



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology
Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 03, March 2026)

Impact of Social Media on Consumer Buying Behaviour

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Abstract-- In recent years, the use of social media has exploded, with billions of users worldwide. This has led to an increase in the amount of time people spend on social media platforms and has created new opportunities for businesses to reach their target audience. This study aims to examine the impact of social media on consumer behavior and how it affects the decision-making process. The study uses a mixed-method approach, including a literature review, survey questionnaire, and interviews with social media users to collect data. The findings show that social media has a significant impact on consumer behaviour, with users relying heavily on social media for information, product research, and reviews. Social media also plays a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions, as users tend to rely on social media content to form opinions about products and brands. The study identifies several factors that contribute to the effectiveness of social media in influencing consumer behaviour, including the authenticity of content, the credibility of recommendations, and the relevance of information. The study's findings provide valuable insights for businesses seeking to leverage social media.

Keywords-- social media, consumer behaviour, decision-making process, product research, and authenticity.

I. INTRODUCTION

Social media has become an integral part of people's daily lives in recent years, with billions of users worldwide. The widespread adoption of social media platforms has created new opportunities for businesses to connect with their target audience and promote their products and services. With social media being a highly interactive and engaging medium, businesses are keen to leverage its potential to influence consumer behaviour and drive sales. This study aims to examine the impact of social media on consumer behaviour and how it affects the decision-making process. In today's digital age, social media has emerged as a powerful tool for businesses to connect with their target audience and influence consumer behaviour. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter have transformed the way consumers interact with brands, with users spending increasing amounts of time on these platforms. As a result, businesses are keen to leverage the potential of social media to drive sales and improve brand reputation.

This study aims to examine the impact of social media on consumer behaviour, specifically focusing on how social media influences the decision-making process of consumers. Consumer behaviour is a complex phenomenon that is influenced by a wide range of factors, including cultural, social, and personal factors. In recent years, the advent of social media has added a new dimension to consumer behaviour, with users relying heavily on social media for information, product research, and reviews. Social media also plays a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions, as users tend to rely on social media content to form opinions about products and brands.

This study uses a mixed-method approach, including a literature review, survey questionnaire, and interviews with social media users, to collect data on the impact of social media on consumer behaviour. The study aims to identify the factors that contribute to the effectiveness of social media in influencing consumer behaviour, including the authenticity of content, the credibility of recommendations, and the relevance of information.

The findings of this study have important implications for businesses seeking to leverage social media to influence consumer behaviour. By understanding the factors that contribute to the effectiveness of social media in shaping consumer behaviour, businesses can develop strategies that resonate with their target audience and improve their brand reputation. Ultimately, this study aims to provide valuable insights into the powerful influence of social media on consumer behaviour, and to offer practical recommendations for businesses seeking to leverage its potential to drive sales and grow their brand.

II. CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Consumer behaviour refers to the actions and decisions that consumers make when purchasing goods and services. It involves the study of how people make decisions, what influences their choices, and how they behave when they encounter different types of products and services. Factors that affect consumer behaviour include personal, cultural, and social influences, as well as psychological factors such as motivation, perception, and attitudes. The impact of social media on consumer behaviour can be summarized as follows:



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Influence on purchasing decisions

Social media can influence consumer purchasing decisions through the content they see. Understanding consumer behaviour is important for businesses and marketers who want to create effective marketing strategies and products that meet the needs and wants of their target customers and engage with them.

Product research

Consumers can use social media to research products before making a purchase, including reading reviews and comparing prices.

Brand loyalty:

Social media allows for a more personal connection between consumers and brands, which can lead to increased brand loyalty.

Word-of-mouth marketing:

Social media provides a platform for consumers to share their experiences with products and services, which can influence others' purchasing decisions.

Trends and preferences:

Social media can provide insight into current trends and consumer preferences, which can help businesses tailor their products and marketing strategies.

Customer service

Social media also allows for quick and easy communication between businesses and consumers, improving customer service and satisfaction.

III. SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media refers to the online platforms and tools that allow users to share, create, and exchange content, ideas, and information with others. These platforms include social networking sites, messaging apps, blogs, video sharing platforms, and other online communities. Social media has become an increasingly popular form of communication and entertainment, with billions of people around the world using these platforms every day. While social media has many benefits, such as facilitating communication and social connections, it can also have negative effects on individuals and society. One area where social media has a significant impact is consumer behaviour. Social media platforms have changed the way people discover, research, and purchase products and services.

