

# The Role of Social Media Marketing in Influencing Customer Purchase Decisions and Market Growth in the Marine and Offshore Oil & Gas Sectors

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## Abstract

This study investigates the role of social media marketing in influencing consumer purchase decisions within the marine and offshore oil & gas sectors in Dhaka. The primary objective is to explore how various social media strategies impact consumer behavior and to identify the challenges faced by marketing professionals in this specialized industry. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, data was collected through surveys distributed to 300 consumers and semi-structured interviews with 15 marketing professionals. The findings reveal that a significant majority of consumers perceive social media marketing as influential in their purchasing decisions, particularly when it involves interactive content and user-generated input. Marketing professionals acknowledge the effectiveness of social media but cite challenges such as managing negative feedback and ensuring consistent messaging across platforms. These insights highlight the importance of developing robust social media strategies that enhance engagement and build trust. The study concludes that while social media marketing holds substantial potential for driving consumer loyalty, companies must address the inherent challenges to harness its full value effectively. Overall, this research contributes valuable knowledge to both academic literature and industry practices, offering practical recommendations for optimizing marketing strategies in the marine and offshore oil & gas sectors.

**Keywords:** Social media marketing, consumer behavior, purchase decisions, marine and offshore sectors, Dhaka, marketing strategies, user-generated content.

## Introduction

The evolution of the marine and offshore oil & gas business has seen substantial changes that are related to social media marketing. Social media channels have become vital instruments for stakeholder engagement, brand awareness, and communication in the sector (Buratti, Parola, & Satta, 2018). Even with the growing relevance of social media in the maritime and offshore oil & gas sectors, little is known about their acceptance and influence, especially affecting customer purchase decisions and market growth. The purpose of this research is to fill this vacuum in marketing literature by evaluating literature surveys on social media marketing methods that influence customers and market growth in the marine and offshore oil & gas sectors (Ali, Meysam, & Mohammad, 2024).

The major goal of this study is to assess the role of social media marketing in purchase decisions and

market expansion in the two chosen industries. In particular, it is aimed to discover how the success of social media marketing may be measured and how that affects views and behaviors in the chosen industries (Ali, Meysam, & Mohammad, 2024). Through this research, the study aims at achieving awareness of utilizing social media efforts to reach company goals.

This research is essential as it could help to better understand how social media marketing works in the marine and offshore oil & gas business. The insights gathered could benefit the industry in reaching the results they desire. This research will also provide an academic contribution, especially improving our understanding of digital marketing and industry-related concerns given prior studies on sustainability and corporate social responsibility (Basile, Capobianco, & Vona, 2021; Muralidharan, Dillistone, & Shin, 2011). We intend to offer ideas through our research that these companies can take to harness social media to innovate and push growth in such vital fields.

### Literature review

Social media marketing (SMM) has created beneficial outlets for real-time exchanges between customers and brands in today's environment. Some of the most essential ideas underlying SMM include brand engagement along with customer relationship management and user-generated content, which affect consumers' views and behaviors (Ngai, Tao, & Moon, 2015). Frameworks like the Social Media Capability Model assert that firms need distinct competencies that help get the most out of social media for brand building and consumer loyalty. (Wang, Rod, Ji, & Deng, 2017) In recent systematic evaluations, the transition of SMM over the previous 20 years has been recorded in literature, which illustrates the move from traditional marketing tactics to a more dynamic approach (Bartoloni & Ancillai, 2024). Even with these developments, the majority of studies are being done on the consumer products business, which does not allow significant study of SMM inside the oil and gas industry (Felix, Rauschnabel, & Hinsch, 2017).

Social media has a crucial role in influencing the shopping decisions of people. Studies suggest that customers are using social media to learn about the product, review peer experiences, and contact the brand, which boosts buy intentions (Wibowo et al., 2020). Hasan and Sohail (2021) revealed that local brands with efficient social media marketing exhibit better levels of consumer trust and buy intentions than their non-local competitors. In the same spirit, Hanaysha (2022) found brand trust as a significant mediating factor between social media marketing characteristics and customer purchasing decisions in the fast-food industry. This means that what people write on social media can influence the buying behavior of customers. Nonetheless, there is paucity of research focused on the impact of these set of situations in the maritime and offshore oil & gas business. Cheung, Xiao, and Liu (2014) noted that further research is required on how social information signals affect purchasing decisions in high-stakes and extensively regulated specialty markets.

