



A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON BUYING BEHAVIOR OF APPARELS IN YOUNG ADULTS IN BANGALORE NORTH REGION

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ABSTRACT

Social media marketing is a powerful way of business marketing in the present tech-driven world. We will be able to reach the target audience with the help of a few clicks. The study aims to get an insight into the buying behavior of apparel in young adults in the Bangalore North region with Social Media Marketing. The study was conducted on 125 respondents from the Bangalore North region in 18 to 30-year-olds. The study aimed to understand if social media marketing had any impact on young adults' buying behaviour. As per the sample population's responses and the analysis of data, young adults' impulsive buying behavior is indeed influenced because of social media marketing. Further few recommendations to the social media marketers are also provided in the research paper.

KEYWORDS: social media marketing, buying behaviour, apparels, impulsive buying

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1. INTRODUCTION

With the popularity of the internet in the early 1990s, the world economy took a different leap in doing business. The ease of doing business increased, and the advent of social networking sites in the late 1990s and early 2000s made the businesses to think of innovative ideas to reach out to the consumers. The early 2000s also saw tremendous growth potential in e-commerce websites. The ease of buying and selling over the internet became one of the most sought after service ever demanded. Any business strategies revolve around how to satisfy and retain the consumers and how to attract new consumers. What more could be asked when social networking sites and e-commerce started to collaborate. With all the innovations and technological boom, customers became the ultimate decision-makers as they have plenty of choices. The businesses' major focus area turned out to be consumer-centric, and thus consumer satisfaction became the key to the success of any business.

E-commerce websites are the new shopping centers for all people nowadays. Shopping has shifted online with more and more people preferring to buy online. This statistic gives information on the digital buyer penetration worldwide from 2016 to 2021. In 2016, 58.3 percent of global internet users had purchased products online. In 2019, this figure was expected to grow to 63 percent. With digital buyer penetration expected to surpass 65 percent of internet users worldwide in 2021, the e-commerce industry is set to evolve and expand. In 2016, the number of digital buyers worldwide reached 1.5 billion. A year later, the number rose to 1.66 billion, and forecasters expect over 2 billion online shoppers in 2020. (<https://www.statista.com/statistics/261676/digital-buyer-penetration-worldwide/>)

Consumer behavior entails "all activities associated with the purchase, use and disposal of goods and services, including the consumer's emotional, mental and behavioral responses that precede or follow these activities" the buying behavior of the consumers depends on a host of things such as the price of the product, quality of the product, reviews of other customers, interactions with other customers, latest fashion, etc.

Impulsive buying is the tendency of a customer to buy goods and services without planning. When a customer takes such buying decisions at the spur of the moment, it is usually triggered by emotions and feelings. (<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/definition/impulsive-buying>)

Social Networking sites are digital platforms through which a person can connect to another person with similar interests, activities, or with similar background or relations. Some examples of social networking sites are Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

Social Media Marketing (SMM) is a platform through which a business can reach its consumers. SMM can be used for promotional activities of the product or direct selling of the product. With the usage of social media, a business can build its brand and increase its sales.

E-commerce Websites are the most popular websites which have gained tremendous popularity in recent times. They help the consumers and the sellers to meet on an online platform without having a face to face interaction with each other. It provides a virtual platform to do the business. Some of the popular e-commerce websites are Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, Snapdeal, and AJIO.



2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Santhi (2017) conducted “A study on consumer satisfaction toward online shopping in Tirupati town” to understand the factors influencing customers' online shopping decisions and how these factors affect customer satisfaction. A descriptive research design using a well-structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 120 respondents across Tirupati town. The results indicated that the respondents are becoming more intelligent towards the internet every day. As they become more confident, they are ready to buy high-value products online as well.

Klieb (2018) investigated the “Impact of Social Media on Consumer Behavior.” The researcher concentrated on social media's role in the decision-making process for compelling purchase where-in significant brand difference, high consumer involvement, and risk and which are expensive and not so frequently used. The model used the information search, alternative evaluation, and purchase decision stages from the classical EBM model. A quantitative survey investigated up to what the use of social media alters degree experiences. Results revealed 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. The study was conducted for internet-savvy consumers in South-East Asia.

Nazeer (2017) investigated the study of “Impact of Social Media Advertisements on University Students of Lahore.” It covers demographic characteristics like gender and age group of the respondents. The age group of the study was 18 to 35-year-old students, and the sample size consisted of university students. The research emphasized these areas and framed the questionnaire to understand users' attitudes on the advertisements. It tried to understand the extent of changes observed in the respondents' behavior on viewing the advertisement on their home page. The data were analyzed through univariate and bivariate statistical procedures. The results were presented in frequencies, cross tabs, and hypothesis testing findings through correlation. The findings revealed that users' exposure to social media advertisements leads them to attitude as well as behavior change in age group (26-35 years). The study also revealed that male students are more affected by exposure to social media ads than female students.

