

Original Article

Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Buying Behaviour with Special Reference to Kollam District in Kerala

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Abstract - Social Media Marketing is the method of using social media as a tool to reach a wide range of customers. This method creates a sudden attention of a particular product to a large group of people. Now a day, this mode of marketing has captured a large space than the traditional marketing media. Now people seek followers and subscribers by giving information on social media about purchases of goods and services online without wasting time. Through social media, customers can get information about the company and its products, and at the same time, the company can get information about the customers for their requirements. Marketing through social media can change the perception and purchase behavior of customers.

Keywords - Consumer perception, Buying behavior, Modern channel and Traditional channel various channels preferred.

1. Introduction

Social media marketing is considered a very important tool and technique in marketing. The major reason behind this success is the time required to reach the customers. Social media marketing requires a very short period to reach its respective audience and low expenses. The advertisements through this mode can easily attract customers and influence their buying decision. Now a day, companies use social media as an important tool for increasing the sales of their products. Technology changes from time to time and greatly influences consumers' buying behavior. Social media helps customers to buy products through communication between the stakeholders. Customers can change their purchasing decision online.

2. Statement of the Problem

The modern world is the world of technology, where social media marketing is rising rapidly. Social media and various networking sites are developing daily, and customers are attracted to them. The thinking aspect and perception of customers are different; they change from time to time. Social media are indeed doing the job of marketing and are an important means of changing customers' minds and thinking. The study attempts to find out how social media has changed the thinking aspect of the customers in the district and the influence of this marketing method on customers buying behavior.

3. Scope of the Study

Social media has become a convenient way to communicate and has improved the shopper's and marketers'

communication medium. Customers' purchase decision is influenced through social media by group communication. Social media is a new platform for exchanging information about products and services. It is, therefore, necessary to understand the impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behavior in the kollam district.

4. Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

1. To analyze the perception of customers towards social media marketing.
2. To examine the influence of social media marketing on consumers' buying behavior.
3. To analyze the best social media preferred by consumers in buying decisions.
4. To offer suggestions based on the study

5. Review of Literature

Lempert (2006) says that customers nowadays turn from traditional mediums such as radio and newspapers. They choose the product based on the information available in the online medium. The customers search the information about the products on different social media.

Mangold and Faulds (2009) the study say that communication is maintained between consumers. Even though the company cannot control it, it can influence the conversation between the consumers.



In their study, Hensel and Deis (2010) pointed out that the business organization should examine the advantages and disadvantages before adopting a social media marketing method. The strategy adopted should be one that can upgrade the company's brand.

Flannery (2010) has examined the use of social media in youth and found that most youths use the internet. The study underlined that for most purposes, they use social media.

Cox (2010) pointed out a relationship between age and attitude in his study. It was found that different age groups have different attitudes towards online advertising platforms.

Chu (2011) says that most Facebook users are more attracted to social media marketing and related advertisement. The study says that this kind of user joins a particular Facebook group.

Heinonen (2011) says that consumers' consumption, production, and participation of consumers are not based on a particular aspect. Different motivations attract them.

Benjamin Ach (2013) has examined the marketing strategy of the business and communication strategy in an Australian marketing company. The study underlined that all type of business, whether small or medium, is getting online and shows the importance of social media in this competitive world.

Ramsunder's (2016) study says that online brands influence shopper decisions. The opinion put forward by one consumer shall influence the purchase decision of another customer. Customers are moving to online media to get more data for buying decisions.

Chowdhury et al. (2019) examined the impact of Facebook on youth and found that it had greater features to attract them. The study found that it has enabled the youth to expand their contacts.

6. Methodology of the Study

The study was conducted in the Kollam district of Kerala. The interview schedule was used for the primary data collection to get the exact result. Secondary data were collected from published books, reports and magazines.

The study is conducted based on convenient sampling, with a sample size of 150. The collected data is analyzed using tabular and percentage methods. The study will be done for a period of 1 year in 2021-2022.

• Interpretation

Table 1 is the general profile of 150 respondents. The table shows that 59.33% of respondents are Female. 30.66% of respondents are aged between 31- 45, and 43.33% are married.

