



# “The Impact Of Social Media Marketing On Consumer Buying Behaviour: A Study In Dehradun”

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## Abstract

In recent years, the digital explosion has completely reshaped how brands and shoppers interact. Platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube are no longer just for chatting; they are now central to how we discover and buy products. This study dives into how social media marketing actually moves the needle for consumers in Dehradun, specifically looking at those from semi-urban backgrounds.

To get the full picture, I surveyed 150 local participants using a structured questionnaire and backed up those insights with existing industry reports and academic journals. Using a descriptive research approach, I looked at how people spend their time online, what they prefer, and what ultimately makes them hit the "buy" button.

The results show a clear trend: younger shoppers are highly active online and are frequently swayed by digital ads, limited-time discounts, honest reviews, and influencer content. Instagram and Facebook come out on top as the most influential platforms, with a significant number of people admitting they've made a purchase simply because they saw it on their feed. While most are happy with what they buy, there's still a lingering hesitation regarding online trust and "clickbait" advertising. Ultimately, this research confirms that while social media is a powerhouse for modern business, success depends on being transparent and building genuine trust with the audience.

**Keywords:** Social Media Marketing (SMM), Consumer Buying Behaviour, Digital Marketing, Influencer Marketing, Online Consumer Behaviour, Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM), Brand Loyalty, Social Media Advertising, Consumer Trust, Dehradun, Semi-Urban Consumers, Purchase Decision

## 1. Introduction

In the modern era, marketing has undergone a major transformation due to technological advancements. Traditional marketing methods such as print media, television, and radio are gradually being replaced by digital marketing strategies. Among these, social media marketing has gained immense popularity.

Social media platforms have become an integral part of everyday life. People use them not only for communication and entertainment but also for gathering information about products and services. Businesses are increasingly using these platforms to reach their target audience in a more personalized and engaging manner.

Social media marketing refers to the use of platforms like Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Twitter for promoting products, services, and brands. It allows businesses to:

- Interact directly with customers
- Understand consumer preferences
- Provide real-time updates and feedback
- Build long-term relationships

One of the major advantages of social media marketing is its ability to create **two-way communication**. Unlike traditional marketing, where communication is one-sided, social media allows consumers to engage with brands through comments, likes, shares, and reviews.

In India, the digital revolution has led to a massive increase in social media usage. With over **500 million active social media users**, India is one of the largest digital markets in the world. This growth has created new opportunities for businesses, especially in semi-urban and rural areas.

This study focuses on analyzing how social media marketing influences consumer buying behaviour, particularly in a semi-urban setting where digital adoption is growing rapidly.

## 2. Review of Literature

The role of social media in marketing has been widely studied by researchers across the globe. This section provides an overview of important studies related to the topic.

## 2.1. Evolution of Social Media in Marketing

According to Kotler and Keller (2016), marketing has evolved from traditional approaches to digital platforms, where customer engagement plays a key role. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) described social media as a group of internet-based applications that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content.

Over time, social media has shifted from being a communication tool to a powerful marketing platform. Businesses now use it for advertising, branding, and customer relationship management.

## 2.2. Consumer Behaviour and Social Media

Consumer behaviour refers to the decision-making process of individuals while purchasing goods and services. Social media has a strong influence on this process.

Duffett (2017) found that social media advertisements significantly affect the attitudes and buying decisions of young consumers. Similarly, Kumar et al. (2016) emphasized the importance of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), where online reviews and recommendations influence consumer choices.

Consumers today rely heavily on:

- Product reviews
- Ratings
- Influencer opinions
- Social media advertisements

## 2.3. Role of Influencers and Online Reviews

Influencer marketing has become an important aspect of social media marketing. Influencers are individuals with a large following who can impact consumer decisions.

Studies show that consumers trust influencer recommendations more than traditional advertisements. Online reviews also play a critical role in building trust and credibility.

## 2.4. Impact on Brand Loyalty

Laroche et al. (2013) highlighted that active engagement on social media strengthens the relationship between consumers and brands. Regular interaction, quality content, and responsiveness help in building brand loyalty.

Hudson et al. (2016) also found that emotional connections created through social media lead to long-term customer relationships.

## 2.5. Research Gap

While many studies focus on wider areas, there is limited research on one city. Consumer behaviour in these areas may differ due to factors like digital literacy, income levels, and access to technology.

This study attempts to fill this gap by focusing on a semi-urban region.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN:

Despite the growing popularity of social media marketing, there remains a lack of region-specific studies assessing its **influence on consumer behavior** and **brand interaction patterns**, particularly in underrepresented regions such as Dehradun, Uttarakhand. Businesses require evidence-based insights to evaluate the effectiveness of SMM campaigns, especially in areas with emerging digital infrastructure.