The use of social media has led to several changes in consumer behaviour, including:

- *Increased brand awareness*

Social media platforms allow companies to reach a larger audience and increase their brand visibility.

- *Influence on purchase decisions*

Social media can influence consumer decision-making by providing information, reviews, and recommendations from peers and influencers.

- *Change in shopping habits*

Consumers can now shop online directly from social media platforms, leading to a shift in traditional shopping habits.

- *Impact on customer service*

Social media has become a key customer service channel for many companies, with consumers often turning to social media to report issues and seek resolution.

- *Privacy and security concerns*

The use of social media has raised concerns about the privacy and security of consumer data.

Overall, the impact of social media on consumer behaviour is complex and multifaceted. While social media has many benefits, it is important to be aware of its potential negative effects and take steps to mitigate these risks.

IV. LITREATURE REVIEW

The impact of social media on consumer behaviour has been a topic of interest for researchers in recent years, as the widespread adoption of social media has created new opportunities for businesses to connect with their target audience and influence consumer decision-making. In this section, we will review the existing literature on the impact of social media on consumer behaviour and identify the key themes and trends in this field.

Several studies have examined the role of social media in shaping consumer behaviour, with most studies focusing on the impact of social media on consumer decision-making. A study by Ramanathan and Shrivastava (2013) found that social media has a significant impact on consumer behaviour, with users relying heavily on social media for product research and reviews. The study also found that social media plays a critical role in building brand awareness and establishing brand reputation.

Another study by Kaur and Garg (2016) explored the relationship between social media usage and consumer behaviour, finding that social media has a positive impact on consumer behaviour, including increased engagement and purchase intentions. The study also identified the importance of social media content in shaping consumer perceptions and preferences, highlighting the need for businesses to create relevant and engaging content to attract and retain social media users.

In addition to the impact of social media on consumer decision-making, several studies have explored the factors that influence consumer behaviour on social media. For example, a study by De Vries, Gensler, and Leeflang (2012) found that the credibility of social media content is a critical factor in influencing consumer behaviour, with users relying heavily on reviews and recommendations from their peers on social media. Overall, the literature suggests that social media has a significant impact on consumer behaviour, with users relying heavily on social media for information, product research, and reviews. The literature also highlights the importance of creating engaging and relevant content on social media, as well as the credibility of social media content in influencing consumer perceptions and preferences.

V. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are to:

1. To examine the impact of social media on consumer behaviour.
2. Analyze the decision-making process of consumers when using social media to make purchase decisions.
3. Evaluate the role of social media in shaping consumer perceptions of products and brands.
4. Provide valuable insights for businesses seeking to leverage social media to promote their products and services.

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- *Literature review*

A comprehensive literature review was conducted to examine the existing research on the impact of social media on consumer behaviour. Relevant peer-reviewed articles, books, and academic papers were collected from various databases, including Google Scholar, JSTOR, and Science Direct.

The literature review provided a theoretical foundation for the study and helped to identify the key themes and concepts related to social media and consumer behaviour.

- *Survey questionnaire:*

A survey questionnaire was designed to collect data on the impact of social media on consumer behaviour. The questionnaire was administered online to a sample of social media users, selected through purposive sampling. The questionnaire consisted of both open-ended and closed-ended questions and covered topics such as social media usage patterns, the impact of social media on purchasing decisions

- *Interviews*

In-depth interviews were conducted with a sample of social media users to provide a deeper understanding of their decision-making process when using social media to make purchase decisions. The interviews were conducted in person and lasted between 15 to 20 minutes. The interviews were semi-structured, allowing for flexibility and exploration of relevant themes.

