

# A Study on Social Media Advertisements and their Influence on Consumers Buying Behaviour

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**Abstract - Social Media is gaining dominance in our society and taking center stage in defining how businesses are engaging with potential customers and the citizens. Companies entered Social Media to expand and maintain their online reputation. Social networks like Facebook and Twitter are daily destinations for millions of consumers. 21<sup>st</sup> century is a witness to the rapid surge in internet-based messages transmitted through these media. Various aspects of consumer behavior including awareness, information acquisition, opinions, attitudes, purchase behavior and post purchase communication and evaluation has been influenced by the social networking sites. This study intends to assess the influence of Social Media advertisements on consumers in Ernakulam district. Various statistical tools like percentages, chi-square, Likert's analysis using median, was performed on the data. Statistical software called SPSS was used to analyze the data. With the study of impact of social media advertising on consumers' buying behavior, the result showed that consumers have positive attitude towards these advertisements. This factor could help companies to increase their brand awareness and brand building through social media advertising.**

**Keywords: Social Media, Buying behavior and Advertisement.**

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## INTRODUCTION

The invention of the internet has brought about countless changes in human life. Social Media is a popular mode for social communication. The 21<sup>st</sup> century uses Social Media networking in their day-to-day life. The growth of this particular media attracts the attention of advertisers as a more productive source to bring in consumers. In today's competitive world, brands are fighting for space in the minds of consumers. Though the traditional modes of advertising and marketing media like television, print media and outdoor media still contribute to a major chunk of the advertising budget, they cannot be solely relied upon to ensure reach to the target audience. The usage of Social Media like Blogs and networking sites for marketing of products is gaining momentum in the present times.

It is practically impossible to design a marketing strategy without considering social networks. Social media had

become a really important gradient in today's marketing mix in general, and in promotion mix particular. Adapting some form of marketing online through social media is a key node for all businesses, especially in an industry where trends in fashion and handicrafts changes constantly. The impact of social media technology is accelerating and we can expect it to have a similar impact on businesses now and into the future. Social Media Marketing is the hottest marketing concept and every business owner wants to know how social media can generate value for their business.

With sites like Face book, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube etc. attracts more than five million users every day. Having a presence on these sites is a must for all marketing organizations. Besides attracting a large number of prospective customers, the cost of Social Media for advertising is comparatively much lower than the other mass media options. Social Media websites helps to generate interest in the brand and also to build trust in the company. This goes a long way in the brand building exercise. It helps the company stay in constant touch with its customers, know their preferences and upgrade, their products and services accordingly. It gives them enough room to receive prompt feedback from them. A satisfied customer spreads positive electronic word-of-mouth for the brand and thus enhances the brand equity. All in all, it helps a company to increase awareness of its brand, generate leads, build its customer base, and improve sales and market share.

## NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The internet revolution is certainly making its impact in India with more users realizing its importance. In this digital age, Social Media has become an important part of our daily life. Most of us check news feeds, post tweets and do other Social Media activities before doing anything else in the morning. A study published by the Digital Analytics Grant ComScore reveals that 25% of all online minutes spent in India are on Social Networking websites. Social Media have become the one of the leading activities on web.

Social Media is gaining dominance in our society and taking center stage in defining how businesses are engaging with

potential customers and the citizens. Companies entered Social Media to expand and maintain their online reputation. Social networks like Facebook and Twitter are daily destinations for millions of consumers. 21<sup>st</sup> century is a witness to the rapid surge in internet-based messages transmitted through these media. Various aspects of consumer behaviour including awareness, information acquisition, opinions, attitudes, purchase behaviour and post purchase communication and evaluation has been influenced by the social networking sites.. Hence it is highly significant to carry out a study on the Impact of Social Media Advertisements on consumers.

