

Social Media Advertising: A Study of Consumer Demographics

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ABSTRACT

Social media has grown into an essential platform for businesses to engage with and make an impression on their target market. Since the advent of digital platforms, marketers have focused on researching the effectiveness of advertisements and the best channels for sharing them. The study focuses on how well-informed people are about social media advertising and how it influences consumer demographic profiles, consumer trust in selected social media advertisements, and the reliability of social media advertisements. Numerous social networking sites, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, etc., use various communication strategies that not only have an effect on their members but also help in appealing to them to interact. Instead of the usual banner and pop-up advertising, people become emotionally attached to brand communication on social networking sites. The study is based on both secondary and primary data. Using a questionnaire and the random sampling technique, data was gathered from 180 respondents within various districts of Uttar Pradesh.

Keywords: Advertisement, Consumer Buying Behavior, Reliability, Social Media, Trustworthiness

INTRODUCTION

Today, the role of social media is growing at an exponential rate. This is due to the continued growth of the World Wide Web (Neti, 2011). There were 4.74 billion active online social network users as of October 2022 (Global Social Media Statistics, n.d.), out of the 7.98 billion people that live globally (Current World Population, n.d.). The fundamental causes of social media advertising's rise to prominence as a key digital marketing strategy are its quick development and widespread adoption. Most large companies now view social media as a potent platform for advertising their products and services (Mercybai and Sahayaselvi, 2020). Unlike conventional types of advertisements, social media ads are displayed in a unique way to entice viewers to scroll through them and indicate interest. Social media advertisements may be text-based, visual, pop-up-based, banner-based, or HTML-based (Kumar *et al.*, 2020). Social networking is an essential requirement for a business. These platforms are used by businesses to communicate with customers, boost sales through marketing and advertising efforts, monitor consumer trends, and assist or look after customers (Economic Times, 2023). This study focused on understanding the impact of social media advertisements on customer's demographic profiles. It will be useful to know whether consumers have trust in social media advertisements and the reliability of selected social media.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ramnarain & Govender (2013) According to the exploratory study, social media has evolved into a crucial tool for South African merchants to connect with young customers, who spend a lot of time on these platforms each day. However, marketers must be aware of social media's distinct features and how they affect consumer behavior. South African advertisers cannot afford to ignore or minimize the importance of social media since it has a big impact on how young consumers behave when making purchases. Marketers must constantly reconsider their marketing strategies in order to stay current and adjust them to the shifting preferences and trends of their target audience.

Boateng&Okoe (2015) According to the study, social media advertisements are influenced by four elements: business reputation, materialism, ethical corruption, and credibility. According to the survey, there is a correlation between opinions about social media and credibility. As a result, businesses that use social media advertising need to build customer trust in order to lower perceived risks. The study discovered a favorable association between views regarding social media advertising and value corruption, but it advises advertisers to regulate the content and guarantee that the offered goods are of high quality. Consumer's opinions about social media advertising were significantly influenced by corporate reputation.

Holland (2016) The Study came to the conclusion that YouTube has changed from being a website for material sharing to a venue for user-generated content. An essay based on three well-known YouTubers. Why do people go for videos from Charming Kjellberg, Helbig Sugg, and other well-known YouTubers? Due to viewers' ability to empathize, particularly younger viewers who may question if user-generated content is authentic, YouTube is the third most popular website in the world.

Lakshmanan and Basariya (2017)The study found that the effectiveness of social media marketing was significantly influenced by the company's level of engagement, the messages and information it posted, and its linkages to other marketing channels. Despite having the largest user base for the various social media platforms, Generation Y is not the main target audience for social media marketing.

Firat (2019)The study found that while entertaining, trending, and educational features had positive benefits for YouTube's advertising value, irritation had a negative influence. The outcomes also showed that advertising on YouTube had a positive effect on customers' propensity to make purchases. The study also considered how various demographic variables might impact the effectiveness of YouTube advertising.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media refers to websites and applications that prioritize interaction, content sharing, engagement, and community-based feedback. People use social media to connect and communicate with their friends, families, and other communities. Businesses use social media applications to track customer complaints and market and promote their goods (Lutkevich, 2021). Social media is defined as “communication platforms that are generated and sustained by the interpersonal interaction of individuals through a specific medium or tool (Neti, 2011).

Internet-based social media include various kinds of communication. Through social media platforms, users can have discussions, share information, and create content for the web. Numerous platforms can be used for social media, such as blogs, wikis, content communities, social networking sites, websites for sharing photos and videos, instant messaging, podcasts, and more (University of South Florida, n.d.).

Facebook: Facebook is a type of social network where members may chat in real time, watch short videos, post comments, swap photos, and share links to interesting online content. Shared content may be accessible to the general public, shared just with a select group of family or close friend members, or shared with a single person (Nations, 2021). In 2004, Mark Zuckerberg and his friend founded Facebook at Harvard University (What is Facebook?). On October 28, 2021, the parent company of Facebook amended its name to Meta (Computer Hope, 2022).

