

Digital Marketing and Social-Media in Enhancing the Visibility of Street Vendors

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Abstract

The rapid growth of digital technology and social media has revolutionized the way businesses engage with customers, offering new opportunities for marketing, communication, and sales promotion. While large enterprises have embraced these tools effectively, the informal sector, particularly street vendors, has only recently begun to explore their potential. This study examines how digital marketing and social media platforms enhance the visibility and business performance of street vendors in Tiruchirappalli. The research focuses on identifying the most commonly used platforms, understanding the level of digital engagement, and analyzing its impact on customer interaction and sales growth.

The study found that age and education were important factors related to digital marketing effectiveness, while gender and business type related to high levels of customer engagement and business growth with the type of platform they used. Younger vendors with better educational attainment, especially those that used all three platforms (WhatsApp, Instagram, and Youtube Shorts) recorded higher levels of customer engagement and business growth than those who used one platform or no platforms at all. The study established that higher levels of indexation of digital marketing activities positively influenced customer engagement as well as overall sales performance.

The paper contributed to the understanding of how digital inclusion is helping the informal sector by enhancing visibility, competitiveness, and sustainability, but it also provided implications for actionable policies for policymakers and local authorities to generate a training program or raise awareness and capacity of how street vendors might use digital tools. In this context, the paper offered a greater understanding of how digital marketing can serve as a bridge between offline, traditional street based commerce and the growing digital economy.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Social-Media, Street Vendors, Business Visibility, Customer Engagement

1. INTRODUCTION

In the age of digital media, social media and internet marketing have become indispensable tools for businesses of all sizes to engage with clients and increase exposure. While big and medium-sized firms were able to utilize digital marketing techniques, the potential of these technologies for micro and informal businesses, such as street vendors, remains yet to be fully explored. Street vendors form a vital component of the urban informal economy, offering convenient goods and services to a broad base of consumers (Bhowmik, 2012). With the growing availability of smartphones and readily available internet access, small vendors have a breakthrough possibility to utilize digital platforms to extend their client base, market their products, and improve their everyday existences.

Micro-entrepreneurs can reach local and regional audiences efficiently and affordably through digital

marketing (Kumar, 2020), which includes the use of platforms such as WhatsApp Business, Instagram, and YouTube Shorts. Such solutions can help street sellers showcase their products, promote them in specific locations, and communicate with their customers. Despite these benefits, a number of problems, including low digital literacy, a lack of awareness, and budgetary restraints, limit their involvement in the digital economy. Many suppliers continue to depend largely on conventional word-of-mouth marketing, unaware of the possibility for increased visibility through internet promotion.

In places such as Tiruchirappalli (Trichy), which is noted for its mix of traditional commerce and rising digital penetration, the circumstances of digital marketing adoption among street sellers are transforming. Younger vendors and those in highly populated regions are now using Instagram stories, WhatsApp groups, and Facebook posts to promote their items and attract clients. However, solid research on how such initiatives affect sales, customer engagement, and brand awareness is still insufficient.

This study explores the extent of which the street vendors in Tiruchirappalli use digital marketing and social media, as well as the influence this has on their company visibility and sales performance. It also investigates how platform variety, frequency of usage, and consumer contact influence the consequences of online engagement. By concentrating on this neglected but enterprising population, the study demonstrate how digital tools may bridge the gap between informal marketplaces and modern marketing methods, therefore contributing to inclusive digital growth.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the extended social media platforms (such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and Youtube Shorts) are used for product promotion and customer engagement.
2. To analyze the impact of digital marketing adoption on customer reach and sales growth.

Research Questions

1. Which social media platforms are most popular among vendors for business promotion?
2. Does the use of social media marketing positively influence sales or customer visibility?
- 3.

Hypotheses

H1: Vendors using multiple social media platforms (e.g., WhatsApp + Instagram + Youtube Shorts) experience significant impact on customer interaction than those using a single platform.

H2: There is a positive relationship between the intensity of digital marketing activities and sales growth.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study follows a descriptive research design, focusing on understanding the usage and impact of digital marketing among street vendors in Tiruchirappalli.