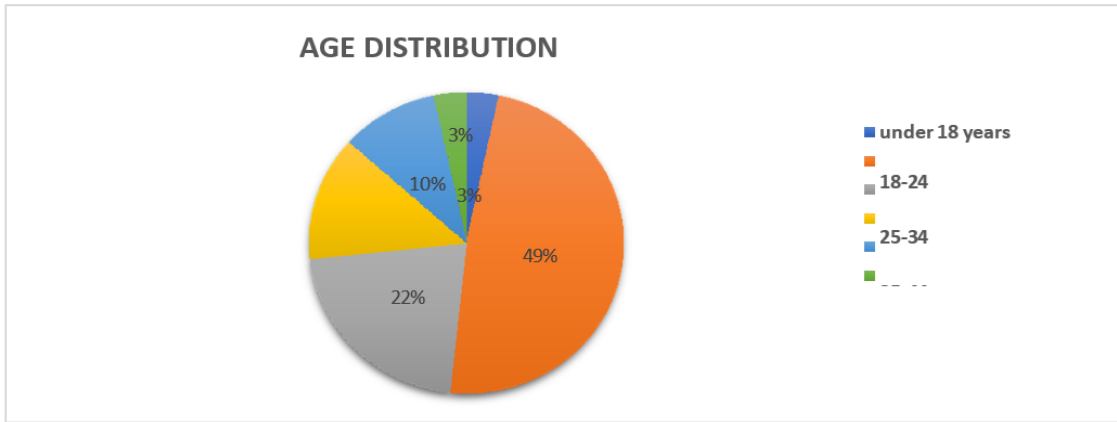
Data analysis was conducted using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The survey data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis, while the interview data was analyzed using content analysis. The findings from each of these methods were triangulated to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of social media on consumer behaviour and the factors that contribute to its effectiveness.

VII. DATA ANALYSIS

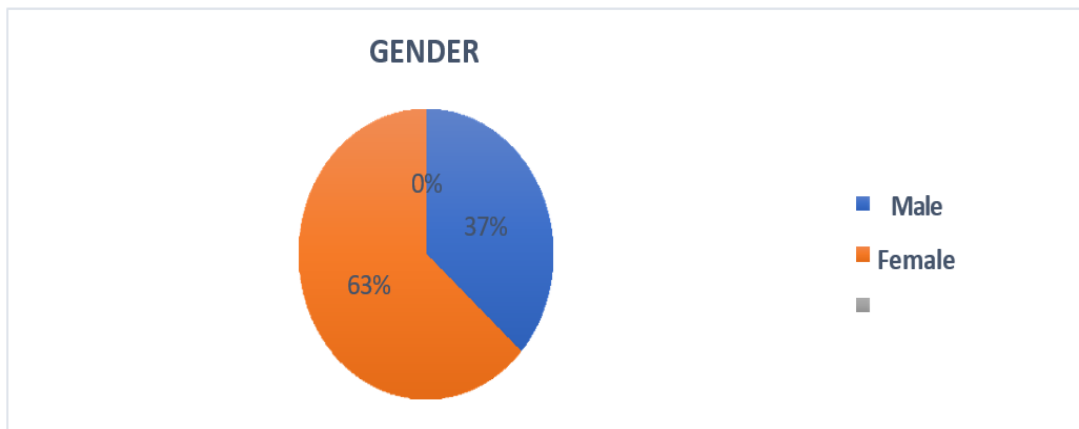
The following section presents analysis made on the data collected from the questionnaire. The set of questions were sent to individuals who are currently living in Bangalore, India. Since the survey was sent to 100 individuals, and the number of participants was 60, therefore the total percentage of responses was 60%. In total the questionnaire contains 10 questions.

VIII. AGE WISE DISTRIBUTION

The following pie chart shows the age distribution of people into 4 different age groups who filled out questionnaire



Gender Wise Distribution

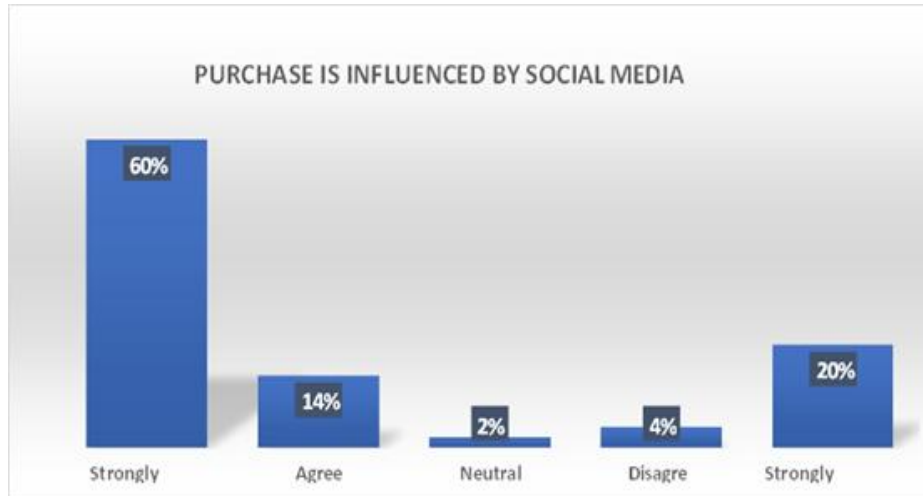


The pie chart shows the gender distribution of the respondents.

