THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTIONS

Dr. Dilip Kumar Ghritlahre

Institute of Management

Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University, Raipur (C.G.)

Ravindra Baghel

Research Scholar, School of Business Studies

MATS University, Raipur (C.G.)

Abstract:

Social media has grown in importance in today's tech-driven economy as a means for companies to connect with customers and influence their buying choices. The purpose of this article is to examine how social media marketing influences consumers' propensity to make a purchase. We use a mixed-methods strategy that includes both quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to get a good feel for the situation. For the quantitative part, we'll be polling a representative cross-section of shoppers to find out how they feel about firms' social media marketing and whether or not they plan to buy anything as a result. Patterns and correlations are discovered by analyzing key variables including the probability of purchase, confidence in brand message, and the frequency of contact with brand material.

In addition to numerical data, qualitative interviews provide a more in-depth look at customers' viewpoints, revealing their true motives and how social media marketing impacts their decision-making. Brand authenticity, social impact, and perceived value are some of the topics that are found and studied via thematic analysis in connection to purchase intentions. This study intends to fill a gap in our knowledge by combining qualitative and quantitative data on the effects of social media marketing methods on consumers' actions and propensity to buy. Businesses who want to maximize their social media presence and successfully communicate with customers in the digital age might benefit greatly from the study's recommendations.

Keywords - Social media marketing, Consumer behaviour, Purchase intentions, Digital marketplace, Brand engagement

Introduction

The growth of the digital marketplace in India has been fueled by the country's skyrocketing internet penetration and smartphone use in the last few years. Social media has therefore become an essential part of millions of Indians' everyday lives, creating an ideal environment for brands to engage with customers and sway their purchases. This introductory section lays the groundwork for the subsequent investigation of the ever-changing connection between social media marketing and the desire to buy among Indian consumers. Making the Transition to Digital in India: People in India are reshaping their relationships with companies, information, and communication because to the widespread availability of cheap cellphones and high-speed internet. The likes of Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp have proliferated into almost every aspect of modern life, serving as conduits for communication, entertainment, and business. Social Media Marketing's Ascent: Social media marketing has emerged in India as a powerful tool for firms looking to reach a certain demographic at a low cost. Businesses of all sizes are realizing the potential of social media to expand their customer bases, increase engagement, and ultimately boost revenue.

Changes in Consumer Behavior: People's habits and the things they buy have changed drastically because of the rise of social media. More and more, Indian customers are using social media for more than just hanging out and entertainment; they're also using it to find new products, learn about reviews, and validate their purchases. They make purchases based on what they see in social media advertisements, reviews, and user-generated material. It is essential to acknowledge that the social media dynamics in India are influenced by the country's distinct socio-cultural context. The way consumers perceive and engage with companies on social media is greatly influenced by factors including cultural sensitivities, geographical subtleties, and various language preferences.

The purpose of this research is to examine, against this background, how social media marketing affects consumers' inclinations to buy in India. In order to help companies enhance their digital marketing efforts in India, this study intends to analyze the success of different social media marketing methods, get a better knowledge of customer views, and identify the primary variables driving purchase intentions. If companies want to reach the varied and interesting Indian customer base, they need to know how social media marketing influences Indian consumers' actions. The authors of this research hope that their findings will add to

what is already known about consumer behavior and digital marketing, and that they will also provide some useful takeaways for marketers in India.

Literature review

Social media was described by Yuliantoro et al. (2019) as publicly available material that people make utilizing publishing technology to let people communicate, influence, and engage with one another and the general public. The marketing reach is increased by the extensive usage of social media in promoting items. Increased product exposure on social media, according to Haudi et al. (2018), increases product conversation frequency, which in turn may promote promotion via word-of-mouth recommendations. To stay afloat and increase their market share, companies need to work harder in today's cutthroat business climate. When it comes to satisfying customer demands for comparable goods under multiple brands, Yuliantoro et al. (2018) stressed the need of a solid marketing strategy, including branding. According to Yuliantoro et al. (2018), brand image is important for company owners because it impacts customer purchasing choices. customer views about a brand's qualities, advantages, and services make up brand image. Kazmi and Mehmood (2018) state that customers are more likely to buy a product or service with a good perception of the brand, but negative perceptions might make them think twice.

