Impact of Social Media on the Buying Choices of Shoppers

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ABSTRACT

Using social media is an integral part of our lives. It is a great way to connect the world and keep people informed about new happenings around them. Social media has also become a space for people to truly express themselves and make a positive impact on this planet. However, excess use of social media has made it a parasite growing on peoples' empty minds. The audiences of social media apps are highly influenced by the content they see on them. Social media is said to influence buyer behaviour significantly. Consumer buying behaviour is a combination of customer's attitudes, intentions, preferences and decisions while purchasing a product or service. Purchases are considered risky and therefore decision-making processes are information intensive. Growth in Social media marketing over the last 10 years is because of the increasing fame of social media sites such as Twitter and Instagram which promote the habit of living life in quick succession by connecting people through stories and reels, tweets and pictures. The main purpose of this investigation is examining the impact of social media on buying choices of the customers. This investigation was carried by conducting a survey, and by taking interviews. The survey also focuses on understanding the impact of influencers on the audience.

Keywords: Social media, consumer behaviour, marketing, digital marketing, buyer behaviour, customer, Decision making.

INTRODUCTION

Social Media affects our everyday life in some way or the other. Social media at its core is all about connecting friends, family, and acquaintances. However, now it has become a platform that brings businesses to life by promoting them in various ways. Now, business owners can easily reach huge audiences using social media and a medium*(Haroon,2020)*.

Because of the easy access of social media and variety of information available on the internet, it is easy to reach a plethora of audiences and customers can make informed decisions while buying products online. Various studies and consumer behavior shows that social media is instrumental in influencing buyer customer's preferences*(Xiang,2020)*.

The purpose of social media is generally defined as "socializing," which encompasses all aspects of people's lives.People will go online to express themselves, share their thoughts, and even form groups to simultaneously post information that appeals to a specific group of people.It's possible that people's choices and actions are influenced by one another because family and friends are more likely to be found online.In addition, people are always connected to one another because social media has made it

easier for them to communicate with one another on a more frequent basis.The purpose of social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Whatsapp, among others, is to keep people connected online and to make it possible for them to communicate with one another(*Mangold, 2009*).

Additionally, these platforms have the added advantage of promoting businesses and persuading individuals to actually alter their decision regarding particular brands and products that they are accustomed to purchasing(*Faulds,2009*).

Social media plays a very important role in causing people to shift their interests and likes regarding the products very easily. Brand knowledge is something that can be developed through the use of social media, and this can cause shoppers to become aware of different brands in the market. Any brand that is present in the market is capable of spreading its message, social media can also act as a medium through which branding can be carried out easily, and it can assist different businesses in maintaining their brand image(*Nick,2014*).

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Social media is considered a very powerful tool because of the fact that it has an effective outreach upon the masses. It is very easy to share information, ask questions, and be heard. This powerful feeling which is gathered by the people call to allow them to use social media to their liking and then encourage others to follow them and come under the wing of their influence. Social media plays a huge role in people lives, and one of the most important roles it plays is the one related to the buying choice of shoppers. People are ultimately influenced by others, the reviews, and various influencers on social media that change the way they shop. This has a huge impact on businesses that operate with the help of social media in most cases(*Bayram, 2012*).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Using social media is a trend within the 21st century. Primarily based on internet messages that have begun to influence unique aspects of consumer selection assessment. Conversations with brands and many others like Twitter,Facebook Instagram and many other social media platforms are beginning to have huge implications on business practices and educational literature alike. Over the last few years, many academic research papers have investigated the function of social media within the businesses globally. Twitter has been analysed to have a look at the position it plays in a spread of advertising areas to encompass helping logo and sell business (*Greer,2001*).

To be able to grow their profitability, companies now need to have the consciousness of enhancing the expertise of their clients(*Karimi, 2015*).
Conventional distribution channels have suffered as customers now use online purchasing due to easier access to product/service records(*Grant, 2007*).
Companies use patron-centric methods to create a social network and interaction with all in their goals and organization. Changing the traditional technique advertising is now primarily based on interactions.

With the upward thrust in social networks, a new technology of content creation and influencer marketing has emerged, wherein people can share their experiences and information without any difficulty with their users and customers(*Chenetal, 2011*).

The next era of online businesses will primarily be based on groups- a good tool for consumer attraction online community will provide an opportunity for organizations to have a higher customer relationship management device, for instance, giving rise to a brand new development wherein businesses can improve(*Gefen,2004*)

A study of the impact of social media on consumers performance,customers are continuously uncovered to these exceptional commercials that try to capture individuals' attention. Defined that search gear is now used to appearance up pre-buy product statistics, inclusive of fees, style, reviews and many others. Internet trends are the number one supply of information for maximum customers on a regular basis and social networks allow clients to evaluate merchandise, make suggestions and make status updates. customers value understanding that after they put up remarks for your pages, they may get a custom-designed reaction instead of a robotized message. Having the option to understand every statement suggests that you are aware of your guests' desires and mean to give first-rate information(*Amitava,2004*).

METHODOLOGY

Primary data was collected by creating a simple questionnaire to understand people's perception and how social media has impacted their buying choices .This was done by sending Google forms to people and analyzing the final result .This research was targeted for above 18 students and working professionals as they are the one's buying things and spend plenty amount of time on social media.(online survey) Dichotomous questions were asked ,which is asking simple "yes" or "no" .