By asking these two general questions we are able to 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 under 18 years old 3%, 18-24 years old 49%, 25-34 years old 22%, 35-44 years old 13%, 44-54 years old 10%, 55 above 3%. From the received responses 37% are male and 63% are female.

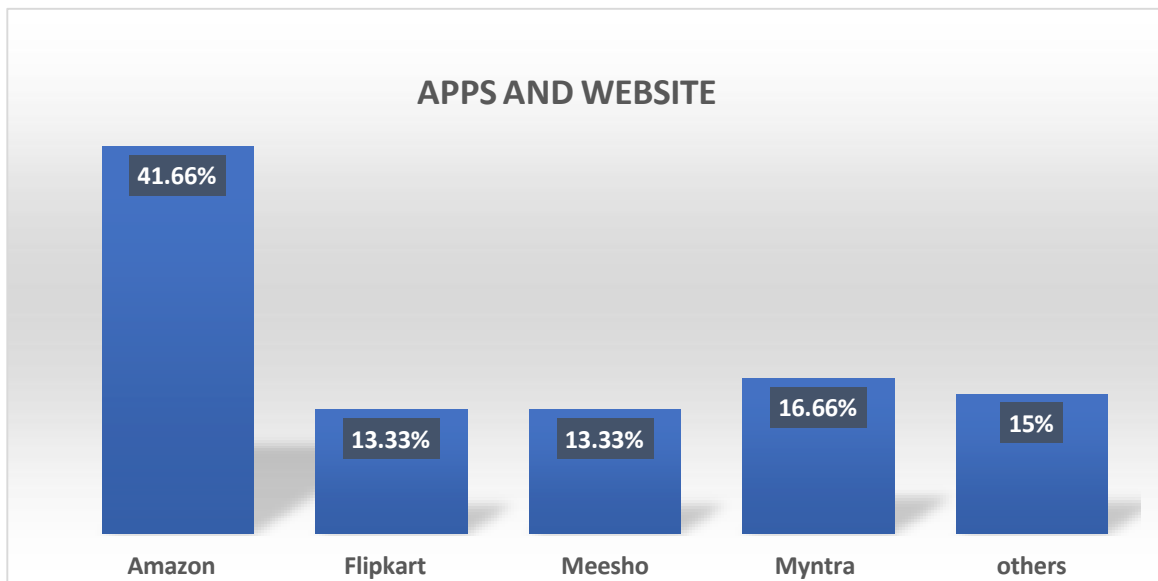
Opinion regarding the purchase influence by social media.



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.

60% people strongly agree that social media does influence the purchase, 14% of people agree, 2% of people neutral, 4% of people disagree, whereas 20% people strongly disagree to this fact.

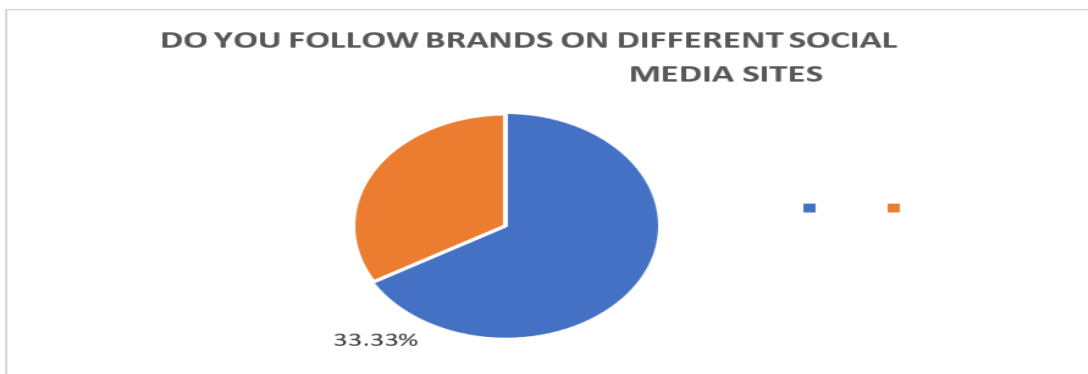
Apps and Websites used most for buying products online.