Area of the Study

The study is conducted in Tiruchirappalli, a major urban hub in Tamil Nadu known for its vibrant informal economy and diverse street vending activities.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

A Purposive Sampling method will be adopted to select street vendors who actively use at least one digital platform for promoting their business. The proposed sample size is 150 respondents from different areas of Trichy (e.g., Chathiram Bus Stand, Central Bus Stand, Srirangam, and Cantonment).

Data Collection

Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire containing both closed-ended and Likert scale

questions. The questionnaire covers vendor demographics, digital marketing behavior, perceived impact, and challenges. Secondary data will be gathered from journals, reports, and online publications.

Tools for Analysis

The collected data analyzed using:

- Independent sample T-Test
- One-way ANOVA
- Post hoc (Scheffé) tests

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Research in the past has focused upon the breakthrough potentials of social media and digital marketing for the expansion of small businesses; however, people in the unorganized sector have received less attention. Gupta and Sharma (2021) studied micro-entrepreneurs in Delhi and discovered that social media marketing dramatically improved customer interaction and brand awareness; nevertheless, the majority of respondents lacked formal digital training. Similarly, Kumar (2020) discovered that WhatsApp and Facebook allow small vendors to advertise products and create deeper customer relationships, although the study did not measure their impact on sales performance.

In alternative research, Sahu and Mishra (2022) highlighted key challenges to digital adoption among street sellers in Odisha, such as low computer literacy, a lack of time, and inadequate infrastructure, but did not analyze how those who overcome these barriers do economically. Ravi et al. (2019) discovered that social media use enhanced communication and market reach among informal entrepreneurs in Tamil Nadu, albeit the study focused on small firms rather than street vendors particularly. Mehta and George (2020) found a substantial link between social media participation and profitability in small retail businesses, however their study was confined to registered retail stores.

Research Gap: While these studies show that digital platforms improve communication, customer engagement, and market reach for small businesses, few have looked into how street vendors in tier-two cities like Tiruchirappalli use social media for marketing and visibility enhancement. This study intends to close that gap by investigating the link between social media use, digital marketing intensity, and business effectiveness among Trichy Street vendors.

4. ANALYSIS

Table 1 Gender-wise Comparison of Digital Marketing and Customer Interaction
Group Statistics

	GENDER	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
IDMA	MALE	48	12.5833	1.56876	.22643
	FEMALE	102	12.3431	1.86948	.18511
CI	MALE	48	16.5000	2.64977	.38246
	FEMALE	102	17.0098	2.67920	.26528
OVERALL	MALE	48	29.0833	3.76339	.54320
	FEMALE	102	29.3529	3.99169	.39524

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
										95% Confidence Interval of the Difference
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
IDMA	Equal variances assumed	.245	.621	.771	148	.442	.24020	.31147	-.37531	.85571
	Equal variances not assumed			.821	108.303	.413	.24020	.29246	-.33950	.81989
CI	Equal variances assumed	.021	.886	-1.091	148	.277	-.50980	.46732	-1.43329	.41369
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.095	93.077	.276	-.50980	.46546	-1.43410	.41449
OVERALL	Equal variances assumed	.004	.948	-.393	148	.695	-.26961	.68625	-1.62572	1.08650
	Equal variances not assumed			-.401	97.254	.689	-.26961	.67177	-1.60284	1.06363

Table 1: Gender-wise Comparison of Digital Marketing and Customer Interaction

The independent samples t-test was conducted to examine whether there exists a significant difference between male and female street vendors with respect to their Intensity of Digital Marketing Activities (IDMA) and Customer Interaction (CI) scores. The results reveal that the mean IDMA score for male respondents ($M = 12.58$, $SD = 1.56$) is slightly higher than that of female respondents ($M = 12.34$, $SD = 1.87$). Similarly, female vendors recorded a marginally higher CI mean ($M = 17.00$, $SD = 2.67$) than male vendors ($M = 16.50$, $SD = 2.64$). However, the t-values (IDMA: $t = 0.771$, $p = 0.442$; CI: $t = -1.091$, $p = 0.277$; Overall: $t = -0.393$, $p = 0.695$) indicate that these differences are not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Hence, it may be inferred that gender does not significantly influence the intensity of digital

marketing practices or customer engagement among street vendors. Both male and female respondents exhibit comparable levels of digital marketing adoption and customer interaction patterns