One-to-one interviews were also conducted in the society .Which made it easier to analyze people and could ask multiple questions.

Analysis and Interpretation

Analysis and interpretation was done with help of final results . In first part percentage analysis was used to study the general profile of the respondents . Google forms was used for this analysis.

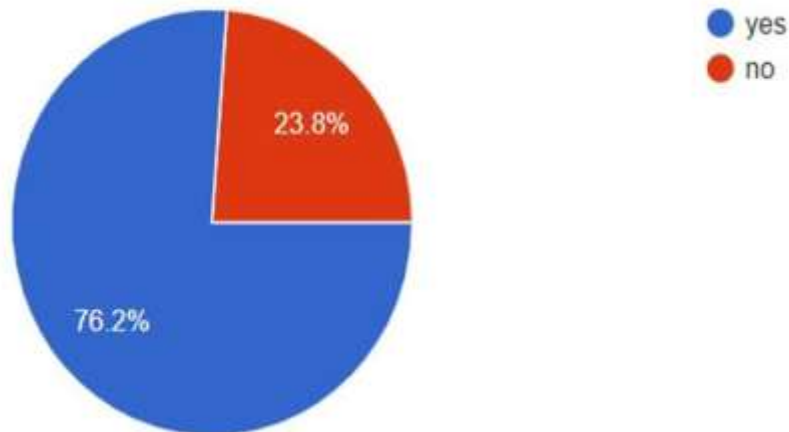| Gender	No. of respondents	Percentage
Male	25	42
Female **Age**	35	58
18-30	28	47
30-42	20	33
42-60 **Occupation**	12	20
Students Working	22	37
Professionals	38	63

The above data was collected with the help of 60 respondents.
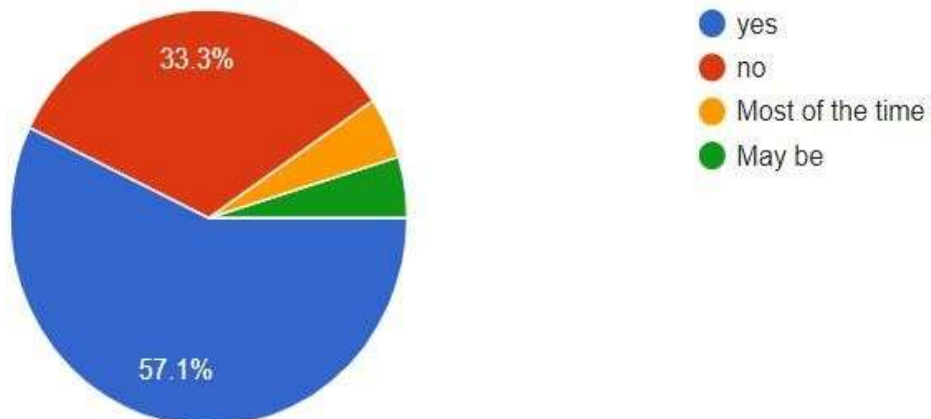
Some other questions asked :-

Have social media ever convinced you to buy something ?
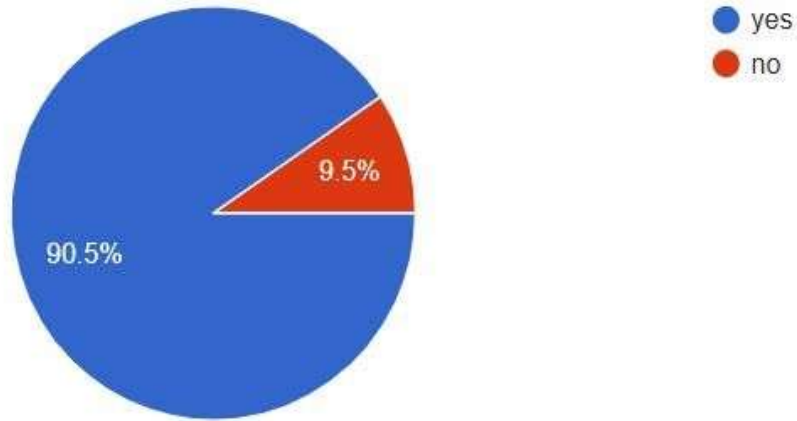
Do you buy any products after seeing something on social media?

If yes , is it most the time the same case? and if its no, then do you atleast think of buying produts?

One-to-one interview we asked them only one question related to the analysis we got with the help of Google forms.

What makes you buy products from social media?

60% people got influenced by the social media influencers. How they present the product .Also by word of mouth.

40% people got fascinated by the varieties of brand and affordable products. Easy to understand product with the help of video etc.

Conclusion

Through this study we can conclude that, Social media do impact the buying choices of shoppers. -It does by bringing Influencers in the role . Influencers help them not only reviewing the product but creating the trust in the product, which gives a guarantee to the buyers and makes them feel trusted to the product .

Social media has given a space to small businesses ,So variety plays an important role . Buyers gets variety in the products as well as brands at one search ,hashtags etc. To able to showcase the product more innovatively , creatively , gives a better understanding of the product.

Scope

This study is based on the primary sources of data collection . Secondary data has not been collected or used for this research. However there are many sources to collect secondary data from , and a lot more analyzation can be done through that. How social media influencers put impact on the buyers . What does the buyer look in the products or how it is presented.

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