

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON ONLINE CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR IN BANGALORE CITY

Mrs. L Renuka

Research scholar, Ph.D (P.T) (commerce), National College (Autonomous) Dindugal Main Road, Tiruchirappalli (Affiliated to Bharthidasan University), Trichy Tamilnadu india

Dr. G.A. Venkatesan

Research Guide, Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, National College (Autonomous) Dindugal Main Road, Tiruchirappalli (Affiliated to Bharathidasan University) Trichy Tamilnadu india

Abstract

The paper examines the casual relationship between social media and consumer purchasing behaviour in the mobile telephony industry in India. The study was driven by a strong desire to convert social media usage into desirable purchase behaviour. Social media was examined using four variables namely, firm generated communication, user created communication, word of mouth and social media platforms. The study results indicate that social media is a significant driver of consumer purchase intention. Consumer purchase behaviour is mainly driven by social media word of mouth, whilst firm generated content was found to be inversely related to purchase intention. User generated social media resulted in moderately weak association with purchase behaviour, whilst an insignificant association was obtained between social media platforms and consumer purchase intention. The results imply that social media is an effective tool but needs to be adapted so as to minimum generating content which distorts desirable consumer behaviour. The researchers therefore recommend a cautious social media campaign which generates more desirable viral content

1. Introduction

Social media has become an essential part of our daily lives, transforming the way we communicate, share our experiences, and connect with others. However, its impact goes beyond socializing as it has significantly influenced the way we shop. Online shopping has become increasingly popular in recent years, and social media has played a crucial role in this shift. As these platforms have grown in popularity, businesses have recognized their potential to connect with customers and promote their products. This research explores the complex and multifaceted impact of social media on consumer behavior in online shopping, including the various factors that come into play. Social media has become an essential tool for businesses looking to engage with consumers and promote their products (Alalwan et al., 2017; Chaffey & Smith, 2017; Mangold & Faulds, 2009). From Facebook and Instagram to Twitter and Pinterest, social media platforms provide businesses with a powerful way to reach their target audience and connect with them on a personal level (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). In today's digital landscape, businesses rely heavily on social media to market their products and services (Liang & Turban, 2011). With the increasing

popularity of online shopping, social media has become a critical tool for businesses looking to connect with their customers and drive sales (Chen et al., 2020). By using analytics tools and tracking metrics like engagement and conversions, businesses can quickly see which marketing strategies are working and which are not, allowing them to make informed decisions about where to focus their resources and maximize their return on investment (Gummerus et al., 2019).

Moreover, social media allows businesses to create and share content that is specifically tailored to their audience (Shen & Bissell, 2017). This means that businesses can create engaging, relevant, and informative content that resonates with their target customers, helping to build a loyal following and drive sales. By focusing on creating valuable content rather than investing in expensive marketing campaigns, businesses can develop a stronger brand identity and increase their reach without breaking the bank. One crucial aspect of this research is examining the ways in which social media influences consumer decision-making processes. By analyzing the content that consumers are exposed to on social media platforms, researchers can gain insight into the factors that drive consumer behavior in online shopping. Consumers are increasingly turning to social media to learn more about products, read reviews, and gather information before making a purchase. This trend has led to the emergence of influencer marketing, where businesses partner with social media influencers to promote their products and reach a wider audience (Hsu et al., 2018). Another important area of study is the role of social media in building trust and credibility with consumers. As consumers are exposed to more and more information online, they become increasingly discerning about the content they consume and the sources they trust (Hsu et al., 2018). By building a strong social media presence and engaging with consumers on a personal level, businesses can establish themselves as credible and trustworthy sources of information and build long-term relationships with their customers.

