

The Nexus of Brand Trust, Social Media Marketing Features, and Online Fast-Food Purchase Intentions: An Empirical Inquiry

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ABSTRACT

This research paper explores the impact of various social media marketing features on consumers' online fast-food purchase decisions, with a specific emphasis on the mediating role of brand trust. The study examines the relationship between four dependent variables, namely interactivity, informativeness, perceived relevance, and entertainment, and their effects on consumers' purchase decisions and brand trust in the online fast-food industry. Data collected through a comprehensive survey is analysed to determine the extent to which these social media marketing features influence online fast-food purchase decisions and whether brand trust plays a mediating role in this process.

Keywords: Brand Trust, Purchase Decision, Social Media Marketing, Online Fast-Food Platforms, Online Fast-Food Purchase Decisions

1. Introduction:

The fast-food industry has undergone a substantial metamorphosis in recent years, particularly in its online interactions with consumers. The advent of food delivery platforms, exemplified by industry giants like Zomato and Swiggy, has reshaped the fast-food landscape by providing consumers unprecedented access to a diverse array of dining options. This transformation is intricately linked to the strategic utilization of social media marketing features by these platforms, which aim not only to connect with their user base but also to foster brand trust. The consumer decision-making process initiates with the identification of a need, followed by exploration of available choices, assessment of different options, and ultimately culminates in the selection of a specific product or service, expressed by (Salem 2018).

In this dynamic environment, consumers are no longer limited to traditional brick-and-mortar dining experiences. The ease and convenience offered by food delivery platforms have propelled the fast-food industry into a new era, where online engagement plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer decisions (Hanaysha 2022). Leveraging social media marketing features has become a cornerstone for platforms like Zomato and Swiggy. Through interactivity, informativeness, perceived relevance, and entertainment, these platforms endeavour to create a compelling online experience that transcends the mere transactional nature of fast-food purchases.

The shift towards online interactions necessitates a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing consumers' decisions in this digital landscape. These channels have emerged as a result of the advancement in the information and communication technologies (Aswani et al., 2018). As Zomato and Swiggy continue to embed themselves in the fabric of consumers' lives, it becomes imperative to unravel the

intricacies of online fast-food purchase decisions. The crux of the matter lies in deciphering the impact of social media marketing features on consumers' choices, with a specific focus on interactivity, informativeness, perceived relevance, and entertainment.

To delve deeper into this multifaceted issue, it is essential to recognize the mediating role of brand trust. Brand trust serves as a linchpin in the relationship between consumers and fast-food delivery platforms. Previous research indicates that most studies on social media marketing have focused on its direct impact on consumer behaviour, with limited attention given to understanding the mechanisms through which social media marketing features influence purchase decisions. Some studies have investigated brand trust as a mediator in the relationship between social media marketing activities and brand equity (Ebrahim, 2020; Hafez, 2021). Understanding how social media marketing features influence and, in turn, are influenced by brand trust is pivotal for comprehending the holistic dynamics of online fast-food purchase decisions. This research seeks to illuminate this intricate interplay between social media marketing features and brand trust in the context of Zomato and Swiggy.

In summary, the fast-food industry's evolution towards online platforms has ushered in a new era of consumer engagement. The rapid progress in internet and information technologies has offered business professionals significant opportunities to connect with their target audiences and strengthen their brand identity (Reveilhac & Blanchard, 2022; Saheb et al., 2021). Zomato and Swiggy, as prominent players in this space, rely heavily on social media marketing features to shape consumers' decisions. This research endeavours to unravel the intricate web of factors influencing online fast-food purchase decisions, with a particular emphasis on the mediating role of brand trust. Through a comprehensive exploration of interactivity, informativeness, perceived relevance, and entertainment, this study aspires to provide a nuanced understanding of the dynamics at play in the ever-evolving intersection of fast food, social media, and consumer behaviour.

Additionally, the studies on social media marketing relied on different aspects for measuring it. (Kim and Ko 2012) focused on trendiness, electronic word-of-mouth, customization, entertainment, and interactivity for examining this concept. (Sano 2015) also used four key elements for testing social media marketing in the insurance context; perceived risk, trendiness, interactivity, and customization.

1.1 Research Objectives:

This study seeks to achieve several key objectives:

- To analyse the influence of social media marketing features employed by Zomato and Swiggy on consumers' online fast-food purchase decisions.
- To assess the role of brand trust in mediating the relationship between these marketing features and purchase decisions.
- To offer insights and recommendations to the marketers for enhancing their online marketing strategies and strengthening brand trust among consumers.

The emergence of Zomato and Swiggy as dominant players in the fast-food delivery landscape underscores the need for empirical insights into consumer behaviour.

This study aims to bridge existing gaps in understanding by systematically exploring the dimensions of interactivity, informativeness, perceived relevance, and entertainment as they relate to online fast-food purchase decisions.

By doing so, it aspires to contribute valuable insights that not only inform academic discourse but also offer actionable recommendations for industry practitioners seeking to enhance their online engagement strategies.

1.2 Research Questions:

To accomplish the objectives, the research will address the following questions:

RQ1: How do the social media marketing features of Zomato and Swiggy, including interactivity, informativeness, perceived relevance, and entertainment, affect consumers' online fast-food purchase decisions?

RQ2: Does brand trust play a mediating role in the relationship between social media marketing features and online fast-food purchase decisions for Zomato and Swiggy?

1.3 Research Scope:

The scope of the research defines the boundaries and limitations of the study, helping to clarify what the study will and will not cover. In the context of the research on the influence of social media marketing features and brand trust on online fast-food purchase decisions through platforms like Zomato and Swiggy, the scope can be outlined as follows:

1.3.1 Scope of the Research:

This research primarily focuses on a specific geographical region or regions where Zomato and Swiggy are prominent online food delivery platforms. The study may encompass urban and suburban areas where these platforms are widely used. - Delhi, to be specific North Delhi. The study is centred on the fast-food industry and its interaction with online consumers. It encompasses various fast-food restaurants and chains that partner with Zomato and Swiggy. Social Media Marketing Features: The research examines specific social media marketing features, including interactivity, informativeness, perceived relevance, and entertainment. It does not delve into other marketing channels or features outside the scope of social media. The study primarily adopts a consumer perspective to understand how these features and brand trust influence online fast-food purchase decisions. It does not extensively delve into the internal marketing strategies of Zomato and Swiggy. The research investigates the mediating role of brand trust specifically between social media marketing features and purchase decisions, emphasizing its importance in the context of Zomato and Swiggy. The study predominantly employs quantitative research methods, such as surveys and statistical analysis, to quantify the relationships between variables and test hypotheses. Confirmatory Factor Analysis. While the study's findings can offer valuable insights into the fast-food industry and online marketing through Zomato and Swiggy, the extent to which the results can be generalized to other industries or platforms may be limited. By defining the scope, researchers can ensure that the study remains focused and feasible, providing valuable insights within the specified boundaries while acknowledging its limitations.

