

## RESEARCH

# Impact of social media marketing on consumer behavior: A comparative study of traditional marketing channels and digital platforms

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Today's businesses are using social media marketing as a powerful method. It would help businesses to achieve their marketing goals in an effective way. It is possible by leveraging the power of various social media channels. Social Media Marketing utilizes social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Snapchat to advertise products and services. The main aim of social media marketing is to connect with existing customers and reach new customers. In social media marketing a number of strategies are involved. This comparative study examines the impact of social media marketing on consumer behavior in comparison to traditional marketing channels. Through the analysis of data from both digital and traditional channels, the study highlights the significant impact of social media marketing on consumer behavior. Digital platforms offer more benefits like interactive communication and customized content, which contribute to increased consumer engagement. The results of our study demonstrate the significance of utilizing social media marketing to enhance consumer engagement and satisfaction, presenting valuable insights to marketers in the current digital environment. A well-structured questionnaire was used to collect responses from 100 respondents in the Dakshina Kannada District of Karnataka State in this study. Our research revealed that customers are more inclined toward social media marketing than traditional marketing.

**Keywords:** social media marketing, traditional marketing, customers

## 1. Introduction

Social marketing is a method of advertising products, services, or brands through social media platforms and websites and engaging with the intended audience. Marketing objectives can be achieved through the reach, interactivity, and user-generated content of social media platforms. Social media marketing provides a unique opportunity to connect with this massive audience on the platforms where they already spend their time. Social media marketing is the practice of using social media platforms and

tools to promote a business and connect with existing and potential customers. It includes content planning, content scheduling, publishing, social media analytics, social media advertising, etc. Social media has a number of benefits such as building identity and awareness, increasing brand image, etc. Nowadays, we can see a number of social media platforms. The most used platforms are Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, Snapchat, and Pinterest (1).

Compared to traditional marketing, social media marketing has several distinct advantages, including the fact that SMM has two kinds of interactions that enable

targeted customer relationship management tools: both customer-to-customer and firm-to-customer. In other words, while traditional marketing tracks customer value primarily by capturing purchase activity, SMM can track customer value both directly and indirectly. A few of the studies revealed that today the majority of the people influencing various products are because of social media marketing. Today people are spending more than two h a day on social media (2). So, it is an easier and smoother way to promote the product through social media marketing. Social media marketing has become an integral part of the overall marketing strategy for many businesses due to its ability to reach and engage a vast audience, provide targeted advertising options, and foster direct customer interactions (3). However, it's important for businesses to develop a well-defined strategy, tailor content for each platform, and consistently monitor and optimize their social media marketing efforts to achieve desired outcomes.

### 1.1. Literature review

Digital marketing has had a major effect on traditional marketing in India, providing businesses with new opportunities to reach and engage with customers while reducing marketing costs and increasing ROI. Limited internet penetration, language diversity, lack of standardization, privacy concerns, and skill shortages are the main challenges of digital marketing (4). People have a positive mindset toward credible commercials. As a result, firms should strive to include these characteristics in their marketing. Appropriate targeting should be done depending on the age and occupation of consumers to reach out to the audience on social media. Advertisements can be personalized to increase response and conversion rates. Businesses should work to increase engagement on their social media profiles (5). The use of social media for online customer engagement is a smart strategy that can be employed by digital marketers in order to emotionally connect the advertised brand with the users of social media. Efficient use of social media for marketing communications can generate a passion for the advertised brands in the social media users' minds, as well as instigate a brand purchase intention (6). The combination of ICT and SMM provides a comfort to show positive involvement in the marketing and acts according to the scenario. The development of the Internet and 4G technologies boosts social media in the direction of price control in respect of specified products and services. These circumstances are a firm base for small-scale industries and entrepreneurship development. Information communication technology in favour of the development of social media marketing in India (7). Digital marketing is cost-effective and has a great commercial impact on the business. Social Media Marketing is a key factor that guarantees success. businesses can really benefit from Digital

Marketing such as search engine optimization (SEO), search engine marketing (SEM), content marketing, influencer marketing, content automation, e-commerce marketing, campaign marketing, social media marketing, social media optimization, e-mail direct marketing, display advertising, e-books, optical disks, and games are becoming more and more common in our advancing technology (?).

### 1.2. Research gap

From our review, we came to know that there has been no study conducted in Dakshina Kannada District to find out consumer behavior and to compare traditional and social media marketing platforms. Hence, there is a need for study on this particular study.

## 2. Objectives of the study

1. To study the influence of social media marketing on consumer behavior.
2. To compare the effectiveness of traditional marketing and social media marketing.
3. To analyze the use and challenges of social media marketing.

