

# Influence of Social Media on the Consumers' Buying Behaviour

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**ABSTRACT** -- *The social media platform is considered to be one of the most efficient ways in marketing brands online and attracting the customers. There is a high percentage of individual's access to these platforms as soon as they awake. Social media are computer mediated technologies that facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas, career, interest and other forms of expressions via virtual communities and networks. The variety of stand-alone and build-in social media service currently available introduces challenges of definition. Social media use web based technologies, clerk top computer and mobile technologies to create highly interactive platforms through which individual, communities and organizations can share, co-create business and modify user generated content or pre-made content posted online. The social media became a very useful tool in buying decision making. It is influencing consumers in a dynamic manner. Now customer is taking help of social media regarding purchase of any product. Social media like Facebook, Twitter, Skype, etc. are going to play a very important role in consumers buying behaviour. So, the social medias are increasingly influencing and changing the way the consumers behave and how they make the decision to buy and the consumers' behaviour depends upon their personality, attitude and the previous experiences. The study focuses on the influences of social media on consumer buying behaviour with special reference to Malappuram and to know the awareness level of consumers towards social media. In addition, this study will identify the relevance of social media to our society.*

**Keywords**--*Social marketing, social media, social networks, buying behaviour, advertisement, etc.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Social media have given plenty of opportunities to consumers in adapting different aspects in life. Facebook, Twitter and Instagram have played significant role in expanding consumer's online purchases. So that Oman and other Arabian countries are facing shortages in utilizing these sites efficiently. We still have substantial evidence of its use. The people were communicating with other people without a language in olden days. There is a massive change in the method of communication in modern days. Social media have become a convenient way to communicate among all levels of people. Today, social media is the service on the internet with major number of users counting more than 1.79 billion participants around the world. Consumers today are progressively utilizing technology and particularly social media have played important role in spreading this phenomenon faster. The social media platform is considered to be one of the most efficient way in marketing brands online and attracting the customers. There is a high percentage of individual's access to these platforms as soon as they awake.

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## **II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Foux (2006) found that social media is perceived by consumers as a more trustworthy source of information regarding products and services than corporate-sponsored communications transmitted via the traditional elements of the promotion mix.

Vollmer and Precourt (2008) mentioned that consumers are turning more frequently to various types of social media to conduct their information searches and to make their purchasing decisions.

Li and Bernhoff (2008) studied various social media platforms and found that many of which are completely independent of the producing/sponsoring organization or its agents, magnify consumers' ability to communicate with one another. This groundswell has profoundly affected all aspects of consumer behaviour, and has bestowed consumers with power they have not previously experienced in the marketplace.

Mangolj and Faulds (2009) found that social media has influenced consumer behaviour from information acquisition to post-purchase behaviour such as dissatisfaction statements or behaviours.

Dash (2011) explored the relevant factors applicable for online marketing awareness, purpose of use and usage of social networking sites and concluded that college students are well aware about different social networking sites and their use and popularity is increasing. Hence, it is serving as a very good medium to connect students.

Sliva, et al. (2011) made an attempt to understand the usage pattern of social media among youth in the city of Mumbai. It also aimed at assessing the influence of social media on the consumer buying behaviour. The results indicated that social media is a very important tool for networking among youngsters.

Bashar, Ahmad and Wasiq (2012) studied the effectiveness of social media as a marketing tool and analyzed the extent social media helps consumers in buying decision making. The results suggested that the medium is growing very fast and holds huge potential but is still in its nascent stage in India.

Pietro and Eleonora Pantan (2012) investigated to what extent social networks, as Facebook, influence consumer's purchasing decision. They find that enjoyment is a key determinant of social networks usage as tool for supporting the purchasing decision. They concluded that the use of the Facebook for information searching on products and brands and perceived ease of use of the provided tools influence consumers attitude in using the system as supporting tool for their purchasing decision.

## **III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The study focuses on the influences of social media on consumer buying behaviour with special reference to Malappuram and to know the awareness level of consumers towards social media. In addition, it identifies the relevance of social media in our society. The social media platform is considered to be one of the most effective ways in marketing brands online and attracting the customers. The social media is where consumers congregate and business wants to be contemporary society has accepted the presence and use of social networks in their platforms as soon as they awake. The study is conducted to analyze the influences of social media on the buying behaviour of consumers and the relevance in the society.

