Impact Of Social Media On Consumer Behaviour

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KEYWORDS

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this paper is to research empirically the role of social media in consumers' decision-making processes. A quantitative survey investigates up to what degree experiences are altered by the use of social media. Customer sentiments on items and administrations are currently progressively overwhelmed by outsiders in advanced spaces, which thusly impact conclusions in the disconnected space. Web-based social networking has engaged purchasers, as advertisers have no control over the substance, timing, or recurrence of online discussions among shoppers. Results show that social media usage influences consumer satisfaction in the stages of information search and alternative evaluation, with satisfaction getting amplified as the consumer moves along the process towards the final purchase decision and post-purchase evaluation.

INTRODUCTION

A study based on the decision process of consumers for purchases widely influenced by social media. Internet-based life has involved a significant situation as a specialized device. Individuals over the globe utilize online life to interface with others or associations. Individuals have a great deal of associations via web-based networking media, in this manner data is devoured by numerous individuals. This data turns into a wellspring of effect on shoppers and their purchasing conduct. From all around the world people begun to utilize online networking, for example, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn to share their encounters. As clients, individuals share item audits, data about a help, exhortation on food or wellbeing, admonitions about items, tips on utilizing certain items, and substantially more. In the course of the most recent decade, the World Wide Web has seen a multiplication of client-driven web advancements, for example, web journals, informal communities, and media sharing stages. By and large, called web-based life, these

innovations have empowered the development of client created content, a worldwide network, and the distribution of shopper feelings.

CONSUMER

Consumers

Any individual who purchases products or services for his/her personal use and not for manufacturing or resale is called a consumer. A consumer is the one who decides whether or not to buy an item at the store or someone who is influenced by advertisement and marketing.

They are the end-users in the distribution chain of goods and services. Buyers are the people who buy the product or service and might or might not use it. The person who ultimately uses the product or service is the consumer. A consumer is the one for whom the services or products are ultimately designed for.

Consumer Decision Process

Consumers are individuals that purchase or consume products and services that are offered to them. The consumer buying behaviour can be mysterious and complex at times. The openness and straightforwardness of data have significantly impacted the dynamic procedure, along these lines, it is critical to at what are the obstacles and fiction focus that hold possibilities turning out to be buyers or keep buyers dithering from repurchasing. Hence, the consumer decision-making process shows the critical aspects of individual consumption behaviour. (Sternthal and Craig 1982)

Consumer behaviour can be classified into five stages –

1. Problem recognition
2. Search of information
3. Evaluation of alternatives,
4. Final decision
5. Post-purchase decisions.

Figure 1: showing 5 stages of Consumer Decision process. (Jansson-Boyd, 2010)

1. Problem recognition

 Problem recognition takes place whenever a consumer recognizes a significant difference between the desired and the actual state of affairs, which is insufficient magnitude to arouse and activate the decision process (Solomon, Bamossy and Askegaard 2002). At the point when an individual is activated remotely, for example, an individual may see a TV notice for a get-away, the upgrades triggers musings or thoughts regarding the chance of making. Once consumers recognize a want, they need to gather information to understand how they can fulfil that want, which leads to step 2.

2. Search of Information

The last buy choice won't be made without a moment's delay, in any event, when people recognize, perceive their issues, and focus on the accessible items; similarly, when possibilities have a certain enthusiasm for an item or administration, they will in general experience the accompanying strides before completing any activity – recognizing accessible choices, considering data of chose alternatives, and in the end judging which of these choices can no doubt convey the best result. While inquiring about their choices, purchasers again depend on inside and outside elements, just as past associations with an item or brand, both positive and negative. In the search of information, they may peruse through alternatives at a physical area or counsel online assets, for example, Google or client audits.

3. Evaluation of alternatives

When data has been gathered, the customer utilizes it to assess and survey the elective item decisions to show up at a buy choice. The elective assessment and data search stages, however, introduced independently, are unpredictably interlaced during dynamic, and shoppers frequently move to and fro between the two. Elective assessment includes the determination of decision options and evaluative measures. When decided, the exhibition of the considered decisions is thought about along the notable rules, lastly, choice standards are applied to limit the choices to make the last determination. This stage prompts the arrangement of convictions, perspectives, and goals, prompting the resulting phase of the procurement. The alternative that is simpler to use or arrange, or what is preference of the majority or various other reviews and experiences matters in the evaluation.

4. Final decision

Purchase choice alludes to the last decision or choice made with respect to which item to purchase.. The act of purchase is the last major stage, with the consumer deciding on what to buy, where to buy, and how to pay. Purchase is a function of intentions, environmental influences and individual situations. Some of the influences that can affect the purchase
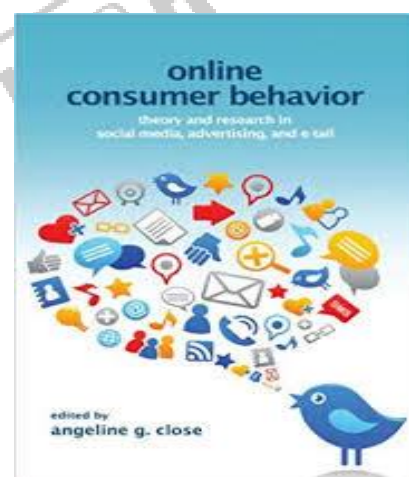
action include the time available for decision making, information availability, and the retail environment. The attitude of family and friends, and unanticipated circumstances such as product availability (size, colour) and stock-outs may also force a re-evaluation (Kotler and Armstrong, 2014).