1.3.2 Research Gap:

The research article on the influence of social media marketing features and brand trust on online fast-food purchase decisions through platforms like Zomato and Swiggy addresses several notable research gaps in the existing literature:

Online Fast-Food Purchase Decisions:

While many studies have explored online consumer behaviour and e-commerce, there is a relatively limited body of research that specifically delves into online fast-food purchase decisions. This research focuses on a niche area within e-commerce and addresses the unique factors that influence consumers when ordering fast food through platforms like Zomato and Swiggy.

Integration of Social Media Marketing Features:

Prior studies often examine individual aspects of social media marketing, such as interactivity or informat-

veness, in isolation. This research integrates four key social media marketing features (interactivity, informativeness, perceived relevance, and entertainment) into a single study, providing a holistic view of how these features collectively impact online fast-food purchase decisions.

Mediating Role of Brand Trust:

The study highlights the mediating role of brand trust in the relationship between social media marketing features and purchase decisions. While brand trust is recognized as essential in consumer behaviour research, the specific mediation effect concerning fast food purchases on online platforms like Zomato and Swiggy is a relatively unexplored area in the literature.

Specific Platforms:

Zomato and Swiggy:

The research narrows its focus to two specific online food delivery platforms, Zomato and Swiggy. While there is ample research on e-commerce and digital marketing, the concentration on the practices and strategies of these platforms in the context of fast food is a distinctive aspect of the study.

Practical Implications for the Fast-Food Industry:

The research aims to provide practical insights and recommendations for Zomato and Swiggy to enhance their online marketing strategies. It bridges the gap between academic research and industry application, offering actionable guidance for businesses in the fast-food sector to improve their online marketing efforts.

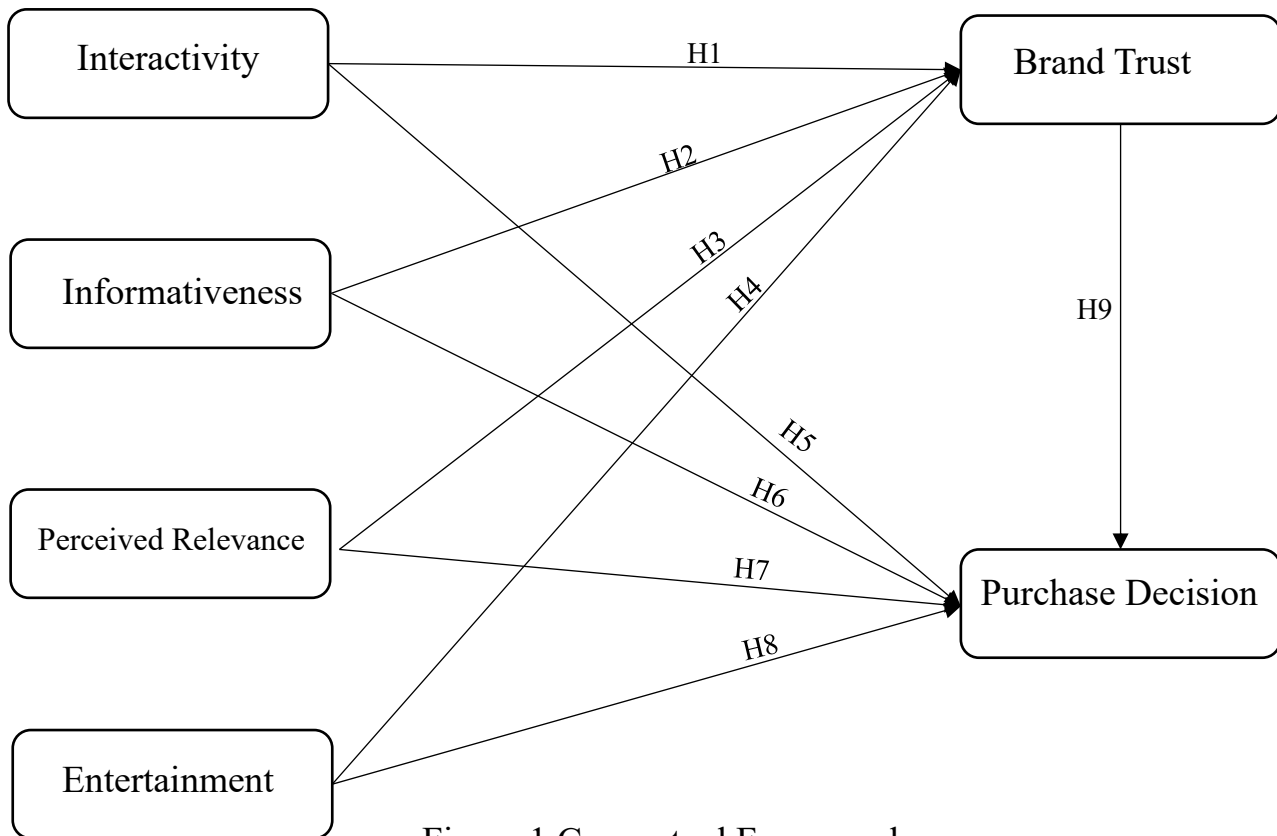


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

In conclusion, the research article contributes to the existing literature by addressing a research gap related to online fast-food purchase decisions, the integration of multiple social media marketing features, the mediating role of brand trust, the specific focus on Zomato and Swiggy, and the practical implications it offers to the fast-food industry. These aspects make the study a valuable addition to the field of consumer behaviour and online marketing.