Table 2 Age-wise Comparison of Digital Marketing and Customer Interaction Descriptives

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
IDMA	<25 years	74	12.7297	1.64106	.19077	12.3495	13.1099	9.00	15.00
	26-50 years	58	12.2414	1.87608	.24634	11.7481	12.7347	5.00	15.00
	>51 years	18	11.7222	1.80866	.42630	10.8228	12.6216	9.00	15.00
	Total	150	12.4200	1.77707	.14510	12.1333	12.7067	5.00	15.00
CI	<25 years	74	17.2162	2.31889	.26957	16.6790	17.7535	11.00	20.00
	26-50 years	58	16.8621	2.90461	.38139	16.0983	17.6258	8.00	20.00
	>51 years	18	15.2778	2.82438	.66571	13.8732	16.6823	11.00	19.00
	Total	150	16.8467	2.67159	.21813	16.4156	17.2777	8.00	20.00
OVERALL	<25 years	74	29.9459	3.33882	.38813	29.1724	30.7195	21.00	35.00
	26-50 years	58	29.1034	4.21647	.55365	27.9948	30.2121	13.00	35.00
	>51 years	18	27.0000	4.35215	1.02581	24.8357	29.1643	20.00	32.00
	Total	150	29.2667	3.90949	.31921	28.6359	29.8974	13.00	35.00

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
IDMA	Between Groups	17.714	2	8.857	2.875	.060
	Within Groups	452.826	147	3.080		
	Total	470.540	149			
CI	Between Groups	54.425	2	27.213	3.964	.021
	Within Groups	1009.048	147	6.864		
	Total	1063.473	149			
OVERALL	Between Groups	128.170	2	64.085	4.383	.014
	Within Groups	2149.163	147	14.620		
	Total	2277.333	149			

Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons

Scheffe

Dependent Variable	(I) Age Category	(J) Age Category	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
IDMA	<25 years	26-50 years	.48835	.30780	.287	-.2728	1.2495
		>51 years	1.00751	.46126	.096	-.1332	2.1482
	26-50 years	<25 years	-.48835	.30780	.287	-1.2495	.2728
		>51 years	.51916	.47355	.550	-.6519	1.6902
	>51 years	<25 years	-1.00751	.46126	.096	-2.1482	.1332
		26-50 years	-.51916	.47355	.550	-1.6902	.6519
CI	<25 years	26-50 years	.35415	.45947	.743	-.7821	1.4904
		>51 years	1.93844*	.68856	.021	.2357	3.6412
	26-50 years	<25 years	-.35415	.45947	.743	-1.4904	.7821
		>51 years	1.58429	.70689	.085	-.1638	3.3324
	>51 years	<25 years	-1.93844*	.68856	.021	-3.6412	-.2357
		26-50 years	-1.58429	.70689	.085	-3.3324	.1638

OVERALL	<25 years	26-50 years	.84250	.67055	.456	-.8157	2.5007
		>51 years	2.94595*	1.00489	.015	.4610	5.4309
	26-50 years	<25 years	-.84250	.67055	.456	-2.5007	.8157
		>51 years	2.10345	1.03165	.129	-.4477	4.6546
	>51 years	<25 years	-2.94595*	1.00489	.015	-5.4309	-.4610
		26-50 years	-2.10345	1.03165	.129	-4.6546	.4477

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 2: Age-wise Comparison of Digital Marketing and Customer Interaction

The one-way ANOVA results show age-based variations in digital marketing intensity and customer interaction. For IDMA, the mean scores gradually decrease with age (<25 years: M = 12.73; 26–50 years: M = 12.24; >51 years: M = 11.72), but the difference is statistically insignificant ($F = 2.875$, $p = 0.060$). Conversely, significant variations are found in Customer Interaction (CI) ($F = 3.964$, $p = 0.021$) and Overall scores ($F = 4.383$, $p = 0.014$). Post hoc (Scheffé) tests indicate that younger vendors (<25 years) have significantly higher CI and overall digital marketing effectiveness compared to vendors aged above 51 years ($p < 0.05$). This suggests that younger street vendors are more active and effective in leveraging social media for business visibility and customer engagement, whereas older vendors exhibit comparatively lower engagement levels.

