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The Impact of Social Media Advertisements towards Customer Purchase Intentions

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ABSTRACT

These changes have molded the way consumers interact with brands within recent years through which advertising and traditional means and marketing channels of social media like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter convey. This research explores how the purchase intentions affected by social media ad vary with those elements such as interactivity, credibility, informativeness, and entertainment that mold consumer behavior. In social media, the condition is different from other ways of marketing. Social media is interactive, with two-way communications-the consumers actively interact with the brands through comments and shares, and through feedback, which constitutes electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), a tool that informs and persuades possible buyers through recommendations and reviews from their peers. A majority of an extensive literature review enables the synthesis of findings from studies that have indicated that there is increasing strength in social media ads to improve consumer behavior. This is rooted in two prominent research issues- millennial and Gen Z consumers, as these most active users on social media demonstrate higher sensitivity to digital ads. Therefore, the importance of critical engagement strategies, such as personalized targeting and culturally appropriate content, is highlighted in boosting participation and building loyalty with the brand. For example, it emphasizes how social media instant feedback circles benefit brands in making adjustments as soon as possible such that the campaign eventually aligns with shifting consumer preferences. The results of this study particularly establish the need to take very informative yet credible and entertaining ads due to the fact that these elements are positively associated with the increased intention of purchase. It thus contributes very helpful information for companies to optimize their marketing strategies in the digital context. With this insight, companies can provide more meaningful advertising in order to enhance relations with consumers and will still result in higher conversion rates. Such a study will also add to the field as it puts forward a framework for using social media advertising to enhance brand awareness, engagement, and sustained growth within an increasingly digital world..

KEYWORDS: Artificial Intelligence, Customer Engagement, Digital Marketing, Personalization, Predictive Analytics and Automated Content Generation

INTRODUCTION

In the context of global development, adapting to market trends, and leveraging advanced technologies, businesses in the 21st century are transitioning from traditional mechanisms and platforms to digital ones to refine the value propositions of their products. The advertising sector similarly benefits from these digital platforms, with social media playing a significant role. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Gmail, and Outlook have become essential channels for businesses to promote and advertise their offerings to targeted consumer groups. These platforms provide tools and features that enable advertisers to engage with, understand, influence, and gain comprehensive insights into the preferences and tastes of their intended audiences.

This shift towards online advertising encourages consumers to interact with digital ads, contrasting sharply with traditional advertising methods that rely on print and broadcast media to reach consumers in their physical spaces. Various online advertising tools include pop-up ads, HTML ads, text ad templates, GIF ads, and interstitial ads. Additionally, certain social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, utilize "dark posts," which allow advertisers to present sponsored content directly to specific user groups within their news feeds. The effectiveness of these tools and mechanisms is evaluated based on metrics such as ad clicks, website visits, frequency of website engagement, and data traffic. Jeff Bezos, the billionaire founder of Amazon, once remarked that while a dissatisfied consumer in the physical world might share their experience with six people, a dissatisfied consumer on social media can reach out to 6,000 individuals. This article explores the extensive reach of advertising on social networks and its distinct impact on consumers compared to traditional print and audiovisual media.

As technology increasingly influences all facets of everyday life, social media is swiftly evolving into a preferred channel for convenient communication and information exchange among users (Agichtein, 2008; Moghavvemi et al., 2016). This digital landscape includes a variety of online platforms and

services, particularly those associated with streaming movies (Basuki et al., 2022). In contemporary business practices, social media has become essential, offering product information and facilitating e-wallet transactions (Basuki et al., 2022). The growing reliance on digital technology and the internet enables individuals to meet diverse needs, including communication, access to information, and online shopping.