According to the survey Amazon is the most preferred platform to do online shopping with 41.66% respondents. Then comes, Myntra 16.66%, Flipkart and Meesho is same as 13.33% and others 15%.

Amazon is to be considered as a leader of online networking sites these days as stated by the majority of our respondents.

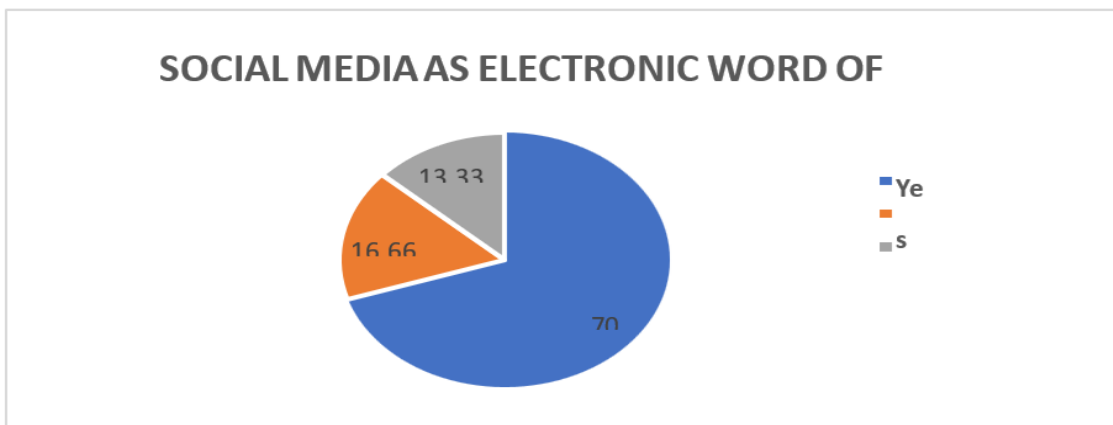
Do you follow brands on different social media sites?



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 number of efforts, thereby, majority i.e., 66.66% of people tends to follow various brands on social media.

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



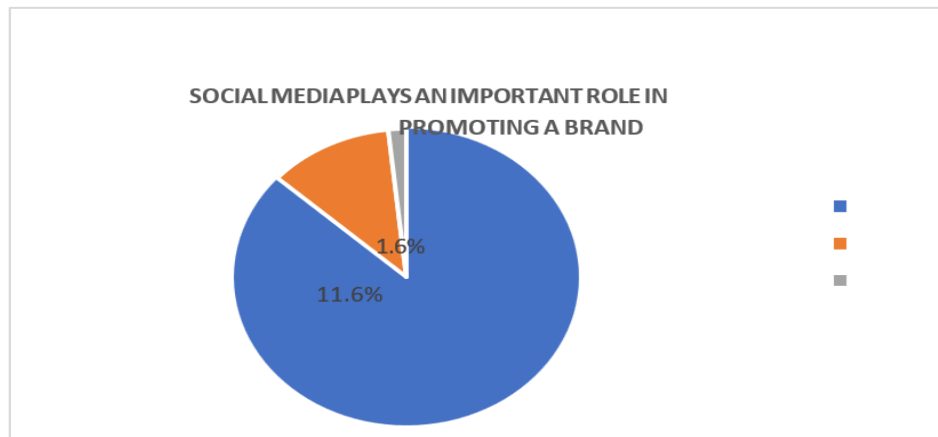
The impact of electronic word of mouth on customers' buy goals has been known for quite a while. Be that as it may, electronic word of mouth has increased another measurement with the appearance of web-based life. electronic word of mouth effect purchase decisions 70% of the total population said that social media acts as an electronic word of mouth and does affects the various decisions of consumers.

Apart from that there are 13.33% of people who don't want to state extreme sides they chose 'maybe' as their answer. Whereas 16.66% of people stated that social media should not be considered as electronic word of mouth.

