

## EXPLORING THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING IN GUIDING CUSTOMER CHOICES

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### ABSTRACT

*This study examines the links between demographic traits, social media platform usage, and engagement indicators in order to investigate the influence of social media marketing on customer purchasing decisions. Based on a survey of fifty respondents, the study used a quantitative research design and descriptive and correlational analysis. The results show that the most popular social media sites among the middle-class, mostly youthful, gender-balanced sample are Facebook and Instagram. Click-through rates and shares have the largest positive associations with purchase influence, according to correlation study, underscoring their important role in influencing consumer decisions. Click-through rates and shares have a greater influence on purchasing decisions than likes and social media time, even though they also positively correlate with them. The least strong relationship is seen between buying behavior and comments. The findings imply that in order to successfully influence consumer purchase decisions, social media marketing strategies should concentrate on increasing engagement through click-throughs and sharing. The significance of focused social media marketing initiatives in influencing consumer behavior in the digital era is highlighted by this study.*

**Keywords:** *Social Media Marketing, Guiding Customer Choices, Demographic Traits, Gender-Balanced, Consumer Behavior, Purchase Influence, Social Media Platforms, Social Media Engagement, E-Marketing, Digital Marketing.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The most widely used and important E-marketing instrument available today is social media. Websites that link millions of people from all over the world who share similar interests and hobbies are referred to as social media. Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, and Facebook are a few examples of social media marketing. Therefore, social media marketing is the most advanced, affordable, quick, and efficient electronic marketing tool when compared to traditional marketing. It allows consumers to easily learn about and explore the features of goods that interest them, and even complete the purchase and sale process without having to physically visit the product or place. Social media marketing, in which companies use social media to promote their brands and products, uses social networking sites as a marketing tool. Social media marketing is crucial for internet marketing. Social networking sites are the most effective method that is frequently used to connect users and users of the same organization. Social media marketing gives the business a more human face while facilitating direct customer input. Social media is an early type of mobile and internet applications that facilitate information sharing among users. It broadens the individuals' communication and bond. Users can expand their network of contacts, which they can then show as a list of pals. These pals could be people they know or met online and have no other connection to, or they could be real friends they have met IRL. People may connect through social media marketing at a minimal cost, which can be very helpful for small firms and entrepreneurs trying to increase their customer base. Businesses can also place text and banner adverts on social networking platforms to advertise. Conduct business internationally; social media platforms can help you maintain contact with people all around the world.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

**Shawky, S., et.al., (2020)** suggested a dynamic architecture that addresses four different customer involvement levels on social media and specifies the right metrics for each level. Online entertainment stages are currently ordinary instruments for correspondence that encourage connections and present opportunities for purchaser collaboration. Straightforward dyadic connections among purchasers and advertisers have been reclassified by them, and they

presently include more complex cooperations including various entertainers, including partners, clients, associations, and non-clients. Scholars have recommended for more research on the function of engagement in multi-actor ecosystems in acknowledgment of the remodeling of client involvement. By improving knowledge of the social media customer engagement process and putting forth an experimentally supported framework with suitable metrics for measuring customer engagement, our study aims to close this knowledge gap. In order to investigate the process of creating and sustaining customer interaction on social media from the viewpoints of social media marketing practitioners and users, thirty-two interviews were performed.

**Cheung, M. L., et.al., (2021)** used a qualitative research methodology utilizing data from several domains, including the SM platform, organization, and consumer domains. Social media (SM) is a well-established platform that allows businesses to co-create value with stakeholders and customers. SM's function in relationship marketing, or relationship development, is unclear, nevertheless. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to look into the application of SM as a relationship marketing tool. There were three particular yet associated investigations did. The consequences of the three examinations are joined to make a complex image of online entertainment's job and application in relationship promoting. The discoveries show that SM is giving relationship promoting new headings and approves its viability as a vehicle for accomplishing relationship advertising goals. The work has theoretically expanded Grönroos's relationship marketing process model by incorporating social media perspectives. The findings imply that management should put in place initiatives to further promote the benefits of social media, including those that help audiences become better informed customers, humanize brands, improve the product experience, and offer customer support.