Social media marketing represents a modern advertising approach that empowers businesses to generate relevant and valuable content for consumers, thereby enhancing engagement and increasing recognition of branded content (Dahnil et al., 2014; De Vries et al., 2012; Michaelidou et al., 2011). Numerous small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Indonesia, such as the Sweet Black Coffee Shop, leverage social media marketing to enhance their brand image, build consumer trust, and boost purchase intentions. The internet now offers direct access to various platforms for promoting products or services, including pay-per-click advertising options. Social media advertisements are uniquely designed to attract customer attention and interest. Compared to traditional advertising methods like radio, television, and print media, social media advertising is increasingly favored by consumers. This form of advertising encompasses text ads, image ads, pop-up ads, banner ads, and HTML ads, all of which are more prevalent than conventional advertising techniques. Various metrics, such as hits and clicks, are utilized to assess website traffic and the duration of visits, aiding in the prediction of consumer behavior.

Reviews in the social media ads are one of the primary factors for knowing customer's buying intention. These reviews are widely available for judging any product or service and it also creates a great value for both companies and customers. It has been noticed that customers also find it interesting to rate and review the product or service online. This helps to build a good or bad electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) which helps the customers in their purchasing decisions. As the emergence of social media advertising, most of the businesses have introduced their brands on social media platforms. At the initial stages, fashion retailers use social media to build awareness towards their brands, with the time most of the businessmen have recognized the importance of social media to reach their target customers, throughout the past decade, social media advertising has become much stronger.

Moreover, the previous studies convince that the development of social media advertising aligns with the fashion industry. As an industry term the "fashion" could be characterized as a consumer behavioural phenomenon, surrounding both intangible and tangible contexts, within the domain of social influence and diffusion. Similarly the Fast fashion can be defined as cheap, trendy clothing that samples ideas from the catwalk or celebrity culture and turns them into garments in high street stores at breakneck speed. (Rauturier, 2018). In terms of fast fashion, it always bonded with the youth and trendiness, whereas fashion acts as a sign and aid to differentiate social identity, taste and cultural capital. (Watson, 2013) According to Kozinnets, Andrea, Sarah & Valack, they found that both the social media and social media platforms contribute to every stage of the consumer decision making process model. Therefore, the "fashion conscious" people will be aware quicker than the others.

Traditional media, including print, radio, and television advertising, is increasingly being supplanted by social media advertising, which has emerged as a vital component of marketing strategies. In the context of the Sri Lankan fast fashion sector, this industry has established a robust global reputation for the ethical production of high-quality garments, catering to well-known brands such as Victoria's Secret, GAP, Liz Claiborne, Next, Jones New York, Nike, Tommy Hilfiger, Pink, Triumph, Ann Taylor, Marks & Spencer, and Boss (EDB - Sri Lanka, 2019). Additionally, local fashion chains like Nolimit and Odel are launching their own brands, including "NLM" and "Embark," alongside other fashion labels like Kelly Felder and G flock. These companies are strategically positioning their products in the upscale market while focusing on providing clothing that meets local needs. As the fashion industry evolves, nearly all fashion chains are striving to capture market share from competitors, leading them to leverage social media for their advertising initiatives.

Consequently, Sri Lankan fashion retailers are engaged in a subtle competition to draw consumers to their brands. Research by Gerald indicates that 71% of social media users are inclined to make purchases influenced by social media accounts, with millennials being the demographic that spends the most time online; social media impacts 47% of their purchasing decisions (Gerald, 2019). He further emphasized that social media serves as an effective platform for executing successful marketing campaigns. A recent Deloitte report corroborates the influence of social media advertising on consumer buying behavior, revealing that 47% of millennials are swayed by social media (Roesler, 2019). This highlights the growing significance of social media advertising in shaping consumer purchasing patterns.

In the current highly interconnected digital landscape, the rapid growth and widespread use of social media have significantly transformed the way businesses, particularly in the retail sector, engage with their customers. This shift has been driven by advancements in technology and evolving consumer behaviors, necessitating a closer examination of the impact of social media advertising. The fashion retail industry has been notably affected by the surge in online shopping, given its dependence on visual aesthetics and customer experience. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok have fostered a more casual and approachable atmosphere in clothing stores, democratizing the fashion industry. These platforms not only equip fashion brands with innovative marketing tools to promote their products and narrate their stories but also enable consumers to influence product development. Consequently, the relationship between marketers and consumers has become more dynamic, with social media advertising fostering a more interactive and engaging connection between the two parties.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). "Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media." This foundational paper explores the rise of social media and its implications for marketing. The authors discuss how social media platforms create unique opportunities for businesses to engage consumers through targeted advertising. Their findings suggest that social media advertisements can significantly influence consumer behavior and purchase intentions by fostering a sense of community and interaction between brands and consumers.

