

Manuscript ID:
TIJCMBLIR-2026-030182

Volume: 3

Issue: 1

Month: February

Year: 2026

E-ISSN: 3065-9191

Submitted: 28 Jan 2026

Revised: 31 Jan 2026

Accepted: 25 Feb 2026

Published: 28 Feb 2026

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.19970395](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19970395)

DOI Link:

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19970395>



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Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Buying Behaviour among Youth

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Abstract

The emergence of social media has revolutionized the way businesses communicate with consumers. Social media marketing has become one of the most influential tools in shaping consumer attitudes and purchase decisions, particularly among youth. Young consumers are highly active on digital platforms and are constantly exposed to online advertisements, influencer promotions, brand campaigns, and peer reviews. The present study examines the impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour among youth. The research is based on primary data collected from 120 respondents aged between 18 and 30 years through a structured questionnaire. The study analyses various factors such as frequency of social media usage, influence of digital advertisements, role of influencer marketing, brand awareness, and impulse buying behaviour. The findings reveal that social media significantly affects brand perception, product awareness, and purchase decisions of young consumers. The study concludes that businesses must adopt strategic and engaging social media marketing practices to effectively target youth consumers in the digital era.

Keywords:

Social Media Marketing, Consumer Buying Behaviour, Youth, Influencer Marketing, Digital Advertising, Brand Awareness, Purchase Decision

Introduction:

In the 21st century, technological advancements and internet penetration have transformed the global marketing environment. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp have become essential communication tools for individuals and businesses alike. These platforms allow users to create, share, and interact with content instantly, thereby influencing opinions, attitudes, and behaviours. Social media marketing refers to the use of social networking platforms to promote products, services, and brands. It includes activities such as paid advertisements, influencer collaborations, sponsored posts, product reviews, live sessions, and interactive campaigns. Compared to traditional marketing methods, social media marketing provides wider reach, better targeting, real-time interaction, and cost efficiency. Consumer buying behaviour refers to the decision-making process consumers go through before purchasing a product or service. This process includes need recognition, information search, and evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behaviour. Social media plays a significant role in each stage of this process. Youth, in particular, are highly active on social media and are more likely to be influenced by digital content, online reviews, and peer recommendations. The growing dependence of youth to digital marketing. Attractive advertisements, influencer endorsements, and personalized content often encourage impulse buying. Therefore, studying the impact of social media marketing on youth buying behaviour is essential to understand modern consumer trends and marketing effectiveness.

Objectives:

1. To study the pattern of social media usage among youth and its influence on their buying decisions.
2. To analyze the impact of social media advertisements and influencer marketing on shaping youth preferences and purchase behaviour.
3. **To evaluate the effectiveness of social media marketing in creating brand awareness and encouraging impulse buying among youth.**

Research Methodology:

1) Research Design

The research design adopted for the study is descriptive and analytical in nature. It focuses on identifying and analysing the relationship between social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour among youth.

How to Cite this Article:

Honrao, V. U. (2026). Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Buying Behaviour among Youth. *The International Journal of Commerce Management and Business Law in International Research*, 3(1), 375–377. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19970395>

2) Sample Design

The study is based on primary data collected from 120 respondents belonging to the age group of 18–30 years. Convenience sampling method was used to select respondents. The respondents include college students, postgraduate students, and young working professionals.

3) Data Sources

- **Primary Data:** Collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of 25 close-ended questions.
- **Secondary Data:** Collected from books, journals, research articles, and reliable online sources related to social media marketing and consumer behaviour.

4) Tools for Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed using:

- Percentage method
- Tabular presentation
- Graphical representation (where applicable)
- Simple interpretation techniques

Concept of Social Media Marketing:

Social Media Marketing (SMM) is a digital marketing strategy that uses social networking platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn to promote products and services, build brand awareness, and engage directly with customers. It involves creating and sharing content like posts, videos, stories, and paid advertisements to attract and influence consumers. Unlike traditional marketing, social media marketing enables two-way communication, allowing businesses to interact with users, understand their preferences, and influence their buying behaviour, especially among youth.

Concept of Consumer Buying Behaviour:

Consumer Buying Behaviour refers to the process through which individuals select, purchase, use, and evaluate goods and services to satisfy their needs and wants. It involves various stages such as problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behaviour. This behaviour is influenced by personal factors (age, income, lifestyle), psychological factors (motivation, perception, attitude), social factors (family, friends, reference groups), and cultural factors. Understanding consumer buying behaviour helps businesses design effective marketing strategies and influence customers' purchasing decisions.

Data Collection and Analysis:

The questionnaire was distributed both online and offline. The responses were carefully compiled and analyzed using percentage analysis.

1) Social Media Usage Pattern

The study reveals that 85% of respondents use social media daily, spending an average of 2–4 hours per day. Among various platforms, Instagram and YouTube are the most preferred platforms among youth for entertainment, product discovery, and brand engagement.

2) Influence of Advertisements

Around 75% of respondents agreed that attractive advertisements on social media capture their attention. Short videos, reels, and visually appealing posts are found to be more engaging compared to traditional advertisements.

3) Role of Influencer Marketing

Approximately 68% of respondents stated that influencer recommendations influence their purchase decisions. Youth tend to trust influencers who provide honest reviews and relatable content. Influencer marketing helps in building brand credibility and increasing product awareness.

4) Brand Awareness

About 72% of respondents follow brand pages on social media. Regular updates, promotional offers, and interactive content enhance brand awareness and strengthen brand recall.

5) Impulse Buying Behaviour

The study indicates that 60% of respondents have made impulse purchases after viewing social media advertisements. Flash sales, limited-time offers, and promotional discounts significantly influence spontaneous buying behaviour.

The overall analysis indicates a strong relationship between social media exposure and consumer buying behaviour among youth.

Findings of the Study:

1. Social media usage among youth is very high and frequent.
2. Social media platforms significantly influence brand awareness and product knowledge.
3. Influencer marketing has a strong impact on youth purchase decisions.
4. Visually appealing and interactive content increases consumer engagement.
5. Social media marketing encourages impulse buying behaviour among youth.
6. Peer reviews and customer feedback play an important role in building trust.
7. Personalized advertisements enhance the effectiveness of marketing campaigns.

Suggestions:

1. Businesses should focus on creating high-quality, engaging, and informative content.
2. Brands should collaborate with credible influencers to build trust and authenticity.
3. Companies should use targeted advertising techniques to reach specific customer segments.
4. Transparency and ethical marketing practices should be maintained to avoid misleading consumers.
5. Customer feedback and online reviews should be actively monitored and addressed.
6. Promotional campaigns should be creative and interactive to increase youth participation.

Conclusion:

The study concludes that social media marketing has a significant and positive impact on consumer buying behaviour among youth. With increasing digitalization and smartphone usage, social media has become a primary source of information

and influence for young consumers. The research findings indicate that youth are highly responsive to digital advertisements, influencer endorsements, and promotional campaigns on social media platforms.

Social media not only creates brand awareness but also shapes consumer perceptions, preferences, and purchase intentions. The interactive nature of social media allows businesses to communicate directly with customers, understand their needs, and build long-term relationships. However, businesses must ensure authenticity and transparency in their marketing strategies to maintain consumer trust.

In the modern business environment, social media marketing is no longer optional but essential. Companies that effectively utilize digital platforms can gain competitive advantage, increase sales, and strengthen brand loyalty among youth consumers.

Acknowledgment

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those who have supported and guided me in the successful completion of this research study titled

“Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Buying Behaviour among Youth.” I am deeply thankful to my institution for providing the necessary academic environment, resources, and encouragement to carry out this research work.

Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper

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