Table 1. General profile of the respondents

Particulars	Classification	No. of respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	61	40.66
	Female	89	59.33
Age	Below 18	29	19.33
	18-30	34	22.66
	31-45	46	30.66
	46-60	20	13.33
	Above 60	21	14
Marital status	Single	43	28.66
	Married	65	43.33
	Widow	28	18.66
	Divorced	14	9.33

Source: Primary data

• Interpretation

Table 2 shows that 28.66% of the respondents use social networking sites before making purchasing decisions, 24.66% use video sharing sites, 16.66% use social community and discussion sites, and 16% use image sharing and messaging, and 14% use social blogging sites.

Table 2. Preference for social media

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Social networking sites	43	28.66
Image-sharing and messaging sites	24	16
Video sharing sites	37	24.66
Social blogging sites	21	14
Social community and discussion sites	25	16.66

Source: Primary data

• Interpretation

Table 3 shows the perception of consumers towards social media marketing by 150 respondents. 33.33% of the respondents strongly agree that social media marketing is an important source of information 37.33% strongly agree that social media marketing increases the standard of living.39.33% agree that social media marketing is credible, and 39.33% Neither agree nor disagree with the essentiality of social media marketing.41.33% strongly agree that social media marketing updates its information, and 37.33% recommend it to others.

Table 3. Perception towards Social Media Marketing

Particulars	Number of respondents (F) and percentage (%)									
	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Source of information	50	33.33	32	21.33	18	12	21	14	29	19.33
Living standard	56	37.33	38	25.33	16	10.66	21	14	19	12.66
Credible	59	39.33	37	24.66	13	8.66	21	14	20	13.33
Essential	31	20.66	28	18.66	59	39.33	18	12	14	9.33
Updating information	62	41.33	36	24	21	14	14	9.33	17	11.33
Recommend to others	56	37.33	38	25.33	11	7.33	24	16	21	14

Source: Primary data

• Interpretation

Table 4 shows the influence of social media marketing on consumer buying behavior by 150 respondents. 37.33% agree that they change their initial purchase preference after viewing social media marketing 32% agree that they fetch information about products and services.30% strongly agree that they seek opinions about the products, and 34% rate the products online.34% of the respondents strongly agree that they view online reviews and blogs.

Table 4. Buying behavior

Particulars	Number of respondents (F) and percentage (%)									
	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Purchase preference	36	24	56	37.33	14	9.33	21	14	23	15.33
Fetch information	33	22	48	32	21	14	17	11.33	31	20.66
Seek opinion	45	30	32	21.33	34	22.66	21	14	18	12
Rate products	21	14	51	34	29	19.33	28	18.7	21	14
Online review and blog	51	34	21	14	21	14	30	20	27	18

Source: Primary data

7. Findings

- The majority of the respondents are female.
- The majority of the respondents are from 31-45 age categories.
- Nearly 43.33% are married
- The majority of the respondents prefer social networking sites for buying decisions.
- Most of the respondents consider social media marketing as a source of information.
- The majority of the respondents agree that social media marketing is credible and improves the standard of living.
- Most respondents agree that social media marketing updates information and recommends it to others.
- Most of the respondents change their initial purchase preference after viewing an online advertisement.
- The majority of the respondents fetch information and seek opinions about products through online.

- Most of the respondents view online reviews and blogs about products and services.

8. Suggestion

- Social media marketing should be presented attractively, and consumers should think that the products and services can improve their standard of living.
- Social media marketing should use all online platforms to reach large groups.
- The information given through social media marketing should contain detailed information to satisfy the viewers.
- Online advertising is getting modified occasionally; thus, the organization should adopt the necessary change to reach the customers.
- If business firms are targeting a particular group, then the marketing should be in such a manner.

9. Conclusion

Social media is an inexpensive platform that gives a wide reach to the brand. The study is conducted in the Kollam district of Kerala. After the study, it is clear that social media marketing impacts consumer buying behavior,

and consumers think that social media marketing is a good thing and is perceived positively. The number of internet users is increasing every day, and they have admitted that social networks are a new dimension that has become a part of the business.

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