Limitations Of the Article:

Sample Size: The study's sample size may be limited, which can affect the generalizability of the findings to a broader population of online fast-food consumers.

Data Collection: Data collection may rely on self-reported information, which could be subject to response bias or inaccuracies. **Time Constraints:** The research may have been conducted over a specific time frame, and the online fast-food industry and social media trends can evolve rapidly. This could limit the long-term relevance of the findings.

Causation vs. Correlation: It may be challenging to establish a direct causal link between social media marketing features, brand trust, and purchase decisions, as other variables may be involved.

Data Availability: The availability of data on specific social media marketing campaigns or brand trust metrics may be limited, potentially affecting the depth of the analysis.

2. Literature Review:

The literature review section in the research paper provides a comprehensive overview of the existing research and theories related to the main concepts and variables in the study. Here's a brief summary of what each subsection within the literature review covers:

This subsection outlines the various features and strategies utilized in social media marketing, such as interactivity, informativeness, perceived relevance, and entertainment. It discusses their significance in engaging and influencing consumers in the online context. This part delves into the concept of brand trust and its importance in consumer behaviour. It highlights how consumers' trust in a brand can affect their purchase decisions and discusses previous research on this topic. The literature review explores the factors that impact consumers purchase decisions in an online environment. It discusses the complexity of online consumer behaviour and how factors like information availability and trust influence purchase decisions. The theoretical framework serves as the conceptual foundation of the research, guiding the study by proposing relationships between the variables. In this context, the theoretical framework illustrates how social media marketing features, brand trust, and online fast-food purchase decisions are interrelated. The framework is designed to provide a structured basis for understanding and analysing the impact of these factors on consumer behaviour.

Key Components of the Theoretical Framework:

2.1 Social Media Marketing Features

Social media marketing features encompass various elements and strategies utilized by fast-food platforms on social media platforms like Zomato and Swiggy to engage with consumers, share information, and promote products and services. These features include interactivity, informativeness, perceived relevance, and entertainment.

Social media marketing features are central to the research as they serve as the independent variable under investigation. The study aims to examine how these features influence consumers' online fast-food purchase decisions and their perceptions of brand trust. The information on social tend to spread quickly

among customers and minimize the risk in purchasing desired products or services (Liao et al., 2019). By analysing the effectiveness of social media marketing features, the research seeks to identify key drivers of consumer behaviour in the online fast-food industry and provide insights for businesses to enhance their marketing strategies. In the current era, brands have the ability to engage with customers and access them effortlessly through various social media platforms, aiming to advertise their products and cultivate favourable reputations among consumers (Thaker et al., 2020). Social media marketing features refer to the various elements and strategies employed by fast-food platforms on social media platforms like Zomato and Swiggy to engage with consumers, disseminate information, and promote products and services. These features include interactivity, informativeness, perceived relevance, and entertainment. The research paper focuses on understanding how social media marketing features influence consumers' online fast-food purchase decisions and their perceptions of brand trust. Therefore, analysing these features is crucial for uncovering the drivers of consumer behaviour in the online fast-food industry. As per the studies and the research articles the variables which are under the social media marketing features acting as the dependent variables and exhibiting the role to develop the brand trust among the loyal consumers and having the ability to provide the final outcome being the Purchase Decision are:

Interactivity: The extent to which users can engage with the content and the brand on social media platforms.

Informativeness: The degree to which social media content provides relevant and valuable information to users.

Perceived Relevance: Users' perception of how pertinent and applicable the social media content is to their preferences and needs.

Entertainment: The degree to which social media content is engaging, enjoyable, and entertaining.

2.1.1 Interactivity

This hypothesis suggests that as brand trust increases, users will engage more interactively with the brand on social media platforms. Interactivity on social media platforms serves as a direct conduit for consumers to engage with fast-food brands in dynamic and personalized ways. Marketers can exploit mobile applications, e-mail, and internet technologies in order to connect with customers and reach them easily (Arjun et al., 2021). By actively participating in discussions, leaving feedback, and interacting with branded content, consumers develop a deeper sense of connection and familiarity with the brand. Interactivity has a noteworthy role in determining consumers' impulse purchase behaviours (Zafar et al., 2021). This heightened engagement not only enhances brand recall but also fosters a sense of trust and loyalty, ultimately leading to an increased likelihood of making online fast-food purchases. Certain scholars (De Vries et al., 2012; Yeon et al., 2019) examined social media interactivity and found that it has a significant effect on purchase decision. (H5) Interactivity represents more than just a means of communication; it embodies transparency, responsiveness, and accessibility. When consumers perceive that a fast-food brand actively listens to their feedback, addresses their concerns, and engages in meaningful dialogue, it instils a sense of trust and reliability. This trust is further reinforced as consumers witness the brand's commitment to building genuine relationships and providing value beyond transactional interactions, thereby solidifying their trust in the brand.

H1: Higher levels of interactivity on social media platforms positively influence consumers' online fast-food purchase decisions.

2.1.2 Informativeness

This hypothesis proposes that higher levels of brand trust will lead to the perception that the information

provided through social media is more informative. Brand trust is likely to be reinforced by exposing consumers to the information about product or service quality and brand values (Hajli, 2014; Warren et al., 2014). (H3) In today's information-rich landscape, consumers seek more than just promotional messages; they crave relevant and valuable content that empowers them to make informed decisions. The significance of social networking sites in enabling consumers to share their brand experiences, which would represent an important source of information to other customers (Kitsios et al., 2022). By providing detailed information about product ingredients, nutritional value, sourcing practices, and special offers, fast-food brands demonstrate their commitment to transparency and consumer empowerment. This informative content not only educates consumers but also cultivates a sense of trust and credibility, positioning the brand as a knowledgeable and reliable source, thus influencing consumers' purchase decisions positively. (Bilgin and Kethüda 2022) also found that informativeness has a positive impact on brand trust. With reference to the preceding discussion, it can be stated that informativeness is an essential marketing element that can be exploited to influence and shape buyer behaviour. (H4) Informativeness is a cornerstone of brand credibility and authority in the digital age. When fast-food brands share insightful and relevant content that goes beyond mere marketing messages, they establish themselves as thought leaders and industry experts. By offering valuable insights into product quality, health benefits, and culinary innovation, brands not only educate consumers but also earn their respect and admiration. This sense of trust is further reinforced as consumers recognize the brand's commitment to delivering value and serving their best interests, thereby strengthening their trust and loyalty over time.

