketing is a comparatively new tactic, it remains an effective option for marketers ready to come up with new ideas while engaging with their potential customers (Kádeková and Holienčinová, 2018).

3.2.5 Customer Service Interaction Platform

The present surge in social media postings connected to brand–consumer interactions is gradually changing the way businesses & its consumers engage. While this focus on social media is understandable, academics and brand managers must also keep in mind that customers interact and engage with companies across a wide range of communication channels. Promotions and rewards, timely information, product description, involvement, exploration, purchasing, customer support, sponsored content, entertainment, and personalization/exclusivity were among the 10 categories of reasons for interacting with businesses identified (Hamilton, Kaltcheva and Rohm, 2016).

According to the study, a higher education institution may enhance student loyalty by providing good experiences on their Brand Fan Page and increasing platform utilization frequency. Since service used to be sluggish previously throughout, brands aim to give fast and efficient service to its consumers. Now that social media networks have the opportunity for companies to be available to serve customers virtually 24/7, brands must manage customers effectively in order to maintain a positive image (Autio, 2020).

3.2.6 Social Listening

Businesses may utilise social media to get data and insights that they can use to enhance their social media marketing strategy. Building a good reputation for a business is critical, and understanding how individuals view a brand may provide a plethora of information via social listening. Monitoring a business's social media platforms for

consumer comments, explicit mentioning of the brand, or discussions about certain keywords, subjects, or rivals, based on an examination to glean insights, is known as social listening.

On social networking sites, consumers want to be heard. As per Sprout Social's research, 46% of customers believe that connecting with their customers on social media is just what distinguishes a business as the best of the bunch online. They want to have the brand to react. But there's more to it than that. It's all about leveraging social listening to develop intelligent replies that add genuine value. These are the types of answers that will enhance client retention and brand loyalty (Amaresan, 2021).

3.3 Marketing Mix

It began with four Ps, but as the globe and the challenges of marketing became more complicated, three more Ps got incorporated to build a successful marketing plan. The cornerstones of a marketing strategy are represented by the 'P's,' which together make up the idea of the marketing mix. The term marketing mix may appear perplexing, yet it is really a key to establishing business. It is the operational component of a marketing strategy, the bones and brains of it, to put it another way.

The marketing mix's traditional function has always been to advertise and promote, generate consumer demands for the brand, enhance brand recognition, and recall and reaffirm brand views (Williams and Curtis, 2007). New technological advancements enable the modern customer to increase the brand awareness. Marketers now have the potential to give more value to their consumers through technologies, information, expertise, and social engagements, resulting in more tailored marketing tactics (Evans, 2011). This helps marketers to create more tailored and social marketing tactics directed at individual customers in order to establish long-term connections (Gummesson, 2002).

According to Williams and Curtis (2007), the 7P's marketing mix, with a focus on communications, will serve to: Distinguish a brand; Remind and convince the intended audience of the company image and advantages. Re-inform the potential customers about the brand by giving them with fresh and up-to-date information; and Attract the target audience to do a specified set of activities (e.g., visiting the company's webpage). Marketers may use this new mechanism of the marketing mix to build brand awareness and acceptance amongst influencers who might just promote the product in their social networks (Williams and Curtis, 2007).

As per Chartered Institute of market (2006), marketers must always examine the external environment, thoroughly segregate the market and marketers must identify customers, investigate their requirements and expectations, and evaluate their attitudes toward the parts of the marketing mix, especially the aspect of promotion, while using the 7P's marketing mix. The marketing mix strategy should include interaction and development of the brand reputation and image, which should be tailored to the customer's requirements and desires. This assists with relationship marketing by making it simpler to build a relationship between the company and the consumer (Wood, 2000).



Fig. 3.6 Marketing Mix 7Ps

Source: Casereads

Product

This refers to a product or service that is intended to meet the requirements & desires of customers. To successfully advertise a good or service, it's critical to figure out what sets it apart from the competition. It's also crucial to figure out if additional items or services may be sold alongside it. The challenge is to come up with the right 'benefits package' to meet a need of the customers. When customer needs shift, competitors catch up, or new business opportunities present themselves? To improve the offering, produce new versions of existing items, or introduce entirely new products, must be added to the 'bundle of advantages.' Thinking well beyond product itself when increasing the product offering like guarantee, warranty, after-sales or online assistance, designing a user-friendly app, or interactive materials like a video which helps the customer get the most out of the offerings may all

contribute positively and bring out uniqueness. Increased product knowledge, shifting aspirations, and rivalry in a product category affect the consumer's opinion of the specific product.

Price

The product's pricing shows how much people are prepared to pay for it. Cost-based pricing requires marketing experts to evaluate expenses associated with research and development, production, marketing, as well as distribution. Value-based pricing is defined as price that is based largely on the perceived quality or value of the product by the customer. Prices must be established with rivals in mind since they are a powerful indicator of market positioning versus competitors.

Place

When deciding on distribution locations, it's vital to examine the sort of goods offered. General consumer items, such as stationery items, are frequently accessible in a wide variety of retailers. Prestige luxury items, on the other hand, are usually limited in a few locations. Another factor to take into account is that a product should be sold in a physical shop, via various websites, or maybe both.

Many businesses have the physical store or internet presence to provide its product/service directly to customers, while others must rely on intermediaries or middlemen' with sites, warehousing, and/or sales skills to assist with distribution. This component of the marketing mix requires judgments on which intermediates are to be engaged in the distribution network, as well as the logistics of delivering the product/service towards the final customers, comprising handling and distribution.

Promotion

A promotional mix is another term for joint marketing programs. Advertising, promotional events, personal sales, and public affairs are examples of possible practices. The funding allocated to the promotion mix should be a major factor. When aiming to reach a larger customer base, marketing experts carefully craft a message that frequently combines elements from the other three Ps. Determining the right means for communicating the information, as well as deciding on the frequency of interaction, are crucial.

There are several communication tools available, each with its own set of advantages. Personal selling with a sales staff is fantastic for developing connections with customers and closing transactions, but advertising is good for boosting awareness and hitting new

audiences. To select the optimal instrument for the job and the most efficient platform to reach people based on prior information. If a consumer is a regular on Instagram, that's where a brand should reach out to them! It not only relates to consumers, but it also applies to interacting with other stakeholders, such as shareholders and the general public, in order to improve the company's reputation. The same ideas apply when selecting the proper tools and media to achieve a brand's goals.

Process

All businesses aim to provide a seamless, effective, and customer-friendly experience, but this simply can not be done without the appropriate procedures in place behind the scenes. Identifying the phases of the customer journey – from creating an online inquiry to seeking information and completing a purchase – allows to assess what procedures should be followed to provide a pleasant experience for the consumer. How long will it take for a client to receive a response after making an inquiry? How long does it take for them to arrange a meeting with the sales staff and have it happen? What happens once they've placed their order? How can one ensure that recommendations are created after a transaction has been made? How can we make business operations more efficient by utilising technology? All of these factors contribute to a great client experience.

People

Good customer service not only leads to sales, but it may also lead to an expansion in your client base through referrals. Obtaining such referrals from supporters of the business may be an excellent illustration of how promotional strategies can aid the selling process. Anybody who promotes the brand or interacts with consumers – even non-human chat bots! – should be thoroughly trained sales experts with a thorough understanding of the product and how it will enhance customers' lifestyles or address their concerns.

When engaging with consumers, whether it be in face to face, over online chat, through social networking sites, or via a contact centre, a company's employees are at the forefront, accepting and handling their inquiries, purchases, and concerns. They connect with consumers across their journey and become the company's "face" with the customers. Their understanding of the company's goods and services, as well as how to utilise them, their capacity to find vital information, plus their daily manner & attitude, all need to be improved. People may be unpredictable, but with the appropriate training, engagement, and

encouragement from a firm, they can also symbolize a chance to stand out in a competitive market and establish important customer connections.

Physical Evidence

Physical evidence gives concrete signals about the level of experience that a firm is delivering. This can be extremely advantageous when a consumer really hasn't purchased from the company previously and wants some confidence, or is anticipated to pay for things before it is provided. Physical evidence for a restaurant might include the environment, staff uniforms, menus, and internet reviews to suggest the sort of experience to anticipate. The website on its own is significant tangible proof for a business, containing anything from testimonies to case studies, along with commitments that companies are provided to reflect the services they may anticipate to receive.

3.4 Social Media Marketing

Consumers' capacity to make better consumption decisions has improved as a result of the increased variety and volume of information available online, and reduced search costs have brought new options for information seeking. User material and opinions increasingly often dominate search engine results. Due to the limited advertising budgets that many businesses have when using traditional channels, small and medium-sized businesses may find social media marketing to be especially easier and more successful. While social media advertising is an advancing technology with a wide range of opportunities, marketing's role remains as it used to be of—defining the market segment, interacting with prospects, building loyalty, and engaging customers (Hall, 2012).

Presently Only selling items and services online isn't enough. A brand should shine out, be easily identifiable, and provide info to all people on social media by focusing on active social media interactions and creating high-quality material for it, brands may improve their reputation and trustworthiness by gaining new followers, or consumers. “As social media continues to appeal to the masses, its importance grows.

Hyper-targeting and retargeting are now feasible thanks to advertising. This enables companies to make better strategic decisions that aid in achieving their marketing objectives while making the most of their resources

The concept of digital marketing, as per Smart Insight content director Dave Chaffey, is "reaching marketing goals by the use of digital technology and media." Management of

various types of online corporate appearance, like as business website, mobile applications, and web - based social networking pages, is included in digital marketing.

Marketing strategy emphasises the significance of creating engaging, helpful content that people appreciate. This first draws them to the brand and prevents them from being bombarded with distracting advertisements. It's a lot simpler to turn content watchers and supporters into prospects and, ultimately, customers than it is to contact complete strangers and hope they'll be interested in brands products or services.

Already, many forward thinking businesses are leveraging the next generation of technology to improve or completely overhaul key components of the marketing mix, giving marketing a prominent role in bringing businesses to the innovative world. According to Gommans, Krishnan, and Scheffold (2001), in online marketplaces, a greater marketing emphasis is necessary to establish and sustain consumer loyalty. Via mass media and internet communications, a company's reputation and image should be developed (Gommans, Krishnan and Scheffold, 2001).

3.4.1 Social Media as Electronic Word of Mouth

The internet has reinvented the notion of word-of-mouth (WOM), which was first established in the 1950s. "Person-to-person interaction between a communicator and a receiver whom the recipient views as non-commercial addressing a brand, commodity, or services," according to Arndt (1967).

WOM is a key resource for consumer purchasing decisions, influencing all phases of consumer decision-making by affecting attitudes, opinions, and expectations of brands, goods, and services from selection through post-purchase appraisal, there is a lot to consider (Kimmel and Kitchen, 2013). Online or electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) is a type of WOM in which internet users offer feedback on, social media network sites or review sites for various products, companies, and services (Bronner and de Hoog, 2010).