#### Objectives of the Study

1. To study the growth of social media marketing in India
2. To analyze its impact on consumer buying behaviour
3. To identify the most popular social media platforms
4. To examine factors influencing purchase decisions
5. To study the role of social media in building trust and loyalty

#### 3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study follows a **descriptive research design**, which helps in understanding the characteristics and behaviour of consumers.

#### 3.2 SAMPLE DESIGN

Sampling design refers to the structured plan used for selecting a sample from a larger population for the purpose of research. It includes key elements such as sample size, sampling unit, sampling technique, and area of study.

In the present study, both **qualitative and quantitative primary data** have been collected using a structured and pre-tested questionnaire. The questionnaire was circulated through online platforms (such as Google Forms) to gather responses from different categories of consumers, including students, working professionals, and business individuals.

In addition to primary data, **secondary data** has been collected from various reliable sources such as research journals, academic articles, books, and online databases.

For this research, a **probability sampling technique** has been adopted to ensure fairness and accuracy in data collection.

##### 3.2.1 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The study uses **Stratified Random Sampling** as the sampling technique.

In this method, the total population is divided into different groups or strata based on characteristics such as age, occupation, and gender. From each group, respondents are selected randomly to ensure proper representation of all segments.

This technique helps in:

- Reducing bias
- Improving accuracy
- Representing diverse consumer groups

### 3.2.2 SAMPLE SIZE

The sample size for the study consists of **150 respondents**.

The respondents were selected from a broader population of social media users in a specific region. The sample size has been chosen to ensure a balanced representation of different demographic groups while maintaining feasibility and accuracy.

### 3.2.3 AREA OF STUDY

The study is conducted in a **Dehradun, Uttarakhand**.

This area has been selected because:

- It represents a developing digital market
- Social media usage is rapidly increasing
- Consumer behaviour is evolving due to digital exposure

### 3.2.4 PERIOD OF STUDY

The study is conducted in a **Dehradun, Uttarakhand**.

This area has been selected because:

- It represents a developing digital market
- Social media usage is rapidly increasing
- Consumer behaviour is evolving due to digital exposure

## 3.3 SOURCES OF DATA

The study is based on both **primary and secondary data sources**.

### 3.3.1 Primary Data

Primary data has been collected from **150 respondents** using a structured questionnaire.

The questionnaire included questions related to:

- Social media usage
- Buying behaviour
- Influencing factors
- Trust and satisfaction levels

### 3.3.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data has been collected from:

- Research journals
- Academic books
- Online articles and websites
- Industry reports (e.g., digital marketing trends in India)

This helped in building the theoretical foundation of the study.

## 3.4 ANALYTICAL TOOLS

The collected data has been analyzed using **simple statistical techniques** such as percentage analysis.

Data has been presented through:

- Tables
- Charts
- Graphs

This makes the interpretation easy and understandable.

### 3.4.1 SOFTWARE USED

The following software tools have been used for data analysis:

- **Microsoft Excel** – for data tabulation and chart preparation
- **SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences)** – for statistical analysis

## 4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter explains the analysis of data collected from respondents in a semi-urban region. The data has been organized into tables and explained using simple percentages to understand how social media affects consumer buying behaviour.

### 4.1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

#### a) Age of Respondents

Age Group	Number of Respondents	Percentage
18-25 years	75	50%
26-35 years	45	30%
36-45 years	18	12%
45 and above	12	8%

#### Interpretation:

Most of the respondents (50%) belong to the 18–25 age group. This shows that young people are the most active users of social media and are more likely to be influenced by it.

#### b) Gender of Respondents

Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Male	83	55%
Female	67	45%

#### Interpretation:

There is a slightly higher number of male respondents (55%), but female participation is also strong. This shows that social media usage is common among both genders.

#### c) Occupation

Occupation	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Student	60	40%
Working Professional	52	35%
Business Owner	23	15%
Homemaker	15	10%

**Interpretation:**

Students form the largest group (40%), followed by working professionals (35%). This indicates that young and working individuals are more engaged with social media platforms.

**4.2. Social Media Usage Patterns****a) Most Frequently Used Social Media Platforms**

Platform	Number of Users	Percentage
Instagram	57	38%
Facebook	45	30%
WhatsApp	30	20%
YouTube	15	10%
Twitter/Other	3	2%

**Interpretation:**

Instagram is the most popular platform (38%), followed by Facebook (30%). This shows a shift towards more visual and interactive platforms, especially among younger users.

**b) Daily Time Spent on Social Media**

Time Duration	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 1 hour	23	15%
1–3 hours	75	50%
3-5 hours	37	25%
More than 5 hours	15	10%

**Interpretation:**

Half of the respondents (50%) spend around 1–3 hours daily on social media. This shows that people are highly active online, making social media an effective marketing platform.