6. Post-purchase decisions

After consumption, the consumer then experiences certain levels of satisfaction or dissatisfaction and evaluates the wisdom of the choice made in selecting the alternative. Two potential outcomes are derived from this phase – satisfaction or dissonance. When consumer experiences dissonance towards the purchase, the choice is 'devaluated' and the consumer begins the process of searching, obtaining information and evaluating other options for future buying decision, in which triggers new behaviour. (Sternthal and Craig 1982). In this part the process involves initiative from both buyer and seller where the expectations of the buyer had to be met perfectly by the product and seller has to ensure future engagement and repurchase by the buyer.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media can be defined as a group of Internet-based applications that are built on the ideological and technological foundations of the Web and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Social media is accessible and enabled by scalable communication techniques. As social media become more and more prevalent, connecting people and facilitating the exchange of information, consumer behaviour is shifting. Through social media, consumers now can easily watch an interesting advertisement on
YouTube, while posting their own opinions on Twitter and sharing it with friends on Facebook. Social media differ from paper-based media (e.g., magazines and newspapers) and traditional electronic media such as Radio, TV in many ways, including quality frequency, interactivity, usability, and performance.

Types of Social Media

In this discussion regarding different categories of social media, 4 distinct types of social media outlets are focused on:
 1) Social networking sites
 2) Social news Website
 3) Media sharing Sites
 4) Blogs
Each of these social media platforms unique features.

1. Social networking sites

A **social networking site** is an online platform that people use to build social networks or social relationships with other people who share similar personal or career interests, activities, backgrounds, or real-life connections.

Interpersonal interaction locales, as a rule, have another client input a rundown of individuals with whom they share an association and afterward permit the individuals on the rundown to affirm or some interpersonal interaction sites like LinkedIn are utilized for setting up proficient associations, while destinations like Facebook ride the line among private and expert.

2. Social news Website

Social news websites are communities that encourage their users to submit news stories, articles, and media and share them with other users. These stories are ranked based on popularity, as voted on by other users of the website. Users and comments and share these stories too.

3. Media sharing sites

A site that empowers clients to store and offer their interactive media records (photographs, recordings, music) with others. The media is played/seen from any Web program and might be specifically accessible by means of a secret key or to the overall population.

4. Blogs

A **blog** is a discussion published on the Web consisting of discrete, informal diary-style text entries called posts. A blog allows you to post your views on a particular topic. On February 16, 2011, there were over 156 million public blogs in existence. (Wikipedia)

Social Media and Marketing

According to Weinberg (2009), he refers social media marketing as leveraging the 'social' through the 'media' to 'market' businesses' constituents. Social Media marketing is the process of empowering individuals to promote their services or products through different social media channels to attract a larger amount of people that may not have been available via traditional way of advertising. The advertisements via mass media are no longer as efficient as they were in the past. Social web is a place where people with common interests gather to share ideas, information, thoughts etc. Through the channel of social media marketers can listen and respond to communities, take feedbacks and promote their products or services.

What makes social media marketing special?

Small and medium sized companies with small budgets can take full advantage of social media marketing when they have insufficient funds to use the traditional way of marketing. Even though social media marketing is an evolving concept, the basic idea of marketing remains the same which is to target the section of the population, communicating with prospects, building loyalty and so on.

Social media and consumer

Social media as a mean of giving consumers a voice. Companies are engaging with the purpose of creating brand awareness, engaging their existing customers, driving traffic to other marketing properties and growing channel number (Zarrella 2010; Weber 2009; Weinberg 2009; Smith and Zook 2011). Each of the social media platforms plays a role in giving out, receiving, and exchanging information without any boundary limitations, and as mentioned previously that social media enables the two-way flow of information. Since the flow of communication does not merely impact how companies can access their targeted groups, but also it influences throughout the entire decision process, from interpreting the message, searching for available alternatives, as well as actions carried out in the after the purchase; thus, it is important to denote that rejection, misinterpretation, and misunderstanding are the possible pitfalls in the flow of communication (Smith and Zook 2011, 120). Online life presents another element of potential outcomes and difficulties for advertising (PR) and organizations around the globe. It rebrands the idea of the network and reclassifies the manners in which customers and brands impart. Before online networking, purchasers were constrained in how far they could take protests, past reaching client care, or telling others in their locale. Web- based social networking changed this. Presently, customers in a split second can voice open remarks about organizations. Online networking, as another segment, has additionally confused the noble purchasing conduct process hypothesis wherein the purchasing perspectives are not affected simply by the customary channels yet reach out to the online stages. Inclinations and choice checking is incited rely on the information sources given by parties outside the ability to control of online advertisers, for example, peer audits, referrals, websites, interpersonal organizations, and different types of client produced content.