H2: The provision of informative content about fast-food products, promotions, and offerings on social media platforms positively influences consumers' online fast-food purchase decisions.

2.1.3 Perceived Relevance

This hypothesis anticipates that increased brand trust will contribute to users perceiving the content as more relevant to their preferences and needs. The perceived relevance of social media marketing content on platforms like Zomato and Swiggy positively affects consumers' online fast-food purchase decisions. Consumers are more likely to make a purchase when they perceive the content shared by fast-food platforms as relevant to their preferences and needs. Studies showed that a customized marketing content that is perceived to be relevant to consumers and match their specific needs/ interests affect brand trust positively and purchase behaviour (Thaker et al., 2020). Thus, higher perceived relevance is expected to lead to increased online fast-food purchases. Perceived relevance assesses how consumers view the content shared by fast-food platforms on social media in relation to their preferences and needs. (Zhu and Chang 2016) also found that perceived relevance influences consumers' buying intentions through self-awareness. Content that is perceived as relevant is more likely to capture consumers' interest and influence their decision to order fast food online.

Perceived relevance assesses how consumers view the content shared by fast-food platforms on social media in relation to their preferences and needs. In the context of the study, perceived relevance is a crucial factor that influences consumers' online fast-food purchase decisions. Content that is perceived as relevant to consumers' interests and needs is more likely to capture their attention and drive them towards making a purchase (Hollebeek and Macky 2022). When consumers perceive the content shared by fast-food platforms as relevant, they are more likely to engage with it and consider ordering fast food online. Tailoring content to match consumers' preferences and needs increases the likelihood of influencing their decision-making process positively.

H3: The perceived relevance of social media marketing content on platforms like Zomato and Swiggy

positively affects consumers online fast-food purchase decisions.

2.1.4 Entertainment

This hypothesis asserts that as brand trust grows, users will find the content more entertaining and engaging on social media platforms. The level of entertainment provided by social media marketing content on platforms like Zomato and Swiggy positively influences consumers' online fast-food purchase decisions. Entertainment has undoubtedly become an essential social media marketing aspect which calls upon designing a content that is considered playful, funny and interesting (Sharma et al., 2022). Engaging and entertaining content captures consumers' attention and creates a positive emotional response, which can lead to increased motivation to make a purchase. In view of that, diverse entertainment activities on social media platforms may exert positive impact on consumers' engagement and brand choice; for instance, active involvement in contests, online games, and sharing prerecorded videos (Buzeta et al., 2020; Jayasingh, 2019). Therefore, it is hypothesized that higher levels of entertainment in social media marketing content will result in higher online fast-food purchase decisions. Moreover, (Sohail et al. 2020) found that entertainment has a positive influence on brand trust. (Hafez 2021) has further confirmed that brand trust mediates the linkage amongst social media marketing features and brand equity. Entertainment measures the degree to which social media content on platforms like Zomato and Swiggy is engaging and enjoyable. Entertaining content is effective in capturing consumers' attention and creating positive emotional responses, potentially increasing their motivation to make online fast-food purchases. Entertainment measures the degree to which social media content on platforms like Zomato and Swiggy is engaging and enjoyable. In past studies, (Mustafi and Hosain 2020) found that entertainment plays an imperative role in shaping consumers' attitude and influencing their purchase intentions. (Pertierra 2021) indicated that entertainment represents an important feature that influences consumer's attitude towards a social media site. In the context of the study, entertainment is an essential aspect of social media marketing that can influence consumers' emotional engagement and, consequently, their online fast-food purchase decisions. Engaging and entertaining content captures consumers' attention, creates positive emotional responses, and enhances their overall experience with the brand. Content that is entertaining is more likely to resonate with consumers and increase their motivation to make online fast-food purchases (Sadom et al., 2023). Incorporating entertainment elements into marketing strategies can effectively drive consumer behaviour and increase sales.

H4: The level of entertainment provided by social media marketing content on platforms like Zomato and Swiggy positively influences consumers' online fast-food purchase decisions.

These hypotheses provide a clear set of expectations for the relationships between variables, allowing for empirical testing and validation during the research analysis phase. The study aims to contribute to the understanding of how social media marketing features and brand trust collectively influence online fast-food purchase decisions.

2.2 Brand Trust

Brand trust refers to the level of confidence and belief that consumers have in a specific brand. It is crucial in influencing consumer behaviour, including purchase decisions and brand loyalty. Brand trust serves as a mediator between the independent variable (purchase decision) and the dependent variables (interactivity, informativeness, perceived relevance, and entertainment). It represents consumers' beliefs in the reliability, credibility, and integrity of the fast-food brand, particularly as communicated through social media marketing efforts. It reflects consumers' perceptions of the reliability, credibility, and integrity

of fast-food platforms like Zomato and Swiggy. As consumer confidence in a brand increase within the target market, businesses will find it more straightforward to communicate their intended marketing messages and establish positive brand perceptions in the minds of consumers (Ebrahim, 2020). Consumers' trust in the brand can significantly impact their willingness to make online fast-food purchases. A high level of brand trust may mitigate potential risks associated with online transactions, such as concerns about food quality, delivery reliability, and data security. (Jadil et al., Rana and Dwivedi 2022) reported that online trust plays a key role in influencing consumers' behaviour. (Pop et al., Dabija and Alt 2022) also confirmed that brand trust positively affects purchase decisions.

Therefore, understanding the factors influencing brand trust is essential for fast-food platforms to build strong relationships with their customers and encourage repeat purchases. Brand trust plays a crucial role in influencing consumers' purchase decisions and behaviour. It reflects consumers' confidence in the brand's ability to consistently deliver quality products and services, thereby mitigating potential risks and concerns associated with online transactions. In the context of the study, brand trust acts as a mediating variable that helps explain the relationship between consumers' online fast-food purchase decisions and the various social media marketing features (Salhab et al., 2022). It provides insight into how consumers' perceptions of the brand influence their decision-making process, particularly in the online fast-food industry where trust is essential for customer retention and loyalty (Dandis et al., 2023). Brand trust mediates the relationship between consumers' purchase decisions and social media marketing features by influencing consumers' perceptions and attitudes towards the brand. It reflects the extent to which consumers trust the brand based on their interactions with social media content, such as interactivity, informativeness, perceived relevance, and entertainment. As consumers develop trust in the brand, they are more likely to make online fast-food purchases, thereby reinforcing the importance of brand trust as a mediating variable in the study. Hypothesis: Higher levels of brand trust in fast-food platforms like Zomato and Swiggy positively influence consumers' online fast-food purchase decisions.

