

OPEN ACCESS

Volume: 11

Special Issue: 2

Month: February

Year: 2024

E-ISSN: 2582-0397

P-ISSN: 2321-788X

Impact Factor: 3.025

Received: 15.01.2024

Accepted: 10.02.2024

Published: 12.02.2024

Citation:

Meenalochani, K., and Cassandra Jacqueline Quilley. "The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Buying Behaviour towards Small Scale Businesses in Sub Urban Areas - A Study." *Shanlax International Journal of Arts, Science and Humanities*, vol. 11, no. S2, 2024, pp. 136–40.

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.34293/sijash.v11iS2-Feb.7437>

The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Buying Behaviour towards Small Scale Businesses in Sub Urban Areas - A Study

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Introduction

Social media marketing has become a pivotal force shaping consumer buying behaviour, particularly for small scale businesses operating in suburban areas. In recent years, platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter have transformed the way businesses connect with their target audience. One of the most significant impacts of social media marketing is its ability to facilitate direct engagement between businesses and consumers. Through interactive posts, targeted advertisements and influencer collaborations, small-scale businesses can establish a more personal and relatable brand image, fostering trust and loyalty among consumers. Moreover, social media platforms offer unparalleled opportunities for businesses to showcase their products and services, providing visually appealing content and real-time updates on promotions and sales. This constant exposure not only increases brand awareness but also influences purchasing decisions by creating a sense of urgency and desire. Additionally, social media enables businesses to gather valuable insights into consumer preferences and behaviours through analytics tools, allowing for more tailored marketing strategies. As a result, the influence of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour towards small-scale businesses in suburban areas cannot be overstated, as it continues to redefine the dynamics of commerce and interaction in today's digital age.

In recent years, the proliferation of social media platforms has transformed the landscape of marketing, offering small scale businesses in suburban areas unprecedented opportunities to engage with potential consumers. This study seeks to investigate the intricate relationship between social media marketing strategies and consumer buying behaviour within the context of small scale businesses operating in suburban locales. As traditional marketing channels

evolve, understanding how social media influences consumer decisions becomes paramount for businesses aiming to thrive in competitive markets.

Social media has emerged as a powerful tool reshaping the landscape of marketing and consumer behaviour. Its influence extends far beyond merely connecting individuals; it has become a dynamic platform for businesses, particularly small-scale enterprises in suburban areas, to engage with their target audience and drive purchasing decisions. This introduction delves into the significant influence that social media marketing exerts on consumer buying behaviour, specifically focusing on its implications for small businesses operating in suburban regions.

Review of Literature

This section provides a comprehensive review of existing literature on social media marketing and consumer behaviour, emphasizing studies relevant to small scale businesses and suburban markets. It explores theoretical frameworks, such as the social influence theory and the consumer decision-making process, to elucidate the mechanisms through which social media exerts its impact on consumer buying behaviour. Furthermore, it examines empirical research and case studies to identify trends, challenges and best practices in leveraging social media for marketing purposes within suburban settings.

Muhammad Shafiqul et al., (2004)

In the analysis, the researchers concentrated on finding the relationship of social media and buying behaviour of customer. The study involved the students of academic Institutes of Karachi. Around two hundred and sixty questionnaires were answered by the students. The study finds that there is no strong relationship between Customer Buying behaviour and social media.

Mir et al., (2012) [8]

Thousands of web news groups and chat rooms influence the purchase decision of shoppers. The image of the brand increases when many users provide positive opinion about the brand.

Vij & Sharma (2013)

The paper suggested the measures for effective Social Media Marketing (SMM) strategies that social media marketing content should be “interesting”, “informative”, “interactive” and “reliable”. Marketers should align their social media marketing effort with the changing tastes and preferences of customers.

Prof. Assoc. Dr. Elenica Pjero et al., (2015)

The researchers conducted the study in Albania reality sector. Their article targeted on social media and its capacity to effect buying behaviour of customer. The researchers discussed the growth and adaptability of Social Media networks by numerous users in the world. There searchers made a multifaceted analysis on the impact of social media on consumers and buying intentions. The samples are selected from users of social media in all dimensions and the result depicts the significant behaviour of consumers.

Research Methodology

- This study utilized the descriptive method of research. As widely accepted, the descriptive method of research is a fact-finding study that involves adequate and accurate interpretation of findings.

- Descriptive research describes a certain present condition and relatively this method is appropriate to this study.

