



RESEARCH ON UNDERSTANDING CONSUMER PREFERENCES IN SOCIAL MEDIA FOR JAMNAGAR'S BUSINESSES

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of social media as a powerful tool for business promotion in Jamnagar. It investigates how social media platforms influence consumer behavior, preferences, and purchasing decisions. The research identifies key social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube, and explores their effect on consumer interaction and engagement. A survey conducted with 52 respondents reveals that Instagram is the most widely used platform, followed by YouTube and Facebook. The majority of respondents believe social media is an effective marketing tool, influencing buying decisions through advertisements, reviews, and recommendations. The study also identifies tangible products, particularly clothing, cosmetics, and electronics, as the most suitable for social media marketing. Additionally, it highlights the growing importance of online marketing due to increased internet usage and consumer awareness. Despite concerns about internet security, the study concludes that social media marketing offers significant advantages over traditional marketing methods, providing businesses with the opportunity to reach a wider audience and engage consumers effectively.

Key words: Social media, Consumer Response, social media

INTRODUCTION

Social media marketing can be described as the ways and means through which various social media platforms are used by marketers to process the information of customer behavior and gain insights about customer's likes and preferences.

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Basically, social media marketing programs aim to create content that grabs people's attention by giving them useful information and prompting them to share it with others. When customers talk about a brand or event online, it boosts brand awareness and promotes products/services. This works well because it feels like it's coming from a reliable source, not just the company, which builds trust in customers' minds.

These platforms and websites were initially developed for individuals to engage in interactions and establish connections. As companies integrated into these social channels, consumers began actively engaging with them. The personal connection users feel stems from their past experiences with social networking site interactions. The functionalities such as "retweet" or "repost" on social networking sites and blogs play a crucial role in expanding reach. These social networking sites function as effective word-of-mouth tools as the information about the product circulates and is repeated, resulting in increased traffic directed towards the product or company.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The effectiveness of social media as a marketing tool has gained substantial attention in recent years, particularly due to its ability to engage consumers, drive sales, and enhance brand awareness. Several studies have examined how businesses can harness the power of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter to promote their products and services.

SOCIAL MEDIA AS A STRATEGIC MARKETING TOOL

Varghese & Singh Dogo (2020) and Antwi (2021) argue that social media should be integrated into a business's overall strategy, considering content consistency and audience segmentation. Chokkas (2014) suggests that a well-planned content strategy, with regular posting and interactive content, can enhance engagement and conversion rates.

Antwi (2021) reviews the cost-effectiveness of social media, emphasizing that it provides small businesses with an affordable way to reach large audiences and generate engagement. Chokkas (2014) agrees, noting that social media's low cost compared to traditional advertising allows businesses to interact in real-time and adjust strategies quickly.

Ghosh (2019) stresses the importance of trust in social media marketing. Consumers are more likely to engage with brands that are authentic and transparent. Both Ghosh (2019) and Roy (2018) emphasize that businesses that provide immediate feedback and personalized content can build trust, fostering long-term relationships with consumers.

Roy (2018) highlights that social media marketing is particularly effective among younger consumers, offering businesses a unique way to engage with this demographic through targeted content and influencer marketing. Varghese & Singh Dogo (2020) further argue that social media fosters two-way communication, building a sense of community and customer loyalty, particularly on platforms like Instagram and Facebook.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

1. To identify mostly used social media platform.
2. To determine the intended purpose of using a social media platform.
3. To identifying the Most Purchased Product.
4. To identify the product or service that is most suitable to be marketed on social media.
5. To analyse consumer perceptions of security in digital purchases and payments.

SIGNIFICANT OF THE STUDY

Local businesses in Jamnagar can use the study to understand how social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube are influencing consumer behavior in their region. This could help them tailor their marketing strategies to the platforms that resonate most with the local population.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study is limited to Jamnagar and focuses on the local public's interactions with social media for business promotion.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Research design

The present paper is a sample study and is descriptive and analytical in nature.

2. Sample design

The population of the study consists of local public of Jamnagar. Sample sizes of 52 respondents were selected for the purpose of conducting the study.

3. Sample technique

The technique used here is convenient sampling.

4. Data collection

Primary data was collected using a questionnaire consisting of 14 questions, which was distributed through social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Instagram.

5. Tools for analysis

The tools used in this project are mathematical and statistical such as percentages. For analysing and interpreting the collected data, statistical tools such as percentage analysis, scaling, bar diagrams, pie charts, graphs, table, etc. Were used.

INTERPRETATION

• DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENT :

Table represent the demographic details of the respondents like gender, age, employment status and education.