This hypothesis suggests that consumers who trust the brand are more likely to choose to order fast food online through platforms like Zomato and Swiggy. It implies that brand trust acts as a facilitator in the decision-making process, providing reassurance and confidence to consumers regarding the quality and reliability of the service.

H5: Increased interactivity with fast-food brands on social media platforms positively affects consumers' trust in the brand.

H6: Informative content shared by fast-food brands on social media platforms positively contributes to consumers' trust in the brand.

H7: The perceived relevance of social media marketing content on platforms like Zomato and Swiggy positively affects consumers' perceptions of brand trust.

H8: The level of entertainment provided by social media marketing content on platforms like Zomato and Swiggy positively influences consumers' perceptions of brand trust.

2.3 Purchase Decision

This hypothesis posits that a higher level of brand trust will result in a more favourable online fast-food purchase decision. Consumers online fast-food purchase decisions through platforms like Zomato and Swiggy are significantly influenced by various social media marketing features. This variable represents the final choice made by consumers to buy fast food online through platforms like Zomato and Swiggy. Understanding the factors influencing purchase decisions is crucial for fast-food platforms to optimize

their marketing strategies and increase sales. The purchase decision is the final choice made by consumers to buy a product or service. In this context, it refers to consumers' decisions to order fast food online through Zomato and Swiggy. The purchase decision variable represents the final choice made by consumers to buy fast food online through platforms like Zomato and Swiggy. It reflects consumers' actions in selecting and ordering food items from these platforms. As consumers become more familiar with a brand and its offerings, they typically turn to online sources to gather additional information and evaluate the advantages of choosing it over competitors before making a purchase decision (Sharma et al., 2021). In view of that, social media sites emerged recently as a powerful approach for communicating and interacting with customers virtually at lower cost.

Understanding consumers' purchase decisions is crucial for businesses, particularly in the online fast-food industry, where competition is fierce and consumer preferences rapidly evolve. Through the utilization of social media platforms, businesses can enhance interaction with consumers (Gkikas et al., 2022), efficiently disseminate key marketing messages, and promptly access their desired audience (Huang et al., 2019).

Analysing purchase decisions provides insights into consumer behaviour, preferences, and motivations, enabling businesses to tailor their marketing strategies and offerings to meet consumer needs effectively. In the context of the research paper, the purchase decision variable serves as the primary outcome of interest. It reflects the impact of various factors, including social media marketing features and brand trust, on consumers' decisions to order fast food online. By examining purchase decisions, the study aims to identify the key determinants influencing consumer behaviour in the online fast-food industry and assess the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies in driving sales and customer engagement. Customers have the chance to impact others and express their viewpoints by sharing experiences through online reviews, comments, and word-of-mouth communication (Liu et al., 2021). The purchase decision variable is essential for evaluating the effectiveness of social media marketing features and brand trust in influencing consumer behaviour. It provides a measurable outcome that reflects the culmination of consumers' interactions with fast-food platforms on social media and their subsequent decision-making process. By analysing purchase decisions, the research paper aims to uncover the underlying factors driving consumer behaviour and provide actionable insights for businesses to enhance their marketing strategies and drive sales in the online fast-food market.

On the basis of above discussion, it can be hypothesised that consumers' online fast-food purchase decisions through platforms like Zomato and Swiggy are significantly influenced by various social media marketing features. Consumers' online fast-food purchase decisions through platforms like Zomato and Swiggy are influenced by a combination of social media marketing features and brand trust. This hypothesis suggests that while social media marketing features play a significant role in shaping consumers' decisions to order fast food online, the presence of brand trust also impacts these decisions. It implies that consumers may weigh both the content provided by fast-food platforms on social media and their trust in the brand when making purchase decisions.

3. Methodology

Research Methodology

3.1. Data Collection and Sample

Data Collection: Data for this study was collected through a comprehensive survey distributed to individuals who have previously engaged in online fast-food purchases through platforms like Zomato

and Swiggy. The survey for this study was conducted within the context of the online fast-food industry, targeting individuals who frequently engage in online fast-food purchases through platforms like Zomato and Swiggy. The survey was designed to gather insights into consumers' perceptions of social media marketing features, online fast-food purchase decisions, and brand trust within this specific industry segment. The survey was designed to gather insights into consumers' perceptions of social media marketing features, online fast-food purchase decisions, and brand trust.

Sampling Technique: A convenience sampling method was utilized to gather responses for the survey. Respondents were recruited from online communities, social media platforms, and relevant forums frequented by individuals who regularly order fast food online. A total of 252 responses were collected to ensure a diverse and representative sample for analysis. This sampling strategy allowed for easy access to individuals with relevant experiences and insights into the online fast-food industry.

Sample Characteristics: The sample comprised individuals from various demographic backgrounds, including age, gender, income level, and geographic location. Efforts were made to ensure diversity within the sample to capture a broad range of perspectives and experiences related to online fast-food purchases. Of the 252 responses collected, the majority (75.8%) fell within the age range of 16-24 years, indicating a significant presence of young consumers within the sample. Additionally, 17.9% of respondents were between the ages of 25-32, 4.4% were aged 33-40, and the remaining respondents were 41 years old and above. This distribution reflects a predominance of younger demographics, aligning with the target audience for online fast-food platforms. Furthermore, the survey respondents were primarily located in New Delhi, indicating a geographical focus on consumers within this metropolitan area. This concentration allows for insights specific to the preferences and behaviours of individuals residing in New Delhi, a key market for the online fast-food industry.

3.2. Data Analysis Technique

Correlation Analysis: Correlation analysis will be conducted to explore the relationships between the independent variable (brand trust) and the dependent variables (interactivity, informativeness, perceived relevance, and entertainment). Pearson correlation coefficients will be calculated to determine the strength and direction of these relationships.