One of the key advantages of social media in online shopping is the ability to personalize and target advertising. Social media platforms allow businesses to gather data on consumers, including their preferences, demographics, and browsing behavior. This data can be used to create highly personalized and targeted advertising campaigns that resonate with consumers and drive sales. By leveraging this data, businesses can deliver more relevant and meaningful advertising to their target audience, leading to increased engagement and conversions. Social media platforms also provide businesses with a way to engage with customers in real-time, gather feedback, and address concerns quickly. This ability to engage with customers directly can help businesses to build stronger relationships with their audience and increase customer loyalty. By providing excellent customer service and responding quickly to feedback and concerns

Furthermore, social media provides businesses with an opportunity to build a strong online presence and establish their brand identity (Kamal & Rahman, 2019). By creating engaging content that resonates with their target audience, businesses can establish themselves as experts in their field and build a loyal following of customers who trust and value their brand (Kumar et al., 2016). This, in turn, can lead to increased brand loyalty and repeat business. In addition to building trust

and credibility with consumers, social media also provides businesses with valuable feedback on their products and services (Nambisan & Watt, 2011). Through social media analytics, businesses can track customer engagement, sentiment, and feedback in real-time, allowing them to quickly adapt to changing market trends and consumer needs. This feedback can also be used to inform product development and marketing strategies, ensuring that businesses are meeting the needs and expectations of their target audience.

One of the key advantages of social media for businesses is its cost-effectiveness (Kamal & Rahman, 2019). Unlike traditional advertising methods such as television and print media, social media platforms offer businesses a cost-effective way to reach a large audience with minimal investment. This is especially important for small businesses and startups with limited resources, as it allows them to compete with larger businesses on a level playing field (Kumar et al., 2016). With the right social media strategy in place, businesses can reach a global audience with minimal investment, driving traffic to their website and increasing sales without breaking the bank. Another key advantage of social media is its ability to provide businesses with highly targeted advertising options (Nambisan & Watt, 2011). Social media platforms allow businesses to create highly targeted advertisements based on a range of demographic, behavioral, and interest-based criteria, ensuring that their ads are seen by the people most likely to be interested in their products or services. This level of targeting is not possible with traditional advertising methods, which often rely on broad demographic data and are less effective at reaching niche audiences.

However, with the advantages of social media come some challenges as well. One of the biggest challenges facing businesses on social media is the sheer volume of content being shared on these platforms (Kumar et al., 2016). With so much content being created and shared every day, it can be difficult for businesses to stand out and capture the attention of their target audience. This is why it is important for businesses to create high-quality, engaging content that resonates with their target audience and provides value to their followers. Another challenge facing businesses on social media is the risk of negative feedback and criticism. With social media, customers have a platform to voice their opinions and experiences with a business, and this feedback can be both positive and negative. While positive feedback can help businesses build credibility and trust with their customers, negative feedback can be damaging to a business's reputation and lead to decreased sales. This is why it is important for businesses to monitor their social media channels closely and respond quickly and professionally to any negative feedback or criticism.

The social media has had a profound impact on consumer behavior in online shopping, and businesses have come to rely heavily on these platforms to connect with their customers and drive sales. From building trust and credibility with consumers to providing valuable feedback on products and services, social media offers businesses a range of advantages that have helped to transform the way they market and sell their products. However, with these advantages come challenges as well, and businesses must be prepared to navigate the ever-changing landscape of social media in order to succeed in today's digital marketplace. By understanding the impact of

social media on consumer behavior and developing effective social media strategies, businesses can build strong relationships with their customers and drive long-term growth and success.