The maritime and offshore oil & gas business is starting to embrace social media marketing for stakeholder engagement and reputation management. Recent studies describe trends where corporations use social media to promote sustainability and corporate social responsibility themes (Muralidharan, Dillistone, & Shin, 2011). Additionally, Richert, Rogers, and Burton (2015) explored how social media strengthens firm-community connections, allowing communities to effectively voice their thoughts, grievances, and opinions regarding the corporate operations taking place nearby. Moreover, not all authors from the oil and gas business see social media as detrimental for this industry. For example, Basile, Capobianco, and Vona (2021) observe that sustainable business models of the oil and gas sector increasingly resort to social

media methods to help attain societal approval. Nonetheless, there are no big case studies that are available attesting to the effective SMM in the industry. Wanasinghe et al. (2020), however, have stressed the immediate need for studies on trends in digital transformation in oil and gas industries for a better knowledge of how social media might be leveraged for market expansion.

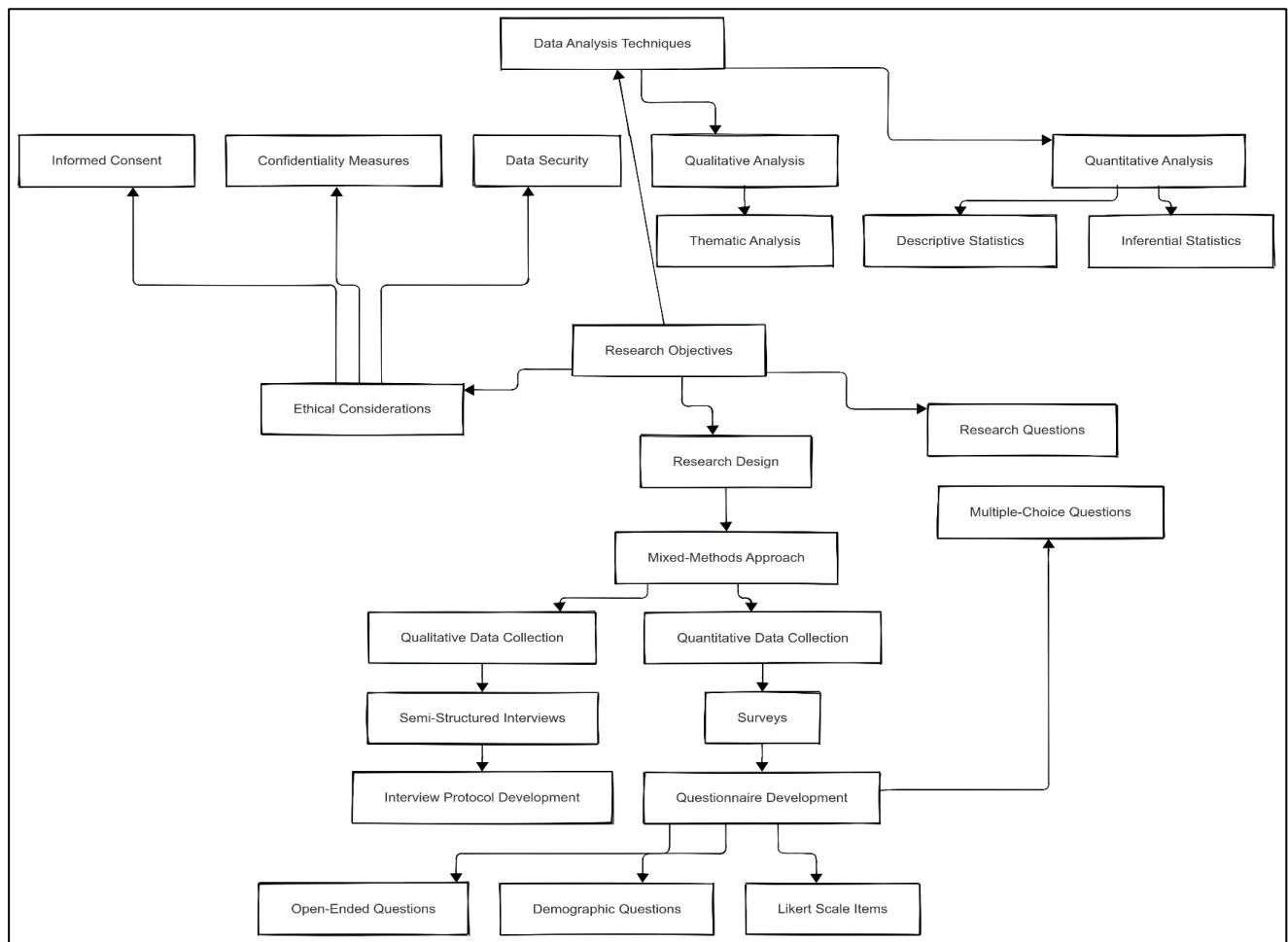
Plus, the incorporation of digital technologies like the Internet of Things (IoT) and digital twins into the oil and gas business brings up tremendous prospects for building innovative and effective marketing campaigns through social media. Using these technologies, firms may develop interactive content to engage consumers more effectively while also delivering real-time information on their operations. In spite of all these improvements, some issues persist, such as misinformation, which the industry needs to cope with, which is under ongoing examination (Tamala et al., 2022).