Morris (2013) conducted a study on ‘More Consumers Prefer Online Shopping.’ Shoppers increasingly want what is called a “seamless Omnichannel experience,” meaning one in which retailers allow them to combine online and brick and mortar browsing, shopping, ordering, and returning in whatever combo they would like.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study aims at finding out the relationship between social media marketing and the consumers' impulsive buying behavior towards apparel in online shopping sites by youth in the Bangalore North Region of Karnataka, India.

4. OBJECTIVES

1. To study the perception of youth towards social media marketing in Bangalore North.



2. To understand the impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behavior.

5. NEED FOR THE STUDY

A considerable amount of research has been undertaken in the field of Social Media Marketing. After reviewing the literature in this field, the researcher felt that research was to be undertaken in the Bangalore North region with special reference to apparels. Since the social media influence on buying behavior was not, however, conducted thus far in the Bangalore North Region, a study was thus conducted.

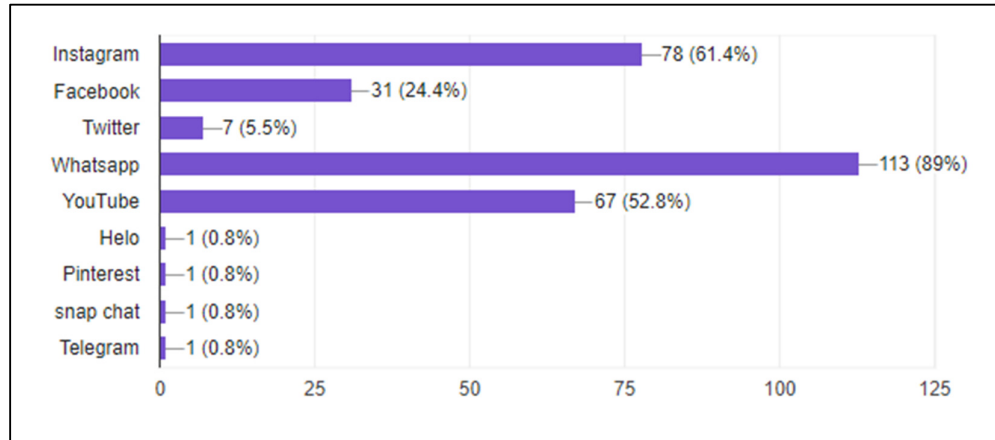
6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Focussing the objective of the present study, a survey was conducted with the help of a structured questionnaire to collect data on the impact of social media marketing on the buying behavior of young adults in the North Bangalore region. The structured questionnaire was designed to collect information about the demographic profile of the respondents, such as age, gender, occupation. In addition to this, various questions related to which social media was the most popular amongst them, how many hours on an average did the person spend on the social media, the purpose of using the social media channel, and the kinds of advertisements that are visible to them on the social media networks were asked. The questions related to their buying behavior with the impact of social media marketing was stressed upon during the selection of the questions. The data was limited to the respondents in the North Bangalore region only, and the questionnaire was distributed with the help of Google forms. Convenience sampling methods were used for the study. The questionnaire was filled by 125 respondents, with the help of Google forms. Simple charting and tabulation tools are used to understand the behavior of the respondents towards Social Media Marketing. The statistical tool used by the researcher is MS Excel. A simple analysis was undertaken to establish the relationship between the respondents' social media marketing and impulsive buying behaviour with the help of mean and standard deviation as the statistical technique. Standard Deviation here was used to know the shape of the distribution, how close the individual data values are from the mean value. With the help of Standard Deviation, the researcher was able to establish a relationship between the impulsive buying behavior of the target audience with the influence of Social Media Marketing.



7. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

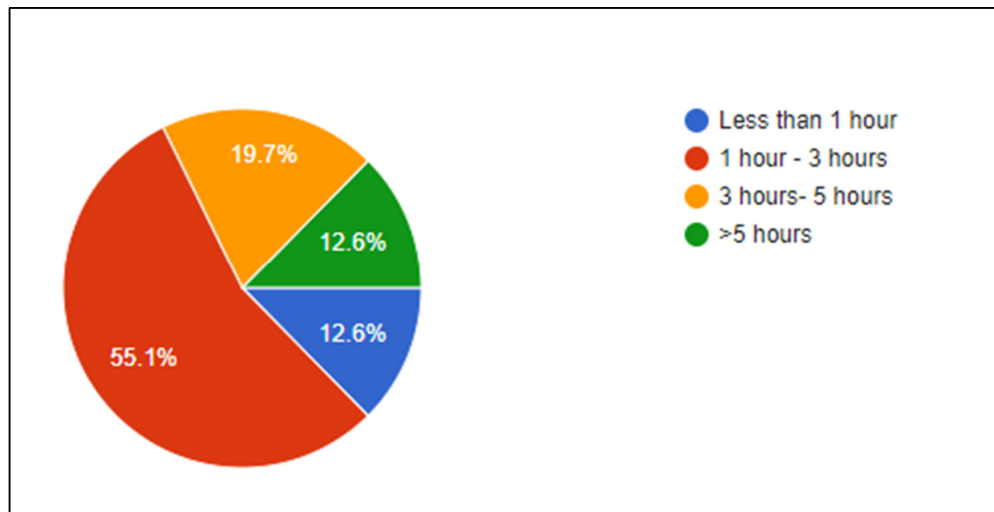
Figure 1: Popular Social Media Platforms



