

# Influence Of Social Media Engagement On The Online Purchase Behaviour Of Customers

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## Abstract

Customers who are technologically aware depend heavily on social media sites to learn about, comprehend, and create opinions on products. These social media organizations employ a variety of strategies to draw customers and keep them interested in their media postings, including photographs, videos, blogger reviews, shop reviews, after-purchase feedback etc. Social media platforms are regarded as a one-stop shop where both customers and sellers carry out a variety of marketing strategies. Everything from product search to product reviews to post-purchase reviews occurs on a single social media platform, with spillover effect on other social media platforms. This article aimed to assess the influence of customer engagement in social media on the purchase behaviour of customers in Kerala. The study found that customer engagement practices followed by the social media sites differ from one to another.

**Key Words:** *Social Media, Customer Engagement, Online Retailers, Online Shopping, Online Purchase behaviour*

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## 1.Introduction

In modern era there are dozens more products with comparable features and uses in contemporary internet retail stores. Only new and distinctive products are chosen by consumers. In the age of social marketing, when advertisements and reviews of products are posted on many websites, including Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter, they have a direct impact on consumers' attitudes, perceptions, and decisions to purchase or refrain from purchasing (Vu et al.2001). Technology-savvy consumers rely extensively on social media platforms to research items, understand them, and form judgments about them. These social media organizations employ a variety of strategies to draw customers and keep them interested in their media postings, including photographs, videos, expert and blogger reviews, retailer reviews, after-purchase feedback, etc. (Lin et al, 2019) Marketers highlight the significance to look for creative ways to communicate with customers, especially as customer involvement is expected to play a large role in the online world, particularly via social media. Customer interaction is a key marketing idea, and the rise of social media has only emphasised how important it is. Consumers are more inclined to conduct research before making a purchase since they are spending more money on essentials and lifestyle requirements. In order to successfully operate in the modern business world, a brand needs to have a strong online presence. Through social media, marketers hope to maintain their brand awareness across various customer categories, spread information about their products, set them apart from competing goods, facilitate consumer purchasing activities, establish geographic presence for their goods and services, and so on. (Paquette and Holly 2013). The use of high end technology and the provision of individualized services have joined these components of privacy and security as part of social media marketing.

## 2.Review Of Literature

Compared to previous decades, Indian consumers' shopping habits have seen a major transformation (Yasav 2015) Various product makers and marketers use social media marketing techniques to promote their goods to final consumers (Cvijikj and Michahelles 2013). Customers may interact with products and brands more successfully through social media (Hollebeek et al. 2014) The behaviours of users who participate on social media transcend beyond transactions and can be more precisely described as consumer behaviour manifestations with a social media focus, beyond purchases brought on by motivating drives (Doorn et al,2010). Customers believe that social networking advertisements encourage them to engage in social media buying because they are entertaining, informative, full of information, and superbly featured (Kujur and Singh 2017). The buyers purchase decisions are influenced by the reviews, opinions, and experiences posted on social media platforms by

private individuals or by those who work for stores (Jothi and Gaffoor 2018). As technology developed, consumers increasingly gained access to digital and social media platforms that allowed them to interact with brands and share their opinions. To interact with customers more directly, several firms transferred their promotional efforts from traditional media to digital means. Early studies and concepts of customer engagement fell behind the current technological advancements that are continually creating new opportunities for client-firm contact. However, commercial marketing strategies encouraged investments aimed at creating distinctive brand experiences through interactive multimedia environments as digital platforms expanded over the previous years (Paruthi and Kaur 2017). Relationship marketing has significantly changed and expanded as a result of the broad acceptance of new technologies in general and the expanding popularity of social media in particular (Steinhoff et al., 2019). Marketing professionals are now using social media to find highly engaged clients for particular marketing initiatives. (Kumar et al. 2010) Positive and negative attitudes among consumers are developed through active participation in social media networking. Consumers are developing a conflicted sense of anxiety and trust around the adoption of social media shopping methods (Muhammed et al.,2021). The use of social marketing techniques aids producers and marketers in promoting their brands and has direct, indirect, and reverberant effects on customer purchasing behaviour (Unnava and Arvindakshan 2021). Customer appreciation on social media influences their post-buy behaviour, and customer pleasure with the social media post influences their purchasing behaviour (Hingad et al., 2022).