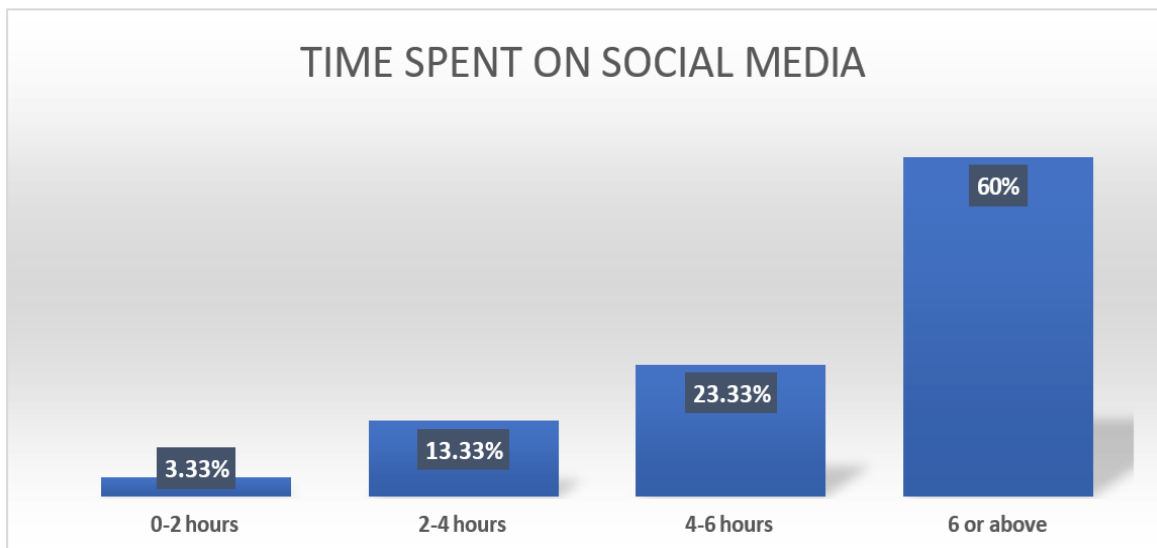
Do you think social media plays an important role in promoting a brand?

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., 86.66% of people said that social media plays a very important role in brand promotion. Whereas, a minority of 11.6% were not to aspect and 1.6% respondents prefer maybe.



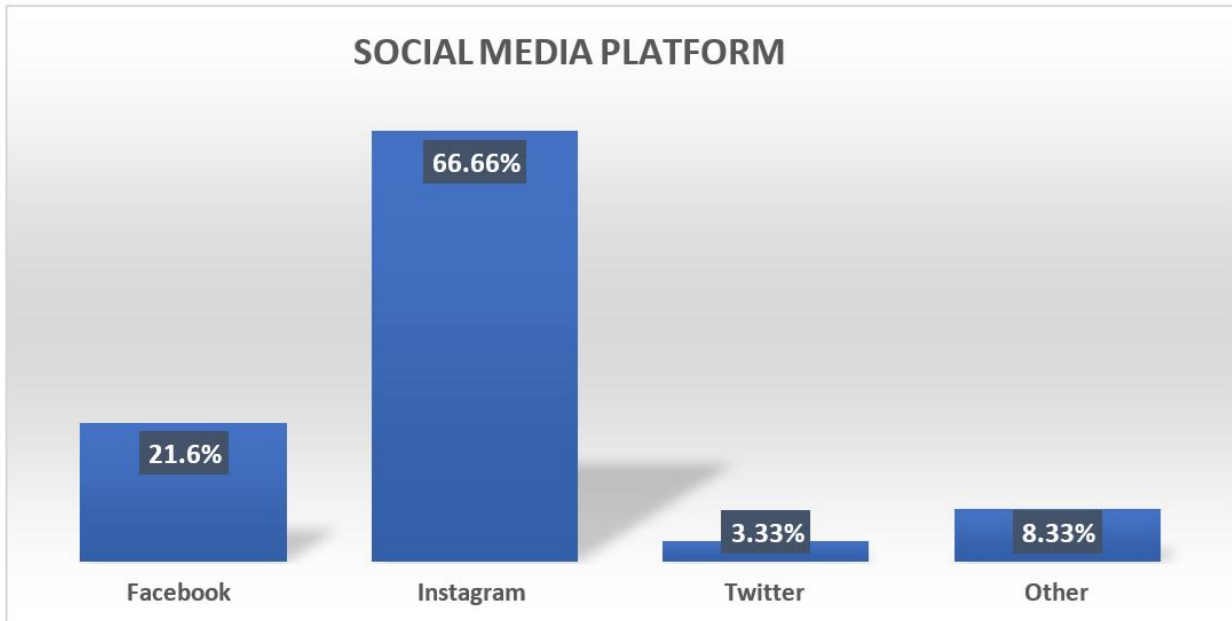
Time spent on Social Media Websites on a typical day.