Table 1. Classification Of Demographic Profile Of Respondent

Variables	Classification	Percentages
Gender	Male	42.3
	Female	57.7
Age	Less than 20	34.6
	20-30 years	57.7
	30-40 years	6.7
	Above 40 years	1
Education	Intermediate	26.9
	Undergraduate	51.9
	Postgraduate	21.2
Employment status	Employment	71.2
	Unemployment	28.8

- **INTERNET ACCESS:**

The table below shows whether respondents have access to the internet.

Table 2. Internet Media Users

Particulars	Number Of Respondents	Percentages
Yes	52	100
No	0	0
Total	52	100

This table shows that all 52 respondents have internet access, with no respondents reporting a lack of access.

- **SOCIAL MEDIA USERS**

The table below categorizes the respondents based on whether they have access to any social media platform.

Table 3. Social Media Users

Particulars	Number Of Respondents	Percentages
Yes	52	100
No	0	0
Total	52	100

This table indicates that all 52 respondents have access to at least one social media platform, with no respondents indicating they lack access

- **PURPOSE OF USE OF A SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM**

Table below shows the purpose of using a social media platform.

Table 4. Use Of Social Media Platform

Particulars	Number Respondents	Of Percentages
Entertainment	51	98.1
Chatting	19	36.5
Professional work	26	50
Total	52	100

Out of 52 to respondents, 51 respondents use social media for entertainment while 26 respondents use for professional work and 19 respondents.

It is observed that all the respondents use social media for entertainment purposes.

• POPULAR MEDIUM OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Table describing the preferred social media platforms utilized by the respondents.

Table 5. Classification of Social media websites used by the Respondents

Particulars	Number Respondents	Of Percentages
Instagram	46	88.5
Facebook	25	48.1
YouTube	40	76.9
others	3	5.8
Total	52	100

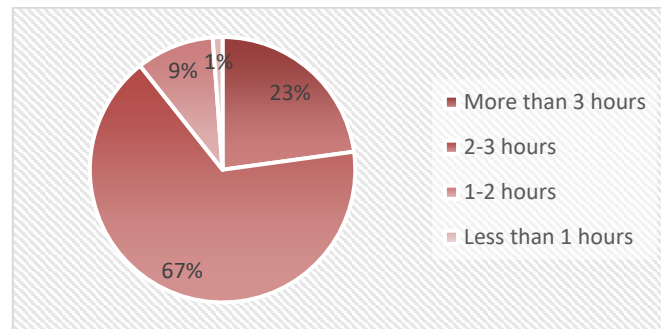
It is observed that out of the total respondents, 88.5% respondents use Instagram (46) , nearly 48.4% of respondents uses Facebook (25), 76.9%(40) respondents uses YouTube and other app are accessed by nearly 5.8%(3) of the respondents.

The current study indicates that Instagram is predominantly used by the majority of youngsters, followed by Facebook and then YouTube.

• TIME SPENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

The pie chart below depicts the duration of time that respondents spend on social media.

Fig 1. Depicts Time Spent By Respondent On Social Media



The pie chart above clearly illustrates that approximately 67 percent of individuals dedicate more than 2 hours to social media platforms. This indicates a beneficial opportunity for marketers to promote products and services on these platforms.

• SOCIAL MEDIA AS AN IMPORTANT TOOL OF MARKETING

The table below shows the different responses from respondents to the question of whether they believe social media is an important marketing tool.

Table 6. Depicts The Significance Of Social Media As A Growing Marketing Tool.

Particulars	Number Of Respondents	Percentages
Agree	38	73.1
Neutral	5	9.6
Disagree	9	17.3
Total	52	100

Social media is a new trend in marketing. Most respondents (73.1%) believe that social media is an emerging marketing tool. They see it as effective and cost-efficient for marketing purposes.

• IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADS ON BUYING DECISION

The table illustrates the responses from respondents regarding the influence of social media app ads on their purchasing decisions.

Table 7. Depicts Impacts Of Social Media Ads On Buying Decision.

Particulars	Number Of Respondents	Percentages
Mostly	26	50
Sometimes	21	40.4
Never	5	9.6
Total	52	100

Out of all the respondents, 50% (26 people) believe that social media advertisements influence their online purchasing decisions. Social media has opened up new opportunities for advertisers to reach and connect with a large online audience. The majority of respondents were influenced by social media ads to make online purchases.

• PRODUCT OR SERVICE THAT IS MOST SUITABLE TO BE MARKETING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

The table below shows the products or services most frequently purchased availed by the respondents.

Table 8. Product or service most suitable for social media marketing Products

Product	Number of respondent	Percentage
Tangible	39	75
Intangible	4	7.7
Both	9	17.3
Total	52	100

Primary Data Out of total respondents 74% (40) of them believe that tangible products are most suitable for marketing through social media. 20% (11) respondents believe both tangible and intangible products are suitable for marketing through social media. Only 6% (3) respondents believe intangible products or services are more suitable to be marketed through social media.