### 3.Statement of the Problem

Social media platforms quick adoption and widespread use have given e-commerce a new dimension of growth and development and made online purchasing a reality. According to a Times of India survey, 467 million Indians regularly use social media and spend, on average, 2 hours every day perusing various social media sites. Social media platforms are regarded as a one-stop shop where both customers and sellers carry out a variety of marketing strategies. Product search, product promotions, product reviews, purchase completion, and post-purchase reviews all take place on a single social media platform, and they have an impact on both online purchasing behaviour and other social media platforms. Although research on consumer interaction are becoming increasingly important from a theoretical and managerial standpoint, academics still don't have a standard framework for analysing consumer participation via social media (Paruthi and Kaur 2017). Our understanding of the development of consumer engagement research is still limited since there isn't a thorough, current evaluation that takes into consideration its expression on social media. This study intends to examine how social media networking sites' engagement strategies affect consumers' purchasing decisions.

### 4.Objectives of the Study

- To study the customer engagement practices in social media.
- To assess the impact of customer engagement in social networking sites on their online purchase behaviour.
- To understand the various customer engagement practices followed by the online retailers in social media
- To determine the customer satisfaction towards customer engagement practices in social media

### 5.Research Methodology

The study is descriptive in nature and is constructed on the basis of the quantitative data analysis method. The Palakkad district's social media users are regarded as the research population. There are 7 taluks in the district (Palakkad, Chittur, Alathur, Ottapalam, Mannarkkad, Pattambi and Attappadi). Out of the seven taluks, three taluks (Palakkad, Ottapalam, and Mannarkkad) were chosen for a small sample survey based on 50 respondents from each taluk (regions selected randomly). At the conclusion of the data collection period, the authors were successful in gathering 125 fully completed questionnaires from the 150 social network users who had been reached (based on conveniences). The validity of the measurement was evaluated in this study using Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient.

### 6.Data Analysis and Discussion

#### 6.1.Demographic profile of the respondents

With the help of social media platforms like YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and others, new generation e-commerce is becoming more and more significant. Indians who are well-educated and technologically savvy shop easily by reading reviews, perusing products, and constantly visiting social media sites.

**Table 1:Demographic Profile Of The Social Media Consumers**

Demographic Profile	No of Respondents (N=125)	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	51	40.80
Female	74	59.20
<b>Age</b>		
Up to 25 Years	41	32.80
26-40 Years	68	54.40
41-60 Years	16	12.80
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	39	31.20
Married	86	68.80
<b>Monthly Income</b>		
Below (Rs.) 10,000	27	21.60
10,001- 30,000	45	36.00
30,001-Rs. 50,000	45	36.00
50,001 and Above	8	6.40
<b>Educational Qualification</b>		
Professional Degree	39	31.20
Post-Graduation	36	28.80
Under Graduation	50	40.00

Source: Primary Data

**Interpretation of Table-1**

An empirical study of 125 social media viewers and users found that women made up 59.20 percent of the sample while men made up 40.80 percent. Age distribution of social media users was as follows: 25 years (32.8%), 26–40 years (54.40%), 41–60 years (11.2%), and 61 years (6.1%). About 68.80% of the samples were married, and 68.80% of the sample had a good education, meaning they were either undergraduates or postgraduates. The samples' monthly incomes were divided evenly at 36% into two ranges: Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 30,000 and Rs. 30,001 to Rs. 50,000.

**6.2.Impact Of Social Media On Customers Buying Behaviour**

Social media is a dynamic source of social evidence, which is a crucial factor for customers to take into account while making purchases.