Through this we got to know that major chunk of population spent 0 - 2 hours of their time on social media i.e., 3.33% of people.

Furthermore, 13.33% of population spent 2 - 4 hours on social media, furthermore, 23.33% of population spent 4 - 6 hours on social media, 60% population spent time on social media is 6 hours or above. The emergence and popularity of social media have made it easy for an individual to communicate in real time with different people.

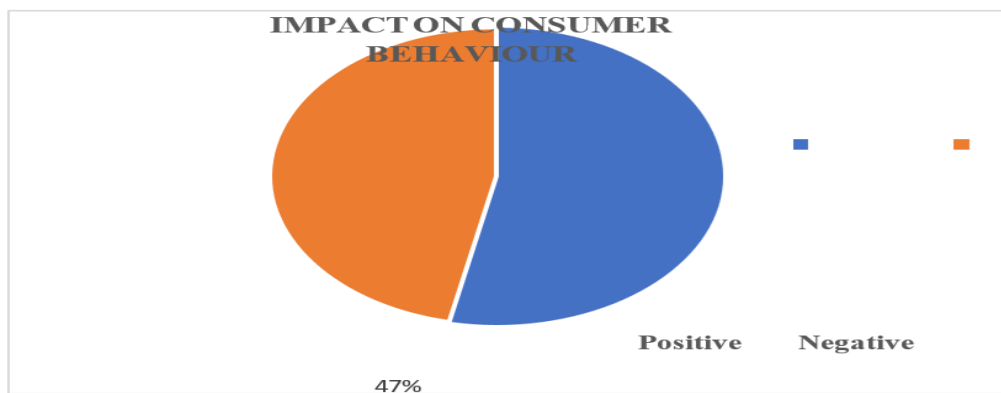
What social media platform do you use the most for product research?



The 21.6% of respondents use Facebook platform for product research, 66.66% of respondents use Instagram platform for product research, 3.33% of respondents use twitter platform for product research and 8.33% of

respondents use other platform for product research. More number of respondents use Instagram platform for product research.

Do you believe that social media has a positive or negative impact on your overall consumer behaviour.



Social media has its own pros and cons. Most of the respondents prefer that social media as positive impacts on consumer behaviour. 53% respondents prefer to say positive impact on consumer behaviour and 47% re4spondents prefer to say negative impact on consumer behaviour.

IX. FINDINGS

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the impact of social media on consumer behaviour and the factors that contribute to its effectiveness.

- The maximum numbers of the respondents were from the age group of 18-24 as this is the age group which spends maximum number of hours on social media.
- The data from the survey shows that most of the respondents are female that is 63% are female and 37% are male respondents.
- The data from the survey shows that almost half of the people spend 6 and above 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.
- The data from the survey shows almost 66.66% of the respondents follow brands on social media. People follow brands on social media as they want to know about sales, new products etc.
- The data from the survey shows that almost 70% take social media as the electronic word of mouth as many people make purchase related decisions according to social media referrals.
- The data from the survey suggests that almost 67% 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.
- The data from the survey shows that almost 86.66% of the respondents believe 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.
- The most of respondents use Instagram for product research that is 66.66% and least respondents use twitter for product research.
- Social media as both advantages and disadvantages moreover most of the respondents prefer that social media as positive impact on consumer behaviour that is 53% of respondents prefer positive impact and 43% respondents prefer that social media as negative impact on consumer behaviour.
- 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.60% people strongly agree that social media does influence the purchase.

X. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- *Sample size*

The size of the sample may be too small or not representative of the target population, which could limit the generalizability of the findings.

- *Sampling bias*

The method of selecting participants may be biased, such as using convenience sampling or only recruiting participants from one location, which could limit the external validity of the study.

- *Data collection*

The method of collecting data may be unreliable or incomplete, such as using self-reported measures or only collecting data at one time point, which could limit the accuracy and validity of the findings.