• MOST SUITABLE TANGIBLE PRODUCT TO BE MARKETING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIAS

The table below shows the ranking given by respondents on the basis of most frequently purchased product.

Table 9. Suitable tangible product for marketing through social media

Product	Number of respondent	Rank
Electronics	44	III
Clothing	51	I
Accessories	33	V
Jewellers	40	IV
Cosmetics	49	II
Consumer goods	31	VI
Others services	20	VII
Total	52	100

It is clear from the table that the most suitable tangible product to be marketed through social media is Clothing (RANK I) followed by Cosmetics (RANK II) and then Electronics (RANK III). RANK IV, RANK V and RANK VI and RANK VII is given to jewellers, accessories, consumer goods and others respectively.

Clothing followed by Cosmetics and electronics are the most suitable tangible product to be marketed through social media.

• SECURITY ISSUES IN DIGITAL PURCHASE AND PAYMENT

The table below shows the different responses from respondents to the question of whether they feel secure while purchasing online.

Table 10. Security issues in digital purchase and payment

Particulars	Number Of Respondents	Percentages
Yes, I always worry about the security of my personal and payment details.	30	57.7
Sometimes, but I trust the platforms I use.	9	17.3
No, I believe digital payments are secure.	13	25
Total	52	100

A significant portion of respondents (57.7%) express consistent concerns about the security of their personal information and payment details during digital transactions. This indicates a strong sense of caution among more than half of the participants. They may fear risks such as data breaches, fraud, or identity theft.

FINDINGS

1. Instagram is the most widely used social media platform, followed by Facebook and YouTube.
2. The majority of respondents believe that social media is a powerful marketing tool.
3. Social media advertisements have a greater influence on consumer buying behavior compared to traditional marketing methods.
4. Social media has a significant impact on influencing young buyers.
5. Tangible products are more effectively marketed through social media.
6. Cosmetics, electronics, clothing, and apparel are the most suitable tangible products for marketing on social media.

7. Online tickets, followed by travel and leisure services, are the most appropriate intangible products to be marketed on social media.
8. As the majority of people feel insecure, payment providers should enhance efforts to educate users about the security measures they use. This could include highlighting encryption technologies, fraud detection systems, and strong user authentication protocols.

SUGGESTION

1. **Focus on Instagram:** Use high-quality images, videos, and reels to promote tangible products like clothing and cosmetics.
2. **Leverage YouTube:** Create tutorial videos, product reviews, and behind-the-scenes content to build trust with consumers.
3. **Engage Influencers:** Collaborate with local influencers for sponsored posts and product reviews to expand reach.
4. **Encourage User-Generated Content:** Motivate customers to share experiences and offer incentives to increase engagement.
5. **Optimize with Analytics:** Track social media performance to adjust campaigns effectively and ensure better reach and engagement.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study used a sample size of only 52 respondents, which may not be representative of the larger population or diverse consumer segments across the region or beyond.
2. The use of convenient sampling, where participants were chosen based on availability.
3. The research focuses exclusively on Jamnagar, which may not provide a complete picture of social media's effectiveness in business promotion in other parts of India.
4. The study captures consumer behaviour and attitudes at a single point in time, which limits its usefulness for long-term trends or changes in consumer preferences.

CONCLUSION

The study highlights that the growing importance of online marketing is primarily due to the increasing internet literacy among people. Consumers recognize the internet as a powerful tool for serving various purposes, including social networking, online shopping, and media sharing (such as photos, music, and videos). This awareness has heightened their tendency to stay online. Today's consumers strongly believe that every company should leverage this capability to enhance its marketing efforts, motivating them to engage with online marketing for exclusive brand content, discounts, and the opportunity to share feedback with advertisers.

With the rise of internet technology, consumers' preference for traditional marketing methods has diminished. The key advantages of online marketing include the ability for interaction between consumers and advertisers, the availability of vast information, and the convenience of shopping. These benefits make online marketing more effective than traditional marketing. However, consumers remain concerned about internet safety, fearing that online marketing may lead to increased fraud and privacy issues. Despite these concerns, social media marketing is emerging as a powerful tool. If utilized effectively, it has the potential to reach a larger audience than traditional marketing methods.

The study also reveals that social media platforms heavily influence consumer purchasing decisions through videos, images, blogs, and articles, with many users spending over two hours daily on these platforms. The study reveals a stronger preference for Instagram and YouTube over Facebook. These platforms not only influence buying decisions but also help customers discover products, compare alternatives, read reviews, and get quick responses to their questions.

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