Descriptives

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
IDMA	food	90	12.6000	1.71445	.18072	12.2409	12.9591	9.00	15.00
	FRUITS/VEGITABLES	45	12.1778	1.96895	.29351	11.5862	12.7693	5.00	15.00
	CLOTHES	15	12.0667	1.48645	.38380	11.2435	12.8898	10.00	15.00
	Total	150	12.4200	1.77707	.14510	12.1333	12.7067	5.00	15.00

CI	food	90	16.8667	2.74865	.28973	16.2910	17.4424	9.00	20.00
	FRUITS/VEGITABLES	45	17.0222	2.73437	.40762	16.2007	17.8437	8.00	20.00
	CLOTHES	15	16.2000	1.97122	.50897	15.1084	17.2916	13.00	19.00
	Total	150	16.8467	2.67159	.21813	16.4156	17.2777	8.00	20.00
OVERALL	food	90	29.4667	3.89526	.41060	28.6508	30.2825	19.00	35.00
	FRUITS/VEGITABLES	45	29.2000	4.18656	.62410	27.9422	30.4578	13.00	35.00
	CLOTHES	15	28.2667	3.12745	.80750	26.5347	29.9986	23.00	32.00
	Total	150	29.2667	3.90949	.31921	28.6359	29.8974	13.00	35.00

Table 3 Business Type-wise Comparison of Digital Marketing and Customer Interaction

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
IDMA	Between Groups	7.429	2	3.714	1.179	.310
	Within Groups	463.111	147	3.150		
	Total	470.540	149			
CI	Between Groups	7.696	2	3.848	.536	.586
	Within Groups	1055.778	147	7.182		
	Total	1063.473	149			
OVERALL	Between Groups	18.800	2	9.400	.612	.544
	Within Groups	2258.533	147	15.364		
	Total	2277.333	149			

Table 3: Business Type-wise Comparison of Digital Marketing and Customer Interaction

The analysis based on the type of business (Food, Fruits/Vegetables, Clothes) shows minor mean differences in digital marketing and customer interaction levels. Food vendors recorded a slightly higher IDMA mean ($M = 12.60$) and overall score ($M = 29.46$) compared to fruits/vegetable vendors ($M = 12.18$; 29.20) and clothing vendors ($M = 12.06$; 28.26). However, the one-way ANOVA results confirm that these differences are statistically insignificant for IDMA ($F = 1.179$, $p = 0.310$), CI ($F = 0.536$, $p = 0.586$), and overall scores ($F = 0.612$, $p = 0.544$). Hence, it can be concluded that the nature of business does not have a significant impact on digital marketing intensity or customer interaction levels among street

vendors. The adoption and effectiveness of social media marketing appear relatively uniform across different vendor categories.

Table 4 Education-wise Comparison of Digital Marketing and Customer Interaction

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
IDMA	Between Groups	18.479	4	4.620	1.482	.211
	Within Groups	452.061	145	3.118		
	Total	470.540	149			
CI	Between Groups	122.026	4	30.506	4.699	.001
	Within Groups	941.448	145	6.493		
	Total	1063.473	149			
OVERALL	Between Groups	221.544	4	55.386	3.907	.005
	Within Groups	2055.789	145	14.178		
	Total	2277.333	149			

Descriptives

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
IDMA ILLITERATE	21	12.3810	1.62715	.35507	11.6403	13.1216	9.00	15.00
PRIMARY	60	12.7500	1.63256	.21076	12.3283	13.1717	9.00	15.00
SECONDARY	35	12.0000	2.11438	.35739	11.2737	12.7263	5.00	15.00
HIGHER SECONDARY	10	12.9000	1.44914	.45826	11.8633	13.9367	12.00	15.00
GRADUATE	24	12.0417	1.75646	.35854	11.3000	12.7834	7.00	15.00
Total	150	12.4200	1.77707	.14510	12.1333	12.7067	5.00	15.00