## 3. Hypothesis

$H_0$  = Personal profile of the respondents is independent of their opinion and perception of social media marketing.

$H_1$  = Personal profile of the respondents is not independent of their opinion and perception of social media marketing.

## 4. Scope of the study

The focus of the study was to find out consumer behavior and to compare traditional and social media marketing platforms. Hence the area of study was Dakshina Kannada District. The sample was selected from students, professionals, homemakers, and agriculturists. The study covered all three domiciles, i.e., rural, urban, and semi-urban.

## 5. Research methodology

It was an empirical study based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected using a well-designed and structured questionnaire. Google Forms was used to collect the data from the sample respondents.

**TABLE 1** | Personal profile of the respondents.

Variable	Options	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	58	58
	Male	42	42
	Total	100	100
Age	Below 18	2	2
	18–24	67	67
	25–34	19	19
	35–44	6	6
	45 and above	6	6
	Total	100	100
Domicile	Rural	51	51
	Semi-urban	23	23
	Urban	26	26
	Total	100	100
Family's annual income	Less than 1,00,000	40	40
	1,00,000–2,50,000	42	42
	More than 2,50,000	18	18
	Total	100	100

Source: Primary data.

**TABLE 2** | Frequently encountering traditional marketing channels.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Television advertisements	79	79
Radio advertisements	26	26
Print advertisements (newspapers, magazines)	54	54
Outdoor advertisements (billboards, banners)	39	39
Direct mail campaigns (flyers, brochures)	31	31
Telemarketing calls	18	18
Other	4	4

Source: Primary data.

**TABLE 3** | Purchases based on advertisements encountered through traditional marketing channels and social media market in the past years.

Variable	Options	Frequency	Percentage
Social media marketing	Yes	77	77
	No	23	23
	Total	100	100
Traditional marketing	Yes	76	76
	No	24	24
	Total	100	100

Source: Primary data.

The secondary data were collected from books, reports, and websites. The sample size of the study was 100 people from Dakshina Kannada district. We used Excel for the analysis.

**TABLE 4** | Actively using social media platforms.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Facebook	46	46
Instagram	85	85
Twitter	20	20
LinkedIn	17	17
Snapchat	30	30
TikTok	3	3
Other	5	5

Source: Primary data.

**TABLE 5** | Frequency of encounter marketing content on social media platforms.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Multiple times a day	28	28
Daily	26	26
A few times a week	31	31
Rarely	14	14
Never	1	1
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data.

**TABLE 6** | Effective marketing channel in capturing consumers' attention and influencing their behavior.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Social media marketing	55	55
Traditional marketing channels	11	11
Equally effective	29	29
Not sure	5	5

Source: Primary data.

## 6. Results and analysis

In this part of the study, the data collected through primary sources are analyzed and interpreted.

From **Table 1**, it can be seen that 58% of respondents were female and 42% were male. The majority (67%) of respondents belonged to the 18–24 age group, followed by the 25–34 age group (19%). More than half (50%) of the respondents were from rural backgrounds. 42% of the respondents had annual incomes of 1,00,000 to 2,50,000.

It is observed from **Table 2** that traditional market channels are still not outdated. Among several traditional marketing channels, television advertisements are the most encountered traditional market channels (79%). 54% of respondents opined that they are seeing marketing ads or strategies in paper advertisements.

**TABLE 7** | Factors that make social media marketing more effective or influential compared to traditional marketing channels.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Personalized content and targeting based on user interests and demographics	65	65
Interactive and engaging ad formats (videos, quizzes, polls)	52	52
Ability to share and receive recommendations from friends and influencers	39	39
Access to user-generated content and reviews	24	24
Real-time updates and promotional offers	31	31
Other	1	1

Source: Primary data.

**TABLE 8** | Frequency of social media marketing ads influences purchasing decisions.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Very often	18	18
Often	18	18
Occasionally	41	41
Rarely	19	19
Never	4	4

Source: Primary data.

It is a fact from **Table 3** that 76% of the respondents made purchases based on the advertisements seen through traditional marketing channels. 77% of respondents made purchases based on the advertisements seen through social media marketing.

From **Table 4**, it is observed that 85% of respondents are actively using Instagram, followed by Facebook (46%) and Snapchat (30%).

It is clear from **Table 5** that 31% of respondents opined that they are seeing marketing content on social media platforms a few times a week. 28% of respondents are encountering multiple times a day.

From **Table 6** it is clear that 55% of respondents opined that social media marketing is effective in capturing consumers' attention and 29 respondents stated that social media and traditional marketing are equally effective.