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

With the growing importance of internet in day-to-day life, Social Media has gained rapid acceptance in the minds of the users. Most of the companies strive to ensure their presence felt on Social Media websites to attract large number of potential customers. Corporates spend enormous funds behind advertising of their brands on Social Media websites. Hence this study intends to assess the influence of Social Media advertisements on consumers in Ernakulam district. The problem under study is stated as "A Study on Social Media Advertisements and Their Influence on Consumers' Buying Behaviour".

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are

1. To find out the effect of social media advertisements on consumers' buying behavior.
2. To find out whether there is any difference in buying behavior based on social media advertisements among gender groups.

### HYPOTHESIS

The attitude towards social media advertisements may differ in males and females. Attitude has an influence on the buying behavior of consumers. This may differ among gender groups. In this study, the difference in buying behavior based on social media advertisements among gender groups is assessed. For this, the hypothesis created is:

$H_0$ : There is no significant difference between male and female on purchase with information from social media sites.

$H_1$ : There is significant difference between male and female on purchase with information from social media sites

### SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study on the impact of Social Media advertisements on consumers, is confined to Social Media usage pattern, purchase decision, attitudes and preferences of consumers residing in Ernakulam district.

### DATA AND METHODOLOGY

#### Method of sampling

The sampling technique to be used is convenience sampling. The sample size of the study was 70. The questionnaire was put over Google Forms and the collected data was stored in Google Drive. The collected data has been statistically analysed with the use of SPSS.

#### Tools for data collection

The data for the study was collected through primary and secondary sources. The main tool used for primary data collection is questionnaire. The survey was conducted online by preparing the questionnaire using Google Forms. The questionnaire was sent to all the facebook users by posting the link on facebook profile page and also through e-mails. Secondary data will be collected through books, magazines and websites.

#### Tools for analysis

Various statistical tools like percentages, chi-square, Likert's analysis using median, was performed on the data. Statistical software called SPSS was used to analyse the data.

### DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### Distribution according to Gender of respondents

Table 1

#### Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	48	68.6
Female	22	31.4
Total	70	100.0

#### Source: Primary Data

The number of respondents was 70 in which 48 were males and the remaining 22 were females. The table 1 shows that out of 70 respondents' majority i.e., 68.6% are male and the remaining 31.4% are female.

**Distribution on the basis of Age of respondents**

**Table 2**  
**Age of Respondents**

Age	Frequency	Percent
Below 18	3	4.3
18 to 23	25	35.7
24 to 29	33	47.1
30 to 35	6	8.6
Above 35	3	4.3
Total	70	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Out of 70 respondents only 3 were below 18, 25 respondents were from the age group of 18 to 23, 33 of them were from the age group of 24 to 29, 6 from the age group of 30 to 35 and 3 respondents are above 35. From the table 4.2 it is clear that most of the respondents i.e., 47.1% belong to the age group of 24 to 29 and the least are from the age groups below 18 and above 35, i.e., only 4.3%. 82.8% of respondents belong to the age group of 18 to 29 which indicates that social media is mostly used by the youth. In the study 'Effectiveness of Social Media as a Marketing Tool: An Empirical Study' by Abu Bashar also has been found that younger people are using social media more than any other groups.

**Distribution according to the occupation of respondents**

**Table 3**  
**Occupation of respondents**

Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Business	6	8.6
Employment	25	35.7
Profession	8	11.4
Student	22	31.4
Others	9	12.9
Total	70	100.0

Source: Primary Data

There are only 6 respondents who are businessmen, 8 respondents from profession, 25 employees, 22 respondents are students and 9 from others. Others include who are part time workers, house wives etc., The table indicates that most of the respondents are employees (35.7%) and students (31.4%) and the least are from business.

**Positive attitude towards social media advertising-analysis**

Respondents were asked to mark their opinion on a set of statements in order to assess their attitude towards social media advertisements. They were asked to rate the statements from '1 strongly disagree to '5 strongly agree. The analysis is done by calculating the median for each statement.

**Advertisement in social media sites persuade to buy a product**

This statement helps to know to what extent an advertisement in social media influence the buying behaviour of respondents.