It is considered as "any good or negative words expressed about a product or firm by prospective, current, or past customers, which have been made accessible to a large number of individuals and organizations via the Online platform" (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh and Gremler, 2004). Electronic WOM can be spread in a variety of ways, via social networking sites or comments areas on e-commerce websites, and this type of information published is relatively uncommon via traditional channels. Content created by people using

the internet, who are also customers, is widely regarded as being free of commercial influences. Due to this trust, consumers seek information for buying decisions from forums, blog posts, and other unbiased social media sites (Powers et al., 2012).

Much of what you talk in an informal setting much like with peers, family members, or colleagues, related to information about the product regarding different items or services. You're engaging in Word-Of-Mouth (WOM) interaction when you inquire fellow workers where they got their outfit or suggest a new eatery to your pals. WOM is effective, especially when consumers are unaware with a brand. When unfavourable WOM or rumours develop, it can be detrimental to a company. WOM, both negative and positive, is easily shared, particularly online.

3.4.2 Impact of Social Media on Consumer Decision

Today, there are over 4 billion social media users and 5.19 billion mobile phone users. On a routine basis, 350 million images are published to Facebook, Instagram receives approximately 4 billion likes, and YouTube receives 1 billion hours of video viewing. The future is arrived, and it all revolves on social networking.

The tremendous transformation in the sector has led in consumers needing conveniently available information. As a result, a variety of venues, especially social media, have altered shoppers' pre-purchase sentiments. The findings revealed that electronic word of mouth (E-WOM), social media advertisements, and online shopping systems all had a significant influence on consumers' buying decisions (Kumar, Konar and Balasubramanian, 2020).

People of any age are utilising social media platforms and possessing a smartphone has become increasingly popular. Customers are using smart phones to get crucial knowledge that will assist them enjoy their buying experience, irrespective of where they purchase.

Users interact with other like-minded people to participate in an endless circle of exchanging information, tracking developments, and obtaining comments and recommendations on a wide range of products, services, and activities all thanks to social media (Ashman, Solomon and Wolny, 2015). With online decision-making, information overload is a major concern. Consumers have become paralysed by analytical paralysis as a

result of the massive amount of posted on social platforms, making it impossible to traverse all of the data available (Powers et al., 2012)

Additional influencing elements for the success of online decision-making comprise risk perceptions, knowledge of products, and reliability, in addition to time & cognitive expenses of getting and information processing. The internet, or online skills, have become increasingly important: the more people utilise the internet, the more probably they are to use it for decision-making.

3.5 Consumer Behaviour

The investigation as to how individual consumers, groups, or organisations pick, acquire, utilize, and dispose of ideas, commodities, and services to meet their needs and wants is known as consumer behaviour. It pertains to the consumer's activities in the markets and the motivations behind those behaviors. It's an accumulation of knowledge that looks at many elements of people buying and using goods and services, as well as the social and psychological factors at play.

"Consumer behaviour focuses on psychological and emotional activity as well as the apparent behaviour of customers throughout the search, purchase, and post-consumption of a good or service," said Satish K Batra and S.H.H.Kazmi.

The term "customer behaviour" corresponds towards the buyer's responsive, psychological, and behavioural reactions, including the actions associated with the acquisition, use, removal, and inspection of products and service, as well as all actions related to the buyer. The buyer's activity became a separate issue in the field of marketing in the 1940s and 1950s. The buyer's reaction is investigated before and after each purchase decision, as well as during the usage, assessment, and disposal procedures.

Marketers look forward to being able to identify which items are required in the marketplace, which are outmoded, and how best to display the commodities to customers by knowing what motivates people to acquire products and services.

Decision making units acquisition, consumption, and disposal of items, services, time, and ideas has been characterised as consumer behaviour. (Indian Institute of Chartered Analysis).

Consumer behaviour is always changing. Depending on the type of the items, it undergoes changes throughout time. Children, for example, like colourful and extravagant footwear, whereas teens and young adults want fashionable footwear, and middle-aged and

older individuals choose soberer footwear. Several additional factors, such as a rise in income level, educational levels, and marketing considerations, might cause a shift in buying behaviour.

Individuals borrow money from friends, family, and institutions, and in some cases, they use immoral measures to expend on advanced technology buying. However, there are those individuals who, despite possessing extra cash, avoid making even routine expenditures and resist using and purchasing advanced technology.

Consumer behaviour differs significantly between states, regions, and countries. The conduct of urban customers, for example, differs from those of rural consumers. A large proportion of rural consumers are cautious in their purchasing decisions.

There are already millions of products available in the market. Marketers must compete for the awareness, time, and money of customers in order to ensure that they purchase a product from their brand. Given today's competitive environment, this is a difficult assignment. Marketers have a formidable weapon in the shape of customer behaviour to ensure that their product or service is chosen from among the variety of options available in the market.

Consumer behaviour research addresses the four Ws of a goods or services acquisition: why, what, when, and where. It is critical for the marketer to understand what impacts the consumer's purchasing behaviour and how marketing communications may be shaped to influence the consumer's buying behaviour in the marketer's favour.

After analysing consumer behaviour, advertising, promotional strategies, direct marketing, public relations, and personal selling materials are tailored to the consumer's behaviour and preferences. Each industry area will have its own marketing messaging that will attract potential customers on varying scales.

Despite having ample finances, wealthy rural customers may hesitate to spend on luxuries, but wealthy urban shoppers may take out credit facilities to purchase premium products such as vehicles and household equipment. Consumer behaviour may differ between states, regions, and countries. It varies depending on upbringing, lifestyle, and developmental stage. Understanding the mechanisms that lead to a consumer's preference for certain products and services over others requires an understanding of the consumer's mentality. Consumer behaviour not only aids corporations in developing marketing plans, but it also aids in the development of new products to meet the wants of customers.

3.5.1 Who is a Consumer?

Individuals who have preferences and dislikes are referred to as "consumers." A holistic buyer framework involves a large number of individuals in a given organisation encounters a process or another about a good or service, facility, business, customer, place, or object in a different way, which might also influence the sale of a single entity, good, or company in a favourable or unfavourable way. Marketers fail to convince buyers, strategies, and identifying the present strategy is the first step toward altering it as needed.

3.6 Consumer Decision Making Process

While each consumer has their own criteria for deciding whether or not something should be acquired, everybody is passing through the buying process. The processes vary based on the individual, but below are the most common actions that customers take.

While social media continues to evolve, social networking trends emerge for consumers and in the corporate world. In terms of business and marketing, social media is a treasure that marketers should take use of. Social media has opened up a slew of creative avenues for developing a brand's marketing plan. Understanding today's consumer purchasing behaviour is the most critical component of developing a marketing plan (Autio, 2020).

Consumer buying behaviour has long been a popular marketing issue, because understanding how and why customers behave in specific ways while making purchasing decisions helps businesses enhance their marketing tactics and gain market share. As a result, one of the challenges that all marketers confront today is influencing consumer buying behaviour in favour of their products or services.

As a result, understanding buying behaviour illuminates the motives as to how consumers think, feel, argue, and choose among available options, as well as how the consumer's surroundings affects person, and also how buyer encouragement and decision strategies differ between products. All of this leads to a better knowledge of how marketers may enhance their marketing strategies to reach consumers more successfully (Stankevich, 2017).

Simon's model has been regarded as a ground-breaking decision-making model in the context of decision science since 1960. He classified decision-making under 3 phases: intelligence, design, and choosing. The intelligence phase entails problem categorization as

well as information collection and analysis. Alternatives are produced and assessed during the phase two of designing phase, and one alternative is chosen during the final decision phase. When compared to the traditional paradigm, Simon's intelligence phase combines the first two stages: need identification and information seeking. The design phase is indeed the third step of alternative assessment, whereas the choice phase is the stage of purchasing selection. The traditional model's five phases are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs (Voramontri and Klieb, 2019).

Consumer Decision-Making Process Overview



Fig. 3.7 Consumer Decision Making Process

Source: (Lucidchart, 2021)

Problem Recognition Stage

The first phase of the consumer decision-making process is need identification. Internal cues (such as starvation) or environmental stimuli (such as ads) alert the consumer to the fact that there is a disparity amongst their present and desired states (Kotler and Armstrong, 2014). This is commonly considered as the trigger that begins a buying intention, and it serves as the antecedent to all following consumer-initiated actions such as information seeking, assessment, and purchase. Consumers' purchasing decisions are influenced by the outcomes of several problems or by a single problem. Social variables, cultural factors, reference groups, and environmental factors all have an impact on the issue recognition stage.

Information Search Stage

Based on the identification of a need, a consumer conducts a 'search' into memories to assess if enough information about the relevant alternatives is accessible to make a decision. If internal information is insufficient to augment current knowledge, an external

search is necessary. Because of the infrequency of complex purchases, there will be a larger volume and severity of search. Personal sources (e.g., family members and friends), commercial sources (e.g., advertising and salespeople), and public media sources are commonly used in external searches (e.g., newspapers, magazines, television, & internet). User evaluations on social media networking sites like Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp and Pinterest are regarded as giving a more comprehensive and accurate product evaluation (Kotler and Armstrong, 2014).

The search goes on until enough high-quality information is obtained, but it is limited by the accessibility and amount of information. While a lack of knowledge undoubtedly restricts decision-making, an abundance of information also impedes smart judgments owing to limitations in consumers' cognitive processing capacities. Because social media provides a new dimension to information search, its implications are the primary focus of this research.

Alternatives Evaluation Stage

Once the information has been gathered, the customer utilises it to analyse and appraise the various product options before making a purchasing decision. Though shown separately, the alternative appraisal and information search stages are closely interwoven throughout decision-making, and consumers frequently switch between the two. Alternate assessment entails the choosing of alternative choices and evaluating criteria. After that, the effectiveness of the examined options is contrasted along the prominent characteristics, and lastly, decision rules are used to limit down the possibilities to make a final pick. Consumers' choices are often based on basic decisions such as "purchase the cheapest items," while some selections are complicated and include several procedures and phases.

Purchase Decision Stage

A ultimate option or decision made concerning which goods to purchase is referred to as a purchase decision. The final significant stage is indeed the act of buying, in which the customer decides what to buy, where to buy it, as well as how to pay. Under this step of the process, both quality of the decision as well as how the option turned out becomes essential. Consumers begin to compare their product views to their expectations (Kardes, 2011).

Purchase decisions are influenced by goals, contextual factors, and individual circumstances. The amount of time available for decision-making, the availability of

information, and the retail environment are all factors that might impact purchasing behaviour. The mindset of family members and friends, as well as unexpected situations such as pricing and availability of products (size, colour, and stock-outs), may compel a re-evaluation (Kotler and Armstrong, 2014).

Post-Purchase Decision Evaluation

In the post-purchase stage, customers assess the performance of the product against their expectations and determine whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied. Expectations, perceived performance, and belief confirmation (or disconfirmation) all play a role in post-purchase pleasure, according to confirmation theory (Oliver, 1977). In a subjective assessment, comparisons are made to expectations in one of three ways: positive disconfirmation or gratification when performance exceeds expectations, simple assurance or neutral reaction when performance meets expectations, as well as negative disconfirmation or disappointment when performance falls short of expectations (Kotler and Armstrong, 2014).