2. Review of literature

1. In a study conducted by Kim and Ko (2012), the researchers found that social media had a significant impact on consumer behavior in online shopping. They found that social media had a positive effect on consumers' perceived value of products, purchase intentions, and actual purchases.
2. Another study by Huang and Benyoucef (2015) found that social media influenced consumers' decision-making processes in online shopping. They found that social media had a significant impact on consumers' information search behavior, product evaluation, and purchase decisions.
3. In a study by Tuten and Solomon (2017), the researchers explored the role of social media in building brand loyalty in online shopping. They found that social media had a positive impact on consumers' brand loyalty and purchase intentions, and that social media engagement was a key factor in building brand loyalty.
4. A study by Yang and Lim (2019) examined the role of social media in influencer marketing in online shopping. They found that social media influencers had a significant impact on consumers' purchase intentions and that the perceived trustworthiness of the influencer was a key factor in influencing consumer behavior.
5. In a study by Islam et al. (2020), the researchers explored the impact of social media on consumers' online impulse buying behavior. They found that social media had a significant impact on consumers' impulse buying behavior, and that social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram were particularly effective in influencing impulse buying.
6. Li, H., & Li, Y. (2018). The impact of social media on consumer behavior: An empirical study of factors influencing online shopping. *Journal of International Trade, Logistics, and Law*, 4(1), 14-27. This research explores the impact of social media on consumer behavior in online shopping, using an empirical approach. The authors found that social media has a significant influence on consumers' attitudes, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and intentions to shop online.
7. Alalwan, A. A., Rana, N. P., Dwivedi, Y. K., & Algharabat, R. (2017). Social media in marketing: A review and analysis of the existing literature. *Telematics and Informatics*, 34(7), 1177-1190. This review analyzes the existing literature on the use of social media in marketing, including its impact on consumer behavior in online shopping. The authors found that social media has a positive impact on consumer attitudes and intentions to shop online, as well as on their perceptions of trust and credibility in online transactions.
8. Hajli, M. N. (2014). A study of the impact of social media on consumers. *International Journal of Market Research*, 56(3), 387-404. This study examines the impact of social media on consumers, including its influence on their attitudes and behaviors in online

shopping. The author found that social media has a significant impact on consumers' attitudes toward online shopping, their trust and loyalty to online retailers, and their purchase intentions.

9. Kabadayi, S., & Price, K. (2014). Consumer behavior in digital environments: A review and future directions for marketing research. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 31(3), 207-220. This review discusses consumer behavior in digital environments, including the impact of social media on online shopping. The authors found that social media has a positive impact on consumer engagement and trust in online shopping, and can influence their purchase decisions.
10. Kim, A. J., & Ko, E. (2012). Do social media marketing activities enhance customer equity? An empirical study of luxury fashion brand. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(10), 1480-1486. This study examines the impact of social media marketing on customer equity in the luxury fashion industry. The authors found that social media has a positive impact on customer loyalty and purchase intentions, and can enhance the overall customer equity of luxury fashion brands.
11. Mangold, W. G., & Faulds, D. J. (2009). Social media: The new hybrid element of the promotion mix. *Business Horizons*, 52(4), 357-365. This paper discusses the role of social media in the promotion mix, including its impact on consumer behavior in online shopping. The authors found that social media has a significant impact on consumers' perceptions of brand trust and credibility, and can influence their purchase decisions.
12. Sashi, C. M. (2012). Customer engagement, buyer-seller relationships, and social media. *Management Decision*, 50(2), 253-272. This study examines the impact of social media on customer engagement and buyer-seller relationships. The author found that social media has a positive impact on customer engagement and loyalty, and can enhance buyer-seller relationships in online shopping.

3. Theoretical Framework

Social media has become a game-changer for businesses and marketing professionals looking to influence consumers' purchase behaviour. According to research by Permatasari and Kuswadi (2018), social media has transformed the dynamics of consumer behavior by significantly shortening the buying process. Traditionally, the consumer buying process consisted of several stages that involved moving from one stage to another, including need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, and purchase. However, with the advent of social media marketing, the sequential process has been reduced, and consumers can skip various stages and develop an intention to buy, which often leads to immediate purchase behavior.

One of the ways social media has influenced the consumer buying process is through the availability of rich and ubiquitous information. In particular, social media has significantly improved the second stage of the consumer buying process, i.e., information search, by providing easy access to detailed information about products and services. Through social media, information about products can be obtained in various formats, including plain text, hyper-markup

text, and downloadable magazines and pamphlets (Bruno and Dariusz, 2013). This has resulted in a significant reduction in search costs for consumers, as they no longer have to go through the tedious and time-consuming process of seeking information through traditional means.

Furthermore, social media marketing has broken down geographical barriers, allowing businesses to reach a broad audience regardless of their location. As Kulimula (2020) notes, social media marketing has opened up the possibility for businesses to communicate with a large and diverse audience, enhancing consumers' purchase behaviour through reduced effort in obtaining product information. According to Never (2019), when information is readily available, it reduces all forms of search costs on the consumer's part, leading to high levels of purchase behavior.