Social media such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are dynamic tools that facilitate online relationships (Golden, 2011). It is a relatively low cost form of marketing and allows organizations to engage in direct and end-user contact (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Given the choices made available to consumers and the influential role of social media marketing, the brands and consumers have a changing role to play in the organization's strategy in that they now have an economic impact (Lindermann, 2004; Mayfield, 2008). Brands influence customer choice. Customers influence other customers. These chains of events affect repurchases, which further affect future earnings and long term organisational sustainability (Oliveira and Sullivan, 2003). Peer correspondence through web-based life, another type of buyer socialization, it affects dynamic and in this manner advertising procedures. Buyer socialization hypothesis predicts that correspondence among buyers influences their psychological, full of feeling and conduct mentalities

OBJECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH:

Social media has become a crucial instrument for online consumers in this day and age. It's no surprise that all kinds of businesses have turned to social media to find and connect with their target market. There's a 71% more chance of users buying a product when it is referred to them through social media. The generation born in 2000s is considered as the generation that spends most of their time on social media websites/apps, more than 50% of their purchases are influenced by social media. Social media websites/apps are the foremost platforms for executing successful digital marketing campaigns. Changes in consumer behaviour due to social media are one of the most fascinating aspects in modern marketing. The objective of this research is to explain why, when, and how social media has impacted the consumer decision process. The study has been conducted by collecting primary data through questionnaires in Delhi during the month of May.

Research Questions:

1. How do consumers gather and process the information before a purchase?
2. How does social media affect consumers in different stages of their decision making?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The use of social media is a trend in the 21st century. Internet based messages have started influencing different aspects of consumer decisions, the buying behaviour, evaluation, communication with brands etc.
The advent of social media in forms similar to Twitter and Facebook are beginning to have large implications on business practices and academic literature alike. Over the last few years, many academic research papers have investigated the role of social media in the business world. Twitter has been analysed to look at the role it plays in a variety of marketing areas to include helping brand and promote businesses (Greer and Ferguson 2001). In order to increase their profitability, companies now need to focus on enhancing their understanding of their customers (Karimi, 2015). As Grant (2007) mentioned, traditional distribution channels have suffered as consumers now use online purchasing due to easier access to product/service information. Companies use customer centric approach to create a social network and interact with all of their target group. Changing the traditional approach marketing is now based on interactions. Consumers' motivations to join social networks have been identified, analysed and supported by several studies. Consumers have been recognized to join social media in order to get some type of information and request for help; to improve their skills and knowledge about certain product or service. Members feel identified with the symbols and meaning that the brand stands for; but also to share their passion and feel gratification from participating in the community (Shao, 2009, Park et al., 2009, Brodie et al., 2011a, Zaglia, 2013). Social media can now provide with additional and vast information about any product and brand to various people with different opinions.

There are a number of social platforms that have facilitated information sharing. For instance, Wikipedia, a free online encyclopaedia, is one of the most popular platforms and has the facility for users to collaborate on information sharing (Chen et al. 2011a). Other platforms with the ability to generate reviews and ratings, such as Amazon, com, enable customers to review and rate products. In addition, members of these platforms are cooperatively interdependent (Chris

et al. 2008). By using social media, consumers can create content and offer valuable advice to others (Füller et al. 2009). This new development has seen online communities and an electronic network of individuals emerge on social platforms where members share information globally and quickly (Molly McLure & Samer 2005). People before taking any decision regarding purchase of a product or service tends to refer online comments ad reviews nowadays. With trend of online ordering the reviews of other people matter a lot for people to get insight and real view of how the product actually is without physically having the product with them.

With the rise in social networks, a new era of content creation has emerged, where individuals can easily share experiences and information with other users (Chen et al. 2011a). The next generation of online businesses will be based on communities - a good tool for new customer attraction (Bagozzi & Dholakia 2002; Ridings & Gefen 2004). Online communities offer an opportunity to organisations to have a better customer relationship management system (Ridings & Gefen 2004), for instance, giving rise to a new development where businesses can improve 389 A study of the impact of social media on consumers performance. Moreover, on those platforms where consumers have social interaction, members can become familiar with one another, providing a possible source of trust (Lu et al. 2010). This can greatly influence users' intention to buy (Gefen 2002). At times it is said that "Celebrity is mandatory" it is when the role of influencers and celebrity comes in promotion of a brand online. There are celebrity endorsements which influences people to go towards a particular brands, celebrities and influencers play a very important role in online promotion.(Chen et al. 2011a).

There are a number of social media that facilitate these activities, such as Wikipedia, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. Individuals apply different social media tools, such as online forums and communities, recommendations, ratings and reviews, to interact with other users online. In fact, individuals are attracted online to exchange information and receive social support (Ridings & Gefen 2004). Web-based life involves correspondence sites that encourage relationship framing between clients from assorted foundations, bringing about a rich social structure. The client produced content energizes requests and dynamics.

Reviews are one of the key areas that have emerged from social media. Customer reviews are widely available for products and services, generating great value for both consumers and companies (Nambisan 2002). In fact, consumers are actively encouraged by firms to rate and review products and services online (Bronner & de Hoog 2010). These activities produce electronic word of mouth. This word of mouth, produced through social media, helps consumers in their purchasing decisions (Pan & Chiou 2011).

Marketers could consider that social media does influence buying behaviour. According to the recommendations on purchases, 59% of all respondents were using Facebook as their social media tool when they received a product recommendation. Thirty seven percent of all users were using Twitter. From these results, social media has influenced their buying behaviour.