Twitter: Twitter, a news source and social media website established in 2006, allows users to communicate with one another through short messages called tweets. Sending short posts to those who follow you on Twitter in the expectation that others will find them interesting and amusing is known as tweeting. Every tweet for microblogging is limited to 280 characters or less (Gil, 2021).

YouTube: YouTube was founded by Steven Chen, Jawed Karim, and Chad Hurley in June 2005 (Holland, 2016). In 2006, YouTube was purchased by Google. Those who have registered on the popular video-sharing website YouTube are able to upload and circulate videos with anyone with an internet connection. adding these films to other websites and spreading them. YouTube has had a significant impact on media and advertising (Moreau, 2020).

Instagram: Facebook acquired Instagram, an entirely free online photo-sharing service and social media network, in 2012. Instagram users can edit, upload, and share still images and short videos through a mobile app. Users have the option to add a caption to every post in addition to using geographic tags and hashtags in order to index the posts and enable them to be accessible by other users. To promote their brand and products, businesses can open an account for free on the photo-sharing app. 60% of users say that the app helps them locate new products, while business analytics offer free involvement and impression data for businesses (Holak and McLaughlin, 2017).

SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISEMENT

Social media advertising is the process of leveraging social media platforms to increase website traffic or attention. Social media advertising campaigns often concentrate on creating content that is attractive and encourages users to circulate it on their social networks (Otugoet *al.*, 2015).

OBJECTIVES

1. To study influence of social media advertisements on consumer demographic profiles
2. To analyze reliability of different social media advertisements
3. To study the trustworthiness of consumers on social media advertisements

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sampling procedure and sample size:

The study is an empirical one. In order to collect the data, both primary and secondary sources were used. The questionnaire was distributed to 200 people who answered it, from all age groups. A random sampling technique was used to select the respondents. Information was gathered from selected districts of Uttar Pradesh, including Prayagraj, Jaunpur, Azamgarh, Mau, and Ballia, through Web-based questionnaires. Secondary information is compiled from a wide range of research projects, articles, papers, and publications. While writing the conclusions and a summary of the literature review, information gathered from these various sources was helpful.

Questionnaire Design:

There were seven questions in the questionnaire. Three questions made up Section A and were aimed at gathering demographic data. Four questions made up Section B, which focused on respondents' engagement with social media advertisements. The questions aimed to determine whether the respondents were influenced by social network advertisements and to analyze consumers' trust in and reliability of social media advertisements.

Data Collection:

A structured, precisely created questionnaire was distributed to 200 consumers aged 16 to 60 and above in November 2022. The questionnaires were given out in Prayagraj, Jaunpur, Azamgarh, Ballia, and Mau districts of Uttar Pradesh. Respondents were chosen at random. Because twenty questionnaires were spoiled, they were excluded from the study.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data was quantitatively examined with the SPSS software using frequency distribution analysis.

Data Analysis and Findings:

Table 1 *Demographic characteristics*

Demographic Variable		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	104	57.8%
	Female	75	41.7%
	Others	1	0.6%
Age	Below 16	6	3.3%
	16-35	137	76.1%
	35-60	36	20.0%
	60 and above	1	0.6%

Education	Below Matriculation	1	0.6%
	Matriculation	4	2.2%
	Intermediate	4	2.2%
	Graduation	57	31.7%
	Above Graduation	114	63.3%

Participant Demographics

Out of a total of 180 respondents, 57.8% were Male, 41.7% were female, and 0.6% were others. In terms of age, the sample was 76.1% between 16 and 35 years, 20.0% between 35 and 60 years, and 0.6% were 60 years and above. Finally, a majority of the respondents (63.3%) had an education level above graduation, and 31.7% had graduated. Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Table 2 *Influence of social media advertisements on consumers*

Construct		Influence on consumers					
		Yes		No		Can't Say	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	63	35.0%	26	14.4%	15	8.3%
	Female	48	26.7%	11	6.1%	16	8.9%
	Others	1	0.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Age	Below 16	6	03.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	16-35	87	48.3%	27	15.0%	23	12.8%
	35-60	18	10.0%	10	5.6%	8	4.4%
	60 and Above	1	0.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Education	Below Matriculation	1	0.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Matriculation	4	2.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Intermediate	2	1.1%	0	0.0%	2	1.1%
	Graduation	31	17.2%	15	8.3%	11	6.1%
	Above Graduation	74	41.1%	22	12.2%	18	10.0%

From Table 2, it is found that the majority of male consumers (35%) and 26.7% of female consumers are influenced by social media advertisements, whereas 14.4% of male consumers and 6.1% of female consumers are not influenced by social media advertisements. 48.3% of consumers in the age group 16–35 are influenced by social media advertisements, 15% are not influenced, and 12.8% are indifferent. All consumers below 16 and above 60 are influenced. Talking about consumers in the age group 35–60 maximum, 18 are influenced, 10 are not influenced, and 8 are indifferent. Consumers with education below and above matriculation are influenced by social media advertisements. Consumers with intermediate education: 2 are influenced, while 2 are indifferent. Social media advertisements have an influence on 17.2% (31) of consumers who have completed their education, while 15 are not influenced and 11 are indifferent. 41.1% of consumers with education beyond graduation are influenced by social media advertisements, 12.2% are not influenced, and 10% are indifferent.