**4.3. Influence of Social Media on Consumer Behavior****a) Have You Purchased Any Product Seen on Social Media?**

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	113	75%
No	37	25%

**Interpretation:**

A large majority (75%) have purchased products after seeing them on social media. This clearly shows the strong influence of social media on buying decisions.

### b) What Type of Products Do You Usually Buy via Social Media Ads?

Product Type	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Clothing & Accessories	60	40%
Electronics	38	25%
Beauty & Personal Care	30	20%
Food & Others	22	15%

#### Interpretation:

Fashion-related products are the most commonly purchased (40%), especially among young users. Electronics and beauty products are also popular.

### c) Factors That Influence Your Buying Decision on Social Media

Factor	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Attractive Advertisement	42	28%
Discount/Offers	41	27%
Product Reviews	30	20%
Influencer Recommendation	22	15%
Brand Name	15	10%

#### Interpretation:

Attractive ads and discounts are the most important factors influencing buying decisions. Reviews and influencer recommendations also play a key role.

### d) Do You Trust Products Promoted on Social Media?

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	98	65%
No	52	35%

#### Interpretation:

Most respondents (65%) trust social media promotions, but a significant number still have doubts. This shows that trust is important for successful marketing.

### 4.4. Customer Satisfaction After Social Media Purchases

Level of Satisfaction	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Highly Satisfied	38	25%
Satisfied	67	45%
Neutral	30	20%
Dissatisfied	15	10%

## Interpretation:

Most respondents are either satisfied or highly satisfied (70%). This indicates that social media marketing generally provides a good customer experience, although some improvement is still needed.

## Chapter 5: Findings, Suggestions, and Conclusion.

### 5.1. Key Findings

Based on the analysis of data collected from **150 respondents in a semi-urban region**, the following key findings have been observed:

#### 1. Demographics:

- The majority of respondents belong to the **18–25 years age group (50%)**, showing that young people are the most active users of social media.
  - Male respondents (55%) are slightly higher than female respondents (45%), but both genders are actively using social media.
  - **Students (40%) and working professionals (35%)** form the largest group of users, indicating high engagement among youth and employed individuals.

#### 2. Platform Preference and Usage:

- **Instagram (38%)** is the most preferred social media platform, followed by **Facebook (30%)**.
  - A large number of respondents (**50%**) spend around **1–3 hours daily** on social media.
  - Overall, more than **75% of users spend at least 1 hour daily**, showing strong engagement levels.

#### 3. Influence on Consumer Behavior:

- Around **75% of respondents** have purchased products after seeing them on social media, showing a strong impact on buying decisions.
  - The most commonly purchased products are:
    - **Clothing & fashion (40%)**
    - **Electronics (25%)**
    - **Beauty products (20%)**

The main factors influencing buying decisions are:

- Attractive advertisements (28%)
- Discounts and offers (27%)
- Customer reviews (20%)
- Influencer recommendations (15%)

#### 4. Trust and Satisfaction:

Around 65% of respondents trust products promoted on social media, while 35% still have doubts. About 70% of respondents are satisfied or highly satisfied with their purchases made through social media.

However, some users still face issues related to product quality and misleading advertisements.

### 5.2. Suggestions

Based on the above findings, the following suggestions are recommended:

#### 1. For Marketers:

- Focus on creating **visually attractive and engaging content**, especially short videos and reels.
- Use **influencer marketing** to reach a wider audience and build trust.
- Provide **discounts and special offers** to attract price-sensitive consumers.
- Encourage **customer reviews and feedback** to increase credibility.

## 2. For Businesses:

- Focus more on platforms like **Instagram and Facebook**, as they have the highest user engagement.
- Design **mobile-friendly advertisements**, as most users access social media through smartphones.
- Maintain **transparency in product details, pricing, and return policies**.
- Engage with customers regularly through comments, messages, and updates.

## 3. For Consumers:

- Always check **reviews, ratings, and seller authenticity** before purchasing.
- Avoid falling for unrealistic offers or fake advertisements.
- Prefer buying from **trusted and verified accounts**.

## 4. For Policymakers:

- Implement stricter rules to control **misleading advertisements on social media**.
- Promote **digital awareness programs** to educate users.
- Ensure better **consumer protection policies** in online shopping.

## 5.3. Conclusion

This study clearly shows that **social media marketing has a strong influence on consumer buying behaviour**, especially among young users in semi-urban areas.

Platforms like **Instagram and Facebook** have become powerful tools for businesses to promote products, interact with customers, and increase sales. Most consumers are influenced by **attractive advertisements, discounts, and online reviews** when making purchase decisions.

Although social media marketing has many advantages, issues like **lack of trust and misleading promotions** still exist. Therefore, businesses need to focus on **honesty, transparency, and customer satisfaction**.

In conclusion, social media marketing will continue to grow in the future, and both businesses and consumers must adapt to this changing digital environment to make better decisions.

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