This causes the consumer to seek out helpful information in order to alleviate the dissonance either through affirming the decision taken or determining that it would be a poor one. Satisfaction of customers is a consequence of experiences at all phases of the purchasing process, since one stage's outcome influences the experiences at other stages (Karimi, Papamichail and Holland, 2015).

3.6.1 Factors Influencing Consumer Buying Behaviour

Consumers begin by seeking to determine the items and services they wish to consume, then selecting just those that are more useful. Upon the selection of products, the customer figures out how much money he possesses to put money into. Lastly, the customer evaluates prevailing commodity prices before making a decision. Which commodities he might purchase is a decision he must make. Meanwhile, a slew of additional issues like economical, social and cultural, personal, and psychological variables influence Consumer behaviour. The following is a description of these elements.

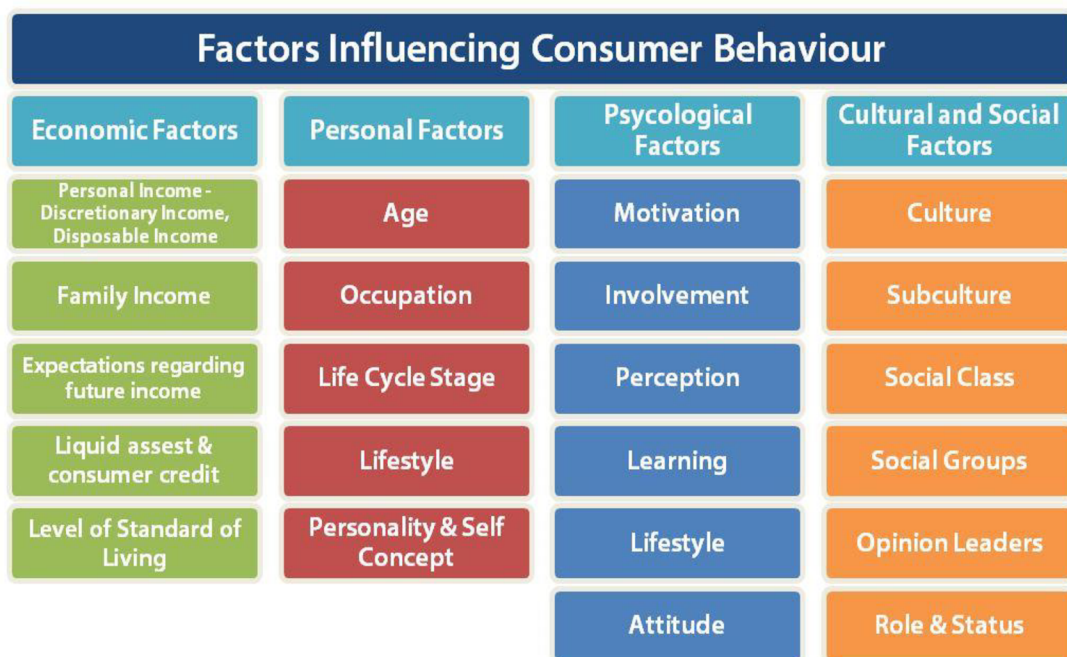


Fig. 3.8 Factors Influencing Consumer Behaviour

Source: (BBA|mantra, 2021)

Economic Factors

Consumer purchasing patterns and choices are heavily influenced by a nation's or market's economic status. When a country is wealthy, its economy is robust, resulting in a larger supply of money and better buying power for individuals. When customers feel a pleasant economic climate, they are more likely to spend money on purchasing goods. A poor economy, on the other hand, indicates a failing market that is influenced by unemployment and decreased purchasing power. Economic factors have a major impact on a consumer's purchasing decision. The following are some of the most major economic elements:

Individual Income

If an individual's disposable income rises, so does his or her purchasing power. The cash left over after meeting a person's fundamental necessities is referred to as disposable income.

Increased discretionary income leads to increased spending on a variety of products. However, when disposable income declines, so does expenditure on a variety of things.

Discretionary Income

Income accessible to a customer after taxes and essential living expenses have been deducted.

Family Income

Overall total income of all family members is referred to as family income. When more individuals work in the family, there might be more funding available for essential requirements and indulgences. Individuals in a higher-income family are more motivated to purchase more. When there is an excess of cash available for the family, the temptation is to purchase additional luxury things that a person may not have been able to purchase otherwise.

Liquid Assets

Individuals with liquid funds are much more inclined to spend on world - class amenities. Liquid assets are ones that can be quickly turned into cash. Liquid assets include cash on hand, bank savings, and securities. When a customer has more liquid funds, he is more likely to purchase luxury items.

Consumer Credit

When a customer is given cheap credit to buy items, it encourages more spending. Sellers make it simple for customers to obtain finance in the terms of credit cards, easy payments, bank loans, hire buy, and a variety of other credit choices. When customers have more credit accessible to them, they are more likely to buy comfort and luxury products.

Level of Standard of Living

A customer demands & consumes more when their earnings or future expectations earnings or the availability of liquid cash or credit increases, while saves and desires less when it does not. The structure of spending and a consumer's behaviour are also influenced standard of living.

Personal Factors

Personal variables include the consumer's age, gender, educational background, income, and so on. Personal Elements are the factors that are unique to each customer and have a significant impact on their purchasing decisions (Bhasin, 2020). These variables range from one individual to the next, resulting in a diverse system of beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours toward specific goods and services. Different personal variables that influence consumer behaviour are explained below.

Age & Life Cycle Stage

Customers' buying behaviour might be influenced by their age and life cycle. Customers' purchasing of items and services will undoubtedly alter with the passage of time

(Bhasin, 2020). Family life cycles include periods such as the development of young people, married people, and single people, etc. As life cycles vary, so do accountabilities, resulting in a shift in consumption patterns. (Slabá, 2019) The author discovered via their research that age has a significant impact on customer purchasing decisions and attitudes about pricing.

Occupation

The profession or occupation of a person has an impact on his purchasing habits. The lifestyles & purchasing concerns and options vary depending on the nature of the employment (Bhasin, 2020). A dentist's purchases, for example, may be easily separated from that of an attorney, instructor, contractor, tenant, and so on. Teenagers would be more interested in buying bright and loud colours as compared to a middle aged or elderly individual who would prefer decent and subtle designs. A bachelor would prefer spending lavishly on items like beer, bikes, music, clothes, parties, and clubs and so on. A young single would hardly be interested in buying a house, property, insurance policies, gold etc. An individual who has a family, on the other hand would be more interested in buying something which would benefit his family and make their future secure. The marketing managers must then create a variety of marketing strategies to cater to the various professional classes' purchase motivations (Ramya and Ali, 2016).

Lifestyle

The "whole person" dealing with the surroundings is depicted by a person's habit or mode of living as reflected in his activities, interests, and opinions. Marketing managers must devise a variety of marketing tactics to appeal to a variety of customer lifestyles (Bhasin, 2020).

Personality & Self Concept

Personality is indeed a psychological characteristic that leads to relatively consistent & long-lasting reactivity to one's own circumstances (Bhasin, 2020). Characteristic of personality are typically characterised as self-confidence, aggression, supremacy, etc. A concept that brands have personalities and that buyers choose brands that match their own. A brand personality is a unique combination of human qualities that may be connected to a brand. Buyers have a variety of self-portraits. Self-images, or self-concepts, are linked to personality in the sense that consumers are more inclined to purchase products and services from shops whose appearances or reputations are similar to their own. Some personal

qualities include hostile, standoffish, egoist, extrovert, conservative, and experimental (Khuong and Duyen, 2016).

Psychological Factors

Owing to the psychological makeup, customers respond differently to the very same marketing mix (product). Consumer behaviour is influenced by psychological factors such as motivation of a person, perception, learning of an individual and beliefs and attitude all play a significant role (Sisk, 2018).

Motivation

At any one time, a person has a variety of requirements. When a need is stimulated to a certain degree of intensity, it becomes a motivator. According to motivational psychologists, each product might elicit a distinct set of motives among customers. Motivation is an internally prompted want state that leads to a goal-oriented activity that fulfils that need. Motives can thus be defined as internal impulses that are relatively long-lasting, strong, and consistent, and which generate and lead behaviours toward specific outcomes.

Involvement

It pertains to a consumer's level of engagement in or significance for a product. A consumer's participation in a product might be high or minimal. Marketers can enhance customer's involvement with their products or services by enhancing their reach through social media via blogs, reviews, video content, customer interaction websites, etc. It has been revealed from the studies that social media now a days is playing a decisive role in creating customer's involvement for a product or a brand through an efficient online communication via social networking websites.

Perception

The technique of selecting, organising, and interpreting facts in order to construct a meaningful image of the universe is known as perception. Three separate perceptual mechanisms are selective focus, selective distortion, and selective retention. Shoppers' interest is targeted by advertising when it comes to paying attention closely. Selective distortion, on the other hand, has an influence on consumer when consumer strive to interpret the data in a way that is consistent with the customers' existing values. Similarly, when it comes to selective preservation, advertisers strive to save information that will assist them achieve their goals.

Learning

Learning describes how a person's behaviours change as a result of their experiences. Our comprehension is impacted by our past knowledge in any circumstance, because that is what makes up our prepared collection of observations and the framework in which we try to arrange them and set up fresh stimuli. To put it another way, we've benefited from our past experience through reacting to and understanding new stimuli in order to maintain balance or consistency in terms of a previously experienced or learnt stimulus (Blythe, 2016).

Attitude

Each customer has a unique perspective and mindset when it comes to various products. Marketers are sensitive to particular attitudes and actions because they contribute to the brand's image and affect customer purchase behaviour. Marketers will constantly strive to change consumers' minds and opinions by launching unique campaigns.

The mentality of the customer influences their purchasing decisions. When a consumer's attitude about an item is good, it affects their behaviour positively. Marketers figure out what customers think of their products and try to improve them, or if they're currently good, maintain them that way (Hoyer and Deborah, 2008).

Cultural & Social Factors

When considering a purchase, people evaluate a variety of variables. One of the most important elements in decision-making is social considerations. Family, peer groups, and a buyer's duties and position are all social aspects to consider.

Cultural influences include the collection of values, interests, behaviour patterns, and perceptions that an individual learns at a young age as a result of socialisation inside the family as well as other significant institutions. Culture, subculture, and social class are all included.

Culture

A culture is the shared values, habits, traditions, and practises of a certain group of individuals. As a kid matures, he absorbs purchasing and decision-making habits from his family and major organisations. Culture differs from area to location and even nation to nation. The making and selling of "sarees" and "lungis" seems to be more prevalent in South India than in North India. As a result, the marketer must thoroughly research all of the various cultures and develop marketing tactics appropriately. Cultural factors are among the

most powerful effects on consumer purchasing behaviour. Marketers must keep in mind that every group or civilization has a culture. Cultural influences may and will differ considerably from one nation to the next, as well as from one social class to the next. If you do not include these principles in your marketing strategies, your efforts may be unsuccessful, if not humiliating.