Table 3 Reliability of social media advertisements

Construct		Reliable									
		Facebook		Twitter		You Tube		Instagram		All above	
		Fre que ncy	P e r c e n t a g e	F r e q u e n c y	P e r c e n t a g e	F r e q u e n c y	P e r c e n t a g e	F r e q u e n c y	Pe rc en ta ge	Fre que ncy	Per cen tag e
Gender	Male	20	11.1%	15	8.3%	39	21.7%	5	2.8%	25	13.9%
	Female	7	3.9%	4	2.2%	29	16.1%	18	10%	17	9.4%
	Others	1	0.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Age	Below 16	3	1.7%	0	0.0%	2	1.1%	0	0.0%	1	0.6%
	16-35	12	6.7%	14	7.8%	56	31.1%	22	12.2%	33	18.3%

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	35-60	13	7.2%	5	2.8%	9	5.0%	1	0.6%	8	4.4%
	60 & Above	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Education	Below Matriculation	1	0.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Matriculation	3	1.7%	0	0.0%	1	0.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Intermediate	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	1.1%	2	1.1%	0	0.0%
	Graduation	6	3.3%	4	2.2%	27	15.0%	8	4.4%	12	6.7%
	Above Graduation	18	10.0%	15	8.3%	38	21.1%	13	7.2%	30	16.7%

Source: Field data

Majority of the male consumers i.e.39% find YouTube advertisement more reliable, 25 of them find all four social media advertisements reliable followed by Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. 29 females found YouTube advertisement more reliable followed by Instagram, all above, Facebook, and Twitter. Consumers below 16 years facebook advertisements are more reliable and after that YouTube. YouTube advertisement is more reliable for consumers (54) of age group 16-35, 33 find all social media advertisement reliable followed by instagram, twitter and then facebook. Consumers of age group 35-60 find facebook advertisement most reliable followed by YouTube and consumers above 60 ages find YouTube advertisement reliable. Facebook advertisements are more reliable for consumers having

education below matriculation and matriculation whereas YouTube and instagram are more reliable for intermediate consumers. YouTube is a more reliable advertisement platform for consumers who are graduate and above graduation consumers followed by all above advertisements.

Table 4 Consumer trust on social media advertisements

		Trust					
		Yes		No		Can't Say	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	34	18.9%	55	30.6%	15	8.3%
	Female	27	15.0%	22	12.2%	26	14.4%
	Others	1	0.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Age	Below 16	5	2.8%	1	0.6%	0	0.0%
	16-35	45	25.0%	54	30.0%	38	21.1%
	35-60	12	6.7%	22	12.2%	2	1.1%
	60 & Above	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.6%
Education	Below Matriculation	1	0.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Matriculation	3	1.7%	1	0.6%	0	0.0%
	Intermediate	1	0.6%	2	1.1%	1	0.6%
	Graduation	14	7.8%	25	13.9%	18	10.0%
	Above Graduation	43	23.9%	49	27.2%	22	12.2%

Source: Field data

Referring to Table 4, the majority (30.06%) of male consumers have no trust in social media advertisements, whereas 18.9% of male have trust. 15% of female trust social media advertisement and 12.2% don't trust. As can be seen from the table, 30% of consumers in the age group 16–35 do not trust social media advertisements, and 25% do. 12.2% of consumers in the age group 35–60 don't trust the advertisements on social media whereas below 16 consumers have trust on it. Consumers with matriculation and below matriculation trust on social media advertisements. 27.2% of consumers with education qualifications above graduation have no trust in social media advertisements; 23.9% have trust, whereas 12.2% are indifferent.

CONCLUSION

Social media advertising is the practice of promoting products, services, or information to a specific audience through different social media platforms. Social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, and others provide strong advertising tools that enable businesses and people to reach out to potential consumers by considering demographics, interests, behaviors, and other variables.

From the above finding, it can be concluded that the majority of the respondents are men, followed by females. The age range of 16 to 35 had the highest proportion of respondents, followed by the age range of 35 to 60. The majority of consumers with education qualifications above graduation refer to social media advertisements, followed by graduates.

A large fraction of consumers is influenced by social media advertising to buy things, while a smaller number are not influenced and rest are indifferent. The influence of social media advertisements on consumers varies with age groups. The highest number of consumers influenced by social media advertisements belongs to the 16–35 age group, followed by 35–60. Consumers with education above graduation are highly influenced. The maximum number of male and female users find YouTube advertisements more reliable. Consumers aged 16–35 find YouTube advertisements highly reliable, and those aged 35–60 find advertisements on Facebook more reliable. For consumers with intermediate, graduate-level, and higher education levels, YouTube advertisements are more reliable. Consumers with matriculation find Facebook more reliable. Females and below 16 are more likely to trust social media advertisements than male, graduates, above graduates, 16-35, and 35-60 don't have trust on it. In conclusion, most consumers refer to social media advertisements before purchasing goods and services, some trust on them, but most don't.

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