

Impact of Social Media Marketing on Customer Buying Behaviour in the Optical Industry: A Study in Kanyakumari District

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ABSTRACT

Social media has emerged as an important marketing platform that significantly influences consumer awareness, preferences, and purchasing decisions. The optical industry, which offers products such as spectacles, sunglasses, contact lenses, and other vision-related products, is increasingly using social media platforms to promote products, communicate with customers, and create brand awareness. In this context, the present study examines the impact of social media marketing on customer buying behaviour in the optical industry, with special reference to Kanyakumari District.

The study aims to analyse customers' exposure to social media marketing and examine its influence on their buying behaviour towards optical products. It also seeks to identify the level of customer agreement regarding the influence of social media marketing and to examine the association between selected demographic factors, particularly age, and the influence of social media marketing on purchase decisions. Primary data for the study are collected from customers of optical products in Kanyakumari District through a structured questionnaire. Percentage analysis is used to examine the demographic profile and social media usage patterns of respondents. The Weighted Average Method is employed to analyse the level of customer agreement regarding various aspects of social media marketing, while the Chi-Square Test is used to examine the association between customers' age and the influence of social media marketing on their purchase decisions.

The study is expected to provide insights into the role of social media advertisements, online reviews, promotional offers, product information, and other digital marketing activities in shaping customer buying behaviour. The findings of the study may help optical businesses and marketers understand customer preferences and develop more effective social media marketing strategies to improve customer engagement and influence purchase decisions.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing; Customer Buying Behaviour; Optical Industry; Purchase Decision; Digital Marketing; Chi-Square Test; Weighted Average Method; Kanyakumari District.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of digital communication has substantially changed the way businesses interact with consumers. Social media platforms have evolved beyond their original role as communication networks and have become important channels through which businesses provide information, promote products, build brand awareness, interact with customers, and influence purchase-related decisions. Unlike conventional advertising, social media enables consumers to actively participate in the marketing environment by viewing content, sharing opinions, posting reviews, interacting with brands, and exchanging product-related information with other users. Consequently, consumer decision-making is increasingly shaped not only by marketer-generated messages but also by online interactions and user-generated content.

Social media marketing has become particularly important because consumers frequently use digital platforms during different stages of the buying process. Consumers may search for product information, compare alternatives, evaluate reviews, observe product demonstrations, and consider recommendations before making a purchase decision. Research on digital consumer behaviour has highlighted the growing importance of social media environments, online information, advertising, and electronic word-of-mouth in influencing consumer decisions (Stephen, 2016). Similarly, studies have demonstrated that social media usage and interactions can be associated with consumer shopping preferences and purchase intentions.

The influence of social media marketing extends beyond direct advertising. Factors such as the quality of information, credibility of the source, customer reviews, promotional offers, visual content, recommendations, and interactions with brands may shape consumers' perceptions and behavioural intentions. Social media therefore provides a setting in which consumers can receive commercial information while simultaneously being exposed to the experiences and opinions of other consumers. Previous research has shown that social relationships and consumers' attitudes towards social media marketing may influence purchase-related behaviour (Yang & Che, 2020). Further evidence indicates that different dimensions of social media marketing, including interaction, entertainment, trendiness, customization, and word-of-mouth communication, can contribute to consumers' purchase intentions.

The optical industry represents an increasingly relevant context for examining changes in consumer buying behaviour. The purchase of spectacles, sunglasses, contact lenses, frames, and related optical products involves both functional and personal considerations. Consumers may evaluate factors such as product design, price, quality, brand, comfort, appearance, and professional recommendations before making a purchase. The growing availability of product information and promotional content through digital platforms has created additional opportunities for optical businesses to communicate with existing and potential customers. Recent research on the Indian eyewear market also indicates changing consumer purchasing patterns and the increasing relevance of online channels in eyewear-related purchase decisions, while highlighting that concerns relating to fit, comfort, quality, and safety continue to influence consumer preferences.