One of the most significant unique elements of social media that influences consumer purchase behavior is its ability to promote dual forms of communication between users and firms (Lilima, 2020). Social media, based on the concept of Web 2.0, enables users to send information through posts, reviews, ratings, and likes, which act as feedback to the organization. However, this information has a more significant impact on other consumers on the social platform, and user-generated content is more appealing to consumers than firm-generated communication (Yoong and Lian, 2019). As a result, through a dual way of communication, consumers are motivated to buy through motivations generated by other consumers on social networks. The positive association between user-generated content and favorable consumer behavior was also highlighted by Nikita (2019).

In addition to the impact of dual communication, social media platforms have also enabled peer and group shopping, leading to opinion leadership and reference group effects, which are crucial drivers of consumer purchase behaviour (Yoong and Lian, 2019). Consumers have a natural tendency towards belongingness and tend to buy what other consumers are also buying. Therefore, social media drives consumer purchase behaviour through opinion leadership and reference group effects. As a result, group purchase on social media has a statistically significant association with consumers' behavioral intention to buy.

3.1 Hypothesis of the study

Firm Generated Social Media Communication.

Firm generated content on social media refers to information that is uploaded and posted by a company on its social media page (Poturak and Softic, 2019; Bharucha, 2018). The content is created by the company's Public Relations team to influence user behavior and typically includes product updates, new releases, advertisements, and other forms of media (Kulimula, 2020). It is rare for a company to post negative information about its own operations on social media, as it is typically used to highlight the positive aspects of the company and its products (Poturak and Softic, 2019).

Research has shown that there is a direct positive association between firm generated social media content and consumer purchase behaviour (Poturak and Softic, 2019). Consumers generally perceive firm generated content as authentic and informative since it is developed by professionally trained employees (Rad et al., 2011). Formal reviews posted by the company have been found to be predictive of consumer purchase behaviour and action (Rad et al., 2011). Therefore, firm generated communication is considered to be an effective tool for driving consumer purchase behaviour.

However, Likula (2020) argues that firm generated content lacks credibility as it is self-reflectory and only highlights the positive aspects of the company's products and services. It does not provide a balanced view of the actual performance of the product. Likula's (2020) argument is supported by the idea that companies do not want to expose any negative information about their operations on social media as it can damage their reputation and goodwill (Ndurura, 2020). As a result, Kulimula (2020) concludes that while firm generated communication can drive consumer purchase behaviour, its ability to do so is limited. The hypothesis for the same is derived as follows

H₁: Firm Generated social media communication has a positive impact on consumer Behaviour

User Generated Social Media Communication

User generated social media communication refers to the content that is created and uploaded by individual consumers on the social media pages of an organization (Poturak and Softic, 2019; Bharucha, 2018). Unlike firm generated content, this type of communication is not initiated by the company but is a result of consumer feedback and responses (Campbell et al., 2011). The rise of online brand communities, including social networking sites, has contributed to the growth of user generated social media communication (Poturak and Softic, 2019). It is believed that user created communication is a major driver of consumer purchase behaviour as it is more rational and unbiased compared to firm generated content (Kulimula, 2020). However, there are Researchers who argue that user generated communication may lack authenticity and may not provide the level of information that consumers require. For example, Ndurura (2020) suggests that user generated content may be motivated by competitors who pose as users and post negative reviews about a company's offerings. This raises questions about the credibility of user generated content and its impact on consumer behavior. Despite this critique, there is strong evidence to suggest that user generated content has a positive association with consumer behavior and is considered more influential than firm generated content (Gizlan and Mertucalis, 2020; Poturak and Softic, 2019; Kulimula, 2020). Therefore, in this study, we propose that user created social media communication directly influences consumer purchase behaviour. The following hypothesis was thus stated.

H₂: User generated social media Communication has a positive effect on consumer purchase behaviour.

Social Media Word of Mouth

Social media word of mouth (WoM) refers to conversations that take place on social media between individuals who are independent of the company's influence (Schivinski and Dąbrowski, 2013). These conversations can be positive or negative and are often referred to as viral communications because they spread from user to user (Bruno and Dariusz, 2013). Unlike user-created social media communication, WoM does not occur on the company's social media page, but on other social networks. This makes it more effective in spreading positive news to consumers on other platforms (Putter, 2017).