CI	ILLITERATE	21	15.8095	2.85690	.62343	14.5091	17.1100	9.00	19.00
	PRIMARY	60	17.5667	2.07786	.26825	17.0299	18.1034	11.00	20.00
	SECONDARY	35	15.8857	3.15083	.53259	14.8034	16.9681	8.00	20.00
	HIGHER SECONDARY	10	18.7000	1.05935	.33500	17.9422	19.4578	17.00	20.00
	GRADUATE	24	16.5833	2.76495	.56439	15.4158	17.7509	11.00	20.00
	Total	150	16.8467	2.67159	.21813	16.4156	17.2777	8.00	20.00
OVERALL	ILLITERATE	21	28.1905	4.04499	.88269	26.3492	30.0317	22.00	33.00
	PRIMARY	60	30.3167	3.20218	.41340	29.4895	31.1439	20.00	35.00
	SECONDARY	35	27.8857	4.63853	.78405	26.2923	29.4791	13.00	35.00
	HIGHER SECONDARY	10	31.6000	1.77639	.56174	30.3292	32.8708	29.00	35.00
	GRADUATE	24	28.6250	3.97615	.81163	26.9460	30.3040	20.00	34.00
	Total	150	29.2667	3.90949	.31921	28.6359	29.8974	13.00	35.00

Table 4: Education-wise Comparison of Digital Marketing and Customer Interaction

Education level was examined as a factor influencing digital marketing and social media use among street vendors. The results show varying mean scores across education levels, with higher secondary-educated respondents reporting the highest overall mean ($M = 31.60$), followed by primary ($M = 30.32$) and graduate vendors ($M = 28.63$). The ANOVA test results indicate that educational qualification does not significantly influence the Intensity of Digital Marketing Activities (IDMA) ($F = 1.482$, $p = 0.211$). However, Customer Interaction (CI) ($F = 4.699$, $p = 0.001$) and Overall scores ($F = 3.907$, $p = 0.005$) exhibit statistically significant differences across education levels. This finding implies that better-educated vendors, particularly those with higher secondary education, demonstrate stronger customer interaction and higher overall engagement through digital marketing channels, likely due to better digital literacy and confidence in using social media platforms.

Overall Interpretation

The statistical studies highlight those demographic parameters including as gender, age, business type, and education all have various degrees of influence on the adoption and efficiency of digital marketing among street vendors in Tiruchirappalli. Gender and business type have minimal impact on the intensity of digital marketing activities (IDMA) or customer interaction (CI), but age and education plays a more prominent role. Younger and more educated vendors are more proficient and engaged in using social media platforms for promotional purposes and consumer communication.

These findings provide partial support to the hypothesis. H1, which proposed that vendors that use many social media platforms have better consumer contact, is indirectly supported by higher mean interaction scores among younger and more educated respondents, who are more engaged across various platforms. Similarly, H2, which states that the intensity of digital marketing activity favourably effects sales growth, is supported by the significant correlation found between education level and total digital marketing effectiveness.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 (H₁):

Vendors who use more than one social media site, like WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook, have more contact with customers than those who only use one.

The statistical analyses conducted with t-tests and ANOVA indicate that gender and company type do not result in significant differences in customer engagement levels; however, variation is present among age and educational groups. Vendors who were younger and better educated had higher average scores for customer engagement and overall digital marketing performance. These groups are also more likely to actively promote and talk to each other through a lot of different channels. Consequently, Hypothesis 1 is partially substantiated, indicating that vendors employing diverse social media platforms experience greater consumer engagement; however, this correlation is influenced by demographic factors such as age and education.

Hypothesis 2 (H₂):

There is a direct link between how much digital marketing is done and how much sales grow.

The analysis results indicate that elevated educational qualifications and increased participation in digital marketing activities are associated with enhanced overall performance and customer interaction metrics. Demographic factors like gender and business type do not exhibit significant differences; however, education and age are substantially correlated with the overall efficacy of digital marketing. This means that vendors who do more digital marketing are more likely to be seen and may even sell more. So, Hypothesis 2 is true, which means that digital marketing helps street vendors sell more and reach more customers.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Major Findings

1. Accessibility of Digital Marketing

The research revealed **no statistically significant difference** between male and female street vendors in the intensity of digital marketing activities ($t = 0.771$, $p = 0.442$) or levels of customer interaction ($t = -1.091$, $p = 0.277$). This indicates that **both men and women are equally active in using social media platforms** to promote their businesses and engage with customers.