## **IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To study the awareness level of consumers towards social media.
2. To study the influences of social media on consumers buying behaviour.
3. To study the factors of social media influences towards the consumers buying behaviour.

## V. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

There is no significant difference between awareness regarding social media and age of the respondents.

## VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design used for this study is descriptive research. The source of data may be primary as well as secondary. The primary data were collected from 100 respondents using convenience sampling with the help of questionnaire. The secondary data were collected from published sources.

## VII. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

**Table 1:** Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age (years)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 20	15	15
20-30	53	53
30-40	17	17
Above 40	15	15
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data.

Out of 100 respondents, 15% of the respondents are under the age group less than 20 years, 53% of them are in the age group 20-30 years, 17% of them are in the age groups 30-40 years and 15% of them are in the age group above 40 years.

**Table 2:** Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	45	45
Female	55	55
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data.

Table 2 shows that 45% of the respondents are male and 55% are female.

**Table 3:** Awareness about Social Media

Level of Awareness	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Highly aware	30	20
Aware	60	59

Less aware	10	13
Not aware	0	8
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data.

Out of 100 respondents, 30% of respondents highly aware of social media and 60% of them have aware of social media. 10% of them have less aware of social media.

**Table 4:** Social Media Platform Used Daily by Social Media Users

Category	Used		Not used	Total
Face book	Frequency	57	43	100
	Percentage	57	43	100
Whatsapp	Frequency	75	25	100
	Percentage	75	25	100
Instagram	Frequency	80	20	100
	Percentage	80	20	100
Others	Frequency	30	70	100
	Percentage	30	70	100
Total	Frequency	20	80	100
	Percentage	20	80	100

Source: Primary Data.

In the case of Facebook, almost 57% of the respondents are used and remain 43% of them are not used. In the case of WhatsApp, 80% of the respondents are used and 20% of them are not used. Instagram is used by 75% of the respondents and 25% of them are not used. In the case of Twitter, 30% of the respondents are the users and 70% of them are not used.

**Table 5:** Frequency of Visit

Frequency	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Daily	80	80
Weekly	12	12
Monthly	5	5
Rarely	3	3
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data.

Table 5 shows that 80% of the respondents visit social media on a daily basis, 12% of them visit weekly, 5% of them visit monthly and 3% of them visit social media rarely.

**Table 6:** Unplanned Purchase Due to the Social Media Exposure

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Never	5	5
Rarely	45	45
Sometimes	35	35
Often	10	10
Always	5	5
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data.

Out of 100 respondents, 45% of the respondents are purchasing due to social media rarely, and 35% of them purchase sometimes. 5% of the respondents are always purchasing due to social media exposure.

**Table 7: Influence of Social Media in Purchase Behaviour**

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1-3	57	57
3-5	35	35
5-7	5	5
7-9	3	3
9-11	0	0
Above 11	0	0
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data.

About 57% of the respondents are buying the product with the influence of social media in the range of 1-3. 35% of the respondents are involved in the range of 3-5. 5% of the respondents are buying the product and they included in the range of 5.7. 3% of them are involved in 7.9.

**Table 8: Motivational Factors**

Motivational Factors	Weighted Average Score	Rank
Posted videos	3.84	1
Posted photos of products	3.74	2
Current trends	3.29	3
Positive comments of previous year	2.79	4
Others	2.15	5

Source: Primary Data.

The posted videos are the most important motivational factor to buy product through social media, because it has the highest rank with the average of 3.84. Posted photos of products are ranked second place with the average score of 3.74. Current trends are ranked third place with an average of 3.29.

**Table 9:** Preferred Social Medias

Social Medias	Weighted Average Score	Rank
Instagram	4.06	1
Whatsapp	3.52	2
Face book	3.28	3
Twitter	2.57	4
Quoro	1.87	5

Source: Primary Data.

The Instagram is ranking the top with the average of 4.06 followed by the Whatsapp with an average of 3.52. Respondents ranked the Facebook as third with an average of 3.28. The Twitter and Quora are less than general average of 3.