The relationship between social media and consumer decision-making present that social media affects advertising attitudes, brand attitudes, and purchasing intentions of consumer. It will not necessarily affect consumer's decision-making, but might possess a mediating effect (Taining, 2012). Social media can build brand attitudes that affect buying behaviour. The good image of brand or product can lead the consumer to make decision on their purchases. When consumer's friend on social media shares or recommends services or products on their social media, it affects brand attitude and influences their decision-making. Yet, advertising on social media, which is provided by commercial sources affect both consumer brand attitudes and purchasing intention (Yang, 2012). Any brand that has a good image on social media gets a higher benefit and consumers prefer that brand. Marketers sometimes get involved in doing negative publicity for competitors brand to decrease their market value and attract customers towards them.

Social media is not only for advertising, but it can also be a tool for brands or services to connect with their consumers. Another study shows that social media allows consumers and prospective consumers to communicate directly to a

brand representative. Since most consumers are using the social media as tool to search and purchase items, brands or services use this advantage to advertise their products. The online consumer is a booming market worldwide, however it is giving a globalized level of segmentation cross-culturally (Vinerean, Cetina & Tichindelean, 2013). Interpersonal organizations are currently a significant piece of each showcasing methodology, and the advantages of utilizing online life are extraordinary to such an extent that anybody not actualizing this savvy asset is passing up a marvellous promoting opportunity. It's anything but difficult to see that web-based life showcasing is a key component for accomplishment in promoting and numerous advertisers understand the potential for business development utilizing the stage.

Consumer motives for engaging in social media provide insights into consumers' activities. Consumers have three main gratifications or motives for using the Internet as a medium, namely, information, entertainment, and social aspects (Heinonen, 2011). The motivation is in two main groups: rational motives, such as knowledge-sharing and advocacy, and emotional motives, such as social connection and self-expression (Krishnamurthy & Dou, 2008). Purchasers' exercises in internet based life have been discovered dependent on buyers' lead on the web. These days shoppers are utilizing Internet as their apparatuses to accomplish their inspirations. Their inspiration could be associated with their old companions, business, or surveys to help their dynamic. Audits via web-based networking media become recycled assets to bolster purchaser's dynamic since they need they need an incentive from their dollar. Surveys on web based life influence to costly things, yet in addition modest things also. Individuals can see the surveys on beautifiers, books, vehicles, lodgings, or even nail shines. Those surveys can rouse buys or on the other hand bolster shoppers dynamic by make it increasingly sensible to spend the cash on it.

Social media does not only effect consumers' decision making on products or services, but also it helps in other fields of studies or careers such as political or juror impartiality and fair trials too. In context of justice system, the easily accessible nature of the Internet has results in jurors having the ability to consult an online social media source in order to aid their decision-making and deliberations (Simpler, 2012). Online life is one of the most cost-effective computerized showcasing strategies used to coordinate substance and increment your business' permeability. Executing a web based life procedure will significantly expand your image acknowledgment since you will be drawing in with a wide crowd of purchasers.

Since people can't try travel-related products and services before they consume them, dynamic processes with various amounts and types of information sources have been used (Fodness, & Murray, 1977). Many studies have found that many travellers used social media as a guideline for their trip. Reviews of places, hotels, transportation, food, or restaurants could have large effects on traveller's decisions. Travel organizations and businesses have used social media as a communication tool for their audience by posting travel information; uploading photos, warnings, advice, or sharing personal traveller reviews. Those things can influence trip's decisions and even create future trip destination impressions. Fifty-eight percent of U.S. online travel used ratings for their travel information: 49% of them checked reviews and recommendations: 18% used photos and friends' social network sites: 12% read blogs: and 5%watched videos (eMarketer, 2007).

Venkatesh, Speir, and Morris (2002) showed the theory of social influence affected person's decision-making. People participating in social media activities are usually in communities and appear to be socially influenced by the community group members. Social influence is defined as the degree to which a person believes that person to perform a particular behaviour (Venkatesh, Speir, & Morris, 2002).The utilization of online life in movement arranging impacted expanding real travel experience offering conduct and the experience to web based life likewise emphatically identified with real travel-experience sharing via web-based networking media. These outcome detailed that with expanded apparent delight, the utilization of internet based life increment as a source in movement arranging, and level of involvement in internet based life has a positive effects on sharing travel encounters via web-based networking media.

Social media has brought on a 'participatory culture' where users network with other like-minded individuals to engage in an unending loop of sharing information, monitoring updates, and requesting opinions and ratings on all kinds of products, services and activities (Ashman et al., 2015). The quality of online product reviews, characterised by perceived informativeness and persuasiveness, together with the perceived quantity of reviews, are found to have a significant positive influence on consumers' purchase
intentions (Zhou et al., 2013; Zhang et al., 2014). People tend to trust and believe on the online information more than the corporate communications and advertisements.

Riegner (2007) explained that everyday customers are increasing their role in the commercial marketplace, while using internet as a tool for interpersonal communication and commercial implications. Alsubagh (2015) explained that internet is part of the everyday lives of world population affecting a new form of communication through social networking sites. Internet offers opportunities for receiving pre and post-purchase information. Its main advantage is the amount of information available and freedom from physical contact (Jepsen, 2007). According to Hajli (2014), availability of internet has provided individuals with the opportunity to use social networks, such as Twitter and Facebook, to interact without the need for physical meetings. Through social networks, companies can increase brand awareness, positive word-of-mouth, sales, and generate greater support. According to Nolcheska (2017) these social media platforms have enabled a two-way flow of information that allow companies to influence the purchasing decision of targeted groups. With expanded permeability, your business acquires open doors for change. Each blog entry, picture, video, or remark may lead watchers to your organization's site and increment traffic. Web-based social networking advertising permits your business to give a positive impression through an adaptation factor.