**Table 2:Impact Of Social Media On Customers Buying Behaviour**

Variables	Sum	Mean	Rank
Influence Product Purchase Decisions	541	4.33	1
Continue Repurchase (Frequently)	420	3.36	2
Prepared to Purchase Various Products	381	3.05	3
Recommending to Others (Sites)	270	2.16	5
Get Introduced to the Social Media Brands	275	2.20	4

Source: Primary Data

**Interpretation of Table-2**

It has been observed that continuous engagement in social media influences product purchase decision of the customers (Mean 4.33), influences them to continue buying products promoted through social media frequently (Mean 3.36), decides to buy other products promoted on these sites (Mean 3.05), get introduced to other brands (Mean 2.20) and also start recommending the products to others (Mean 2.16).

**6.3.Customer Engagement Practices In Social media**

Customers are engaged in social media pages of the online retailers as it helps them in getting the updated information about the products offered by the retailers. Various strategies are adopted by the online retailers in engaging the customers.

**Table 3:Customer Engagement Practices In Social media**

Variables	Sum	Mean	Rank
Attractiveness Of Online Retailer	536	4.29	1
Shared on Information about the Products with Consumers (Reliability, Accuracy and Validity)	524	4.19	2
Sharing Experience about the Products	504	4.03	4
Usefulness of the Information Shared	505	4.04	3
Support in Product Selection	489	3.91	5
Validity of Ads on Social Media	487	3.90	6

Nature of Pursuance Created	443	3.54	9
Value of Time Spend	448	3.58	8
Product Search	459	3.67	7

Source: Primary Data

**Interpretation of Table-3**

Number of benefits are realised by the consumers by engaging in social media sites on a regular base. Samples have notified that they are attracted by the online retailers’ promotion. They trust the information shared on the social media sites, believe the information as useful and reviews experiences shared by the earlier users. Sample have also convey that through social media engagement they are able to choose right products, support them in search of needy products and trust the ads and promotion made in these sites and are reliable/valid. Consumers also think that they spend quality time in reviewing/watching products/services promotions and pursuance to buy the product/service is developed.

**6.4.Customer Engagement Practices In Social Media And Its Impact On Buying behaviour**

A multiple regression analysis is performed to measure the association between customer engagement practices in social media and their its impact on their buying behaviour (BB). Impact of social media on customers buying behaviour is considered as independent variable and the customers’ engagement in social media activities is recognized as dependent variable.

**Table 4:Multiple Regression Association Between Customer Engagement Practices In Social Media And Its Impact On Buying behaviour**

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	β	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
Constant	2.969	.034	-	86.42	.000	-	-
Attractiveness Online Retailer	.108	.015	1.156	7.17	.000	.192	5.20
Shared on Information the Products with Consumers (Reliability, Accuracy and Validity)	.088	.022	-.913	4.03	.00	.097	1.32
Sharing Experience about the Products	.036	.018	.392	2.96	.053	.13	1.01
Usefulness of the Information Shared	.172	.037	-1.719	4.70	.00	.037	2.76
Support in Product Selection	.106	.031	1.15	3.43	.00	.04	2.73
Validity of Ads on Social Media	-.017	.019	-.197	0.89	.38	.102	3.85
Nature of Pursuance Created	.011	.028	-.129	0.40	.69	.049	2.47
Value of Time Spend	.052	.023	.579	2.28	.03	.077	1.97
Product Search	.007	.025	-.072	0.26	.79	.066	1.11
R	.753						
R <sup>2</sup>	.567						
F Value	9.486						
Sig	.000						