Sub-Culture

As per Kotler and Armstrong, a subculture is just a smaller component of a culture, or a community of individuals with similar idea systems based on common life experiences and backgrounds. There are representations for nations, cultural traits, religions, and geographical locations.

Social Class

Every individual's purchasing decision is influenced by the social class to which he or she belongs. In general, persons from the same class are considered to have comparable interests, values, and behaviours. Our civilization is divided into three social groups: the upper, medium, and bottom classes. Consumers in each of these groups have distinct purchasing habits. For example, an upper-class person will purchase items or services that promote his status, but lower-class individuals will purchase products that meet their fundamental requirements.

Social Groups

Each person has persons in his or her life who impact him or her in some manner. Individual people' reference groups consist of persons with whom they relate oneself. Every everyone knows at least one person in community who has grown to be their inspiration over time. Business reference groups are frequently formed by co-workers, friends and family, acquaintances, neighbourhood, pals, and elders. A section of the population who have a negative influence on a customer is known as an avoidance group. A customer dissociates oneself from that kind of group and avoids utilising items and services that the avoidance group uses, recommends, or promotes.

Aspirational Group

This category comprises movie stars, TV celebrities, athletes, and other celebrities who consumers desire to be like. A customer wants to be associated with individuals to whom he aspires, so he buys items and services that they use, advocate, and promote.

Opinion Leaders

It pertains toward a crucial personality in a group who has the power to influence conduct behaviour of other group members by giving them with timely knowledge regarding changing trends and goods.

Role & Status

An individual can be classified into various classes, families, groups, and organisations, and each class's identity can be characterised in terms of role and status. The job comprises of the duties that people are expected to complete in accordance with those around them. Every position has a status that reflects society's overall esteem for it. People usually choose goods that are appropriate for their positions and ranks.

Chapter-4

Data Analysis

The primary purpose of this research is to evaluate the impact of social media networking sites on the buying behaviour of a consumer. To accomplish the mentioned objective of the research primary and secondary data have been collected and analysed. The secondary data for the research have been collected by the researcher from relevant articles, papers, publications, etc.

The primary data collected is analysed using SPSS ver 22 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Microsoft office Excel is used for tabulation and Graphical Presentation Purpose. Whereas, SPSS software is used for understanding the relationship between the two variables via Cross-Tabulation.

4.1 Data Collection Tools

Surveys are a popular instrument for gathering data that can be quantified. A survey is a means of gathering data on a topic of interest from a small group of people with the goal of extrapolating the findings to a larger number of people. Computer-assisted and online surveys are the most common in today's world. The data for this thesis is collected via an online Google Form questionnaire from country India. The survey was split into two sections. The first section gathered information about the respondents' demographics. The second section concentrated on research-related questions.

4.2 Sample Size

For this research purpose primary data is collected from India, with the help of Semi-Structured Questionnaire comprising of both open ended questions as well as close ended questions for gaining a comprehensive insight into the research problem. Questionnaire is created with the help of Google forms and the link to the questionnaire is circulated to family, friends and community at large via social media platform like Facebook, Whatsapp, Gmail, Instagram, etc, and a response of 160 respondents have been gathered.

4.3 Socio-Demographic Profile Analysis

It is important to study the socio-demographic profile of the respondents under survey as it plays a significant role in influencing consumer buying behaviour.

4.3.1 Frequency Distribution Based on Gender

Gender Based frequency distribution is given as below in the table:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Male	102	63.8	63.8
	Female	58	36.3	36.3
	Total	160	100.0	100.0

Source: Prepared by Researcher

From the above table it can be seen that majority of the respondents are male respondents which comprises of 63.8% of the total respondents i.e. 102. While the total number of female respondents are 58, which comprises of 36.3% of the total respondents. It can be concluded from the above table that male respondents are having major influence in this survey. For easy understanding the graphical presentation in the form of pie chart is given as below:

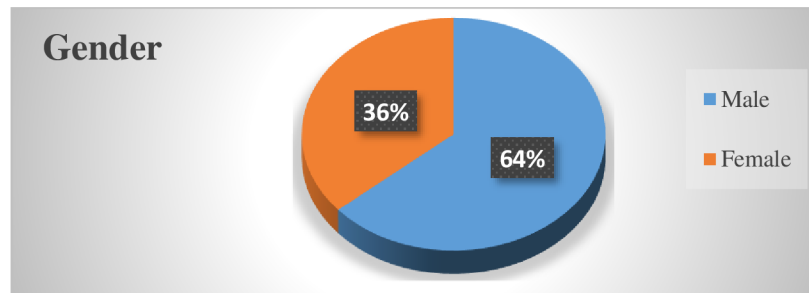


Fig. 4.1 Respondent's Gender

Source: Prepared by Researcher

4.3.2 Frequency Distribution Based on Age

Age based frequency distribution is give in the below table:

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Below 20	23	14.4	14.4	14.4
21-30	55	34.4	34.4	48.8
31-40	56	35.0	35.0	83.8
Above 40	26	16.3	16.3	100.0
Total	160	100.0	100.0	

Source: Prepared by Researcher

From the above table it can be observed that majority of the respondents belong to younger-mid age group. As the number of respondents under the age category of 21-30 are 55 which comprises of 34.4% of the total respondents and the number of respondents under the age group of 31-40 are 56 which comprises of 35% of the total respondents in this research. The respondents under the age group of below 20 are 23, whereas under the age group above 40 are 26 respondents. The graphical representation of the above table is given as below in the form of pie chart.

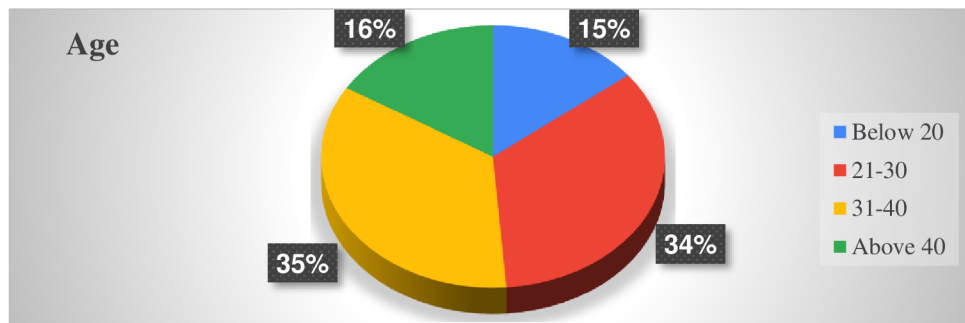


Fig. 4.2 Respondent's Age

Source: Prepared by Researcher

4.3.3 Frequency Distribution Based on District

District wise frequency distribution of the respondents is given as here under with in the form of table:

Cities	Frequency	Percent
Mumbai	1	.6
Agra	10	6.3
Ahmedabad	46	28.8
Bengaluru	4	2.5
Bhavnagar	3	1.9
Chennai	10	6.3
Coimbatore	1	.6
Delhi	12	7.5
Gurgaon	6	3.8
Hyderabad	6	3.8
Jaipur	5	3.1
Jamnagar	2	1.3
Kolkata	1	.6
Mumbai	32	20.0
Nagpur	1	.6
Nashik	2	1.3
Surat	11	6.9
Udaipur	5	3.1
Visakhapatnam	2	1.3
Total	160	100.0

Source: Prepared by Researcher

Data for this research is gathered from all over India by circulating the link of questionnaire to google forms. From the above table it can be clearly seen that majority of the respondents belong to Ahmedabad which is 46 respondents. From the table it can also be seen that after Ahmedabad, the respondents belong to Mumbai i.e. 32 respondents. So it can be concluded that majority of the respondents to take part in the survey are from Ahmedabad and Mumbai covering 48.8% of the total respondents. Whereas cities like Agra, Chennai, Delhi, Surat were the next cities from where the respondents have participated in the survey which comprises of 28% respondents in total and the rest of them from the other cities. The graphical representation of the above table is given as under for the clear understanding:

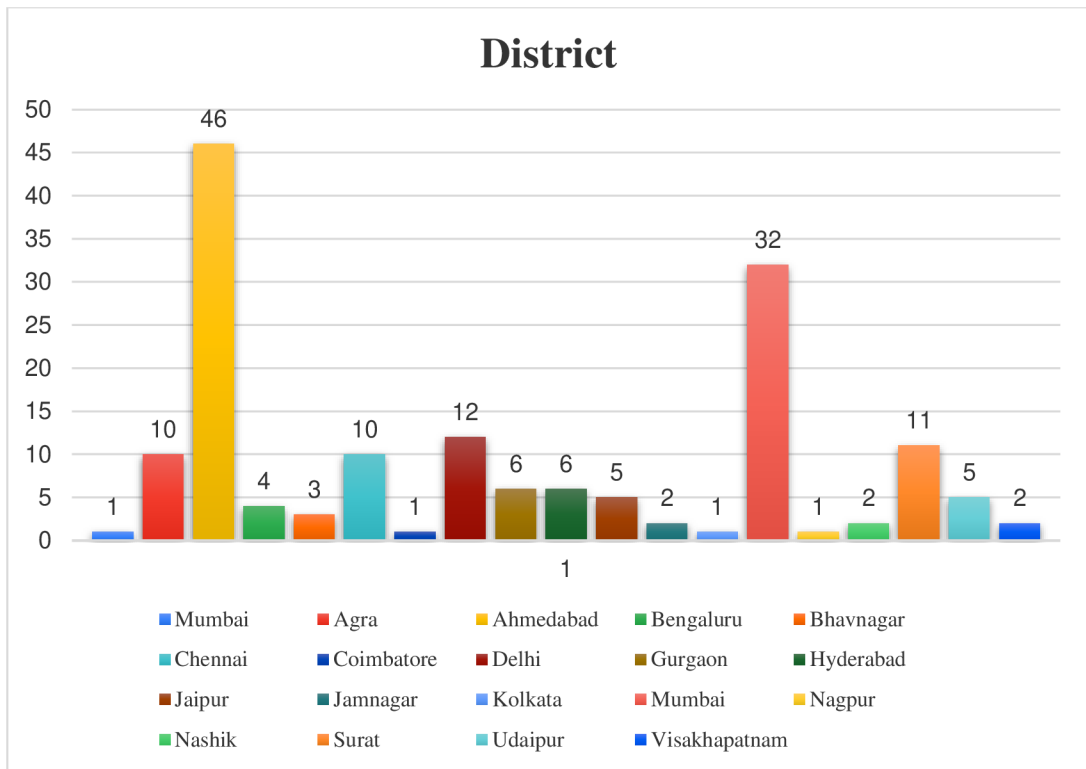


Fig. 4. 3 Respondent's District

Source: Prepared by Researcher

4.3.4 Frequency Distribution Based on Educational Qualification

The education qualification wise frequency based distribution is given as under in the table:

Table 4.4 Education Qualification			
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
HSC and Below	10	6.3	6.3
Graduation	56	35.0	35.0
Post-Graduation	65	40.6	40.6
Professional	29	18.1	18.1
Total	160	100.0	100.0

Source: Prepared by Researcher

From the above table it can be noted that majority of the respondents are educated as they have completed their Graduation or Post-Graduation. It can be seen that the total number of respondents who have completed their graduation are 56 which is 35% and the total number of respondents who have completed post-graduation are 65 which 40.6%. It can also be seen that the respondents with professional education are 18 % and only 6.3% respondents are having educational qualification of HSC and below. The graphical representation in the form of pie chart is given as below for the better understanding.