Source: Author compilation based on Primary Data

The most popular social media channels amongst urban youth amongst the selected sample in terms of the highest number of users are Whatsapp, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter. There are very few participants who have also used Helo, Pinterest, Snapchat, and telegram. The interest shown by the sample population on various social media platforms is shown in Figure 2. As the choice was given to select more than one channel, the participants have chosen the required numbers. More than 89 percent of the population has selected Whatsapp as a popular social media channel. In comparison, 61 percent of the respondents have chosen Instagram as a popular channel of social media. YouTube is the third most popular social media channel at 53 percent, followed by Facebook and Twitter at 24 percent and 5.5 percent, respectively.

Figure 2: Time spent on Social Media

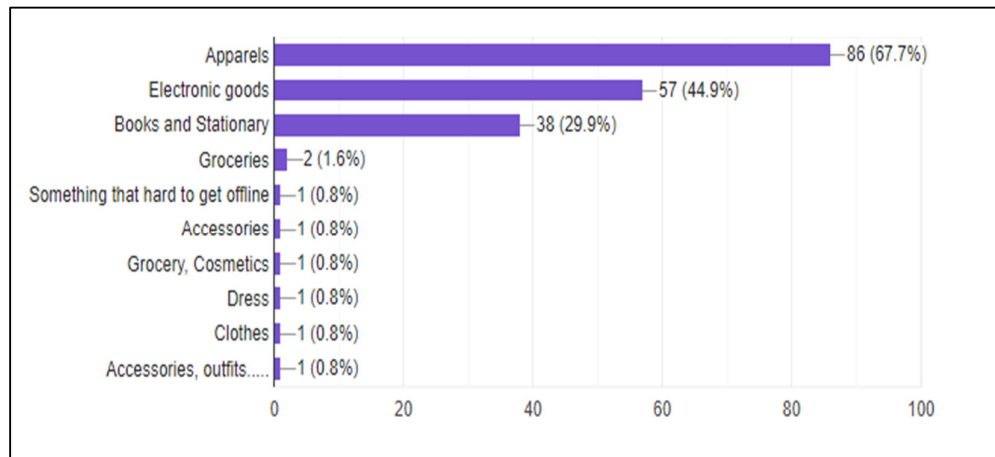


Source: Author compilation based on Primary Data



The time spent on social media channels by the respondents was an essential factor in analyzing the study. More than 55 percent of the respondents spent 1-3 hours on social media platforms, while 19.7 percent spent 3-5 hours. 12.6 percent of the respondents spent more than 5 hours on social media, and the other 12.6 percent of the population spent less than an hour on social media. The data concludes that, for the sample population, an average of 70 percent of the population spend around three minimum hours on social media. The social media marketer can easily use this opportunity to promote their product on the social media platform in an attractive way to attract more consumers towards their product.

Table 3: Types of Goods Purchased on E-Commerce websites

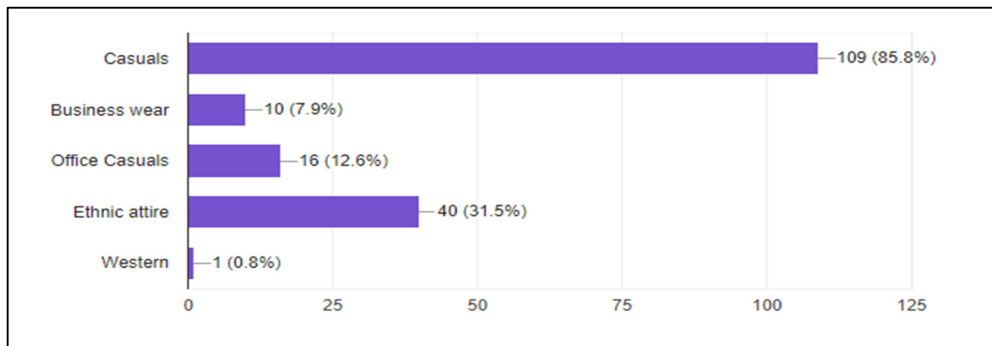


Source: Author compilation based on Primary Data

The respondents were asked to choose the products that they purchased from e-commerce websites. From the response, it can be inferred that most of the respondents in the sample population have given a positive response to apparels purchased by them through online shopping websites. Since the question had a choice of multiple responses from the respondents, more than 67 percent of the respondents have given an opinion that they have purchased apparels from the E-commerce websites. In comparison, 45 percent of the respondents have purchased electronic goods, and 30 percent of the respondents have purchased Books and stationary.