Mangold, W. G., & Faulds, D. J. (2009). "Social media: The new hybrid element of the promotion mix." This article examines how social media serves as a hybrid marketing tool that integrates traditional advertising with user-generated content. The authors argue that social media advertisements can enhance brand awareness and influence consumer attitudes, ultimately affecting purchase intentions. Their research highlights the importance of authenticity and relatability in social media campaigns.

Tuten, T. L., & Solomon, M. R. (2017). "Social Media Marketing." This book provides an extensive overview of social media marketing strategies and their effects on consumer behavior. The authors emphasize that effective social media advertisements can shape consumer perceptions and drive purchase intentions. They explore various case studies demonstrating successful campaigns and the psychological factors that influence consumer responses to social media ads.

Dahl, D. W., & Moreau, C. P. (2002). "Thinking Inside the Box: The Interaction of Cultural and Consumer Creativity." This research investigates how cultural factors influence consumer creativity and responses to advertising. The authors suggest that culturally relevant social media advertisements can enhance consumer engagement and positively impact purchase intentions. Their findings indicate that consumers are more likely to respond favorably to ads that resonate with their cultural backgrounds.

Hutter, K., Hautz, J., Dennhardt, S., & F. F. (2013). "The impact of user interactions in social media on brand awareness and purchase intention." This study analyzes the relationship between user interactions with social media advertisements and their effects on brand awareness and purchase intentions. The authors find that higher levels of engagement, such as likes, shares, and comments, correlate positively with increased purchase intentions. This research highlights the importance of fostering consumer interaction within social media campaign.

Nadaraja, R., & Yazdanifard, R. (2013). "The impact of social media on consumer buying intention." This article explores the direct effects of social media on consumer purchasing behavior. The authors highlight that social media advertisements significantly impact brand perception and consumer trust, which are critical factors in driving purchase intentions. Their findings suggest that social media's interactive nature enhances consumer engagement and encourages buying decisions.

Lim, W. M., & Ting, D. H. (2012). "E-WOM: A New Dimension of the Marketing Mix." This study examines electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) as a crucial element of social media marketing. The authors argue that positive e-WOM generated through social media can enhance brand credibility and influence consumer purchase intentions. They emphasize the role of user-generated content in shaping consumer perceptions and driving sales.

Chin, A. W. (2015). "The impact of social media marketing on consumer behavior: A study on the role of social media advertisements." This research investigates how social media marketing strategies affect consumer behavior, specifically focusing on the role of advertisements. The study finds that targeted social media ads positively influence consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. The author highlights the importance of personalization and relevance in social media advertising.

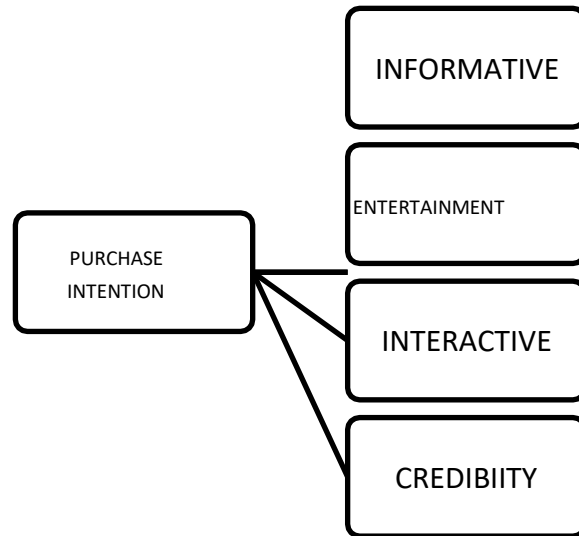
Alalwan, A. A., et al. (2017). "The impact of social media advertising on consumer behavior: A study of the Jordanian market." This study focuses on the Jordanian market, examining the relationship between social media advertising and consumer purchasing behavior. The authors find that effective social media ads significantly enhance consumer awareness, engagement, and ultimately, purchase intentions. This research provides empirical evidence supporting the effectiveness of social media advertising in a specific cultural context.