Though reams of literature are accessible on digital media marketing, its applicability to the marine and offshore oil & gas business is still evolving. Current literature does supply us with all the generally accepted concepts on SMM and customer behavior but is deemed missing on industry-specific practices. This general gap in research shows that further investigations are needed towards the specific SMM practices of the maritime as well as offshore oil & gas sector. Filling these gaps will lead to further studies that will boost understanding and use regarding industry-specific methods for interested stakeholders to enhance their marketing strategy.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study employs a mixed-methods research design, integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches to comprehensively explore the role of social media marketing in influencing customer purchase decisions in the marine and offshore oil & gas sectors within the Dhaka area. The mixed-methods approach allows for a robust analysis by combining the statistical rigor of quantitative data with the rich contextual insights of qualitative data. This dual approach is particularly beneficial in understanding complex phenomena, such as consumer behavior influenced by social media marketing, where numerical data alone may not capture the full spectrum of consumer experiences and attitudes. Figure 1 illustrate Research design process.



**Figure 1: Research design roadmap**

## Data Collection Methods

Data collection for this research was structured into two primary methods: surveys and semi-structured interviews, targeting specific groups within the marine and offshore oil & gas sectors in Dhaka. Surveys were distributed through various online channels, including social media platforms (Facebook, LinkedIn) and email lists associated with industry groups. The survey was accessible for two weeks, with reminders sent to encourage participation. Data collection was structured into two primary methods: surveys and semi-structured interviews.

Surveys were administered to a target group of consumers who have previously interacted with companies in the marine and offshore oil & gas sectors (**table 1**). A total of 300 surveys were distributed online through platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and industry-specific email lists. The survey was accessible for two weeks, achieving a response rate of approximately 70%. The questionnaire featured several components: demographic questions, Likert scale items, multiple-choice questions, and open-ended questions. For instance, participants rated statements related to their perceptions of social media marketing on a five-point Likert scale from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5), such as "Social media marketing influences my decision to purchase products in the marine and offshore oil & gas sectors."

**Table 1: Survey Questionnaire Features**

Question Type	Description	Example
Demographic Questions	Collect basic demographic information	Age, gender, occupation, education level
Likert Scale Items	Assess perceptions using a five-point scale	"Social media marketing influences my decision."
Multiple-Choice	Determine specific behaviors/preferences	Preferred social media platform
Open-Ended Questions	Capture qualitative insights	Suggestions for improving social media marketing

In addition to surveys, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 marketing professionals working in the marine and offshore oil & gas sectors. These interviews aimed to gather deeper insights into marketing strategies and the effectiveness of social media engagement. Each interview lasted between 30 to 45 minutes and was conducted via video conferencing platforms. The interview protocol (table 2) included open-ended questions that encouraged participants to discuss their experiences and perspectives on social media marketing.