**Dwivedi, Y. K., et.al., (2021)** inspected how shopper conduct and company rehearses have developed because of the web and online entertainment. Through less costs, better brand openness, and higher deals, social and computerized showcasing present firms with various open doors. Then again, vexatious and obtrusive web-based brand presence, along with horrible electronic verbal, present difficult issues. Various top experts on themes associated with computerized and web-based entertainment promoting have contributed their bits of knowledge

to this article. Alongside perspectives on additional engaged subjects like man-made consciousness, increased reality showcasing, computerized content administration, portable promoting and publicizing, B2B promoting, electronic informal, and moral issues in that, the specialists' viewpoints give a careful story on key parts of this huge point. By framing the exploration holes, featuring the restrictions of the ongoing work, and creating questions and suggestions that can encourage information in the field of computerized and social showcasing, this study gives a significant and ideal commitment to researchers and experts the same.

**Carlson, J., et.al., (2019)** supplied marketing managers with fresh perspectives on how CP may support retail brands' attempts to create value and how these efforts help retailers develop their brands. Current literature identifies new avenues for leveraging consumers to participate in the brand experience and co-create value. In the retail business, practically little is had some significant awareness of the effect of customer participation (CP) on esteem age and brand relationship execution results in virtual entertainment brand networks. To research how retail customers acquire esteem from CP in virtual entertainment brand networks, this study applies Administration Prevailing Rationale and the utilization esteem hypothesis. The effect of consumer psychology (CP) on useful, close to home, social, and entitativity values — which are all connected to mark relationship execution results — has been affirmed by observational proof assembled from 584 consumers.

**Ebrahim, R. S. (2020)** expected to explore what brand trust and brand value are meant for by social media marketing (SMM) tasks regarding brand steadfastness. The significance of confidence in grasping social media marketing's belongings social media stages are currently utilized into marketing systems. Organizations can utilize the new instruments and specialized devices given by this innovation to draw in and speak with both current and expected customers. Underlying condition demonstrating was utilized to gather and assess information from a web-based survey of 287 Egyptian people who follow telecom organizations on social media. The discoveries showed that there are only three parts to SMM exercises: stylishness, personalization, and verbal. These social media marketing qualities straightforwardly affect brand dedication and

an optional effect on brand value through the mediation of brand trust. The review underscores the significance of trust and gives ideas for checking social media marketing viability.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Research Design**

In order to investigate the relationships between demographic characteristics, social media platform usage, and their influence on purchase influence, this study uses a quantitative research design with a focus on descriptive and correlational analysis. Through the analysis of both descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients, the research hopes to shed light on the ways in which various variables interact and impact consumer behavior.

#### **3.2. Data Collection**

A structured survey was used to gather data from a representative sample of respondents. The survey was designed to collect data on demographic variables, including age, gender, and income levels (Table 1). It also recorded social media usage patterns, such as the frequency of use for different platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Snapchat (Table 2). Engagement metrics, such as time spent on social media, likes, shares, comments, and click-through rates, were also recorded to examine their relationship with influence on purchases (Table 3).

#### **3.3. Data Analysis**

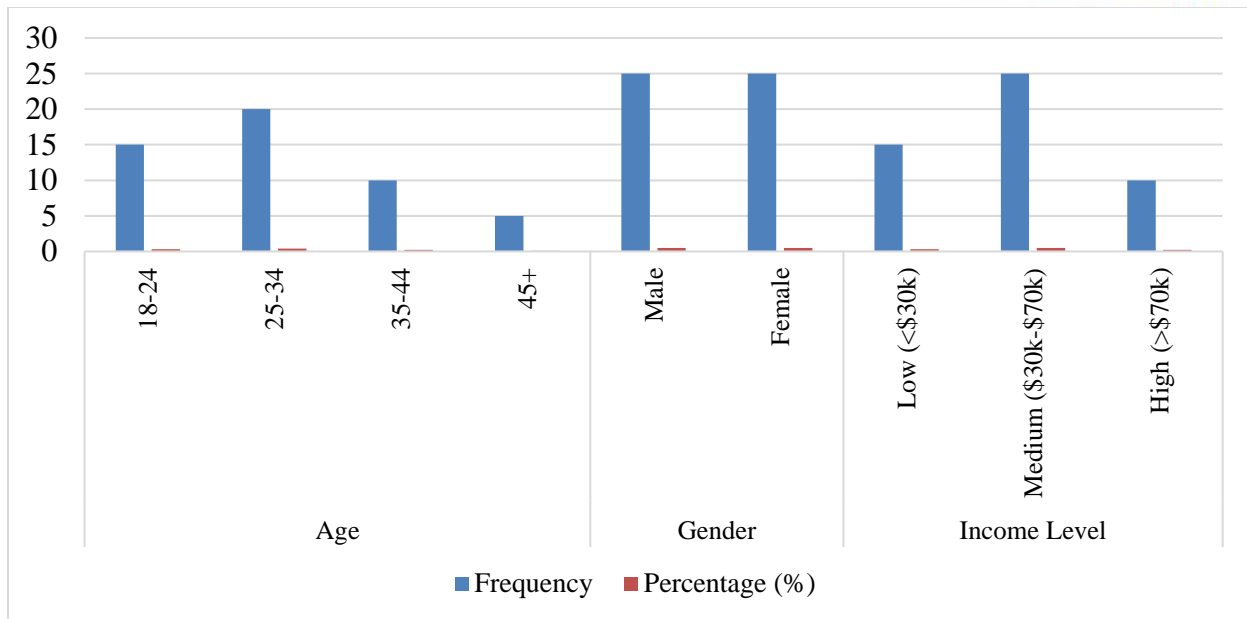
To provide a clear picture of the sample composition and platform preferences, the data analysis involved computing frequencies and percentages for demographic and social media usage variables (Tables 1 and 2). The intensity and direction of the links between various social media engagement activities and their influence on purchase behavior were then evaluated using Pearson correlation coefficients (Table 3). The purpose of this investigation was to determine which engagement metrics had the strongest influence on purchases.