**Table 4 a**  
**Persuade to buy the product**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	2	2.9
Disagree	5	7.1
Neither agree nor disagree	18	25.7
Agree	37	52.9
Strongly agree	8	11.4
Total	70	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Out of 70 respondents, 10% respondents have negative attitude towards this statement, 25.7% are indifferent and 64.3% respondents are positive to this statement. It is clear that most of the respondents agree that the advertisements in social media sites influence the buying behaviour.

**Ads that are seen on profile pages are relevant to their Interests**

Most of the advertisements that are shown in the profile pages of the social media users are related to their interests. This statement checks whether the respondents agree to this.

**Table 4 b**  
**Relevant to interests**

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	8	11.4
Neither agree nor disagree	26	37.1
Agree	28	40.0
Strongly agree	8	11.4
Total	70	100.0

**Source: Primary Data**

There is no respondent who strongly disagree the statement, 8 respondents disagree, 26 are indifferent, and 36 respondents are positive towards the statement. From the table 4.14 b. it is clear that majority of the respondents(40%) agree to this statement but at the same time 37.1% of the respondents are indifferent to this statement. Even though a major portion of the respondents agree that the advertisements that are seen on their profile pages are relevant to their interests, there are respondents who neither agree nor disagree. The graphical representation is given below

**Refer to friends/family through social media sites before buying**

Social media is a platform where people share their opinions, experiences etc. They may refer to their friends/families through these sites before buying a product. This is known as electronic word of mouth. And this opinion influences their buying decision.

**Table 4 c**

**Refer to friends/families**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	5	7.1
Disagree	11	15.7
Neither agree nor disagree	15	21.4
Agree	29	41.4
Strongly agree	10	14.3
Total	70	100.0

**Source: Primary Data**

Out of 70 respondents 5 respondents strongly disagree to this statement, 11 respondents disagree, 15 are indifferent, 29 respondents agree and 10 respondents strongly agree to this. Here also the respondents show a positive attitude. 41.4% of respondents agree that they refer to friends/connections before

buying a product. This indicates that users share their experiences and opinions on a particular brand through social medias and this may influence the buying behaviour of consumers.

**Ads in social media sites help in choosing product/services**

Through social media advertisements customers get to know about different products that are available in the market. This helps to compare different brands in terms of quality, price, etc. and choosing the best from the available brands.

**Table 4 d**  
**Helped to choose products**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	5	7.1
Disagree	4	5.7
Neither agree nor disagree	17	24.3
Agree	33	47.1
Strongly agree	11	15.7
Total	70	100.0

**Source: Primary Data**

Out of 70 respondents 9 respondents are in the opinion that social media advertising does not help in choosing products, 17 respondents are indifferent to the statement, 44 respondents agree to the statement. The table shows that 47.1% of respondents agree that a social media advertisement helps in choosing products/services.

**Like to receive information via social media advertisements**

This statement helps to know the attitude of respondents towards social media advertisements.

**Table 4 e**  
**Like to receive info**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	5	7.1
Disagree	5	7.1
Neither agree nor disagree	8	11.4
Agree	40	57.1
Strongly agree	12	17.1
Total	70	100.0

**Source: Primary Data**

Out of 70 respondents 40 respondents (i.e,57.1%) agree to this statement, 17.1% of respondents strongly agree, 7.1% of

respondents strongly disagree , 7.1 % of respondents disagree and 11.4% of respondents are indifferent. Ther

**Cumulative Analysis**

**Table 4**  
**Statistics**

	Persua de to buy the produ ct	Releva nt to inter ests	Refer to friends/fam ilies	Helpe d to choose produ cts	Like to receive informat ion
No. of responde nts	70	70	70	70	70
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Median	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00

(Source : Computed data)

The table 4.14 shows that the median value of all the statements is 4 which indicates that most of the respondents agree to the statements which indicates that social media advertisements persuade to buy a product, advertisements shown in social media sites are relevant to the interests of users, social media enables electronic word of mouth, social media advertisements helps to choose products and people like to receive information via social media advertisements.