Level of Significance: 5 per cent

Note: BB-Buying Behaviour, Note: AORE -Attractiveness Online Retailer, SIPC -Shared on Information the Products with Consumers (Reliability, Accuracy and Validity), SEPR -Sharing Experience about the Products, UISH -Usefulness of the Information Shared, SPSS -Support in Product Selection, VASM - Validity of Ads on Social Media, NPCR -Nature of Pursuance Created, VTSP -Value of Time Spend and PRSE -Product Search

$$Y=2.969+.108(AORE)+.088(SIPC)+.036(SEPR)+.172(UISH)+.106(SPSS)-.017(VASM)-.011(NPCR)+.052(VTSP)-.007(PRSE)$$

**Interpretation of Table-4**

Measure of association between the two variables tests is accounted to 65.30 per cent, Regression revealed as 56.70 per cent of relationship between the variables (independent and dependent). The study revealed that the customers’ engagement in social media is more influenced by the factors like: attractiveness of online retailer,

shared on information about the products with consumers (reliability, accuracy and validity), usefulness of the information shared, support in product selection and value of time spend in search /review of products.

**6.5. Online Retailers and Customer Engagement practices in Social media**

The services provided by the online retailers are different to a great extent and that the customers preference of online retailers are based on the innovative services provided by them. The services provided by online retailers influences the customer engagement practices in social media.

**Ho: There is no significant differences in the online retailers preferred by the social media viewers and the nature of customer engagement practices**

**Table 5: Online retailers preferred by the social media viewers and the nature of customer engagement practices in social media**

Variables	Flip Kart		Snap Deal		Amazon		Meesho		F Value	Sig
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Attractiveness Online Retailer	4.330	1.39	4.25	1.39	4.32	1.07	4.19	1.14	.104	.96
Shared on Information of the Products with Consumers	4.33	1.05	4.50	0.54	4.21	1.17	4.00	1.07	.61	.61
Sharing Experience about the Products	4.20	1.01	3.00	1.31	4.13	1.17	4.00	1.07	2.48	.06
Usefulness of the Information Shared	4.000	0.93	4.00	0.76	4.10	1.14	3.94	1.03	.181	.91
Support in Product Selection	4.00	0.93	4.00	0.76	4.01	1.25	3.61	1.12	.92	.44
Validity of Ads on Social Media	4.00	0.93	4.00	0.76	3.96	1.31	3.68	1.33	.43	.74
Nature of Pursuance Created	3.47	1.06	3.75	0.46	3.62	1.30	3.35	1.28	.42	.74
Value of Time Spend	3.60	0.74	3.50	0.54	3.68	1.23	3.39	1.38	.44	.73
Product Search	3.60	0.74	4.00	0.76	3.73	1.23	3.48	1.24	.57	.63

Source: Result obtained using SPSS \*Significant 5% level

**Interpretation of Table-5**

Social media subscribers acknowledge that different social media sites adopt different strategies of customer engagement practices. The computed one-way ANOVA test are not found to be significant at 5 per cent level and hence the hypothesis is rejected and it has been concluded there exists differences in the online shopping retailers preferred by the social media viewers and the nature of customer engagement practices followed by the social media sites. Each social media platforms adopt different strategies to attract and influences the viewers.

**6.6.Customer Satisfaction Towards Social Media Engagement**

Customer satisfaction on the engagement practices in social media is reflected in the quality of products purchased by them online. To understand the satisfaction towards the engagement practices is of great importance to the online retailers as it guides them in improving their social media presence.

**Table 6: Customer satisfaction level towards social media engagement**

Variables	Sum	Mean	Rank
Products/Service Purchased	506	4.05	1
Review on Product/Services	503	4.02	2
Reliability Validity and Accuracy and Information	486	3.89	4
Customer Connectivity	463	3.70	5
Reliability of Promotion Advertisement	488	3.90	3
Others	423	3.38	6

Source: Primary Data

**Interpretation of Table-6**

Social media sites viewers are found to be satisfied with the nature (brand) of products or services they purchased (81%), reviews made by the bloggers/experts/users (80.40%), promotions made for a product/services

(78%), appreciate accuracy of information (77.80%), customers connectivity (74%) and product descriptions, post usage satisfaction, product delivery etc., (67.60%)