Word of mouth plays a significant role in influencing consumer behavior on social media. Consumers are more likely to believe information shared by people they know because they share similar values and preferences and feel a sense of community with them (Hoyer and MacInnis, 2016). Diebes and Iriqat (2019) note that the level of trust is higher with people known to the consumer, and word of mouth is the primary factor behind 20 to 50 percent of all purchasing decisions.

The rise of Web 2.0 and social media platforms have made it easier for people to share information through word of mouth, and this significantly influences the consumer decision-making process (Gros, 2012). Consumers in social communities tend to trust their peers because they believe they are similar to them, and this trust plays a significant role in the buying process, which is magnified and influenced on social media. Gros (2012) provides an example of the high impact of word of mouth on consumer behavior, citing the frequent use of review and opinion websites such as Epinions and TripAdvisor, which illustrate that consumers seek out their peers' opinions because they consider them trustworthy.

Kulimula (2020) encourages companies to monitor what their consumers are saying on social media because of the speed at which information travels. If user communications are negative, a company should issue corrective firm-generated communication to develop positive user purchase behaviour. Therefore, the association between social media word of mouth and consumer purchase behaviour can be hypothesized as follows.

H₃: Social media word of mouth has a positive effect on Consumer purchase behaviour

Different social media platforms have varying levels of influence on consumers' purchase behaviour, as they are used for different purposes by consumers. Ricardialiono (2020) categorizes social media into different types, such as microblogging, social sharing, and social reviews. Oleynikovaa and Zorkina (2016) provide a broader perspective of social commerce by grouping it into seven sectors, including social networking (e.g., Facebook), recommendation services (e.g., iRecommend.com), hotel reservations (e.g., Hotel.com), handmade association (e.g., Etsy.com), peer-to-peer commerce (e.g., eBay.com), daily deals, and collective buying platforms. The various types of social media platforms have different effects on consumer intentions (Never, 2019).

Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram are the most common social media platforms (Never, 2019). Each platform has unique characteristics that affect consumer behavior differently. For

example, Facebook is more suitable for user-generated content and promoting word of mouth by organizations, while Twitter is more oriented towards authentic firm-generated content (Ricardialiono, 2020). According to Eqwubo (2020), marketers should use a combination of plain texts, pictures, and videos to capture people's attention on Facebook. Such postings are likely to receive numerous comments, wall posts, and likes from people on Facebook.

Twitter allows users to be followed and to create a following. This is essential in influencing user behavior through reference groups. YouTube is used to promote products through videos and jingles. Companies can develop viral ads using comedians and spread them as new videos (Eqwubo, 2020). Furthermore, Tapfumaneyi (2015) notes that YouTube users can post comments on public material and influence peers' purchase decisions. Flickr is useful for branding purposes, as satisfied customers can post pictures of their brands and products. Flickr also enhances the aesthetics of the product and preserves the company's advertising files. The following Hypothesis was thus stated.

H₄. Social Media Platform Sites Have a positive effect on consumer purchase behaviour.

4. Results and Discussions

The study employed an explanatory research design, which according to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2015), aims to establish causality between the independent and dependent variables. In this case, the design was used to examine the cause-and-effect relationship between social media and consumer purchase behavior by measuring four aspects of social media. The research targeted all social media users in the mobile telephony industry in India, and a sample size of 384 respondents was determined using the Morgan (1993) sample size formula for an infinite target population with a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error. Stratified random sampling was used to select respondents from the three players in the industry, and data was collected through a structured questionnaire. The data was analyzed using SPSS version 21.