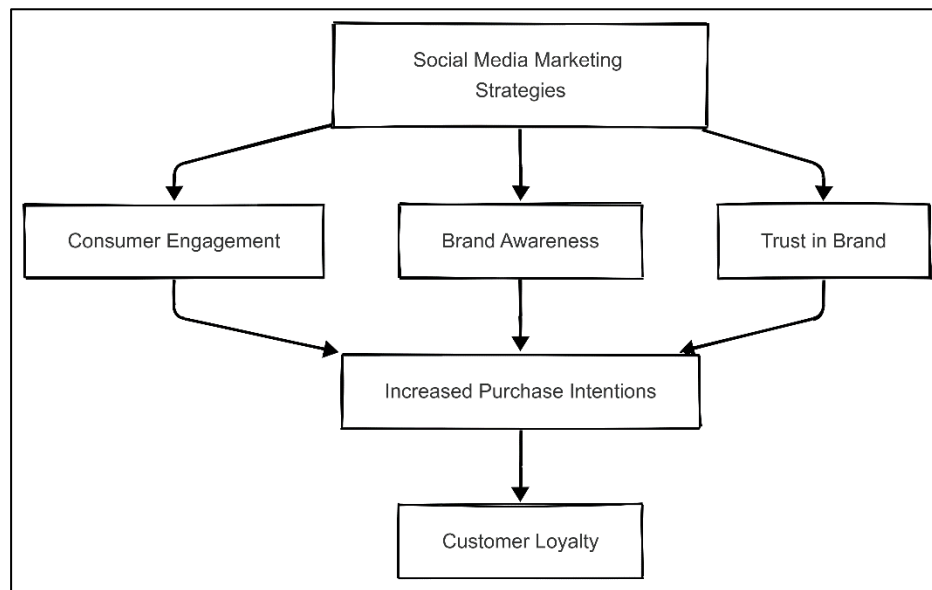
**Table 2: Interview Protocol Features**

Question Type	Description	Example
Open-Ended Questions	Explore perceptions of social media effectiveness	"How do you perceive the effectiveness of SMM?"
Challenges	Identify obstacles in implementing strategies	"What challenges do you face with SMM?"
Success Stories	Gather examples of effective campaigns	"Can you provide examples of successful campaigns?"

## Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative data from surveys were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Descriptive statistics were calculated to summarize participants' responses, including mean scores and standard deviations. Inferential statistics, such as correlation analysis and regression analysis, were employed to explore relationships between consumer perceptions of social media marketing and their purchase intentions.

For qualitative data obtained from semi-structured interviews, thematic analysis was utilized. This process involved familiarization with the data through transcription, coding responses to identify key concepts, generating themes that encapsulated significant insights, and reviewing these themes to ensure they accurately represented the data. **Figure 2** shown Conceptual Framework illustrating the relationship between social media marketing strategies and consumer purchase decisions.



**Figure 2: Conceptual Framework of Social Media Marketing Influence**

## Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were paramount throughout this research process. Prior to data collection, ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional review board. Informed consent was secured from all participants involved in both surveys and interviews, ensuring they understood the purpose of the study, their right to withdraw at any time, and how their data would be used. Participants were assured that their responses would remain confidential and anonymous; no identifying information was collected in the surveys, and pseudonyms were used in qualitative data reporting to protect participant identities. All collected data were stored securely on password-protected devices, accessible only to the research team. Care was taken to ensure that participants' rights were respected throughout the research process. The study adhered to ethical guidelines established by the American Psychological Association (APA), which emphasize respect for persons, beneficence, and justice in research practices.

By employing a mixed-methods approach with a structured data collection process and stringent ethical considerations, this study aims to provide valuable insights into how social media marketing influences customer purchase decisions in the marine and offshore oil & gas sectors in Dhaka. The findings are expected to contribute significantly to both academic literature and practical applications within these industries.