In this changing marketing environment, social media may influence optical consumers in several ways. Advertisements can increase awareness of products and brands, visual content can assist consumers in evaluating styles and designs, customer reviews can provide information about product experiences, and promotional offers may encourage purchase consideration. In addition, recommendations and interactions on social media may influence consumers' preferences for particular brands, products, or optical retailers. However, the extent to which these forms of social media marketing influence actual buying behaviour may vary among consumers. Demographic characteristics, particularly age, may also be associated with

differences in social media usage and the degree to which consumers are influenced by online marketing communications.

Although the relationship between social media marketing and consumer behaviour has received considerable attention across retail and digital business contexts, industry-specific and geographically focused studies remain important because consumer preferences and purchasing environments differ across products and locations. The optical industry combines elements of healthcare-related consumption, fashion, personal appearance, and retail decision-making, making it a distinctive setting for examining the influence of social media marketing. Understanding how customers respond to social media advertisements, product information, online reviews, promotional activities, and other digital marketing content can provide useful insights for optical businesses seeking to improve customer engagement and marketing effectiveness.

Against this background, the present study examines the impact of social media marketing on customer buying behaviour in the optical industry in Kanyakumari District. The study focuses on understanding customers' responses to social media marketing and analysing their level of agreement regarding its influence on buying behaviour. It also examines the association between the age of customers and the influence of social media marketing on their purchase decisions. By applying percentage analysis, the Weighted Average Method, and the Chi-Square Test, the study seeks to provide empirical evidence regarding the role of social media marketing in shaping customer buying behaviour within the optical industry.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Santhababu, Kumaran, and Pachiyappan (2025) examined consumer behaviour in the Indian online eyewear market following the COVID-19 period. The study found that digital and online channels have become increasingly relevant to consumers purchasing eyewear products, particularly among younger consumers. However, factors such as product fit, comfort, quality, and safety continued to influence purchase decisions. The study is particularly relevant to the present research because it provides evidence regarding changing consumer behaviour within the Indian eyewear market and highlights the growing importance of digital platforms in influencing optical product purchases.

Chen (2023) investigated the factors influencing consumers' responses to social media advertisements and their purchase intentions. The study examined the roles of advertising value, emotional appeal, credibility, product evaluation, and incentives. The findings revealed that advertising credibility and emotional appeal significantly influence consumers' attitudes towards social media advertisements, which subsequently contribute to their purchase intentions.

Vithayathil, Dadgar, and Osiri (2020) investigated the relationship between social media use and consumer shopping preferences. The study explored how the use of different social media platforms was associated with consumers' preferences and purchasing behaviour. The findings indicated that social media usage plays an important role in shaping consumer shopping preferences and demonstrated the increasing relevance of digital platforms in contemporary consumer decision-making.

Alalwan (2018) examined the influence of social media advertising features on customer purchase intention. The study found that characteristics such as informativeness, interactivity, relevance, and other advertising-related features significantly influence consumers' responses to social media advertisements. The findings suggested that effective social media advertising can positively influence consumers' evaluation of products and their intention to purchase.

Alalwan et al. (2017) reviewed existing research on the role of social media in marketing and analysed 144 published studies in the field. The study identified social media advertising, electronic word-of-mouth, customer relationship management, and consumer behaviour as major areas of research. The authors concluded that social media has become an important marketing platform through which businesses can communicate with consumers and influence their attitudes and behavioural responses. The study also highlighted the need for further research in different industries and consumer contexts.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Objective of the Study:

- To examine the association between the age of customers and the influence of social media marketing on their purchase decisions in the optical industry.
- To analyse the level of customer agreement regarding the influence of social media marketing on their buying behaviour in the optical industry.

Statement of the Problem:

The rapid growth of social media has transformed the way businesses promote their products and interact with customers. Social media platforms provide businesses with opportunities to influence consumer buying behaviour through advertisements, promotional offers, customer reviews, influencer recommendations, and product-related information.

The optical industry is also increasingly adopting social media marketing to promote products such as spectacles, sunglasses, contact lenses, and frames. However, the purchase of optical products is influenced by several factors, including price, quality, design, comfort, brand preference, and individual requirements. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the extent to which social media marketing influences customers' purchase decisions in the optical industry.