Objectives of The Study

- To assess the impact of social media marketing.
- To identify effective social media strategies.
- To understand consumer preferences and behaviour.
- To explore the role of social influence.
- To examine the effectiveness of different social media platforms.
- To evaluate the impact of content strategies.

Sampling Design

Research is designed for two sampling plans. It consists of three divisions: Sampling unit, Sampling size and Sampling procedure.

Sampling Procedure

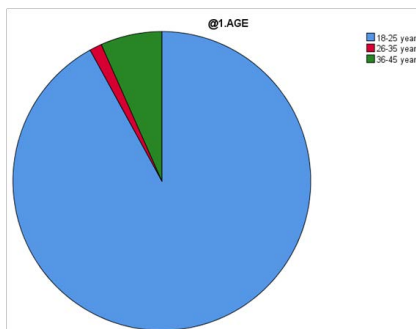
- We cannot take the whole population for the study, so it was taken from 25 customers.
 - The process of selecting sample from the population is known as sampling.
 - The cluster of respondents taken for the study from the total population is sample.
- For the present study purpose, simple random sampling has been selected. Simple random sample is used because every elementary unit has got equal chance to be included in the sample.

Data Analysis

Table 4.1.1 Table Showing The Respondents based on Age

Age					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-25 years	69	92.0	92.0	92.0
	26-35 years	1	1.3	1.3	93.3
	36-45 years	5	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

Chart 4.2.1 Chart Showing the Respondents based on Age



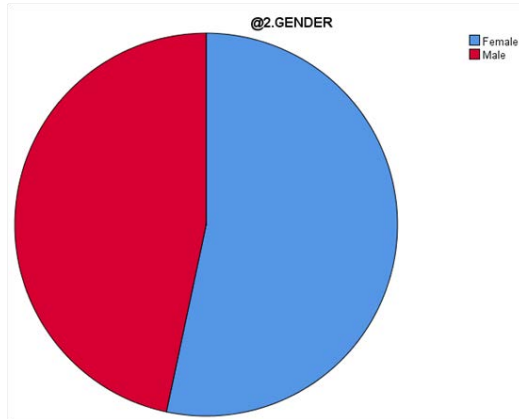
Interpretation

From the above table 4.1.1 the respondents are 92.0% are of 18-25 years, 1.3% are of 26-35 years, 6.7% are of 36-45 years. It has been identified that majority of the respondents are 92.0% of the age group 18-25 years.

Table 4.1.2 Table Showing The Respondents based on Gender

Gender					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	40	53.3	53.3	53.3
	Male	35	46.7	46.7	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

Chart 4.2.2 Chart Showing The Respondents based on Gender



Interpretation

From the above table 4.1.2 the respondents are 53.3% are female respondents and 46.7% are male respondents. It has been identified that majority of the respondents are 53.3% of female respondents.

Findings

- Social media marketing significantly contributes to increasing brand awareness and visibility for small scale businesses in suburban areas. The findings indicate that active presence on social media platforms helps these businesses reach a wider audience and establish a stronger brand identity within their local communities.
- Small scale businesses leveraging social media marketing observe higher levels of consumer engagement compared to traditional marketing channels. The interactive nature of social media platforms facilitates direct communication and interaction with consumers, leading to increased engagement, feedback, and brand loyalty.
- Social media marketing plays a crucial role in influencing consumer purchase intentions towards small businesses in suburban areas. Consumers are more likely to make purchasing decisions based on recommendations, reviews, and promotional content encountered on social media platforms, highlighting the persuasive power of social media marketing.

Suggestions

- Conduct thorough research to understand the demographics, preferences, and behaviors of your target audience in suburban areas. Tailor your social media marketing strategies to resonate with their interests and needs.

- Identify the social media platforms most popular among your target audience in suburban areas. Focus your efforts on platforms where your audience is most active, whether it's Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, or others.
- Develop high-quality, engaging content that showcases your products or services in a visually appealing and informative manner. Use a mix of photos, videos, testimonials, and user-generated content to capture the attention of suburban consumers.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study underscores the pivotal role of social media marketing in shaping consumer buying behavior towards small scale businesses in suburban areas.

By elucidating the intricacies of this relationship, it offers valuable insights and recommendations for businesses seeking to leverage social media effectively to enhance their market presence and competitiveness in suburban markets. Ultimately, this research contributes to the broader discourse on the evolving landscape of marketing in the digital age and its implications for small businesses in suburban communities.

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