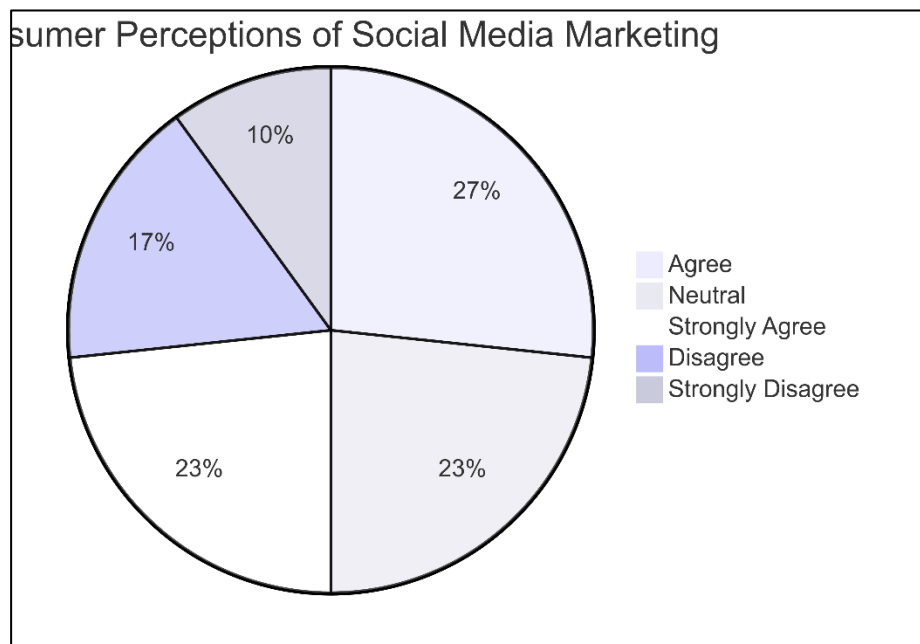
## Result and Discussion

The results of this study are presented through a combination of tables, figures, and descriptive text to provide a comprehensive overview of the findings. The data is organized according to the categories relevant to the research questions, focusing on consumer perceptions of social media marketing, their purchase intentions, and insights from marketing professionals in the marine and offshore oil & gas sectors. **Table 3** summarizes the demographic profile of the survey respondents. A total of 300 participants completed the survey.

**Table 3: Demographic Profile of Survey Respondents**

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age		
18-24	60	20.0
25-34	120	40.0
35-44	75	25.0
45 and above	45	15.0
Gender		
Male	180	60.0
Female	120	40.0
Education Level		
High School	30	10.0
Bachelor's Degree	180	60.0
Master's Degree	90	30.0

The demographic data indicates that the majority of respondents are aged between 25 and 34 years, with a significant representation of individuals holding a bachelor's degree. **Figure 3** illustrates the participants' perceptions of social media marketing's influence on their purchasing decisions based on the Likert scale responses.



**Figure 3: Consumer Perceptions of Social Media Marketing**

The figure indicates that a majority of respondents (70% agree or strongly agree) believe that social media marketing influences their purchasing decisions. **Table 4** presents the analysis of how various social media marketing strategies affect consumer purchase intentions.

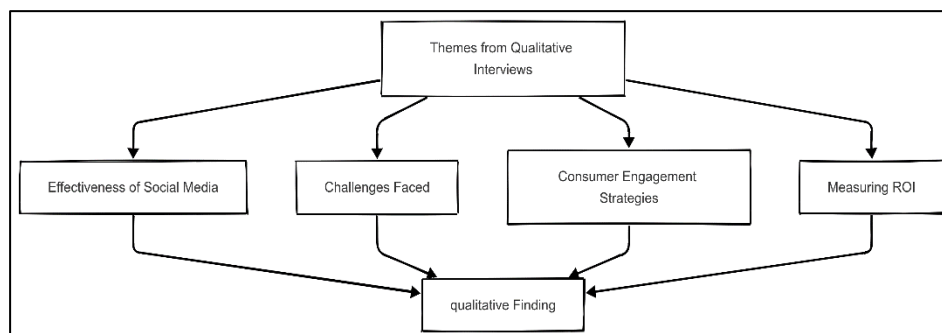


**Table 4: Impact of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intentions**

Marketing Strategy	Mean Score (1-5)	Standard Deviation
Product Promotions	4.2	0.85
User-Generated Content	4.5	0.76
Influencer Endorsements	4.3	0.82
Engagement through Interactive Posts	4.6	0.71