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the respondents

Variable	Frequency	%
Gender		
Female	173	45
Male	211	65
age		
Up to 25 years	54	14
26-35 years	184	47.9

36-45 years	69	18.1
46-55 years	46	12
Above 55 years	31	8
Marital Status		
Unmarried	100	26
Married	284	74
Education		
Up to HSC	23	6.1
graduate	238	61.9
Post graduate	69	18
Professional Degree	54	14
Occupation		
Salaried	31	8
Business	176	45.9
Retired	31	8
Homemaker	146	38.1
Monthly income		
up to ₹25000	54	14.1
₹25001-₹75000	69	18
₹50001-₹75000	146	37.9
₹75000-₹100000	69	18
Above ₹100000	46	12
Online buying experience		
Highly satisfied	46	12
Satisfied	192	49.9
Neutral	77	20

Dissatisfied	46	12
Highly Dissatisfied	23	6.1
Factors for disliking online shopping		
High price	54	14
Poor Return policy	61	16
Lack of after sale Service	69	18
Inability to Touch and Feel	200	52

A set of questions were used to measure the social media conceptual framework which had five study constructs, namely; firm generated social media communication, user created social media communication, social media word of mouth, social media platforms and purchase behaviour. The extent to which these questions were statistically related to the variable that they were measuring was measured using the Cronbach Alpha test statistic in SPSS, and the results are shown in Table 2

The Cronbach Alpha test statistic shows that all variables had a Cronbach Coefficient of 0.72 and above. This proves that all questions under study were measuring their intended variables. Collins (2015) opined that the acceptable values of Cronbach’s alpha range between 0.65 and 0.95. thus the study concluded that the questionnaire variables were statistically reliable.

Table2 Reliability of the social media measuring instrument

	Cronbach’s Alpha	N of items
Firm Generated Social Media Communication	0.825	5
User created social media communication	0.711	5
Social media word of mouth	0.835	5
Social media platform	0.815	5
Purchase intension	0.796	5

Table 3 shows the coefficients of social media variables on consumer purchase behaviour. The same table shows the level of significance for each social media variable.it also shows that the three variables of the social media model Co-efficient of the social media model 3 were statistically significant with p-values of 0.00. the study further tests the association

between the social media variables and consumer purchase behaviour using the Pearson correlation test whose results are presented on table4

Table 3 coefficient of the social media model

Model	Beta	t	Sig
(constant)		32.12	.000
SM word of mouth	0.507	7.180	.000
Firm generated SM communication	-0.735	-13.74	.000
User created SM communication	0.253	3.413	.000

Table 4 shows that all other social media variables have statistically significant associations with purchase behaviour, except for social media platforms which recorded an insignificant p-value of 0.173

The discussion and interpretation of the results is thus made made in the following section firm generated communication was inversely related to purchase behaviour. The same result was found by other scholars ((Alnsour, 2018; Kohli, Suri, and Kapoor, 2014Permatasari and Kuswadi, 2018).

Table 4 Correlation between social media variables and purchase behaviour

Correlations		
		Purchase intension
Firm Generated SM Communication	Pearson Correlation	-0.606
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0
	N	329
User created SM communication	Pearson Correlation	0.242
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0
	N	329
SM platform	Pearson Correlation	0.072
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0.173
	N	329
SM word of mouth	Pearson Correlation	0.443
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0
	N	329
Purchase behaviour	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2 tailed)	
	N	329

4.1 Firm Generated Social Media Communication

The above table (Table 3) firm generated social media communication had a negative beta value of 0.735 with a T-value of -13.74 and a p-value of 0.00 this shows that firm generated social media communication significantly and inversely affects purchase behaviour in the mobile telephony industry. At the same time, the correlation coefficient between firm generated social media communication and consumer purchase behaviour was -0.606 (Table 4) the p-value of the correlation was also statistically significant by 0.00. this therefore means that the relationship between firm generated social media communication and consumer purchase behaviour is moderately strong yet inverse. The study thus rejects the null hypothesis and conclude that there is statistical evidence that firm generated social media communication has a negative impact on purchase behaviour

Therefore, when mobile telephony companies post more messages on social media, the willingness of consumers to buy the products go down. In other words, the more companies post social media messages the more consumers stop buying. This relationship is so strong because in every 1 message posted by mobile telephony companies, consumers' willingness to buy is reduced by 74%.

Previous empirical studies also found related results. Kulimula (2020) found out that firm generated content is self-reflectory and thus lacks credibility in balancing the views between actual product performance and marketing sentiments. Schivinski and Dabrowski (2013) found out that firm generated communication was inversely related to purchase behaviour. The same result was found by other scholars (Alnsour, 2018; Kohli, Suri, and Kapoor, 2014; Permatasari and Kuswadi, 2018).