## 7.Results and Discussion

Overall review and assessment of data summaries that women (59.20 per cent) are major social media viewers, the viewers at the age group of 26-40 years (54.40 per cent) and they are found to be techo-savvy cum well-educated (68.80 per cent). Majority 98.40 per cent of the online buyers reviews or say pre purchase assessment about a product/services by reviewing/watching social media promotions. Most of the online shoppers prefer to buy from international reputed retail stores functioning online (Amazon-56.80 per cent). The viewers primarily shop food, travel customized services online. Majority of viewers review YouTube post (videos) and it greatly influences their purchase decision and post purchase satisfactions. The study found that customer engagement practices followed by the social media sites differ from one to another. Social media sites differ in their services provided to customers such as attractiveness, usefulness of information shared, support in product selection, nature of pursuance created, help in product search etc. Majority of customers are satisfied with the online purchases done by them based on the high engagement in social media sites. The online retailers should promote their products/brands through social media sites by adopting innovative customer engagement practices at the same time they have to focus on their customer engagement practices that support the viewers to share their experience online with friends, relatives and others. Advertisements on social media should be very informative and attractive and should motivate the viewers to buy the products and help them in making better buying decisions.

## 8.Conclusion

Businesses work to increase customer engagement because satisfied customers are less likely to switch brands and offer advantages to the businesses including recurring business and favorable word of mouth. The article concludes by stating that majority of the online shoppers are engaged in the social media reviews and they are attracted to purchase various types of goods.. As the role of social media marketing is getting prominence in recent years, even local and regional business houses aims to promote their business through social media sites. Social Media are not only considered as a medium of entertainment or information, in modern day world it is used as a mighty tool to attract, persuade and retain the large consumers' base that traditional retailers brick and mortar were slowly losing to the online retailers and large scale MNCs. Social media participation by small retailers give them a hope of survival and sustainability. Customer engagement is a topic of intense managerial interest, and the analysis of prior research yields useful recommendations. Managers must give priority to initiatives that improve the customer engagement process given how technology has impacted business and consumer contacts on a regular basis and how active consumers are on social media.

## 9. Suggestions

While a customer is purchasing online, the marketers need to control the entire online experience:

1. To effectively engage their customers in a two-way conversation, online retailers must boost the website's interactivity.
- 2.They must concentrate on improving both hedonic and utilitarian qualities of their online shopping platforms in order to evoke pleasurable experiences.
- 3.Online retailers should concentrate on providing quality information and personalized advertisements through their social media pages that will lead to online purchase decision.
4. To make online buying more enjoyable, benefits like discounts, sales, cash-backs, product diversity, and convenience need to be improved.
5. For a pleasant user experience, the social media online navigation must be simple and fluid.
6. As a result, in order to captivate and eventually engage their clients, online retail firms must concentrate on providing latest information about their products in their social media pages to increase online experience.
7. Specific marketing plans and initiatives must be developed and put into place to take gender disparities in the customer engagement in social media.

## 10.Limitations and Directions For Future Research

Like all research, this study has some drawbacks but also offers insightful recommendations for future investigations. Only online shopping brands were the subject of this research. It was unable to integrate certain additional antecedents of online brand experience, such as the influence of online communities active on social media. A combined framework could contain a number of variables that affect customer involvement, such as motivation and customer beliefs and attitudes. Future researchers can take this into consideration. Cultural contexts, which were not included in this study, have an impact on both experience and involvement. As a result, by including it into the future framework, culture can also be researched. Additionally, all of the respondents in our research samples were from the Palakkad area. Future studies will be able to gather information on consumer social media usage across the entire state of Kerala, making the findings more representative of the broader population. Customer engagement differ according to gender and this research has not considered the gender

disparities in social media engagement. Future research can be done on the gender disparities which will create a better understanding of the concept. This study will make it easier for online businesses to rethink their service marketing and management approaches. Additionally, it encourages the desire to conduct more study on experience and loyalty management. More research is required to examine how the newest types of social media effect customer involvement because it is a relatively new phenomenon.

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