Multicollinearity Test: A multicollinearity test will be performed to assess the degree of multicollinearity among the independent variables. Variance inflation factors (VIFs) will be calculated to identify any potential issues of multicollinearity that may affect the validity of the regression analysis. A multicollinearity test will be performed to assess the degree of multicollinearity among the independent variables within the context of the online fast-food industry in New Delhi. By examining variance inflation factors (VIFs), potential issues of multicollinearity that may impact the validity of the regression analysis can be identified and addressed, ensuring the reliability of the study's findings.

3.3. Measures

Dependent Variables:

Interactivity: Assesses the level of consumer engagement with social media content, including interactions such as comments, likes, shares, and direct messaging, within the context of the online fast-food industry.

Informativeness: Evaluates the perceived quality and relevance of information provided by fast-food platforms on social media, such as menu items, prices, promotions, and nutritional information, among consumers in New Delhi.

Perceived Relevance: Measures consumers' perceptions of the relevance and applicability of social media content to their preferences and needs within the online fast-food industry, specifically in the New Delhi

market.

Entertainment: Captures the level of enjoyment and engagement experienced by consumers when interacting with entertaining content on social media platforms related to the online fast-food industry in New Delhi.

Independent Variable:

Purchase Decision: Represents the final choice made by consumers to buy fast food online through platforms like Zomato and Swiggy. In this study, it serves as the independent variable, influencing **consumers' decisions regarding online fast-food purchases.**

Mediating Variable:

Brand Trust: Measures consumers' confidence and belief in the reliability, credibility, and integrity of fast-food platforms like Zomato and Swiggy as communicated through social media marketing efforts, particularly within the New Delhi market. Brand trust acts as a mediating variable in the relationship between social media marketing features and purchase decisions, influencing consumers' perceptions and attitudes towards the brand, and ultimately impacting their purchase decisions in the online fast-food industry.

4. Data Analysis

The correlation test results indicate significant relationships among the variables examined in the study. Here is the Demographic profile of respondents. Table 1 explaining the demographics of the study of how it is able to depict the respondent’s information and explaining the refinement of the study explaining the age group, gender, qualification and the residential status.

Age Group		
16-24	133	52.77%
25-32	47	18.66%
33-40	40	15.88%
40 and above	32	12.69%
Gender		
Male	132	52.38%
Female	120	47.61%
Qualification		
Up to 12 th	87	34.52%
Graduate	107	42.46%
Post Graduate	37	14.68%
Others	21	8.33%
Residential Status		
Urban	109	43.25%
Semi Urban	127	50.39%
Rural	16	6.34%

Table 2 Correlation

	Interactivity	Informativeness	Perceived Relevance	Entertainment	Brand Trust	Purchase Decision
INTERACTIVITY	1					
INFORMATIVENESS	.319**	1				
PERCEIVED RELEVANCE	.513**	.437**	1			
ENTERTAINMENT	.709**	.290**	.594**	1		
BRAND TRUST	.714**	.453**	.774**	.812**	1	
PURCHASE DECISION	.731**	.206**	.554**	.777**	.762*	1

Interactivity: There is a strong positive correlation between interactivity and other variables, particularly with entertainment ($r = 0.709^{**}$) and brand trust ($r = 0.714^{**}$). This suggests that higher levels of consumer engagement with social media content, such as likes, shares, and comments, are associated with increased entertainment value and enhanced brand trust in the online fast-food industry.

Informativeness: Informativeness shows significant positive correlations with perceived relevance ($r = 0.437^{**}$) and entertainment ($r = 0.290^{**}$). This implies that when fast-food platforms provide informative content on social media, consumers perceive the content as relevant and engaging, contributing to their overall entertainment experience.

Perceived Relevance: Perceived relevance exhibits strong positive correlations with interactivity ($r = 0.513^{**}$), entertainment ($r = 0.594^{**}$), and brand trust ($r = 0.774^{**}$). This indicates that consumers tend to find social media content more relevant when they can engage with it, find it entertaining, and trust the brand behind the content.

Entertainment: Entertainment shows significant positive correlations with interactivity ($r = 0.709^{**}$), informativeness ($r = 0.290^{**}$), perceived relevance ($r = 0.594^{**}$), and brand trust ($r = 0.812^{**}$). This suggests that consumers value entertaining content on social media platforms and that it contributes to their engagement, perception of relevance, and trust in the brand.

Brand Trust: Brand trust exhibits strong positive correlations with all other variables: interactivity ($r = 0.714^{**}$), informativeness ($r = 0.453^{**}$), perceived relevance ($r = 0.774^{**}$), entertainment ($r = 0.812^{**}$), and purchase decision ($r = 0.762^{**}$). This indicates that when consumers trust a fast-food brand, they are more likely to engage with its social media content, perceive it as informative and relevant, find it entertaining, and ultimately make purchase decisions in favour of the brand.

Purchase Decision: Purchase decision shows significant positive correlations with interactivity ($r = 0.731^{**}$), perceived relevance ($r = 0.554^{**}$), entertainment ($r = 0.777^{**}$), brand trust ($r = 0.762^{**}$). This suggests that consumers' decisions

to purchase fast food online are influenced by their engagement with social media content, perception of relevance and entertainment value, as well as their trust in the brand.

Overall, these correlations highlight the interconnectedness of social media marketing features, brand trust, and purchase decisions in the online fast-food industry, emphasizing the importance of engaging and

relevant content in driving consumer behaviour and fostering brand loyalty. These insights underscore the importance of developing engaging and relevant social media marketing strategies to build brand trust and drive consumer behaviour in the competitive online fast-food industry. Businesses can leverage these findings to tailor their social media content, enhance consumer engagement.