- *Analysis*

The statistical analysis may be limited by the choice of statistical tests, the assumptions made, or the quality of the data, which could limit the robustness of the results.

- *Context*

The study may have been conducted in a specific context, such as a specific culture or time period, which could limit the applicability of the findings to other contexts.

XI. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study have important implications for businesses seeking to leverage social media to promote their products and services. Overall, the study found that social media has a significant impact on consumer behaviour and plays a critical role in shaping consumer perceptions and purchase decisions. The following section discusses the key implications of the findings and their potential applications for businesses:

- *Authenticity and Credibility*

The study found that authenticity and credibility are essential factors in the effectiveness of social media in influencing consumer behaviour. Consumers are more likely to trust and act on recommendations from social media influencers who provide authentic and genuine reviews and content. Businesses seeking to leverage social media should prioritize authenticity and transparency in their social media marketing strategies and work with influencers who have established credibility and trust with their followers.

- *Relevance and Personalization*

The study found that relevance and personalization are also crucial factors in the effectiveness of social media in influencing consumer behaviour. Consumers are more likely to engage with social media content that is tailored to their interests and preferences. Businesses should use data and analytics to gain insights into their target audience's interests and preferences and create content that is relevant and personalized to their audience.

- *Social Media Influencers*

The study found that social media influencers play a critical role in shaping consumer perceptions and purchase decisions. Consumers are more likely to trust and act on recommendations from influencers who have established credibility and trust with their followers. Businesses seeking to leverage social media should work with influencers who have a strong following and who align with their brand values and target audience.

- *Future Research*

One limitation of this study is the focus on a specific sample of social media users, which may not be representative of the broader population. Future research could explore the impact of social media on consumer behaviour in different contexts and with different demographic groups. Additionally, future research could explore the impact of emerging social media platforms and technologies on consumer behaviour and marketing strategies.

XII. CONCLUSIONS

The use of social media has exploded in recent years, with billions of users worldwide. This has created new opportunities for businesses to reach their target audience and promote their products and services. This study aimed to examine the impact of social media on consumer behaviour and how it affects the decision-making process. The findings of this study suggest that social media has a significant impact on consumer behaviour, with users relying heavily on social media for information, product research, and reviews. Social media also plays a critical role in shaping consumer perceptions, as users tend to rely on social media content to form opinions about products and brands.

The study identified several factors that contribute to the effectiveness of social media in influencing consumer behaviour, including authenticity, credibility, relevance, personalization, and social media influencers.

By prioritizing these factors, businesses can maximize the impact of social media on consumer behaviour and drive engagement and sales.

One limitation of this study is the focus on a specific sample of social media users, which may not be representative of the broader population. Future research could explore the impact of social media on consumer behaviour in different contexts and with different demographic groups. Additionally, future research could explore the impact of emerging social media platforms and technologies on consumer behaviour and marketing strategies. In conclusion, the findings of this study provide valuable insights for businesses seeking to leverage social media to promote their products and services. By understanding the factors that contribute to the effectiveness of social media in influencing consumer behaviour, businesses can develop social media marketing strategies that engage and resonate with their target audience, ultimately driving engagement and sales.

XIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be made for businesses seeking to leverage social media to influence consumer behaviour:

- *Create authentic and relevant content*

Businesses should focus on creating high-quality content that is authentic and relevant to their target audience. By providing valuable information and addressing their audience's pain points, businesses can build trust and credibility, ultimately influencing consumer behaviour.

- *Engage with social media influencers*

Social media influencers have a significant impact on consumer behaviour, with many users relying on their recommendations when making purchasing decisions. Businesses should identify and engage with social media influencers that align with their brand values and target audience.

- *Personalize content and offers*

Personalization is a key to engaging with social media users and influencing their behaviour. Businesses should leverage the data available on social media platforms to personalize their content and offers to each user's interests and preferences.



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- *Monitor and respond to reviews and comments*

Social media users rely heavily on reviews and comments when making purchasing decisions. Businesses should actively monitor their social media pages and respond to reviews and comments promptly, demonstrating their commitment to customer satisfaction.

- *Continuously evaluate and adjust social media marketing strategies*

Social media platforms and user behaviour are constantly evolving, and businesses must continuously evaluate and adjust their social media marketing strategies to stay relevant and effective.

By following these recommendations, businesses can leverage social media to influence consumer behaviour, ultimately driving engagement and sales.

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