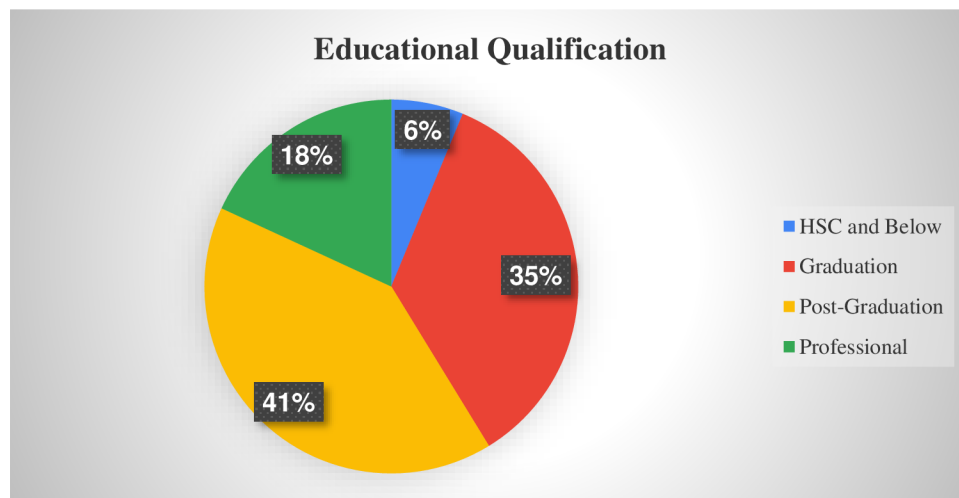


Fig. 4. 4 Respondent's Educational Qualification

Source: Prepared by Researcher

4.3.5 Frequency Distribution Based on Marital Status

Marital based frequency distribution of the respondents is given as below in the following table:

	Frequency	Percent
Married	102	63.8
Un-married	58	36.3
Total	160	100.0

Source: Prepared by Researcher

From the above table it can be inferred that majority of the participants in the survey are married. As it can be seen that the total number of respondents who are married comprises of 63.8% of the total respondents i.e. 102. Whereas, the total number of Un-married respondents are 58 which is only 36.3% of the respondents. The graphical representation of the above table is given in the form of pie chart as below for simple and clear understanding.

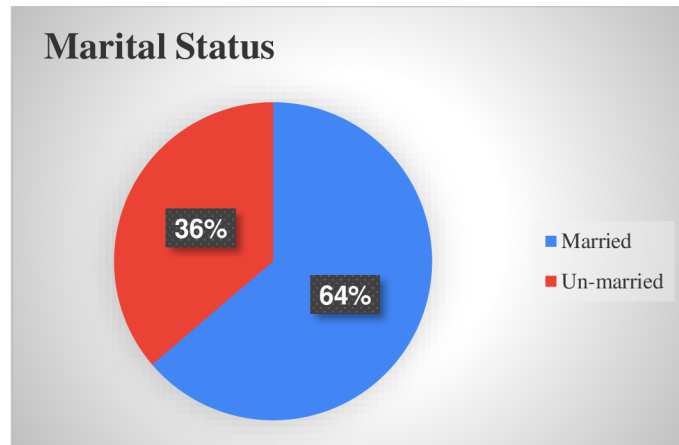


Fig. 4. 5 Respondent's Marital Status

Source: Prepared by Researcher

4.3.6 Frequency Distribution Based on Occupation

Occupation wise frequency distribution of the respondents is given as below in the table:

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Student	11	6.9	6.9
Business	42	26.3	26.3
Salaried	74	46.3	46.3
Professional	31	19.4	19.4
Others	2	1.3	1.3
Total	160	100.0	100.0

Source: Prepared by Researcher

From the above table it can be observed that 74 respondents are salaried which comprises of 46.3%. It can also be inferred that 42 respondents are businessmen which comprises 26.3% of the total respondents. Whereas there are 31 respondents, professionally occupied comprising of 19.4% of the respondents in total. Only 6.9% of the respondents are students and 2 of the respondents are from others category. Thus, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents in the research are salaried and businessmen. The graphical representation of the above table is given below in the form of pie chart.

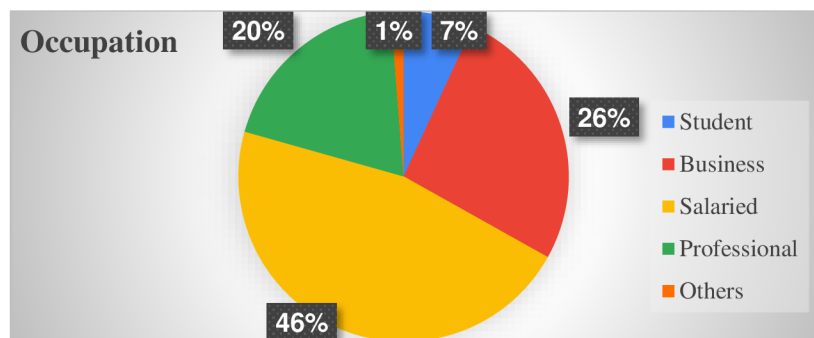


Fig. 4.6 Respondent's Occupation

Source: Prepared by Researcher

4.3.7 Frequency Distribution Based on Income

Income wise frequency distribution of the respondents is given in the below table:

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 5000	13	8.1
5001-10000	16	10.0
10001-20000	73	45.6
Above 20000	58	36.3
Total	160	100.0

Source: Prepared by Researcher

From the above table it can be observed that 73 respondents fall under the income category of 10,001-20,000rs per month which comprises of 45.6% of the total respondents. Whereas 58 respondents fall under the income category of above 20,000rs per month i.e. 36.3% of the total respondents. Only 16 respondents fall under the income category of 5001-10,000rs per month and only 13 respondents fall under the income category of less than 5000rs per month. It shows that majority of the respondents under survey are getting income

sufficient, thus making them capable of making purchases. The graphical representation of the above table is given below in the form of pie chart.

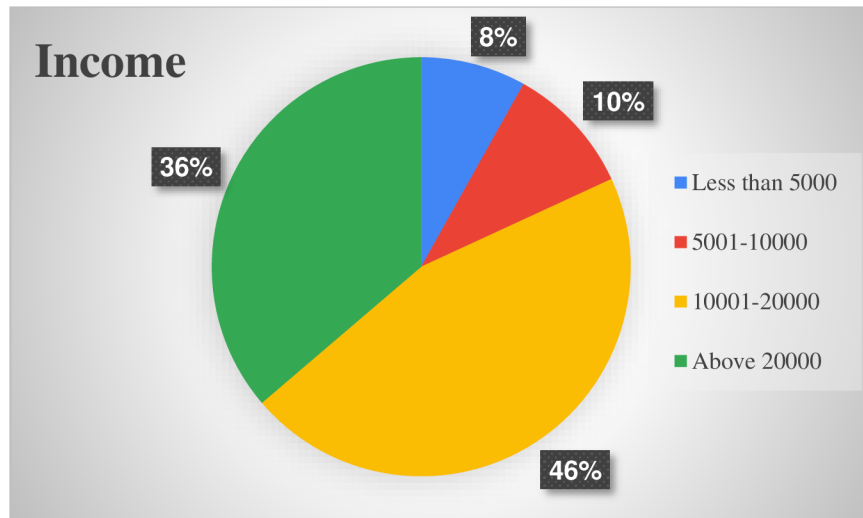


Fig. 4. 7 Respondent's Income

Source: Prepared by Researcher

4.4 Research Based Question on Consumer Buying Behaviour through Social Media Network

It is important to study about the consumer usage of social media as well as their purpose of usage of social media and the influence of advertisers via social media network impacting consumer buying behaviour.

4.4.1 Usage of Social Media Networking Site

Frequency distribution for the usage of social media site is given in the below table:

	Frequency	Percent
Facebook	75	46.9
Instagram	57	35.6
Whatsapp	129	80.6
Google+	13	8.1
Youtube	136	85
Not Using	15	9.4

Source: Prepared by Researcher

From the above table it can be concluded that 136 respondents i.e. 85% respondents have reported that they are utilizing social media platform YouTube. While 129 respondents

have reported that they are using WhatsApp. It can also be seen that 75 respondents have reported that they are using Facebook. Whereas, 57 respondents are using Instagram and 13 are using Google+. Only 15 respondents have reported that they are not using any of the social media. Thus, it can be inferred from the above table that majority of the respondents are making use of YouTube and WhatsApp in their day to day life in comparison with other social media networking sites. The graphical representation in the form of pie chart is given below for simple and clear understanding:

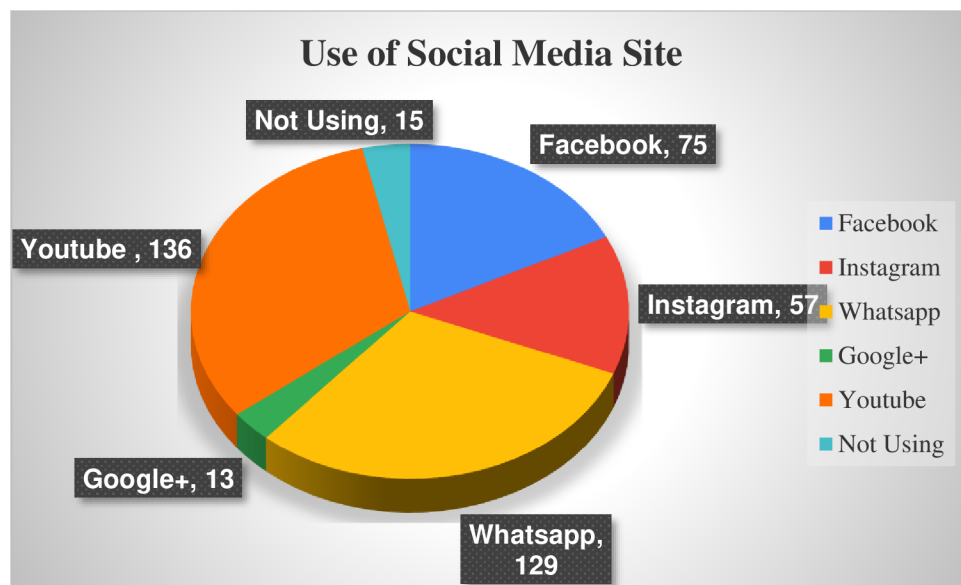


Fig. 4. 8 Use of Social Media Site

Source: Prepared by Researcher

4.4.2 Purpose of using Social Media Sites

Frequency distribution for the purpose of using social media networking site is given as below in the table:

	Frequency	Percent
Connecting with friends & family members	152	95.0
Comparing the products or services	66	41.3
Searching for information about a product or services	109	68.1
Shopping Online	96	60.0
Reading News	73	45.6
Daily Updates	85	53.1
Entertainment	41	25.6
Not Using	17	10.6

Source: Prepared by Researcher

From the above table it can be observed that 152 respondents have reported that they use social media sites for connecting with friends and family members. It can also be inferred that 109 respondents have reported that they use social media sites for searching for information about the product or services. While 96 respondents have reported that they use it for shopping online and 83 of the respondents use it to get daily updates while 73 of them use social media for reading news. It is also observed that 66 respondents make use of social media for comparing products and services and 41 of them have reported that they use it for entertainment purpose. Only 17 respondents have claimed that they are not using social media for any purpose. Thus it can be inferred that majority of the purpose for using social media sites is for connecting with friends and family members and for searching information about products and services online. The graphical representation in the form of bar chart is given below for simple and better understanding of the table.