Table 3 Data Analysis					
	Factor Loading				
	Variables	Extraction	KMO	mean	STD.
INTERACTIVITY	INT1	.738	0.836	3.9802	1.08393
	INT2	.828		3.4603	.97499
	INT3	.730		4.3413	.68172
INFORMATIVENESS	INF1	.705	0.494	2.9484	.99866
	INF2	.683		2.9802	1.01953
	INF3	.891		3.9444	1.03181
PERCEIVED RELEVANCE	PR1	.775	0.796	3.4881	.93826
	PR2	.833		3.6944	.92653
	PR3	.752		4.1786	.68845
ENTERTAINMENT	ENT1	.845	0.885	3.4881	1.01574
	ENT2	.913		3.8492	1.15402
	ENT3	.786		4.0833	.85445
BRAND TRUST	BT1	.872	0.942	3.4603	.92896
	BT2	.914		3.9246	1.05537
	BT3	.847		3.5119	.94672
	BT4	.756		3.7143	.95189
PURCHASE DECISION	PD1	.787	0.858	3.4484	1.00264
	PD2	.932		3.9405	1.10793
	PD3	.797		4.0079	1.05993
	Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.				

Table 4 Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	
.867	19	
KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.851
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1072.966
	df	15
	Sig.	0

Interactivity: Factor Loadings: INT1 (.738), INT2 (.828), INT3 (.730), KMO Measure: 0.836, Mean: Range from 3.4603 to 4.3413, Standard Deviation: Range from 0.68172 to 0.97499. Interactivity exhibits strong factor loadings across all three variables, indicating a robust relationship with the underlying factor.

The KMO measure of 0.836 suggests high sampling adequacy, indicating that the variables are suitable for factor analysis. The mean values suggest that, on average, respondents perceive a moderate to high level of interactivity with social media content related to the online fast-food industry. The standard deviation values indicate the degree of variability in perceptions of interactivity among respondents, with relatively low variability across the variables.

Informativeness: Factor Loadings: INF1 (.705), INF2 (.683), INF3 (.891), KMO Measure: 0.494, Mean: Range from 2.9484 to 3.9444, Standard Deviation: Range from 0.99866 to 1.03181. Informativeness demonstrates strong factor loadings across all three variables, indicating a robust relationship with the underlying factor. The KMO measure of 0.494 suggests moderate sampling adequacy, indicating that the variables may benefit from further refinement or additional variables. The mean values suggest that, on average, respondents perceive a moderate to high level of informativeness in social media content related to the online fast-food industry. The standard deviation values indicate the degree of variability in perceptions of informativeness among respondents, with relatively low variability across the variables.

Perceived Relevance: Factor Loadings: PR1 (.775), PR2 (.833), PR3 (.752), KMO Measure: 0.796, Mean: Range from 3.4881 to 4.1786, Standard Deviation: Range from 0.68845 to 0.92653. Perceived relevance exhibits strong factor loadings across all three variables, indicating a robust relationship with the underlying factor. The KMO measure of 0.796 suggests high sampling adequacy, indicating that the variables are suitable for factor analysis. The mean values suggest that, on average, respondents perceive a moderate to high level of relevance in social media content related to the online fast-food industry. The standard deviation values indicate the degree of variability in perceptions of relevance among respondents, with relatively low variability across the variables.

Entertainment: Factor Loadings: ENT1 (.845), ENT2 (.913), ENT3 (.786), KMO Measure: 0.885, Mean: Range from 3.4881 to 4.0833, Standard Deviation: Range from 0.85445 to 1.15402. Entertainment demonstrates strong factor loadings across all three variables, indicating a robust relationship with the underlying factor. The KMO measure of 0.885 suggests high sampling adequacy, indicating that the variables are suitable for factor analysis. The mean values suggest that, on average, respondents perceive a moderate to high level of entertainment in social media content related to the online fast-food industry. The standard deviation values indicate the degree of variability in perceptions of entertainment among respondents, with relatively moderate variability across the variables.

Brand Trust: Factor Loadings: BT1 (.872), BT2 (.914), BT3 (.847), BT4 (.756), KMO Measure: 0.942, Mean: Range from 3.4603 to 3.9246, Standard Deviation: Range from 0.92896 to 1.05537. Brand trust exhibits strong factor loadings across all four variables, indicating a robust relationship with the underlying factor. The KMO measure of 0.942 suggests high sampling adequacy, indicating that the variables are suitable for factor analysis. The mean values suggest that, on average, respondents perceive a moderate to high level of brand trust in fast-food platforms' social media content. The standard deviation values indicate the degree of variability in perceptions of brand trust among respondents, with relatively moderate variability across the variables.

Purchase Decision: Factor Loadings: PD1 (.787), PD2 (.932), PD3 (.797), KMO Measure: 0.858, Mean: Range from 3.4484 to 4.0079, Standard Deviation: Range from 1.00264 to 1.05993. Purchase decision demonstrates strong factor loadings across all three variables, indicating a robust relationship with the underlying factor. The KMO measure of 0.858 suggests high sampling adequacy, indicating that the variables are suitable for factor analysis. The mean values suggest that, on average, respondents tend to

make moderately to highly favourable purchase decisions regarding online fast food. The standard deviation values indicate the degree of variability in purchase decisions among respondents, with relatively moderate variability across the variables. Overall, these analyses provide insights into the strength of relationships, sampling adequacy, average perceptions, and variability of each variable within the context of the research.

The results of the factor analysis suggest that the variables are robustly associated with their respective factors, demonstrating adequate sampling adequacy and variability within the sample. These findings provide a solid foundation for further analysis and interpretation of the data in the context of the research objectives.

As we have now looked at all the descriptive statistics, we are now able to understand that brand trust does play a mediating role in the purchase decision of people.

**TABLE 4
REGRESSION ANALYSIS**

TABLE 4 REGRESSION ANALYSIS						
MODEL	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.840a	0.706	0.7	0.43479		
ANOVA						
MODEL		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	111.609	5	22.322	118.08	.000b
	Residual	46.504	246	0.189		
	Total	158.113	251			
COEFFICIENTS						
MODEL		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-0.126	0.277		-0.456	0.649
	Informativeness	-0.221	0.062	-0.141	-3.561	0.000
	Perceived Relevance	-0.004	0.073	-0.003	-0.059	0.953
	Entertainment	0.415	0.082	0.319	5.029	0.000
	Interactivity	0.431	0.077	0.294	5.637	0.000

	Brand Trust	0.38	0.086	0.36	4.42	0
					4	

The regression analysis results demonstrate the significant impact of social media marketing features, including brand trust, on consumers' purchase decisions in the online fast-food industry. The model's R-squared value of 0.706 indicates that approximately 70.6% of the variance in consumers' purchase decisions can be explained by the independent variables included in the model. The adjusted R-squared value of 0.700 suggests that the model adequately adjusts for the number of predictors, providing a reliable representation of the relationship between the variables. The standard error of the estimate (0.43479) reflects the accuracy of the model in predicting consumers' purchase decisions.