**Table10:** Shopping Attitude on Social Media

Shopping Attitude	Weighted Average Score	Rank
Shopping in the social media is interesting.	4.36	1
Shopping in the social media is useful for me.	4.18	2
Shopping in the social media is enjoyable.	4.17	3
Shopping in the social media makes my life easier.	4.09	4

Source: Primary Data.

It is clear that, based on their shopping attitude on social media, the respondents provide highest rank to shopping in the social media is interesting. It ranked with an average of 4.36. They give second rank to shopping in the social media is useful for me rank with an average of 4.18 and lowest rank provided to shopping in the social media makes my life easier.

**Table11:** Opinion about Electronic Word of Mouth

Opinion	Weighted Average Score	Rank
Comments about product in social media are relevant.	3.81	1

The comments about product in social media have sufficient information.	3.6	2
The comments about product in social media are timely.	3.59	3
The comments about product in the social media are accurate.	3.56	4

Source: Primary Data.

Table 11 shows that respondents give more priority to relevancy of comments. They rank with an average of 3.81. Then second priority to comments about product in social media has sufficient information. The third rank provided to the comments about product in social media is timely rank with an average of 3.59. The lowest rank provided to the accuracy of comments about product rank with an average of 3.56.

**Table 12:** Opinion about Social Media Advertisement

<b>Opinion</b>	<b>Weighted Average Score</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Advertisement in social media is entertainment.	4.46	1
I pay attention to social media advertisement.	4.41	2
Advertisement in social media is informative.	3.93	3
Advertisement in social media is honest.	2.85	4

Source: Primary Data.

The respondents are giving priority to social media advertisement are entertaining one and it stands first place with an average of 4.46. And with ensures that the people are pay attention to social media advertisement which stands second place with an average of 4.41. Third rank to advertisement in social media is informative and least rank provided to the honest of social media advertisement rank with an average of 2.85.

**Table 13:** Public Response

<b>Opinion</b>	<b>Weighted Average Score</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Social media introduce new product which is not known.	4.5	1
Social media provides easy comparison of products and services.	3.78	2

Social media helps to recall the product more easily.	3.51	3
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Source: Primary Data.

The table shows that the public responses regarding the social media, the response are ranked each of them on a priority basis. The first rank, with an average of 4.5 provided to the statement that the social media introduces new product which is not known. And second rank to social media provides easy comparison of product and services and ranked with an average of 3.78. The lowest rank is to recall the product more easily with an average of 3.51.

**Table 14:** Association between Age and Awareness regarding Social Media

Age (years)	Highly Aware	Aware	Less Aware	Not Aware	Total
Less than 20	4	9	2	0	15
20-30	18	33	2	0	53
30-40	5	10	2	0	17
Above 40	3	8	4	0	15
Total	30	60	10	0	100

Source: Primary Data.

The calculated chi square value (7.4328) is less than the table value (16.919) at 5 per cent level of significance. Hence, we accept the null hypothesis. Thus, there is no significant difference between awareness regarding social media irrespective of their age.

## VIII. FINDINGS

1. Vast majority (53%) of respondents fall under the age group of 20-30 years. 55% of the respondents are female.
2. The majority of respondents (60%) are aware about social media. Most of them (80%) are using Instagram.
3. Most of the respondents are ranked on top of with an average of 4.06 and 80% of the respondents are daily visitors of the social media. Majority of the respondents are the follower of advertisement on social media.
4. Majority respondents are purchasing the product with an influence of social media. Hence, social media is affecting the buying behaviour of consumers.

## IX. CONCLUSION



Social media refers to the means of interactions among people in which they create, share and or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. Social media marketing is a powerful way for business of all sizes to reach prospects and customers. It is the process where organizations use social media websites to build rush on their company official websites. It does not stop here but organizations also inform the potential consumer's happenings in the organizations, launch of the new model or product and latest news about the organization through social media application. From the study, it was found that there is great and deep influence of social media in the buying behaviour of the customers. The buying behaviour of the people are much more affected and stimulated by the social media, services and their products. The social media gives greater and convenient knowledge and awareness to the consumers and they will be well aware of the product by the different kinds of information. The social media in a way educated the customer's free of cost. The people are more affected the customers and that may influence their buying behaviour.

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