According to Pramono et al. (2017), in order for organizations to stay competitive, they need to use efficient marketing methods, one of which is building a strong reputation for their brand. According to Affandi et al. (2017) and Prahiawan et al. (2017), customers' perceptions of a company's goods or services are known as brand image. This impression is impacted by different aspects when consumers make purchase choices. Faircloth et al. (2001) stressed the importance of marketers comprehending these elements and influencing customers in a manner that cultivates a favorable perception of the brand. Dash et al. (2011) explains how a positive perception of a brand may boost sales, customer retention, and happiness. According to Faircloth et al. (2001), in order for firms to have a positive brand image, they should work on making their products more distinctive, appealing to consumers' emotions, and having a distinct character.

Objectives of the study

- To evaluate the Effectiveness of Social Media Marketing Strategies.

- To understand Consumer Perceptions and Preferences.
- To identify Key Drivers of Purchase Intentions.

Research methodology

The study uses a mixed-methods strategy to collect qualitative and quantitative information. This allows for a thorough comprehension of how social media marketing impacts the purchasing intentions of Indian consumers. The goal is to gather quantitative data from a statistically valid cross-section of Indian customers using a pre-designed survey instrument. Participation in social media, interaction with brands, thoughts on the efficacy of social media marketing strategies, and future purchases are all topics covered in the poll. To guarantee a broad representation of age, gender, region, and socio-economic level, a stratified sampling approach is used. The survey is disseminated via several internet platforms and social media channels in order to properly reach the target population. In order to guarantee a sufficient sample size, data is collected throughout a certain time frame. Statistical methods including descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis are used to examine the quantitative data gathered from the survey replies. This study's overarching goal is to deduce associations between social media marketing-related characteristics and consumers' propensity to make a purchase.

Data analysis and interpretation

Table 1. Correlations.

		Social Media	Brand image	Purchase Intention	Cultural dimension
	Pearson correlation	*1*	0.001	0.261	0.899
Social Media	*Sig. (2-tailed)*		0.785	0.002	0.003
	N	*100*	100	100	100
	Pearson correlation	*0.001*	1	0.134	0.136
Brand image	*Sig. (2-tailed)*	*0.785*		0.852	0.896
	N	*100*	100	100	100
	Pearson correlation	*0.261*	0.134	1	0.469
Purchase Intention	*Sig. (2-tailed)*	*0.002*	0.852		0.003
	N	*100*	100	100	100
	Pearson correlation	*0.899*	0.136	0.469	1

| **Cultural dimension** | *Sig. (2-tailed)* | *0.003* | 0.896 | 0.003 | |
| | *N* | *100* | 100 | 100 | 100 |

When it comes to social media and how consumers perceive brands, the data shows no statistically significant relationship (r = 0.001, p = 0.785). This data reveals that customers' perceptions of brands are unrelated to their level of social media participation.

The utilization of social media is positively correlated with the desire to buy, but only slightly so (r = 0.261, p = 0.002). This suggests that customers' propensity to make a purchase rises in tandem with their level of social media engagement.

There is a robust positive relationship between cultural component and social media use (r=0.899, p = 0.003). This points to a strong correlation between social media use and the cultural dimension, suggesting that these platforms both reflect and shape cultural norms and values.

The relationship between consumers' perceptions of a brand and their propensity to buy is weak (r =0.134, p = 0.852). It may be inferred from this that customers' opinions of a brand's image do not substantially impact their buying decisions.

Cultural Aspect and Brand Image: The two variables do not correlate significantly (r=0.136, p=0.896). This suggests that cultural factors do not have a substantial role in how customers perceive a brand's image.

A somewhat favorable connection (r = 0.469, p = 0.003) exists between purchasing intention and cultural dimension. Cultural influences may impact buying choices, since there is a modest relationship between customers' purchase intentions and cultural aspects.

From what we can see, there is a favorable association between social media use and the cultural component and buy intention, but no such correlation with brand image. Neither the cultural component nor the desire to buy are significantly correlated with brand image. The cultural component does, however, show a somewhat positive connection with purchase intention, suggesting that cultural influences may impact consumers' propensity to buy.