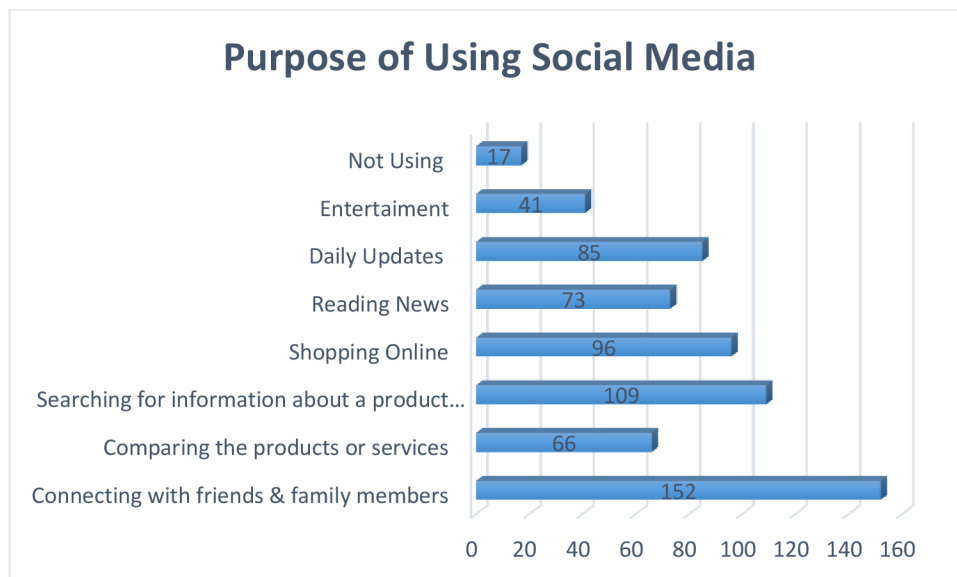


Fig. 4.9 Purpose of Using Social Media

Source: Prepared by Researcher

4.4.3 Usage of Social Media Sites for Shopping

Frequency distribution for the usage of social media site for shopping is given in the below table:

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	149	93.1	93.1
No	11	6.9	6.9
Total	160	100.0	100.0

Source: Prepared by Researcher

From the above table it can be inferred that majority of the respondents i.e. 93.1% of the total respondents have reported that they use social media site for shopping purpose. Whereas only 6.9% of the respondents i.e. 11 of the total respondents have reported that they don't use social media sites for shopping purpose. Hence it can be concluded that now a days majority of the individuals are using social media for shopping purpose. The graphical representation of the above table in the form of pie chart is given as below:

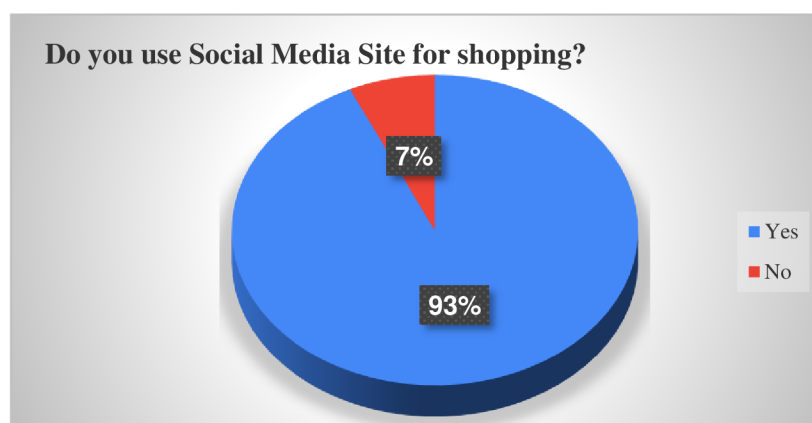


Fig. 4. 10 Use of Social Media Site for Shopping
Source: Prepared by Researcher

4.4.4 Social Media Sites for Shopping

Frequency distribution of sites for social media shopping have been given in the below table:

	Frequency	Percent
Facebook	143	89.6
Instagram	89	56.0
Twitter	51	32.0
Google+	8	5.0
Whatsapp	96	60.0
Youtube	144	90.0
Not Using	11	6.9

Source: Prepared by Researcher

From the above table it can be inferred that 144 respondents i.e. 90% have reported that they utilize YouTube for making buying decision for online shopping. Whereas, 143 respondents i.e. 89.6% of the total respondents have reported that they use Facebook for

shopping purpose. It can also be observed that 96 respondents are utilizing WhatsApp for shopping and 89 respondents are using Instagram for the same. Twitter is used by 51 respondents and only 8 respondents are using Google+ for shopping purpose. While 11 respondents are not utilizing any of the mentioned social media sites for shopping purpose. The graphical representation in the form of bar chart is give below for the simple understanding of the above table:

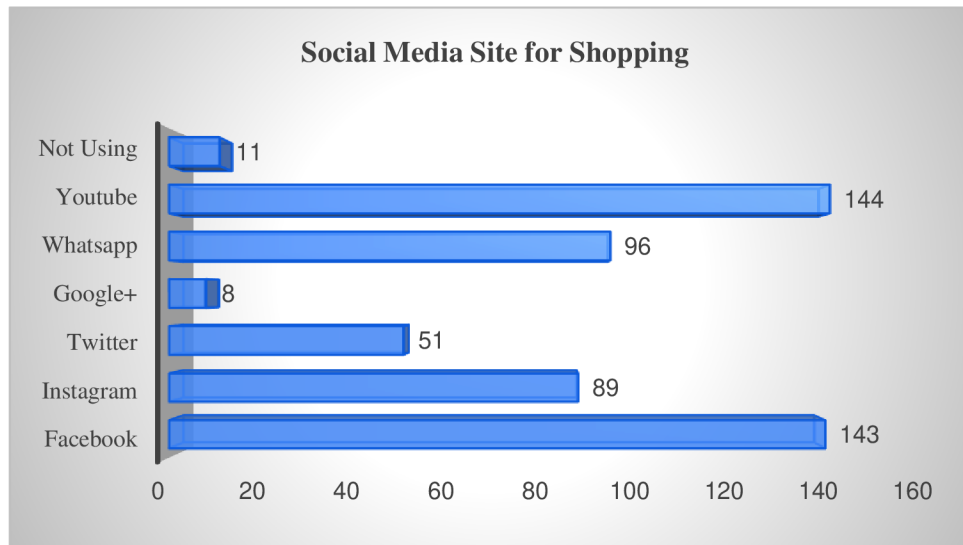


Fig. 4. 11 Social Media Site Used for Shopping

Source: Prepared by Researcher

4.4.5 Kind of Information Search

The frequency distribution for kind of information the respondents look for on social media sites is given below in the following table:

	Frequency	Percent
Price of Product	152	95.0
Product Specification	147	91.9
Product Origin	25	15.6
Terms & Conditions	79	49.4
Health Information	94	58.8

Source: Prepared by Researcher

From the above table it can be inferred that 152 respondents i.e. 95% of the total respondents have reported that they look for the pricing of the products on social media sites. Whereas, the second most information sought by the respondents on social media sites is Product specification. As, 147 respondents i.e. 91.9% of the total respondents have claimed that they look for product specification on social media sites. It is reported by 94 respondents that they search for health information about the product on social media sites. While 79 respondents have reported that they look for the terms and conditions and only 25 respondents have claimed that they search for product origin. Thus, it can be concluded that the primary purpose of utilizing social media for shopping purpose is to search for information like Price of the product and Product specification followed by the health information about the product. The graphical representation of the above table is given below in the form of bar chart, for simple understanding:

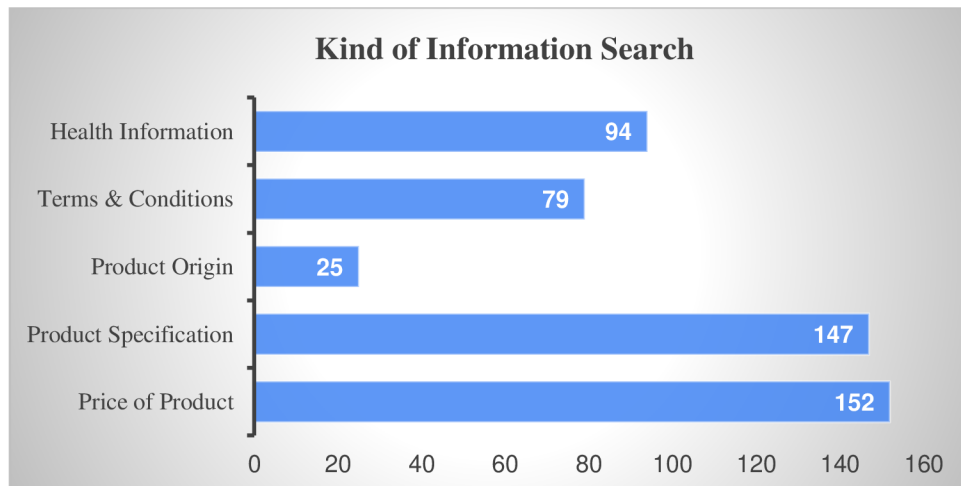


Fig. 4. 12 Kind of Information Search

Source: Prepared by Researcher

4.4.6 Benefits of Social Media

Frequency distribution for the benefits derived by the respondents while using social media network for making buying decisions is given in the below table:

	Frequency	Percent
Enhances Customer Engagement	94	58.8
Improves communication between buyer and seller	48	30.0
Easy access to product information without interruption	129	80.6
Eliminates stress of face to face bargaining	83	51.9

Source: Prepared by Researcher

From the above table it can be inferred that 129 respondents i.e. 80.6% of the total respondents have claimed that easy access to the product information without interruption is the main benefit that they get while using social media network for buying decisions. While 94 respondents i.e. 58.8% have reported that it helps in enhancing customer engagement and 83 respondents i.e. 51.9% have claimed that it eliminates the stress of face to face bargaining while they are making purchases utilizing social media networking sites. Thus, it can be concluded that Easy access to product information and Increase in Customer Engagement are the major benefits that the respondents derive while making buying decisions from social media sites. The graphical representation for the easy and simple understanding of the above table is given as below in the form of Bar Chart:

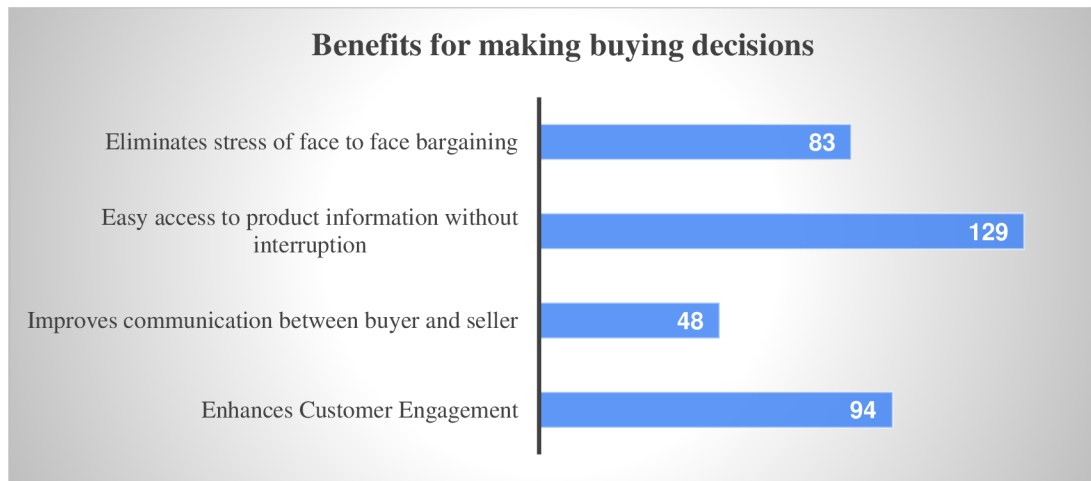


Fig. 4. 13 Benefits for Making Buying Decisions Online

Source: Prepared by Researcher

4.4.7 Challenges in Online Buying

Frequency distribution of the challenges faced by the respondents while making purchase online using social media are given in the below table:

	Frequency	Percent
Cyber-bulling	23	14.4
Reduced face to face communication	95	59.4
Hackers Distraction	121	75.6
Offensive-materials	139	86.9
Product information un-relevant	72	45.0

Source: Prepared by Researcher

From the above table it can be seen that 139 respondents i.e. 86.9% have stated that exposure to offensive-materials is the challenge faced by them while trying to make purchase online using social media site. It is also observed that 75.6% of the respondents i.e. 121 have reported that hackers-distraction is the another challenge faced by them while making online purchases. Whereas, 95 respondents have reported that the challenge they face is reduction in face to face communication while making online purchases through social media and 72 respondents have reported that they have found product information un-relevant which pose a challenge to make purchases. Thus, it can be inferred that Offensive materials posted online and Hackers distraction are the major challenges faced by the buyers when making online purchases on social media. The graphical representation of the above table is given below in the form of bar chart, for simple and easy understanding:

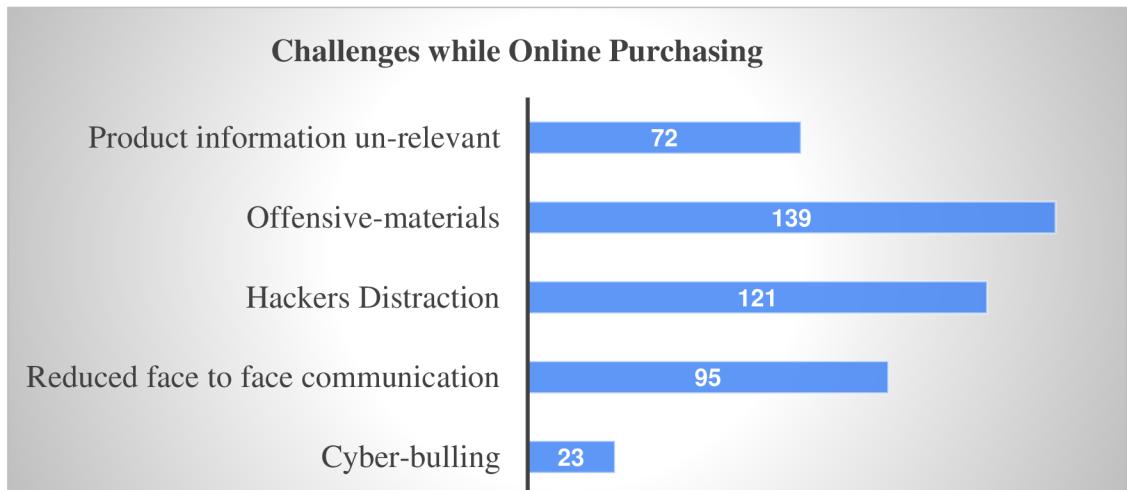


Fig. 4. 14 Challenges While Online Purchasing

Source: Prepared by Researcher

4.4.8 Factors Influencing Online Buying

Frequency distribution of the factors influencing the buying decision under social media network is given in the below table:

	Frequency	Percent
Real-time customer feedback	76	47.5
Easy & Cheap source of information	148	92.5
Privacy	61	38.1
Good customer support	49	30.6
Visuals of advertisement & products	137	85.6
Comments & Reviews about the Product/Service	152	95.0

Source: Prepared by Researcher

From the above table it can be observed that majority of the individuals (152) have reported that comments and reviews about the Product/Service influence their buying decision under social media network. It shows that 95% of the people are preferring social media apps for checking the comments and reviews about products/services. While the second most influencing factors is that social media has become an easy and cheap source of information about the product/services, as reported by 148 respondents comprising of 92.5% of the total respondents. The third factor is visuals of advertisement and products, it also influences the people, as 137 respondents have reported that which comprises of 85.6% of the respondents. It can also be observed that 76 respondents have reported that due to real-time customer feedback they prefer making purchases via social media network sites. Whereas, 61 respondents have reported privacy to be the influencing factor for making buying decisions of purchasing from a social media networking sites. Only 49 individuals have reported good customer support as a factor of influencing their buying decisions. Thus, it can be inferred that Comments and reviews, Easy and cheap source of information and Visual of advertisement are the major sources influencing the buying decisions under social media network. The graphical representation in the form of bar chart of the above table is given as below:

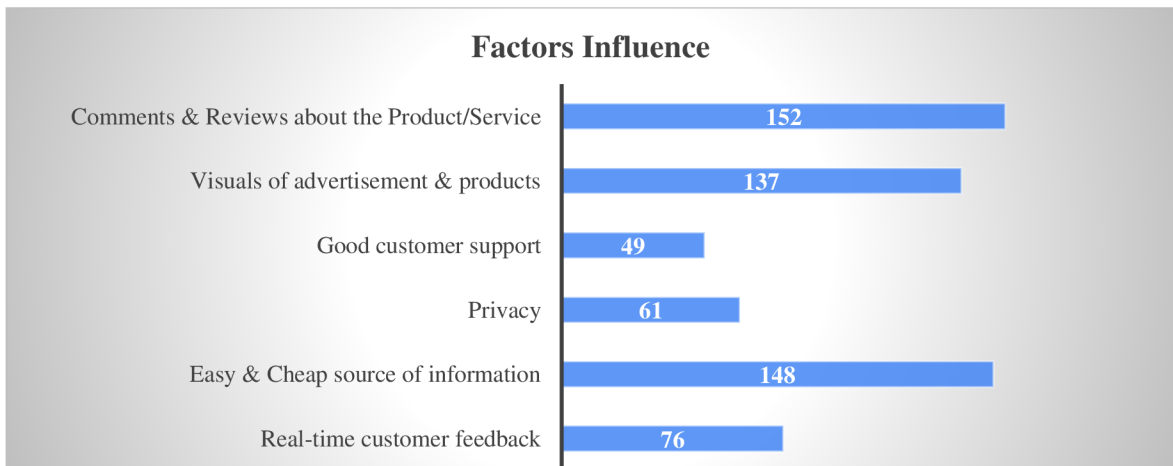


Fig. 4. 15 Factors Influence While Making Purchase Online

Source: Prepared by Researcher

4.4.9 Products Purchased

Frequency distribution for product purchased online getting influenced through advertising social media is given as below in the table:

Table 4.16 How many products have you purchased currently, influenced by advertising on social media?		
	Frequency	Percent
1 to 5	11	6.9
6 to 10	17	10.6
More than 10	42	26.3
Almost Everything	80	50.0
No Products Purchased	10	6.3
Total	160	100.0

Source: Prepared by Researcher

From the above table it can be inferred that majority of the respondents have made online purchases getting influenced by advertising on social media. It is observed that 80 respondents which comprises of 50% of the total respondents have reported that, they have purchased almost everything getting influenced from the social media networking sites. Whereas, 42 respondents have purchased more than 10 products. It is also observed that 11 respondents have made purchases of 1 to 5 products and 17 respondents have made purchases of 6 to 10 products online. Only 6.3% respondents have not made any purchases online, which is only 10 respondents. Thus, it shows that majority of the respondents have started making purchases online getting influenced by the advertising on social media networks. The graphical representation in of the above table is given below in the form of bar chart for simple understanding.



Fig. 4. 16 Product Purchased

Source: Prepared by Researcher

4.4.10 Online Purchasing Experience

Frequency distribution of the online purchasing experience is given in the below table:

Table 4.17 Rate your experience about your online purchases that you make using social media network.		
	Frequency	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	3	1.9
Dissatisfied	12	7.5
Neutral	16	10.0
Satisfied	100	62.5
Very Satisfied	29	18.1
Total	160	100.0

Source: Prepared by Researcher

From the above table it can be observed that 62.5% of the respondents have reported that they are satisfied with their online purchasing experience with different social media networking sites. It can also be found that 29 respondents have reported that they are very satisfied with their online purchasing experience. It can be seen that 10% of the respondents are neutral in their experience regarding online purchases and only 7.5% respondents are dissatisfied and 1.9% are very dissatisfied with their online purchasing experience. The graphical representation of the above table is given as below in the form of bar chart:

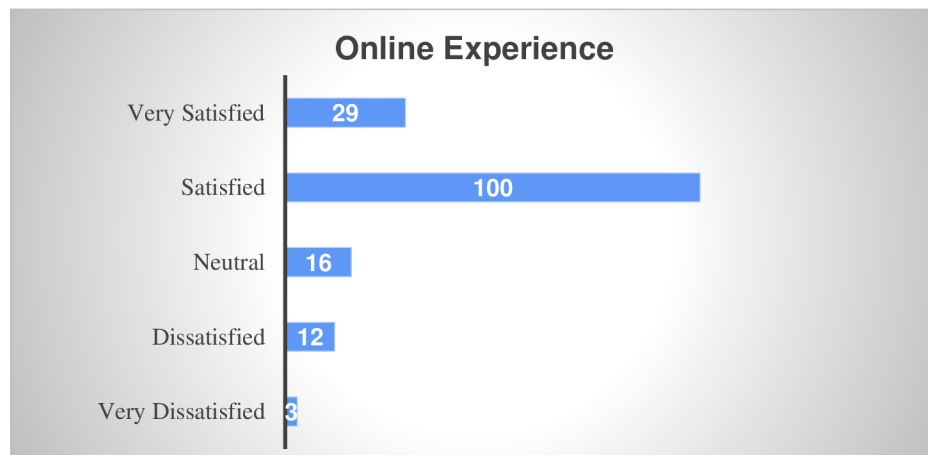


Fig. 4. 17 Online Experience

Source: Prepared by Researcher

4.5 Cross-Tabulation

Cross-tabulation of the variables is done so as to better understand the relationship between the two variables.