Jackson (2009) said that another area of modelling network interaction concerns how network impact behaviour. Also, according to Nolcheska (2017) customer's social interaction has a huge influence on purchase decision, starting from the problem recognition, searching of relevant information, evaluation of alternatives, final purchase decision, and post purchase satisfaction.

According to Dellarocas (2002) Digital Marketing has allowed individuals to make their personal thought accessible to other community of Internet users. Members of a certain community can, without any cost, submit their opinions regarding a certain product, topic or community and these online reviews have a significant effect on customers' purchase intentions (Zhang et al., 2014).

Dellarocas (2002) explained that online mechanisms can nowadays change people's behaviour in important ways. In difference to a decade ago, when people would base their decisions on advertisements or other advice from professionals, now they increasingly rely on reviews or opinions posted on online systems. Each client collaboration on your business' internet based life accounts is a chance to openly exhibit your empathy for your clients. Regardless of whether an individual has an inquiry or a grumbling, web based life permits you to address the issue utilizing relational discourse. A brand gave to consumer loyalty that sets aside the effort to create individual messages will intrinsically be seen in a positive light, regardless of whether reacting to a client protest.

According to Alsubagh (2015) customers are constantly exposed to these different advertisements that try to catch individuals' attention. Kumar (2004-2005) explained that search tools are now used to look up pre-purchase product information, such as price, style, reviews etc. Internet tends to be the primary source of information for most customers on regular basis and social networks allow customers to evaluate products, make recommendations and make status updates. These customers can easily share their ideas, opinions and experiences while connecting with other online peers (Nolcheska, 2017). Online life is a systems administration and correspondence stage. Making a voice for your organization through these stages is significant in acculturating your organization. Clients value realizing that when they post remarks on your pages, they will get a customized reaction instead of a robotized message. Having the option to recognize each remark shows that you are mindful of your guests' needs and mean to give the best understanding.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A Research Design defines how the researcher will ask the research questions. It sets out a logical arrangement of the measurement procedures, sampling strategy, frame of analysis and time frame. There are three types of research designs:

1. Exploratory research design: This kind of research design is used when the problem is vague, its main objective is to explore and obtain clarity about the problem situation. It mostly involves a qualitative investigation.

2. Descriptive research design: This Design is used when a comprehensive and detailed explanation is required for the problem of the study. It can be done in the following ways

A. Longitudinal Study

B. Cross sectional study

3. Causal research design: This type of research design is used when a researcher manipulates one or more causal variables to assess its effect on its dependent variable. This cause effect relationship tends to be probabilistic in nature.

The research design used for this paper is Exploratory since we are trying to gain insight on the Impact of social media on consumer buying behaviour through surveys and published papers with relevant information.

Data Collection Method

The data collection method used is primary as well as secondary. We collected the primary data through surveys using the platform of Google forms, which is a free surveying web-based application. For secondary data we talked to some people about their buying decisions and went through other research papers having similar topics.

Exploratory research is characterized as an examination used to examine a difficult which isn't plainly characterized. It is led to have a superior comprehension of the current issue, however won't give convincing outcomes. Such an examination is generally done when the issue is at a primer stage.

Sampling Design

Sample Universe: The sample universe includes the people of New Delhi region.

Sample Size: The sample size of the participants was of 136 people.

Questionnaire Design

The types of questions used in our Questionnaire are structured as multiple choice questions. This is done so that the researcher is able to find the impact of social media on consumer buying behaviour.

Scope of the research

Taking the objectives of the research into account, conducting the study from the viewpoint of the consumer would be the ideal approach. The researcher conducts this study to help consumers identify reasons regarding how social media changed their buying decisions. The main purpose of marketing is about analysing the needs of the consumer therefore the data collected through the questionnaire is from the consumer's point of view so that new insights can be determined. The research also aims to help potential readers understand the importance of social media websites/apps in the consumer decision-making process. The research focuses on the behaviour of end consumers.

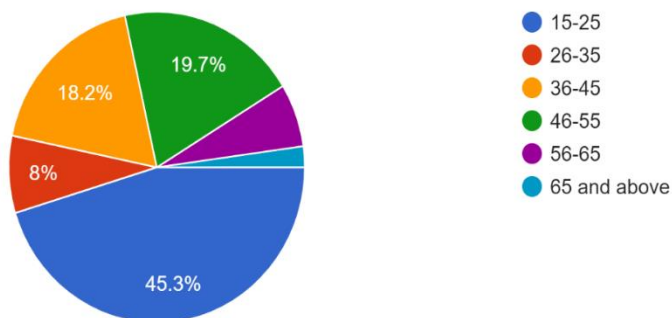# DATA ANALYSIS

1. BACKGROUND

The following section presents analysis made on the data collected from the questionnaire. The set of questions were sent to individuals who are currently living in New Delhi, India. Since the survey was sent to 150 individuals, and the number of participants was 137, therefore the total percentage of responses was 91.33(%). In total the questionnaire contains 12 questions.