Discussion

Several important points brought up by the study's results are discussed in the section on how social media marketing affects Indian consumers' inclinations to buy. The conversation was summarized as follows:

Social media marketing is becoming more important in India due to the country's fast developing digital ecosystem, which is being driven by rising internet penetration and smartphone use. Brands may now reach customers via the omnipresent social media channel, which has millions of active users across platforms like WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. At the outset, we agree that social media marketing is becoming more important in the dynamic consumer market of India.

A favorable association between social media use and consumer purchase intentions was found in the study. This suggests that social media use has an impact on consumers' inclinations to buy. Branded information, user reviews, and promotional initiatives bombard Indian consumers as they spend more time on social media sites. Customers' involvement and propensity to buy are influenced by this exposure, which is driven in large part by social media. The article delves further into the topic of how companies may take advantage of this effect by targeting their social media marketing efforts. This will increase brand awareness, build trust with consumers, and eventually lead to more purchases.

In the context of India's diverse cultural heritage, people use social media to share their customs, express their cultural identities, and have conversations about their culture. The study results show that there is a direct relationship between social media use and cultural factors, demonstrating how the platform both reflects and shapes cultural norms and values. This talk delves into the topic of cultural resonance and how companies can use it to their advantage by making content that resonates with customers on a deeper level.

There seems to be a weaker association between brand image and purchase intentions, despite the importance of brand image in influencing customer views and fostering brand loyalty. Because of this disparity, we need to talk about how things like product quality, price, and word-of-mouth recommendations—in addition to consumers' perceptions of brands—influence their purchasing choices. In order to successfully impact purchase intentions, the

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debate highlights the significance of holistic marketing strategies that target many touchpoints throughout the customer journey.

Finally, we explore what this study means for future studies and how marketers in the Indian market might use this information. The importance of social media marketing techniques that take into account customer preferences and motivations while also connecting with varied cultures is highlighted. The debate also suggests directions for future studies, such as looking at influencer marketing, new social media platforms, and cultural differences in customer behavior and intent to buy.

Social media marketing's impact on Indian consumers' desire to buy highlights the complex relationship between online activity, cultural factors, perceptions of brands, and actual purchases. It helps marketers understand the ins and outs of the Indian market, which is crucial for creating campaigns that connect with customers and produce results.

Conclusion

Ultimately, the impact of social media marketing on Indian consumers' intents to buy is a product of the complex interaction of many elements inside the ever-changing digital world. Several important takeaways from this research illuminate the complex interplay of social media engagement, brand perception, cultural factors, and consumer actions. According to the study's results, social media platforms are great motivators for customers to participate and communicate. Indian consumers are spending more and more time on social media for entertainment, news, and connecting with friends and family. This presents marketers with a once in a lifetime chance to reach their demographic, build connections, and influence consumer spending.

The cultural values and customs of India's varied cultural environment are both reflected and shaped by the country's social media platforms. Customers are more likely to trust and be loyal to brands that show they understand and respect their culture, are genuine, and are relevant to their lives. So, it turns out that cultural resonance is a major factor in how Indian consumers perceive and intend to buy. How Value Perception and Social Influence Function: Despite the continued significance of brand image, studies show that social influence and value perception are far more essential in determining whether or not consumers will make a purchase. Consumers are more swayed by recommendations from friends and acquaintances,

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user-generated content, and perceived value propositions when making purchases than by considerations of brand image alone. According to the research, marketers need to have a more comprehensive view of social media marketing if they want to see results. This means going beyond simple brand promotion and include cultural relevance, value creation, and meaningful involvement. Marketers may create more genuine connections with Indian customers and get more substantial results by learning about their unique tastes, habits, and cultural subtleties.

There are a number of promising directions for further investigation, notwithstanding the useful insights provided by this work. The influence of new social media platforms, the efficacy of influencer marketing, and cultural differences in consumer behavior are all promising topics for future research. So, it's clear that digital platforms have a profound impact on how current consumers behave; social media marketing has a noticeable effect on buy intentions among Indian consumers. Brands can connect with Indian customers on a deeper level, interact with them authentically, and provide value-driven experiences to help them develop in the ever-changing digital economy.

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