Although several studies have examined the influence of social media marketing on consumer behaviour, limited attention has been given specifically to the optical industry at the district level. Hence, the present study focuses on examining the impact of social media marketing on customer buying behaviour in the optical industry in Kanyakumari District. The study also analyses customers' level of agreement regarding social media influence and examines the association between age and the influence of social media marketing on purchase decisions.

Scope of the Study:

The present study focuses on examining the impact of social media marketing on customer buying behaviour in the optical industry in Kanyakumari District. The study covers customers who purchase or use optical products such as spectacles, sunglasses, contact lenses, and related products.

The study examines the role of social media marketing activities, including advertisements, product information, promotional offers, customer reviews, and recommendations, in influencing customers' purchase decisions. It also analyses the level of customer agreement regarding the influence of social media marketing on their buying behaviour and examines the association between customers' age and the influence of social media marketing on purchase decisions.

The findings of the study may provide useful insights for optical businesses and marketers in understanding customer responses towards social media marketing and developing effective marketing strategies.

Research Design:

The present study adopts a **descriptive and analytical research design** to examine the impact of social

media marketing on customer buying behaviour in the optical industry in Kanyakumari District. The descriptive research design is used to understand the demographic profile, social media usage patterns, and buying behaviour of customers. The analytical approach is used to examine the relationship between customers' age and the influence of social media marketing on their purchase decisions.

Source of Data Collection:

The present study is based primarily on **primary data**. The required data were collected directly from customers who purchase or use optical products in Kanyakumari District through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to collect information regarding customers' demographic profile and their opinions on the influence of social media marketing on their buying behaviour.

Sampling Technique:

The present study adopts a **Convenience Sampling Technique** for selecting the respondents. Customers who purchase or use optical products in Kanyakumari District and are easily accessible and willing to participate in the study were selected as respondents.

Convenience sampling was considered appropriate for the study due to the practical difficulty of obtaining a complete list of customers of optical products across the district. The selected respondents provided the required information regarding their exposure to social media marketing and its influence on their buying behaviour.

Sample Unit:

The sample unit of the present study consists of individual customers who purchase or use optical products in Kanyakumari District. The respondents include customers who use or purchase products such as spectacles, sunglasses, contact lenses, frames, and other related optical products.

Each individual customer who meets the criteria for the study and provides the required information through the structured questionnaire is considered as one sample unit.

Sample Size:

The present study is based on a sample of **150 respondents** consisting of customers who purchase or use optical products in Kanyakumari District. The sample size of 150 respondents was considered for analysing the influence of social media marketing on customer buying behaviour in the optical industry.

Tools Used for Analysis:

The data collected for the present study were analysed using the following statistical tools:

1. **Weighted Average Method:** The Weighted Average Method was used to analyse the level of customer agreement regarding the influence of social media marketing on their buying behaviour in the optical industry.
2. **Chi-Square Test:** The Chi-Square Test was used to examine the association between the age of customers and the influence of social media marketing on their purchase decisions.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

1. Weighted Average Method:

Social media advertisements influence your decision to purchase optical products.

Response	Frequency(F)	Weight(W)	F x W
Strongly Agree	52	5	260
Agree	30	4	120
Neutral	23	3	69

Disagree	25	2	50
Strongly Disagree	20	1	20
Total	150		519

$$\text{Weighted Average Score} = \Sigma(F \times W) / N$$

Where:

- **F** = Frequency
- **W** = Weight
- $\Sigma(F \times W)$ = Total weighted score
- **N** = Total number of respondents

$$\text{Weighted Average Score} = 3.46$$

Interpretation

The Weighted Average Method was used to analyse customers' level of agreement regarding the influence of social media marketing on buying behaviour. A five-point Likert scale with weights from **5 (Strongly Agree)** to **1 (Strongly Disagree)** was used. The weighted score was calculated by multiplying the frequency by its corresponding weight and dividing the total weighted score by the total number of respondents. A score of **3.46** indicates that the respondents **agree** with the statement.