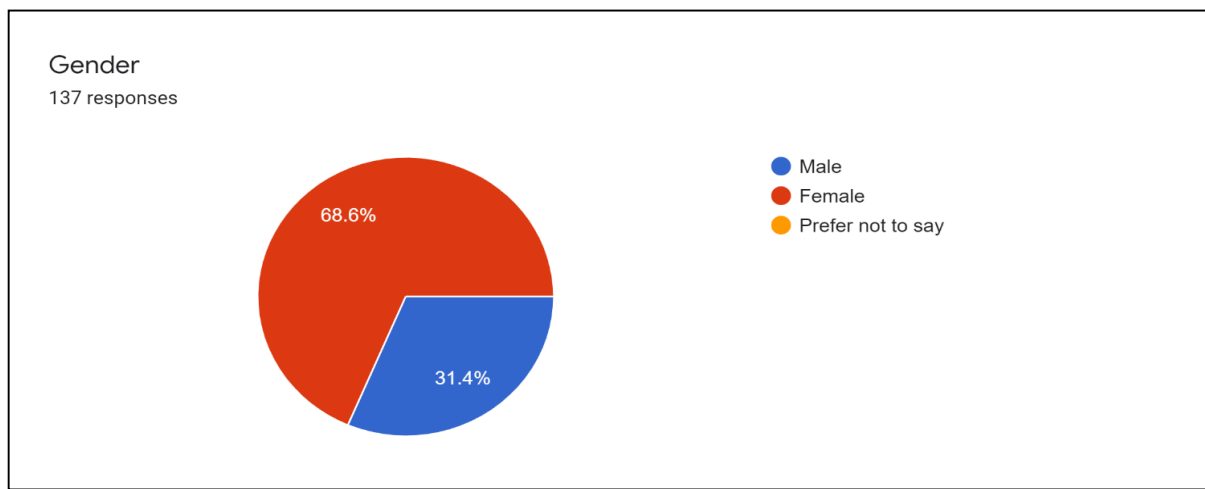In the upcoming sections analysis and findings are presented.

1.1 Age Distribution

The following pie chart shows the age distribution of people into 6 different age groups who filled out questionnaire.

Age Group
137 responses

1.2 Gender: The following pie chart shows the gender distribution of the respondents.

Gender

137 responses

By asking these two general questions we are able identify the diversity of the responses, which will help us give a more generalized analysis.

Six different age groups are covered by collected data, they are 15 - 25 years old 45.3(%), 26 – 35 years old 8(%), 36 – 45 years old 18.2(%), 46 – 55 years old 19.7(%), 56 – 65 years old 6.6(%), 65 and above 2.2(%).
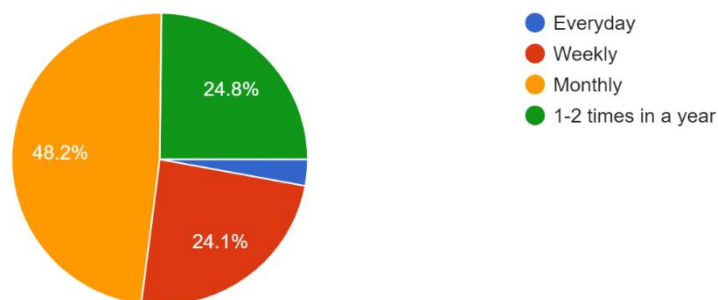
From the received responses, 31.4(%) of the respondents were female, and 68.6(%) were male. Since the collected data covers people from different age groups, preferences and gender, therefore the following analysis is carried out in assessing the general consumer behaviour in New Delhi.

1.3 Frequency of online shopping done by people

How often do you do online shopping?

137 responses

The above pie chart shows the frequency of online shopping done by people. It shows that 48.2(%) of the people did online shopping on a monthly basis, 24.1(%) of the people did online shopping on a weekly basis, 2.9(%) of the people did online shopping every day and 24.8(%) people did online shopping 1 or 2 times a year.

1.4 Time spent on Social Media Websites on a typical day:

On a typical day, about how much time do you spend using social networking websites?
137 responses

- 0-2 hours
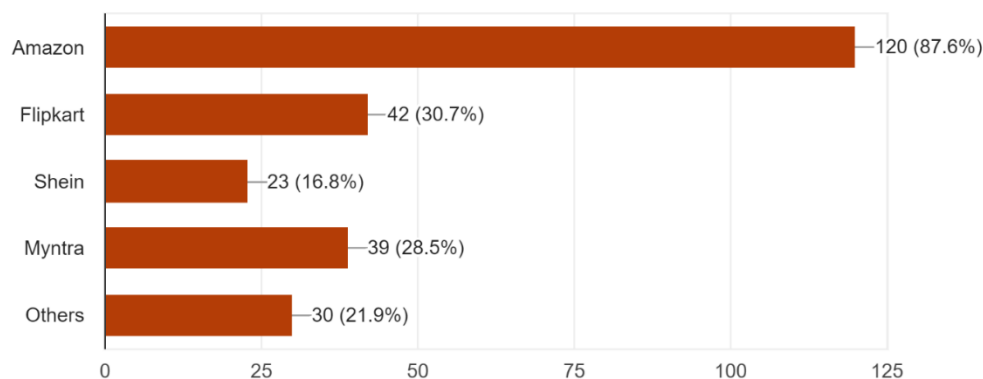- 2-4 hours
- 4-6 hours
- 6 hours and above

The fourth question of our survey was to find out about the number of hours spent by people on social media per day. Through this we got to know that major chunk of population spent 0 - 2 hours of their time on social media i.e. 49.6(%) of people. Furthermore, 30.7(%) of population spent 2 - 4 hours on social media, 15.3(%) of people spent 4 - 6 hours on social media, with the least number i.e. 4.4(%) spending 6 hours or more on social media. The emergence and popularity of social media have made it easy for an individual to communicate in real time with different people. So one can extend their hover of online companions to any degree with the utilization of internet-based life.