**4.5. Ever purchased any product on the basis of social media ads**

**Table 5**  
**Purchased any product**

	Frequency	Percent
No	28	40.0
Yes	42	60.0
Total	70	100.0

**Source: Primary Data**

This table indicates that most of the respondents(60%) have purchased products/services on the basis of information received from social media advertisements.

**Testing of Hypothesis**

It may be differences in buying behaviour among different gender groups. The hypothesis has been tested using chi-square . The level of significance set for this 5% with degrees of freedom (d.f) 1.

**H<sub>0</sub> :** Ho: There is no significant difference between male and female on purchase with information from social media sites.  
**H<sub>1</sub> :** There is significant difference between male and female on purchase with information from social media sites.

**Table 6**  
**Gender \* Purchased any product**

		purchased any product		Total
		no	yes	
gender male	Count	14	34	48
	% within gender	29.2%	70.8%	100.0%
	% within purchased any product	50.0%	81.0%	68.6%
	% of Total	20.0%	48.6%	68.6%
female	Count	14	8	22
	% within gender	63.6%	36.4%	100.0%
	% within purchased any product	50.0%	19.0%	31.4%
	% of Total	20.0%	11.4%	31.4%
Total	Count	28	42	70
	% within gender	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%
	% within purchased any product	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%

**Source: Computed data**

If the p value is less than or equal to .05 we accept the alternative hypothesis. The p value of the above chi-square table is .006 which is less than .05 so we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis and conclude that there is significant relationship between gender and purchase decision. In other words there is different attitude among different gender groups for purchase of products on the basis of information from social media sites. Therefore there is significant difference between male and female on purchase with information from social media sites.

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.468 <sup>a</sup>	1	.006		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	6.101	1	.014		
Likelihood Ratio	7.431	1	.006		
Fisher's Exact Test				.009	.007
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.362	1	.007		
Nof Valid Cases	70				

**FINDINGS OF THE STUDY****Demographic Factors**

It has been found that social media is the latest 'fad' among the youth. The majority of the respondents (47.1%) comes under the age group of 24 to 29. Most of the respondents are employees (35.7%) and students (31.4%). It has been found from the study that social media advertisements persuade the respondents to buy a particular product.

One of the main advantage of social media advertisement is that it enables customized advertising. In this study respondents agree that the advertisements seen on their profile pages are relevant to their interests. Social media is a platform where people share their experiences and opinions to their friends and families. In this study most of the respondents agree that they refer to their friends/families before buying a product.

47.1% respondents agree that social media advertisements helps in choosing products/services. More than half of the respondents said that they like to receive information via social media sites. Most of the respondents (60%) have purchased products/services on the basis of information they received through social media advertisements. Most of the respondents (60%) have purchased products/services on the basis of information they received through social media advertisements.

**SUGGESTIONS**

Advertising must be informative, interactive, promotional and in innovative form to hold the audience. It should target the individuals than the mass. Social media advertisements must be customized according to the interests of social media users.

Marketers should pay more attention to customers' information and feedback that they could get from social media, because social media advertisements are considered to be two-way communication. Social media advertisements influence the buying behaviour of consumers to a great extent, so providing a 'buy button' or a link in the advertisements will be convenient to users and it also helps to increase sales.

Mobile phone has become the main device used by people to access social media sites. So it is necessary to design the advertisements in an effective display format. Youth are the main users of social media sites, so social media advertisements should focus on youth's interests, and preferences.

**CONCLUSION**

Social media is widely used by most of the firms/organizations to market their products/services in the society. The companies resort to social networking sites to generate opinions on the existing and future products that are available in the market. This is an excellent marketing strategy undertaken by most of the companies to draw consumers and elicit public opinion. Such comments or opinions help the organization to redesign their products. Such social media sites are an important way of promoting products and generating opinions.

With the study of impact of social media advertising on consumers' buying behaviour, the result showed that consumers have positive attitude towards these advertisements. This factor could help companies to increase their brand awareness and brand building through social media advertising.

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