#### 4. DATA ANALYSIS

According to Table 1, the majority of respondents in the sample are between the ages of 25 and 34 (40%) and 18 to 24 (30%), with the older age groups (35–44 and 45+) making up 20% and 10% of the sample, respectively. There is a 50/50 gender distribution in which men and women make up half of the sample. In terms of earnings, half of the participants have a moderate income ranging from \$30k to \$70k, 30% are in the low-income range (<\$30k), and 20% are in the high-income range (>\$70k). This distribution shows a sample that is young, gender-balanced, and primarily middle-class.

**Table 1. Distribution of Demographics**

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	18-24	15	30.00%
	25-34	20	40.00%
	35-44	10	20.00%
	45+	5	10.00%
Gender	Male	25	50.00%
	Female	25	50.00%
Income Level	Low (<\$30k)	15	30.00%
	Medium (\$30k-\$70k)	25	50.00%
	High (>\$70k)	10	20.00%

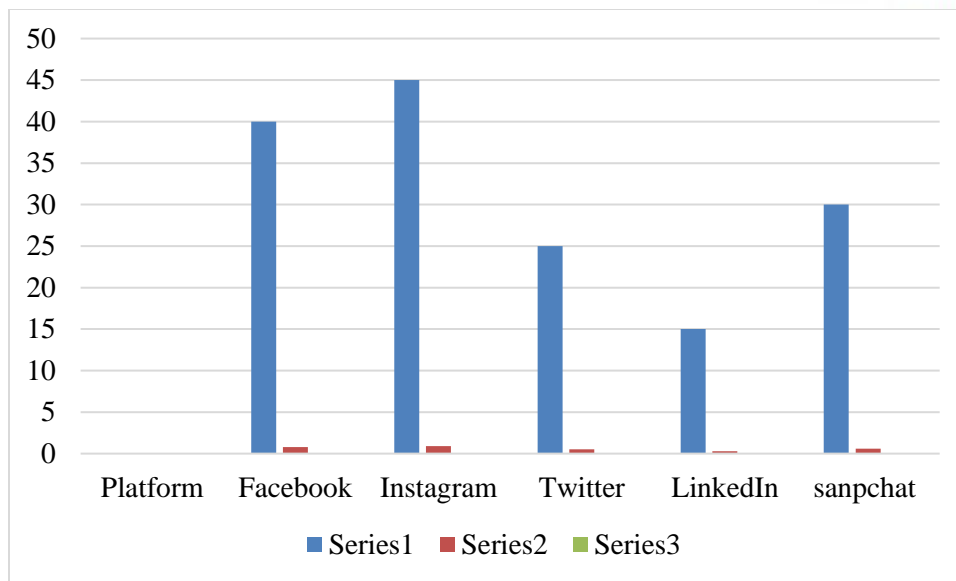


**Figure 1: Graphical Representation of Distribution of Demographics**

Table 2 reveals that, with 90% of the respondents using it, Instagram is the most popular social media network, closely followed by Facebook at 80%. TikTok is also heavily used, with 60% of users. On the other hand, 30% of respondents use LinkedIn, and 50% of respondents use Twitter. This suggests that people have a significant preference for visually appealing and entertaining networks like Instagram and TikTok, whereas they are less engaged with text-based and professional platforms like LinkedIn and Twitter.