1.5 Apps and Websites used most for buying products online:

Which apps/websites do you use most often when buying products online?
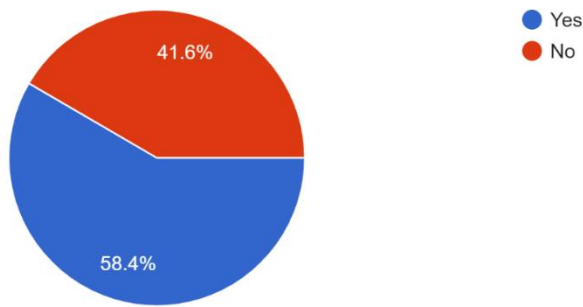137 responses

According to the survey Amazon is the most preferred platform to do online shopping with 87.6(%) of the votes. The comes Flipkart 30.7(%), Myntra 28.5(%), Others 21.9(%), Shein 16.8(%). Amazon is to be considered as a leader of online networking sites these days as stated by the majority of our respondents.
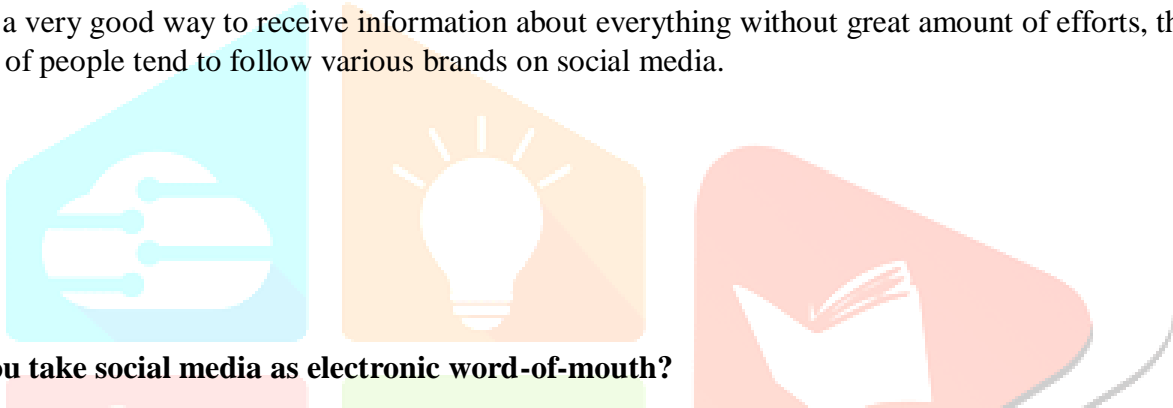
1.6 Do people follow brands on social media?

Do you follow brands on different social media sites?
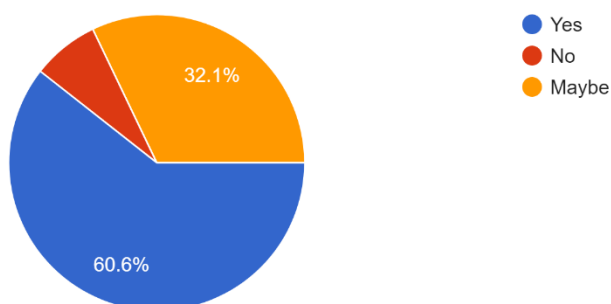137 responses

- Yes
- No

41.6%

58.4%

Information about various brands, promotions, discounts and offers are posted on social media sites, social media and website is a very good way to receive information about everything without great amount of efforts, thereby, majority i.e. 58.4% of people tend to follow various brands on social media.

1.7. Do you take social media as electronic word-of-mouth?

Do you take Social media to be the electronic word-of-mouth (as a means of transmitting information)?
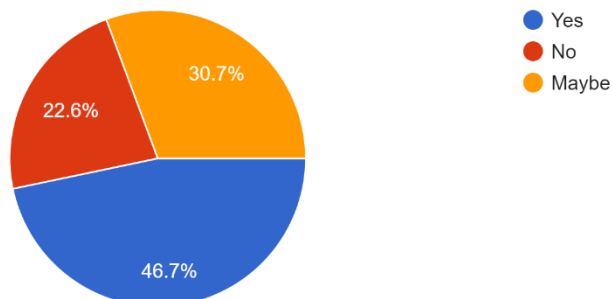137 responses

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

32.1%

60.6%

The impact of Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) on customers' buy goals has been known for quite a while. Be that as it may, Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) has increased another measurement with the appearance of web based life. Electronic Word of Mouth effect purchase decisions. 60.6% of the total population said that social media acts as an electronic word of mouth and does effects the various decisions of consumers. Apart from that there are 32.1% of people who don't want to state extreme sides they chose 'maybe' as their answer. Whereas 7.3% of people stated that social media should not be considered as electronic word of mouth.