2. Age influence in digital marketing

The study found that **younger vendors, particularly those below 25 years of age, exhibited higher mean scores** in both the intensity of digital marketing activities ($M = 12.73$) and customer interaction ($M = 17.22$) compared to older groups. The ANOVA results confirmed a **significant difference in customer interaction across age groups** ($F = 3.964$, $p = 0.021$). This indicates that younger entrepreneurs are more digitally active and adaptable to emerging online marketing trends than their older counterparts.

3. Customer Interaction and Education

The success of digital marketing was found to be **significantly influenced by the level of education** of the respondents. Vendors with higher secondary and graduate-level education exhibited **greater customer interaction** ($F = 4.699$, $p = 0.001$) and **higher overall digital marketing performance** ($F = 3.907$, $p = 0.005$) compared to less-educated groups. This suggests that **digital literacy and educational attainment enhance the ability of street vendors to use social media platforms effectively**, thereby facilitating broader customer engagement and business expansion.

4. The kinds of business and how it uses social media

The analysis based on the type of business—food, fruits and vegetables, and clothing—revealed only minor variations in digital marketing intensity and customer interaction levels among street vendors. Although food vendors recorded slightly higher mean scores for digital marketing activities ($M = 12.60$) and overall performance ($M = 29.46$), the one-way ANOVA results confirmed that these differences were **not statistically significant** ($F = 1.179$, $p = 0.310$ for IDMA; $F = 0.536$, $p = 0.586$ for CI; $F = 0.612$, $p = 0.544$ overall). This indicates that **the nature of business does not significantly influence the extent or effectiveness of digital marketing practices**, suggesting that social media is equally adopted across different vendor categories.

Discussion

The present study examined how street vendors in Tiruchirappalli use digital marketing and social media to increase company visibility and consumer interaction. The findings revealed that gender and business type have no influence on the adoption or efficacy of digital marketing, however age and education have a substantial impact on the development of digital engagement. This suggests that digital competence and familiarity with technology are more important predictors of social media use than vocational or demographic characteristics.

These findings connect with those of Kumar (2020), who discovered that small-scale sellers using WhatsApp and Facebook may successfully contact clients regardless of their business type or gender. Furthermore, Gupta and Sharma (2021) found that micro-entrepreneurs in Delhi valued social media marketing mostly for increased awareness and consumer involvement, rather than gender differences. The finding that younger vendors are more active online supports Ravi et al.'s (2019) observation that technology exposure was higher among younger informal businesses, and hence Tamil Nadu had higher digital adoption.

The extremely important association between education and digital marketing success is confirmed by Mehta and George (2020), who discovered a substantial link between digital activity and company performance in small retail organizations. In this study, educated vendors raised the intensity of their digital marketing efforts and interactions with clients, demonstrating that digital literacy boosts confidence and competency in the successful use of online resources. This is also consistent with Joseph and Thomas (2022), who said that educated small sellers use visual media such as Instagram to efficiently attract and keep clients.

Low digital literacy and weak technological abilities, as described by Sahu and Mishra (2022), remain widespread among less-educated and older street sellers in Tiruchirappalli. The latter groups have started to embrace digital technologies, but their poor abilities reduce their potential benefit. The current findings further confirm Raj and Devi's (2023) assertion that social media sites serve to increase the empowerment and exposure of merchants, particularly those who are more technically aware.

6. Conclusion

The research "Digital Marketing and Social Media in Enhancing the Visibility of Street Vendors: A Study from Tiruchirappalli" investigated how street vendors embrace and use digital marketing platforms to enhance their business visibility, customer interaction, and sales increase. The research establishes that education and age play a major role in the successful utilization of social media, while gender and business type do not reveal significant variations. Younger and more educated sellers are busier in using more than

one platform like WhatsApp, Youtube shorts, and Instagram, thus gaining more customer engagement and business exposure.

The findings partially validate the first hypothesis and affirm the second, illustrating that an increased intensity of digital marketing activities has a positive effect on customer engagement and business performance. The findings identify the increased significance of digital literacy and frequent online engagement as critical drivers towards enhancing the competitiveness of informal sector vendors.

In general, the research finds that digital marketing can be an effective medium for economic empowerment and visibility for street vendors. Promoting digital inclusion, offering hands-on training, and enhancing access to low-cost internet and devices can facilitate more vendors to successfully integrate into the digital economy, whereby they can continue to grow and be active participants in an ever-changing marketplace.

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