Figure 4: Type of Apparels Purchased



Source: Author compilation based on Primary Data

Since this study focuses on the impulsive buying behavior of urban youth towards apparel, a question was posed on what kind of apparel the respondents were willing to purchase. Around 86 percent of the respondents mentioned that they had purchased a casual attire, and 31 percent of the respondents also mentioned that they had purchased ethnic attire. Twelve percent of the respondents have mentioned having purchased office casuals, and 8 percent of the respondents have mentioned that they have purchased Business wear.

FACTORS AFFECTING BUYING BEHAVIOR BASED ON SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Likert Scale used for the collection of responses from the sample population and the scale was as follows:

- 1: Strongly Disagree
- 2: Disagree
- 3: Neutral
- 4: Agree
- 5: Strongly Agree

Table 5: Factors Affecting Buying Behavior of young adults in Bangalore North Region based on Social Media Marketing

Consumer Perception Factors	Mean	Standard Deviation
Pictures used in Social Media (SM) are a good source of product information	3.16	0.98
Latest fashion is projected in SM	3.35	1.17
Quality of the product can be trusted	2.74	0.99
Helpful customer reviews are available on products	3.42	1.13



Information provided on SM is more objective and hence making it more credible	3.06	0.98
SM allows interaction with consumers who have purchased the same type of product	2.80	1.06
I can read about others experience and get more information about the product through SM	3.41	1.13
SM provides information	3.35	1.10
SM is reliable	2.99	1.04
SM keeps track of updated fashion	3.46	1.28
Payments are safe	3.17	1.01
Searching for information is easy	3.46	1.15
SM increases the intention of buying more apparels than I require	3.19	1.21
SM makes my purchase decision more impulsive	3.13	1.03
SM makes me buy apparels that I do not require	2.76	1.20
I tend to make a purchase again due to the influence of SM	2.97	1.09
There is a compulsion to buy apparels when I like them very much due to SM Marketing	2.92	1.17

Source: Author compilation based on Primary Data; N=125

8. RESEARCH FINDINGS

1. The majority of the respondents spend an average of 2-3 hours on social media.
2. Impulsiveness here is not unnecessary buying things that are not required, but some consumers were buying things required by them.
3. The impulsive buying behavior of the consumers are
4. Most of the respondents felt that social media provides information about a product.
5. The respondents had a neutral opinion about the reliability of the information available online.
6. The respondents also think that Social Media keeps track of the latest fashion.
7. The majority of the respondents feel that the information search on Social Media is easy.
8. The respondents believe that the quality of the product cannot be trusted in social media marketing. This may be because of their experiences.
9. The respondents also feel that another useful feature of social media is the availability of review on any product.
10. Social media does not make the respondents buy apparel, which they do not require.



9. SUGGESTIONS

Suggestions of the Social Media Marketers

1. Looking at the respondents' time on Social Media platforms, the Social Media Marketer can benefit out of it by making more attractive advertisements and creating trust in the customers.
2. Interaction between the consumers can be improved with the help of chat window options being made available.
3. Social media marketers can emphasize the reliability of the product by providing prompt services to customers.

Suggestions for Further Research

1. Researchers can conduct further research on the topic of clickbait advertisement techniques used by social media marketers.
2. A study can also be made on ethical issues in social media marketing.
3. Researchers can undertake a study on pyramid marketing with the help of social network advertisements and its reliability.

10. CONCLUSION

Things are moving digital in the current era. More people are tech-savvy now and use the internet actively, for reasons such as surfing social media. This research finds that the users spend at least one hour a day on average on those social networks; we have to conclude that social networks have become a reality in which people communicate, interact, and trust. We also have to be aware that over 60% of those users access social networks through mobile devices, and we can be sure that these percentages are only going to see an upward trend in the times to come.

In the present world, we have to admit that social networks are a new dimension of reality that has become a part of the business world. Moreover, those businesses can have many benefits from using social network sites. Social networking sites are to be used for business benefits. The social media market should be seen not merely as being eye candy. However, it should serve the purpose of benefitting the customers by regularly reviewing their feedback and taking the consumers' criticism positively. Thus, social media marketing is no longer considered alternative marketing, but instead, it is now becoming mainstream marketing.



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