Phua, J., Jin, S. V., & Kim, J. (2017). "The relationship between social media use and consumer purchase intention: A meta-analysis." This meta-analysis synthesizes findings from multiple studies to assess the overall impact of social media on consumer purchase intentions. The authors conclude that social media use positively influences purchase intentions across various contexts and demographics. Their findings reinforce the notion that social media advertising is a powerful tool for marketers aiming to drive consumer behavior.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To understand whether social media advertisements or tools have a positive or negative impact on consumers' desire to purchase the offerings.
- To find out strategies and tools which are ideal in terms of avoiding negative influences, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of these ads, so that they influence consumer's purchase intention to the maximum.

RESEARCH MODEL



HYPOTHESIS

Null Hypothesis (H₀):

Neither social media advertisement nor tools have a meaningful influence on consumers' level of desire to buy products or services.

Hypothesis Alternate (H_a):

Social media ads and tools have a great influence on consumers who wish to buy certain goods or services, be it positively or negatively.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology plays a crucial role in establishing the validity and reliability of the findings derived from the study. In this investigation, we adopt a mixed-methods approach to examine how social media marketing influences customer behavior within the fashion retail sector. Our objective is to achieve a comprehensive understanding of this relationship. By implementing this methodology, we can integrate both qualitative and quantitative data, leading to a deeper insight into the phenomenon.

CORRELATION

HYPOTHESIS:

Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is no relationship between PI and IN ($r = 0$).

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁): There is a positive relationship between PI and IN ($r > 0$).

		PI	IN	EN	INT
PI	Pearson Correlation	1	.325**	.506**	.278**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.001
	N	150	150	148	150
IN	Pearson Correlation	.325**	1	.413**	.444**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000	0.000
	N	150	150	148	150
EN	Pearson Correlation	.506**	.413**	1	.299**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		0.000
	N	148	148	148	148
INT	Pearson Correlation	.278**	.444**	.299**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0.000	0.000	
	N	150	150	148	150

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

INTERPRETATION:

All variables exhibit a positive correlation with one another, indicating that an increase in one variable typically corresponds to an increase in the others. Given that all correlations are statistically significant ($p < 0.01$), it is improbable that these associations arise from random chance. The most robust correlation in this matrix is observed between PI and EN, with a value of 0.506, highlighting a notably strong connection between these two variables. Conversely, the least strong, yet still significant, correlation is found between PI and INT, which stands at 0.278.

ANOVA

HYPOTHESIS:

Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant difference in the mean PI scores across the groups (mean differences are due to chance).

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁): There is a significant difference in the mean PI scores across the groups.

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
PI	Between Groups	50.298	3	16.766	1.847	.141
	Within Groups	1325.275	146	9.077		
	Total	1375.573	149			
IN	Between Groups	81.168	3	27.056	3.036	.031
	Within Groups	1301.206	146	8.912		
	Total	1382.373	149			
EN	Between Groups	52.448	3	17.483	1.658	.179
	Within Groups	1518.120	144	10.542		
	Total	1570.568	147			
INT	Between Groups	131.342	3	43.781	3.825	.011
	Within Groups	1671.218	146	11.447		
	Total	1802.560	149			

INTERPRETATION:

The ANOVA results for IN and INT are statistically significant, suggesting that the means among the groups differ significantly. This implies that group membership likely affects these variables. Conversely, for PI and EN, there is no significant difference between the groups, indicating that these variables are not impacted by group differences.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- The biggest response group across samples tends to be neutral, with percentages ranging from 26% to 37.3%. This raises doubts as to whether there are many respondents who probably do not have strong opinions or remain in an undecided position about the statement.
- General support: Given the average of all samples, in most samples, the percentage of people agreeing to the statement and strongly agreeing to it exceeds that of those disagreeing and strongly disagreeing, often between 40% and 47.4%.
- Variability in agreement levels: The agreement levels are considerably variant in samples. It appears as the largest category for agree group with percent 30-34 indicating an average leaning of the response toward the statement.
- Moderate Opposition: Combined disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree) usually falls within a range of 24% to 42%. Opposition in this case exists, but not as predominantly potent in most samples. However, in some samples, opposition was strong enough to represent divided opinions among the respondents.
- High Indecision Among Respondents: The neutral category always represents the largest percentage—mostly between 26% and 37.3%. This is very high neutrality level, which may be interpreted as mixed feelings of the respondents or that they were not informed properly to definitely affirm the statement.

- **Strong Levels of Disagreement in Certain Samples:** There are samples in which quite strong disagreement levels have been witnessed in the range of up to 23.3%. Such results would, however, suggest that some respondents are strongly opposed to the statement.
- **Most General Spacing across all the Dimensions:** The answers are spread out roughly equally across all dimensions (agree, strongly agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree), where no dimension really stands out and thus gives a range of views in the population group. Agree and Strongly Agree as the Highest Percentage Plural The sum often works out as the highest percentage roughly ranging from 40% to 47.4%, showing the overall positive view end.
- **Moderate Combined Disagreement:** Not as primary as to agreement, disagree and strongly disagree are still considerable in percents of 24-42%. This means a certain extent of reservations or criticism by a considerable share of respondents.
- **Largest Category Shift:** Neutral is often the largest category; sometimes in some samples, agree or disagree responses can be larger than neutral indicating variability in the force of feeling among the response group.
- **Mild Polarization** The results manifest mild polarization: the distribution of responses is between the neutral, agree, and disagree groups, with no overwhelming opinion that would lean towards an affirmative or mixed reaction against the statement in question.
- **Range of Disagreement Magnitude** This is manifested in the disagreement category, wherein the responses are generally average, not overwhelmingly high. **High yet Balanced Range of Agreement and Neutrality:** The agreement percentages tend to be balanced or slightly above the neutrality, indicating that some respondents may agree, while many are still undecided.
- **Indications of a Divided Audience** With the high percentages spread across the three possible categories-agree, neutral, and disagree-it thus emerges that the outcomes express a divided audience, where opinions regarding the statement or the question will vary widely.
- **Potential for Change in Neutral Respondents:** There is potential to possibly change the neutral response with more information or activation towards con or against the proposition

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Personalized Advertising:** Through data-driven insights, ensure that their ads are aligned to the preferences, behavioral patterns, or even the purchase history of individual customers. Personalization helps make the consumer's sense of relevance in ads enhance engagement.
- **Leverage Influencer and User-Generated Content:** Partner with influencers whose audiences mirror your target profile. Those customers who share individual experiences, through reviews or testimonials, will help build trust and credibility, hence a higher propensity to buy.
- **Use high-quality visuals and videos:** eye-catching visuals and engaging videos capture attention fast. That is an absolute essential on fast-scrolling social media platforms. High-quality media makes ads stand out and keeps potential customers interested.
- **Integrate clear call-to-actions:** guide customers toward a specific action, say Shop Now, Learn More, or Get Yours Today. Strong CTAs may make it more straightforward for the user to understand next steps and really improve the conversion rates.
- **Make sure that ads are mobile-friendly** because most access social media through their mobile phones. Formatting, load speed, and ease of navigation on a small screen all work together toward a smooth experience.
- **Retargeting:** This advertising strategy aims to reconnect with users who have previously engaged with your brand but have not yet completed a purchase. By keeping your brand at the forefront of their minds, retargeting can enhance conversion rates.
- **Social Proof and Reviews:** Incorporate customer ratings, reviews, and testimonials into your advertisements. Positive social proof can bolster consumer confidence in their purchasing decisions, reducing hesitation and encouraging more users to make a purchase. Offer something limited in time, discounted, or as part of a promotion. When a product or service is available only for a short time, immediate purchase actions occur because customers prefer to take advantage of a good deal while they can.
- **Utilize Interactive Elements like Polls, Stories, and Live Streams:** These engaging formats encourage customers to take a more active role in advertising. Polls, live broadcasts, and stories tend to yield higher conversion rates due to the enhanced personal engagement they provide. Focus on specific niches by leveraging the targeting features available on social media platforms, aiming at particular audiences that are more likely to show interest in your products. Accurate targeting guarantees that advertisements reach the appropriate individuals, thereby boosting the likelihood of a favorable response.
- **Consistent Brand Messaging:** Use consistent branding voice throughout your social media and ad campaigns. Consistency does help in branding recognition and helps in building trust with customers.
- **Emotional Appeals:** Use emotional appeal through storytelling, humor, or other means. An ad that evokes positive emotions, triggering customers to make a purchase, increases its stickiness because the customer will be more likely to recall your brand.