The results indicate that engagement through interactive posts received the highest mean score (4.6), suggesting that this strategy is perceived as most effective in driving purchase intentions. Insights from the semi-structured interviews with marketing professionals were analyzed thematically. **Figure 4** discuss Themes from Qualitative Interviews Key themes identified include:

- **Effectiveness of Social Media:** Most professionals highlighted that social media is critical for brand visibility and consumer engagement.
- **Challenges Faced:** Common challenges mentioned included managing negative feedback and ensuring consistent brand messaging across platforms.



**Figure 4: Themes from Qualitative Interviews**

The analysis reveals significant insights regarding consumer behavior and marketing strategies in the marine and offshore oil & gas sectors, aligning with the research objectives.

From the survey results, it is evident that consumers in Dhaka perceive social media marketing as an influential factor in their purchasing decisions. The demographic analysis shows that younger consumers (ages 25-34) are more likely to engage with social media marketing initiatives, suggesting that targeted campaigns could be particularly effective for this demographic.

The high mean scores for user-generated content and interactive engagement indicate that these strategies resonate strongly with consumers, highlighting their importance in crafting effective marketing campaigns. This finding aligns with existing literature that emphasizes the role of interactive content in enhancing consumer engagement (Wibowo et al., 2020).

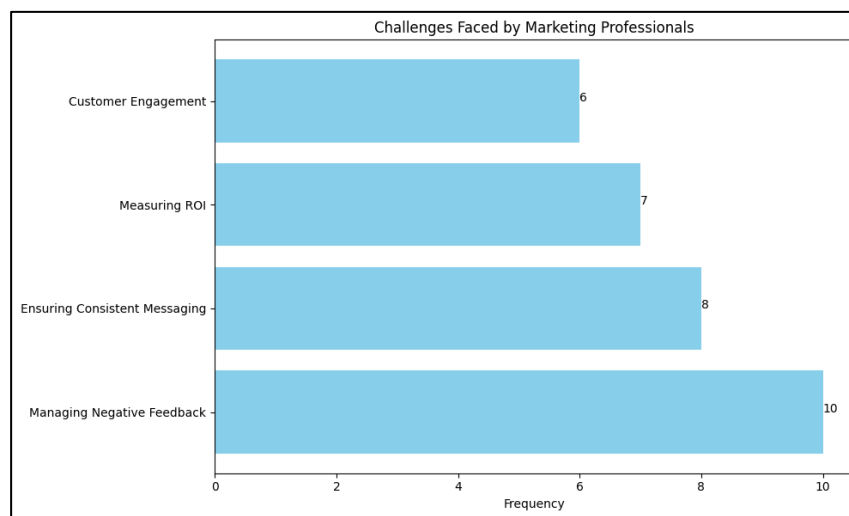
Qualitative findings from interviews with marketing professionals corroborate survey results, indicating a consensus on the effectiveness of social media as a marketing tool. However, professionals also noted challenges such as managing negative feedback and ensuring consistent messaging, which can significantly impact brand perception. **Table 5** describe Challenges Faced by Marketing Professionals



**Table 5: Challenges Faced by Marketing Professionals**

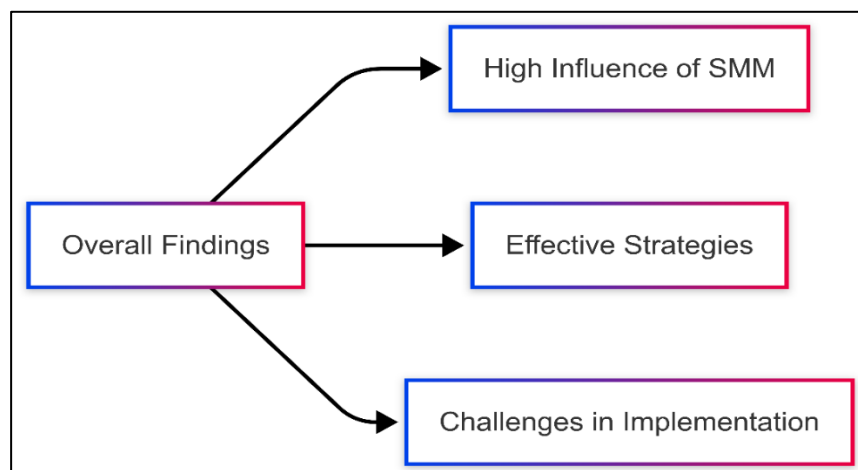
Challenge	Frequency (N=15)
Managing Negative Feedback	10
Ensuring Consistent Messaging	8
Measuring Return on Investment (ROI)	7
Customer Engagement	6