1.8 Does social media affect your vision of the brand?

Does the social media page/website affect your vision of the brand?
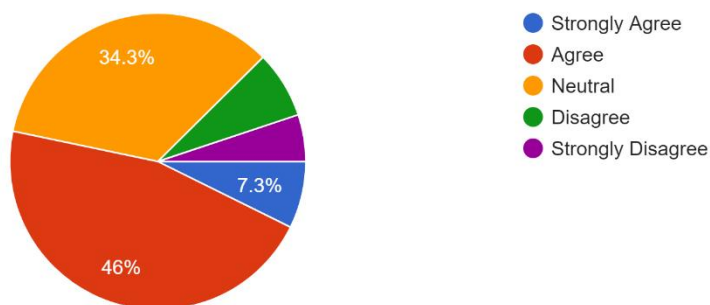137 responses

Social media is like megaphone to generate information about the brands to the customers, brands can shine and create an advantage through this medium by generating positive information about their products and services. 46.7% of the total respondents stated that social media does affect the vision of the brand in the minds of the customers. This can have a negative impact for the brand in a case where there are few bad reviews about the brand on social media, the target audience might consider it to be the trust and not buy the product or service from that brand. Whereas, the minority of people ie 30.7% said that social media does not affect the perception of the brand, they believe mostly in trying the product and service and then judging it instead of looking at its promotion on various websites.

1.9 Do you feel that your purchase is influenced by social media?

Do you feel that your purchase is influenced by Social Media?
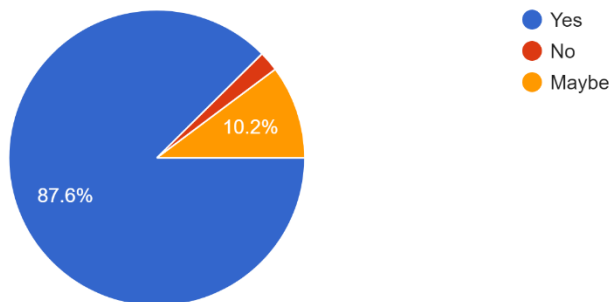137 responses

All kinds of businesses have turned to social media to find and connect with their target market. Consumer buying decision is affected by the social media promotions.46% people agree that social media does influence the purchase, whereas 34.3% people are neutral in this and a very few people disagree to this fact.

1.10 Do you think social media plays an important role in promoting a brand?

Do you think social media plays an important role in promoting a brand?
137 responses

Social media marketing helps to spread the word about the products and mission of a brand. Through promotions, influencers or celebrity marketing brand awareness is increased, majority of our respondents i.e. 87.6% of people said that social media plays a very important role in brand promotion, whereas, a minority of 10.2% were neutral to this aspect.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

FINDINGS

1. The maximum number of the respondents were from the age group of 15-25 as this is the age group which spends maximum number of hours on Social Media.
2. Data from survey shows that nearly half of the people tend to do online shopping once or twice in a month. This may suggest that they belong to working class which do not have a lot of free time and they tend to buy in large quantities but less frequently from Online platforms.
3. The data from the survey shows that almost half of the people spend 0-2 hours every day on Social Media Platforms. Social Media plays a crucial role in connecting people and developing relationships which enables us to grow in our careers and have more opportunities.
4. The data from the survey shows almost 60% of the respondents follow brands on Social Media. People follow brands on Social Media as they want to know about sales, new products etc.
5. The data from the survey shows that almost 61% take Social Media as the Electronic word of mouth as many people make purchase related decisions according to Social Media referrals.
6. The data from the survey suggests that almost 47% of the respondents believe that Social Media page/website affected their vision of the brand. As most of the consumers who shop online read reviews about the brands of the products, they are buying which might affect their vision of that particular brand.
7. The data from the survey shows that 46% of the respondents believe that their decision was influenced by Social Media. It is because many people tend to see online reviews and comments about that particular product to choose the perfect brand and price.
8. The data from the survey shows that almost 88% of the respondents believes Social Media plays an important role in promoting a brand as it helps increase the amount of exposure which enables the brand to generate leads and increase sales.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from this research that consumers in New Delhi, India are actively utilizing social media platforms as a tool in validating their purchase decisions. Social media is taken as the electronic word of mouth by majority of the respondents. Reviews and preferences by the past consumers on Social media platforms affect the decision process of potential customers.

Social media users found decision-making to be easier and enjoyed the process more, when compared to those who used other information sources. Those who perceived the information on social media to be of higher quality and greater quantity than expectations were more satisfied overall. The results overall show that Social Media has a strong impact on the consumer decision-making process.

LIMITATIONS

- Social media marketing is not a new aspect and it is always changing and evolving. There are many journals/articles on this topic but very few link social media with changes in consumer behaviour. The study is presented in a general manner.
- Data sample was quite small that shows limited generalizability of the study conducted. Sample size should be increased as it would cover more people in the society and help create a better and accurate set of results.
- The people who participated in the survey were mainly from Delhi, but the study can be conducted on a broader scale by collecting data from different parts of the world to get a better picture of the impact social media is having on consumer buying process.
- As cultures and values change from country to country, consumer's buying behaviour may also vary. A study involving many countries should be conducted on this topic for more accurate and generalized results.
- As the study was limited to a specific time period, i.e. May 2020. Thus, it cannot be used to analyse behaviour over a period of time as the timing is not guaranteed to be representative.
- In order to increase the level of focus of the study objectives have been narrowed down and the research only contains information on what needs to be studied considering the objectives.
- Data was collected from the members of the population who were conveniently available and able to participate in study. This may lead to a bias error and also may be an untrue representation of the population.

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