- Campaigns Analyze and Optimize frequently: Therefore, you must utilize analytics tools to track the performance of your social media ads and accordingly work upon it based on the data retrieved from it. This would enable you to manage your ads appropriately as well as ensure that your investment is judiciously expended.
- Test Different Ad Formats: Experiment with carousel ads, story ads, or short video ads-whatever floats your boat-and find which one best works for your audience. Testing formats can help ensure the content remains fresh and engaging.
- Target Long-term Relationships: It is a retention game, not a quick-sales game. Engaging a customer through social media beyond an ad helps create loyalty and chances of repeat sales.
- Educate and Offer Value: Create informative advertisements that educate the customer on the benefits, usage, or value of a particular product. Informative copy rather than a generic sales pitch can lend an advertisement credibility, making the users more likely to buy.

CONCLUSION

The impact of social media advertisements on consumer purchasing intentions is both significant and complex. As social media becomes increasingly integral to everyday life, it provides businesses with a novel avenue to connect with customers through appealing, engaging, and tailored content. By developing targeted advertising strategies and incorporating interactive formats, companies can effectively capture customer attention through social media ads. This targeted engagement not only enhances brand visibility but also fosters a deeper connection with customers, ultimately influencing their intent to purchase. Social media advertising harnesses one of its most powerful advantages: the ability to utilize customer data for highly personalized content delivery. By analyzing user behavior, demographics, interests, and recent search activities, social media platforms enable the creation of advertisements that resonate deeply with individual consumers. This level of personalization enhances the appeal of advertisements, making them more compelling and fostering a stronger attachment to the brand. Research indicates that personalized ads can significantly increase trust among consumers, thereby improving the likelihood of conversion. Moreover, social media advertisements leverage the interactive and communal aspects of these platforms, which cultivates brand loyalty and encourages word-of-mouth promotion. Through features such as comments, likes, shares, and live-streaming, customers can engage directly with the brand and fellow users, creating a social proof effect. Over time, this interaction builds trust, as customers witness immediate feedback and opinions from their peers. In many instances, peer influence solidifies purchasing intentions, as consumers are more likely to trust a product or service that is endorsed by their social network. While social media advertising offers notable advantages, it also presents certain drawbacks and challenges. Excessive exposure to advertisements can discourage customer engagement, and negative feedback may further dissuade potential interactions. Customers may perceive ads as intrusive or irrelevant, and overly aggressive advertising can even harm brand perception. However, these challenges can be mitigated by companies that prioritize transparency, respect user preferences, and customize both the frequency and content of their ads, thereby fostering active customer engagement and trust. Social media advertising has proven to be a formidable instrument in influencing customer purchasing decisions. By leveraging the distinctive features of social platforms—such as personalization, interactivity, collaborations with influencers, and visually appealing content—brands can effectively sway consumer behavior and drive purchases. Although challenges like ad fatigue and privacy concerns exist, the opportunity for a well-executed social media advertising campaign to convert customers is unparalleled. As the landscape of social media continues to evolve, the strategies brands employ to connect with their audiences will also adapt, solidifying social media's role as an essential component of contemporary marketing strategies.

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