The most frequently cited challenge ((**figure 5**)) was managing negative feedback, which was reported by two-thirds of the interviewees, underscoring the importance of proactive reputation management in social media marketing.



**Figure 5: Challenges Faced by Marketing Professionals**

the results indicate a clear understanding among consumers regarding the influence of social media marketing on their purchasing decisions, particularly within the marine and offshore oil & gas sectors in Dhaka. Marketing professionals recognize the effectiveness of social media as a tool for engagement but also face significant challenges that need addressing for optimal performance. **Figure 6** show summary of key finding



**Figure 6: summary of key finding**

The integration of quantitative survey results with qualitative insights from interviews provides a holistic perspective on the current landscape of social media marketing in this specialized sector, offering valuable recommendations for future marketing strategies.

### **Discussion**

Findings from this study reveal that social media marketing strongly influences consumers' purchase decisions for marine and offshore oil & gas products in Dhaka. Most respondents believe that social media marketing is beneficial in influencing their purchase habits. They tend to think that social media is significant due to its interactive content and user-generated content. This corresponds with the existing literature, which speaks about the need for engaging techniques for digital marketing (Wibowo et al., 2020). In addition, through interviews with specialists in the field of marketing, qualitative results suggest that social media is a vital tool for boosting brand visibility and consumer connection. This is consistent with prior studies recommending targeted social media use to promote consumer trust and loyalty (Hasan & Sohail, 2021). The problems mentioned, including dealing with unfavorable comments and messaging inconsistencies, are ones the business still faces. This points to the view that social media has tremendous promise but can be unproductive if not managed appropriately.

These findings can be implemented realistically for the advantage of marketing in the marine and offshore sectors. Companies are encouraged to establish effective social media marketing strategies that encourage involvement and participation from users. By coping with the issues that they confront, like handling unfavorable comments, the firms will have a strong online presence. In addition, training the marketing team in social media interaction helps increase brand perception. Through this method, organizations can improve their customer reliability. When corporations engage with transparency and foster communication, they can encourage partnerships that will fuel growth in an industry facing increased environmental criticism.

While this research has given significant insights, there are certain limits. While the sample size is appropriate for some studies, it may not adequately reflect the different demographics of consumers using marine and offshore oil & gas firms. Furthermore, the data was based on self-reporting, which has the potential for bias and accuracy in replies. The fact that the study focuses on Dhaka limits the applicability of the results to other places in order to make any conclusions. For a better understanding of the research, the next study could be performed with a large sample and diverse area.

### **Future Work**

Future research should try to investigate the long-term effects of social media marketing on consumer loyalty within the maritime and offshore oil & gas sectors. Moreover, future research may give information on the effectiveness of social media marketing techniques in the maritime and offshore oil and gas sectors. This exploration could ultimately contribute to industry growth and competitiveness.

### **Conclusion**

This study gives substantial insights into the function of social media marketing in influencing consumer buying decisions across the marine and offshore oil & gas sectors in Dhaka. The data show that most customers feel social media marketing is a key factor bearing on their purchase behavior, specifically brand reach and accessible user-generated content. Experts feel that while social media is vital for company visibility and consumer interaction, they encounter issues with bad comments and consistent

messaging. It is vital to cope with these aspects to use social media successfully. The results imply that brands should engage consumers by implementing social media marketing activities that can assist in building trust and loyalty. This turns a challenge into an opportunity for firms to better understand consumer behavior in this area and consequently improve their positioning in the market. Ultimately, this research provides insights into how social media might influence purchase behavior, and practitioners can make their marketing efforts more effective.

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