2. Chi Square Test

Age and Customer reviews and feedback on social media influence your choice of optical products

Observed Frequency

Age Group	Highly Influenced	Influenced	Neutral	Not Influenced	Highly Not Influenced	Total
Below 30	16	12	7	2	3	40
31-40	10	9	7	3	5	34
41-50	8	5	6	7	15	41
Above 50	6	3	5	11	10	35
Total	40	29	25	23	33	150

Expected Frequency

Age Group	Highly Influenced	Influenced	Neutral	Not Influenced	Highly Not Influenced
Below 30	10.66666667	7.733333333	6.666666667	6.133333333	8.8
31-40	9.066666667	6.573333333	5.666666667	5.213333333	7.48
41-50	10.93333333	7.926666667	6.833333333	6.286666667	9.02
Above 50	9.333333333	6.766666667	5.833333333	5.366666667	7.7

$$\chi^2 = \Sigma [(O - E)^2 / E]$$

Age Group	Highly Influenced	Influenced	Neutral	Not Influenced	Highly Not Influenced
Below 30	2.666666667	2.354022989	0.016666667	2.785507246	3.822727273
31-40	0.096078431	0.895848546	0.31372549	0.939676044	0.822245989

41-50	0.78699187	1.080577516	0.10162602	0.080940262	3.964567627
Above 50	1.19047619	2.096715928	0.11904762	5.913250518	0.687012987

Chi-Square (χ^2) = 30.734

df = 12

p = 0.00216

Level of significance = 0.05

Hypotheses

Null Hypothesis (H_0)

H_0 : There is no significant association between the age of customers and the influence of social media marketing on their purchase decisions in the optical industry.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1)

H_1 : There is a significant association between the age of customers and the influence of social media marketing on their purchase decisions in the optical industry.

Interpretation:

Since the **p-value (0.002)** is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there is a significant association between the age of customers and the influence of social media marketing on their purchase decisions.

FINDINGS

- The study found that customers expressed varying levels of influence of social media marketing on their purchase decisions in the optical industry.
- The Weighted Average Method was used to analyse the level of customer agreement regarding the influence of social media marketing on their buying behaviour. The weighted scores were used to determine the overall level of agreement of the respondents for the statements included in the study.
- The Chi-Square Test was used to examine the association between the age of customers and the influence of social media marketing on their purchase decisions.
- The Chi-Square analysis revealed a calculated value of $\chi^2 = 30.734$ with 12 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.002.
- Since the p-value (0.002) is less than the significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected.
- Therefore, the study found that there is a statistically significant association between the age of customers and the influence of social media marketing on their purchase decisions in the optical industry.

SUGGESTIONS

- Optical businesses may consider strengthening their social media presence by sharing information about optical products, new designs, offers, and services.
- The use of informative and visually appealing social media content may help customers obtain information regarding product features, price, quality, and available offers.
- Providing opportunities for customers to share reviews and feedback on social media platforms may contribute to improving customer engagement and purchase-related decisions.

- Social media platforms may be used to communicate promotional offers and discounts, which could help increase customer awareness and interest in optical products.
- Since the study identified a significant association between customers' age and the influence of social media marketing, age-specific marketing approaches may be considered to address the preferences of different customer groups.
- A combination of product information, visual content, customer reviews, promotional offers, and interactive communication may contribute to improving customer engagement through social media.
- Regular evaluation of customer responses and preferences towards social media marketing may provide useful insights for optical businesses in developing their marketing strategies.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the impact of social media marketing on customer buying behaviour in the optical industry in Kanyakumari District. The study focused on understanding customers' level of agreement regarding the influence of social media marketing on their buying behaviour and examining the association between customers' age and the influence of social media marketing on their purchase decisions.

The findings indicate that social media marketing plays a relevant role in influencing customers' awareness, preferences, and purchase-related decisions regarding optical products. The Weighted Average Method was used to analyse the level of customer agreement towards various aspects of social media marketing. The Chi-Square Test further revealed a statistically significant association between the age of customers and the influence of social media marketing on their purchase decisions.

The study concludes that the influence of social media marketing on buying behaviour may vary among different age groups. Social media platforms therefore represent a valuable medium through which optical businesses can communicate product-related information, promotional offers, and other marketing content to potential customers. The findings of the study may provide useful insights for understanding customer responses to social media marketing and its role in shaping buying behaviour within the optical industry.

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