**Table 2: Usage of Social Media Platforms**

Platform	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Facebook	40	80.00%
Instagram	45	90.00%
Twitter	25	50.00%
LinkedIn	15	30.00%
Snapchat	30	60.00%



**Figure 2: Graphical Representation of Usage of Social Media Platforms**

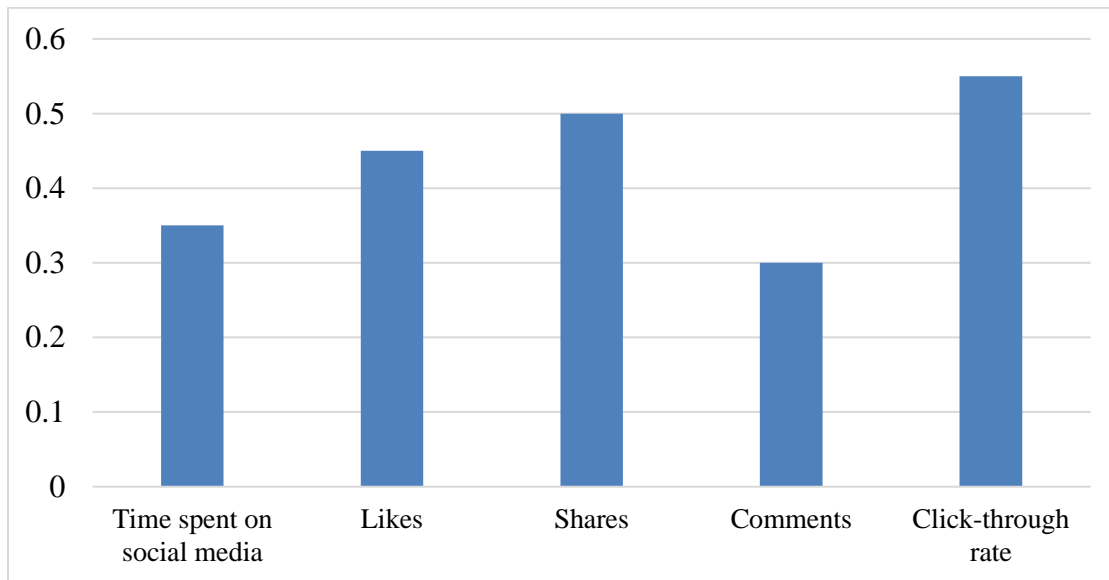
The association between social media engagement measures and purchase influence varies, as seen in Table 3. The click-through rate ( $r = 0.55$ ) shows the largest correlation, indicating a strong positive relationship between users' propensity to make a purchase and the frequency with which they click on links. Additionally, there is a strong association between shares ( $r = 0.50$ ) and purchasing decisions, suggesting that individuals who share content are more likely to be persuaded. While comments have the lowest association ( $r = 0.30$ ), likes and social media time spent have modest correlations ( $r = 0.45$  and  $0.35$ , respectively), suggesting that these interactions have less of an effect on purchasing behavior. In general, it seems that engagement activities—such as sharing content and clicking links—have the biggest impact on buying decisions.

**Table 3. Relationship Between Purchase Influence and Social Media Participation**

Variable	Correlation Coefficient (r)
Time spent on social media	0.35
Likes	0.45
Shares	0.5



Comments	0.3
Click-through rate	0.55



**Figure 3: Graphical Representation of Relationship Between Purchase Influence and Social Media Participation**

## 5. CONCLUSION

According to the analysis, Facebook and Instagram are the two social media networks that respondents use the most frequently, with Instagram being the most commonly utilized. The sample is gender-balanced, primarily young, and has a middle-class income distribution, according to the demographic profile. The highest relationships between purchase influence and engagement indicators, such as click-through rates and shares, show how powerfully these actions can influence consumer decisions. Likes and social media time spent have positive associations as well, but they don't have the same effect as shares and click-through rates. The least strong relationship exists between comments and purchasing influence. Overall, the results indicate that in order to effectively influence customer decisions, social media marketing strategies should concentrate on optimizing engagement through click-throughs and shares.

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