4.5.1 Cross-tabulation of Gender * Total Products Purchased

Cross-tabulation of Gender with Total products purchased is given as below in the table to understand the relationship between the two variables. Whether gender is having any influence on online purchasing behavior or not.

		Do you use social media for shopping?		Total
		Yes	No	
Gender	Male	98	4	102
	Female	51	7	58
Total		149	11	160

Source: Prepared by Researcher

It can be inferred from the above table that majority of the females i.e. 7 have not made any purchases online utilizing social media networks whereas only 4 males have not made any purchases online using social media sites. Thus it can be concluded that marketers should put more efforts to convert non purchasing females into purchases as the number of female non-purchaser is more than males.

4.5.2 Cross-tabulation of Age * Usage of Social Media for Shopping

Cross-tabulation of Age with Usage of Social Media for shopping is given as below in the table to understand the relationship between the two variables. Whether age is having any influence on usage of social media for shopping or not.

		Do you use social media for shopping?		Total
		Yes	No	
Age	Below 20	23	0	23
	21-30	54	1	55
	31-40	48	8	56
	Above 40	24	2	26
Total		149	11	160

Source: Prepared by Researcher

From the above table it can be concluded that the respondents who don't use social media for online purchasing of them majority of the respondents are belonging to age 31-40 which is 8 respondents followed by 2 respondents from the age group above 40. Thus it can be inferred that marketers should make more efforts to convert these age groups into prospects.

4.5.3 Cross-tabulation of Age * Products purchased

Cross-tabulation of age with products purchased online is given as below in the table to understand the relationship between the two variables. Whether the purchasing behavior is affected by the age.

		How many products have you purchased currently, influenced by advertising on social media?					Total
		1 to 5	6 to 10	More than 10	Almost Everything	No Products Purchased	
Age	Below 20	1	1	7	14	0	23
	21-30	3	5	15	32	0	55
	31-40	5	5	15	23	8	56
	Above 40	2	6	5	11	2	26
Total		11	17	42	80	10	160

Source: Prepared by Researcher

From the above table it can be understood that majority of the respondents who have made purchases of almost everything belongs to the age group of 21-30 followed by the age group of 31-40. As majority of the purchases are from these two age groups marketers should frame strategies to target these groups so as to encourage and enhance their online shopping experiences.

Chapter-5

Interpretations

The interpretation and the key concerns of this research are listed below for knowing the customers online purchasing behaviour being influenced by social media network and to help marketers to develop strategies accordingly.

- Majority of the participants in the survey are males which shows that the study is influenced by male respondents.
- It can also be interpreted that majority of the respondents belong to young to mid age group i.e. from 21- 40. It is also found that majority of the respondents are married respondents thus it can be inferred that these respondents will utilize social media apps for communications amongst their family members, relatives and friends.
- It is also inferred from the cross tabulation that age plays a significant role in influencing the buying behaviour of the respondents to make purchases online.
- It can be inferred from the survey that respondents have participated from different cities but majority of the respondents belonged to Ahmedabad and Mumbai District.
- It can also be seen that majority of the respondents are graduate and above in their educational qualification, thus it can be concluded that these respondents will be influenced by the user ratings, reviews, comments on different social media apps.
- It is also found in the study that only few of the respondents are students and the majority of the respondents are income earners occupied in various sectors, as reported in the study majority of the respondents income fall in the range of 10,000-20,000 and above which shows that they are earning sufficient enough for making purchases via different modern modes of shopping.
- Very few of the respondents are not utilizing social media apps, rest all the respondents are using different types of social media apps, amongst which the most used app is YouTube followed by WhatsApp. It can be inferred that these two apps play a vital role in connecting people with their family, friends and peers along with marketers to share information, feedback, problems, and various events of life.
- It is also found from the study that people make use of social media apps for connecting with friends and family members. Moreover, they also make use of social

media apps for searching information about the products and services and for shopping online as reported by majority of them.

- It is found in the study that majority (93%) of the respondents have reported that they make use of social media apps for shopping purpose and the most preferred site for shopping is Facebook and YouTube.
- Majority of the respondents have reported that they make use of social media apps for shopping purpose for finding out the product information and the price of the products.
- The biggest benefit of social media apps for shopping purpose as reported by the respondents is, that it allows easy access to product information without any interruption.
- Study shows that the challenges faced by the online shoppers while making purchases using social media sites is Hackers Distraction and Offensive materials as these two challenges pose a restriction on individual to make purchases online via social media networking sites.
- It can be inferred from the study that the factors that motivate buyers to make purchases utilizing social media apps for shopping are Easy and Cheap source of information, Comments & Reviews about the product/services and visuals of advertisement and products.
- It is also found from the study that now-a-days people mostly make purchases online getting influenced through advertisements on social media networks. As majority of the purchases are reported to be made by them via online mode.
- It is also inferred from the study as reported by the respondents, that they are satisfied with the online purchase experience.
- From Cross-tabulation it can also be inferred that male respondents make purchases via social media networks more in comparison with female respondents. Thus, gender plays an influencing role in consumer behaviour.
- From Cross Tabulation it is also observed that majority of the large purchases are made by the people belonging to middle age group and the older people are found to hesitate making purchases online getting influenced by the challenges they face via social media networks.

From the study it can be interpreted as the Factors affecting Consumer Behaviour are:

Age, income & gender are found to be the influencing factors as the respondents buying behaviour varies in accordance with gender, with different age group (respondents with age more than 40 are found to be making less frequent or no purchases online) & with different income range (respondents with lower income are found to be less frequent in making purchases online in comparison with the high income groups) affecting the consumer buying behaviour.

Whereas, easy access to product information without interruption, comments and reviews about the products/services and visuals of the online ads and products seems to be the motivating factors encouraging buyers to make purchases online via social media networks. The challenging factors that demotivate the buyers to make online purchases is distraction caused by the hackers like their social media account getting hacked, unsafe payment gateways, phishing attempts, malware attacks, poor encryption, etc. are the various ways one may be distracted while utilizing social media platforms. Whereas, offensive materials do pose a serious challenge thus again leading to users avoiding usage of online networks for making purchases.

These challenges needs to be addressed by the marketers so as to attract more and more social media users to make purchases via online platform.

Chapter-6

Conclusion and Recommendation

6.1 Conclusion

As social media is an integral part of daily life and everything necessary and much more information seems to be at our fingertips, it has become an integral element of the purchasing process. Because social media has brought practically all services closer to us, all businesses are now simply a message away, regardless of their actual location.

It is generally before the actual purchase process that social media has the most influence on customer purchasing behaviour. Social media is utilised to obtain further information as well as to locate alternative products and services that meet one's needs. Different social media influencers, businesses, and other accounts/platforms can have an impact on customers' thoughts, needs, and how the purchase process progresses based on their particular attitudes and social media activity.

The goal of this study was to determine whether social media had an effect on customer purchasing behaviour. The results gathered during this study show that various forms of social media marketing may influence consumer purchasing decisions and even generate new wants for customers by providing targeted advertisements and simple solutions to meet those requirements. However, rather than immediately purchasing the goods or service, buyers are motivated to seek more accurate and true information from social media after a purchase thought is aroused.

The findings show that social media plays a significant influence in buying decisions and, in particular, information gathering. Consumers are ready to utilise social media as a platform as well as to access limitless volume of information in a flash. Consumers are also willing to try new things and pay close attention to tailored marketing on social media platforms, which they are not scared to buy.

As per the findings of this study, using influencer marketing as part of a marketing strategy is effective since marketers reach people on social media belonging generations. Also, companies should continue to focus on online social media behaviour in order to establish consumer confidence, provide contemporary and quick customer service, and make it easy for customers to get reliable and required information about their offerings in the form of products and services. The openness of content and the exchange of customer

experiences via word of mouth is becoming considerably faster and even more available for all social media users, forcing companies to be much more consumer oriented in order to prevent poor reputation.

Even while most customers rely upon their acquaintances, family members, and personal expertise while making purchase selections, there is no denying that social media is a great platform for buying and aids in the gathering of sufficient data to allow faster judgments in a variety of scenarios. The impact of social media on consumer purchase decisions is already evident, and it is certain to grow in the coming years as new technology emerges. To address the expectations of today's customers, advertising through social media should focus on providing high-quality material that is consumer-relevant.

To summarise the outcomes of this study, it can be shown that customers are actively using social media as a tool for confirming purchasing decisions and obtaining relevant information.

6.2 Recommendations

The findings of the study are useful for the different industries for promoting their products through online social media networks, since it is found in the study that people not only use social media network for connecting with family and friends but they also make use of social media in comparing different products and services, for shopping online and for checking the price of the products. Following are the recommendations for the marketers:

- Based on the research study the appropriate target customers for the marketers are males and females belonging to the middle age group of 21-40, marketers need to identify as to what motivates these age group specifically to make purchase decisions. They need to create a dedicated team to manage consumer brand engagement via widely used social media platforms.
- Based on the research it is also found that YouTube, WhatsApp & Facebook are the most preferred social media networks by the customer, marketers should develop a marketing campaign for social media and try to attract consumers to their YouTube Channels, Facebook Page and WhatsApp groups for more customised services as desired by the customers and for offering speedy customer services.
- It is also observed from the study that people are influenced by the attractive advertisement and product displays online, marketers must ensure to create an

artwork which is creative and is helping in getting audience as it would lead to more awareness and brand engagement for different brands amongst the users of social media networks.

- Social media networks also provide analytics regarding the post views via videos, likes and subscribes to the content of a channel, number of followers and the number of comments per day and likes and dislikes on it. Marketers needs to make sure that they choose the relevant tools to measure the key performance indicators as well as return on investment made by them.
- Brands may share more good experiences from consumers who have previously purchased the product, allowing prospects and those who are going to purchase to connect more easily.
- Brands must demonstrate their influence by attempting to make their products ubiquitous on social media.
- Customers may be more engaging with brands, and brands can gain more consumer insights, evaluations, and feedback to allow them to feel like they are a part of the company.
- Marketers must update their security plugins and safety components like fire-walls and two factor authentication to prevent customers from getting distracted by the hackers. They may keep upgrading their social media platforms regularly and make sure that the website is hosted with the standalone server.
- To avoid the challenge of Offensive Material minimum age limit must be set by the marketers for their advertisements media so as to avoid offensive materials for the users. Installing parental controls, age restriction & age verification, turning on safe search on search engines, setting filters, blocking pop-ups are some of the ways to avoid access to offensive content while surfing through different social media networks. These users are to be made aware regarding the same to provide them a best experience while browsing online through different platforms.

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Appendix

Link for the Google Form is Given as Below

<https://forms.gle/UeRW4c79ki6wxi5J7>