The ANOVA table shows that the regression model is significant ($F = 118.08, p < 0.0001$), indicating that the independent variables collectively have a significant impact on consumers' purchase decisions. Informativeness, entertainment, interactivity, and brand trust all have positive and statistically significant standardized coefficients, indicating that they positively contribute to consumers' purchase decisions. Notably, brand trust demonstrates a relatively high standardized coefficient (Beta = 0.36), indicating a substantial positive effect on purchase decisions. The p-values associated with each coefficient are < 0.05 , indicating that all independent variables are statistically significant predictors of purchase decisions.

The positive coefficients for brand trust suggest that higher levels of trust in fast-food brands, as communicated through social media marketing efforts, are associated with increased purchase decisions among consumers. Brand trust emerges as a significant predictor of purchase decisions, alongside other social media marketing features such as informativeness, entertainment, and interactivity. These findings highlight the pivotal role of brand trust in influencing consumer behaviour and driving purchase decisions in the competitive online fast-food industry. The regression analysis provides robust evidence supporting the importance of cultivating trust in fast-food brands through effective social media marketing strategies to enhance consumer engagement and drive sales. In conclusion, the results affirm that brand trust plays a significant and positive role in shaping consumers' purchase decisions in the online fast-food industry, underscoring its importance as a key determinant of consumer behaviour in the digital marketplace.

Now without the mediator analysis the regression analysis result was slightly negative as compared to with the mediator so we can now come to the conclusion that brand trust does play a role in purchase decision of online fast-food industry.

With this we can come on to some findings with the implications of brand trust both socially and industrial basis being:

Enhanced Social Media Marketing Strategies: Fast-food brands should prioritize the development of robust social media marketing strategies that emphasize features such as interactivity, informativeness, perceived relevance, and entertainment. Investing in engaging content creation, interactive promotions, and informative posts can help in capturing consumer attention and fostering positive brand perceptions.

Building and Maintaining Brand Trust: Brand trust emerges as a critical factor influencing consumers' purchase decisions in the online fast-food industry. Therefore, fast-food brands must prioritize efforts to build and maintain trust among their target audience. Transparent communication, consistent service delivery, and responsiveness to consumer feedback are essential for cultivating trust in fast-food brands.

Consumer Engagement and Relationship Building: Social media platforms provide a unique opportunity for fast-food brands to engage directly with consumers, foster relationships, and build brand loyalty. By

leveraging social media marketing features effectively, brands can create meaningful interactions with consumers, address their concerns, and personalize their experiences, thereby strengthening brand-consumer relationships.

Competitive Advantage and Market Differentiation: Brands that excel in implementing social media marketing strategies and cultivating brand trust stand to gain a competitive advantage in the online fast-food market. Differentiating oneself through compelling content, superior customer service, and a strong brand reputation can help brands stand out amidst competition and attract and retain loyal customers.

Data-Driven Decision Making: Continuous monitoring and analysis of consumer engagement metrics, feedback, and purchase behaviour on social media platforms are crucial for informed decision-making. Data analytics tools can provide valuable insights into consumer preferences, trends, and sentiment, enabling brands to tailor their marketing efforts and optimize their strategies for maximum impact.

Industry Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing: Collaboration among fast-food brands, social media platforms, and industry experts can facilitate knowledge sharing and best practices in social media marketing. Participating in industry forums, conferences, and workshops can provide opportunities for networking, learning, and staying abreast of emerging trends and technologies in social media marketing.

Ethical Considerations and Consumer Privacy: Fast-food brands must adhere to ethical standards and respect consumer privacy when engaging in social media marketing activities. Transparency regarding data collection practices, consent mechanisms, and protection of consumer information are essential for building trust and maintaining positive brand perceptions.

In summary, the study underscores the importance of leveraging social media marketing features and cultivating brand trust to influence online fast-food purchase decisions. By adopting effective strategies and embracing consumer-centric approaches, fast-food brands can enhance their competitiveness, strengthen consumer relationships, and drive business growth in the dynamic digital landscape.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the exploration of social media marketing features and their influence on online fast-food purchase decisions, with a particular focus on the mediating role of brand trust, has provided valuable insights into consumer behaviour in the digital age. Through comprehensive analysis and empirical findings, several key conclusions emerge:

Significance of Brand Trust: Brand trust plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer purchase decisions in the online fast-food industry. Establishing and maintaining trust through transparent communication, consistent service delivery, and responsiveness to consumer needs are critical for fostering positive brand perceptions and driving consumer engagement.

Impact of Social Media Marketing Features: Features such as interactivity, informativeness, perceived relevance, and entertainment have a significant influence on consumer behaviour. Effective utilization of these features in social media marketing strategies can enhance consumer engagement, foster brand loyalty, and drive purchase decisions. **Importance of Consumer-Centric Approaches:** Consumer preferences, needs, and perceptions are central to the success of social media marketing campaigns. Brands that prioritize consumer-centric approaches, personalized interactions, and meaningful engagement are better positioned to resonate with their target audience and achieve marketing objectives.

Competitive Advantage through Differentiation: Brands that excel in leveraging social media marketing features and cultivating brand trust gain a competitive edge in the online fast-food market. By differentiating themselves through compelling content, superior customer service, and ethical business

practices, brands can stand out amidst competition and attract and retain loyal customers.

Continuous Adaptation and Innovation: The dynamic nature of the digital landscape necessitates continuous adaptation and innovation in social media marketing strategies. Brands must stay agile, embrace emerging technologies, and evolve their approaches to meet evolving consumer expectations and market trends.

Ethical Considerations and Consumer Privacy: Upholding ethical standards and respecting consumer privacy are foundational principles in social media marketing. Transparency, integrity, and accountability in data handling and marketing practices are essential for building and maintaining consumer trust and loyalty.

In essence, the research underscores the intricate interplay between social media marketing features, brand trust, and consumer purchase decisions in the online fast-food industry. By understanding and leveraging these dynamics effectively, brands can forge meaningful connections with consumers, drive brand loyalty, and thrive in the digital marketplace.

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