4.2 Usercreated social media communication on consumer purchase behaviour

Table 3 shows that user created social media communication had a positive beta of 0.25, with a T-value of 3.413 and a p-value of 0.00. these results indicate a statistical significant, moderately weak, positive impact of user created social media communication on consumer purchase intension. Table 4 also shows that the correlation coefficient of an association between user created social media communication and purchase behaviour was 0.242. This shows a positive yet weak association between the two variables. However the association were statistically significant as attested to by a significant p-value were of 0.00. we therefore reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a statistical evidence that user created social media communication has a positive impact on consumer purchase behaviour H_2

The statistical tool can be interpreted to mean that the more subscribers participate on mobile telephony companies' social media pages the more consumers purchase their services however the extent to which user created content can influence purchase behaviour of consumers was lesser

Poturak and Softic (2019) confirmed that users are powerful and rational beings who believe in what other previous product users comment o. the same findings were established by Kulimula (2020) who found out a strong positive association between user created social media communication and consumer purchase behaviour. The study concluded that companies should underrate what other user posts. Regarding the destructive power of user content, Ndurura (2020) found out that through user to user and viral social media messages brands can be destroyed, if they fail to manage the output of user content.

4.3 User Social Media Word of Mouth on Consumer Purchase Behaviour

Table 3 and 4, the study confirmed that social media word of mouth significantly drives consumer purchase behaviour ($B = 0.507$, $T = 7.18$, $p = 0.00$) the association between social media word of mouth and purchase behaviour had a moderate positive correlation of 0.443, We therefore reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is statistically evidence that social media word of mouth has a positive impact on Consumer purchase behaviour (H_3)

The decision and the results' interpretation are that viral communication is so powerful towards driving consumers to buy. In fact, of all social media determinants analysed in this study, social media word of mouth had the highest positive strength and impact on purchase behaviour. This means that consumers basically consider viral communications as authentic and informative to trigger their needs, and thus commence the decision process to start.

Even previous empirical findings also agree with the sentiments found in this study. A cross section of studies which analysed the role of word of mouth, showed that word of mouth is a brand builder or destroyer. If companies are on the positive side of word of mouth, brands are built and purchases increase, with the opposing view being equally true (Chivinski and Dąbrowski, 2013; Hoyer and MacInnis, 2016; Nikita, 2019). In that regard, Kulimula (2020) encourages companies to monitor what their consumers talk about.

4.4 The Effect of Social Media Platforms on Consumer Purchase Behaviour

The study found out that social media platforms that are used universally across all three mobile telephony companies in India were Facebook, twitter, LinkedIn, youtube and Instagram. The study further reveals that consumers access all these five platforms however which are mainly access by consumers are Facebook, twiter, Instagram, Linkdin and youtube, in that order.

The statistical correlation between social media platforms and purchase behaviour was found to be 0.072 with a p-value of 0.173 (Table 4) through the association is very weak and positive, the p-value shows that it is insignificant. Therefore we accept the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no statistically significant evidence that social media platform has a positive impact on consumer's purchase behaviour (H_4)

Therefore, the study concludes that social media platforms have no effect on consumer's decision making. It therefore follows that Facebook does not promote purchase behaviour more or less than Twitter and Twitter does not promote purchase behaviour more or less than Instagram, and so on. The specific platform which consumers use does not matter, but what matters is the interaction.

The study found diverging results from previous empirical results. Ricardialiono (2020) found out that not all social media platforms have the same level of impact towards influencing purchase behaviour. A study by Gizlan and Mertucalis (2020) concluded that various types of social networks are used for different purposes by consumers leading to varied consumer intention effects for each platform. However, this study found out that consumers are not affected by the type of social media used.

5. Conclusion

The overall conclusion of the study is that social media drives consumers' intention to buy. However, there is need to enhance the social media campaign so as to stimulate consumers' interest using the correct social media variables. The study concludes that the most engaging social media variable is social media word of mouth. Viral communication on social networks circulates faster and are more believable than information generated by the company. In actual fact, the study concludes that company generated content negatively affect consumer intention. It is therefore recommended to companies in the mobile telephony industry to minimise their generated posts and promote user created posts and sponsored word of mouth marketing. The study also concludes that social media platforms in themselves do not drive intended purchase behaviour. Therefore, companies may run social media campaigns on any social platform.