It is crystal clear from **Table 7** that, 65% of the respondents opined that personalized content and targeting based on user interest is the major factor that make social media marketing more effective. 52% of the respondents opined interactive and engaging ad format is one of the factors that made social media marketing more effective. 39% of the respondents stated that ability to share and receive recommendations from friends and influencers is another factor that made social media marketing more effective.

**TABLE 9** | Drawbacks of social media marketing compared to traditional marketing channels.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Trust issues regarding the authenticity and credibility of online advertisements	66	66
Information overload due to the abundance of social media content and ads	43	43
Privacy concerns related to data collection and targeted advertising	43	43
Difficulty in measuring the effectiveness and return on investment of social media marketing	32	32

Source: Primary data.

**TABLE 10** | Social media marketing has a greater impact on younger consumers compared to older consumers.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	78	78
No	5	5
Maybe	17	17
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data.

**TABLE 11** | Do you believe social media marketing has a significant influence on consumer behavior?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	67	67
No	10	10
Maybe	23	23
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data.

From **Table 8**, 41% of the respondents stated that social media marketing ads occasionally influence their purchasing decisions. 19% of respondents opined that social media marketing ads rarely influence their purchasing decisions.

Along with several advantages, also we can see the drawbacks of social media marketing. It is observed trust issue (66%) is one of the major issues of social media marketing. Information overload and privacy concerns (43%) also have an impact on social media marketing. It is found that difficulty in measuring the effectiveness and return on investment (32%) is another drawback of social media marketing **Table 9**.

The majority (78%) of respondents opined that social media marketing has a greater impact on younger consumers compared to older consumers **Table 10**.

From **Table 11**, it is found that 67% of the respondents opined that social media marketing has a significant influence on consumer behavior.

**TABLE 12** | Chi-square values.

Question	Gender	Domicile	Annual income
Social media marketing has influenced my purchase decisions	0.594	6.506	10.941*
Social media marketing has increased my exposure to a wider variety of products/services.	2.021	5.689	10.551
Social media marketing is more effective in influencing my purchasing behavior than traditional marketing channels.	2.224	2.332	3.446
Social media marketing has influenced me to follow or subscribe to brands' social media accounts	2.907	4.205	6.24
Social media marketing has influenced my brand loyalty and repeat purchases	5.285	6.597	4.356
I believe social media marketing delivers accurate and reliable information about products/services.	4.757	3.5	11.788
Social media marketing has positively influenced my perception of brand reputation and authenticity.	1.139	2.702	4.246

Source: Primary data. \*indicates significance at 5%.

## 7. Hypothesis testing

$H_0$  = Personal profile of the respondents is independent of their opinion and perception of social media marketing.

$H_1$  = Personal profile of the respondents is not independent of their opinion and perception of social media marketing.

The hypothesis was tested by using the Chi-Square test and the test was conducted at a 5% level of significance.

**Table 12** reveals that all of the calculated statistics (except one) are less than the critical value or insignificant at a 5% level of significance. We concluded that the personal profile of the respondents is independent of their opinion and perception of social media marketing.

## 8. Findings

1. Television advertisements are the most encountered traditional marketing channel.
2. It was observed that the majority of respondents are using Instagram, followed by Facebook and Snapchat.
3. 55% of the respondents opined that social media marketing is effective in capturing consumers' attention and influencing their behavior.
4. Personalized content and targeting based on user interests, demographics, and interactive and engaging ad formats are the main factors that make social media marketing more effective or influential compared to traditional marketing channels.
5. 41% of the respondents opined that social media marketing ads occasionally influence purchasing decisions.
6. Trust issues regarding the authenticity and credibility of online advertisements, information overload due to the abundance of social media content and

ads, privacy concerns related to data collection and targeted advertising, and difficulty in measuring the effectiveness and return on investment of social media marketing are the major challenges of social media marketing.

7. After applying the chi-square test for the Likert scale question, we came to know that the personal profile of the respondents is independent of their opinion and perception of social media marketing.

## 9. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to compare the impact of social media marketing and traditional marketing channels on consumer behavior. Through various questions, we collected valuable insights from participants into their perceptions and experiences. The results suggest that social media marketing has an important influence on consumer behavior. Participants largely agree that social media marketing effectively gets their attention and interest, influences their purchasing decisions, and helps them discover new products and services. This underscores the power that social media platforms have in reaching and communicating with consumers. This comparative study highlights the transformative impact of social media marketing on consumer behavior and encourages businesses to adapt their marketing strategies to leverage the power of digital platforms in today's dynamic marketing landscape.

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