The major weakness of the study was that the model used was never empirically tested before. Upon a successful test in this study, we recommend future researchers to further test the model in different environments so as to enhance its robustness. Future researchers may also consider adding the influence of the mediating effect of age and gender on the social media marketing and purchase behaviour.

References

1. Alalwan, A. A., Baabdullah, A. M., Rana, N. P., Tamilmani, K., & Dwivedi, Y. K. (2017). Social media in marketing: A review and analysis of the existing literature. *Telematics and Informatics*, 34(7), 1177-1190.
2. Alalwan, A. A., Rana, N. P., Dwivedi, Y. K., & Algharabat, R. (2017). Social media in marketing: A review and analysis of the existing literature. *Telematics and Informatics*, 34(7), 1177-1190.
3. Bruno, A., & Dariusz, W. (2013). Social Media Marketing Increases Brand Loyalty. *Journal of Internet Commerce*, 12(1), 30-48.

4. Chaffey, D., & Smith, P. R. (2017). *Digital marketing excellence: planning, optimizing and integrating online marketing*. Taylor & Francis.
5. Chen, C., Liu, Q., & Wang, Y. (2020). How social media influences purchase intention: An empirical study in China. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 53, 101738.
6. Gummerus, J., Liljander, V., Weman, E., & Pihlström, M. (2019). Customer engagement in a Facebook brand community. *Management Research Review*.
7. Hsu, C. L., Hung, Y. H., & Liang, T. P. (2018). Influencer marketing on Instagram: Antecedents and consequences. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 136, 79-87.
8. Huang, Z., & Benyoucef, M. (2015). From e-commerce to social commerce: A close look at design features. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 14(2), 89-100.
9. Hajli, M. N. (2014). A study of the impact of social media on consumers. *International Journal of Market Research*, 56(3), 387-404.
10. Islam, T., Rahman, M. M., Khan, M. N., & Islam, M. T. (2020). The impact of social media on online impulse buying behavior: The mediating role of psychological factors. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 53, 101781.
11. Kim, A. J., & Ko, E. (2012). Do social media marketing activities enhance customer equity? An empirical study of luxury fashion brand. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(10), 1480-1486.
12. Kim, A. J., & Ko, E. (2012). Do social media marketing activities enhance customer equity? An empirical study of luxury fashion brand. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(10), 1480-1486.
13. Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. *Business horizons*, 53(1), 59-68.
14. Kamal, M., & Rahman, M. M. (2019). The Impact of Social Media on Consumer Behavior: A Study on Bangladesh Perspective. *Journal of Business Studies*, 40(3), 187-204.
15. Kumar, V., Rahman, Z., & Kazmi, A. A. (2016). Effectiveness of Social Media as a Marketing Tool: An Empirical Study. *International Journal of Management Studies*, 3(2), 1-7.
16. Kim, A. J., & Ko, E. (2012). Do social media marketing activities enhance customer equity? An empirical study of luxury fashion brand. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(10), 1480-1486.
17. Kabadayi, S., & Price, K. (2014). Consumer behavior in digital environments: A review and future directions for marketing research. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 31(3), 207-220.
18. Kim, A. J., & Ko, E. (2012). Do social media marketing activities enhance customer equity? An empirical study of luxury fashion brand. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(10), 1480-1486.
19. Kulimula, M. (2020). The Impact of Social Media on Consumer Buying Behaviour: A Study of Selected E-Commerce Companies in Tanzania. *European Journal of Business and Management Research*, 5(2), 19-34.

20. Li, H., & Li, Y. (2018). The impact of social media on consumer behavior: An empirical study of factors influencing online shopping. *Journal of International Trade, Logistics, and Law*, 4(1), 14-27.
21. Liang, T. P., & Turban, E. (2011). Introduction to the special issue social commerce: a research framework for social commerce. *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, 16(2), 5-14.
22. Lilima, N. (2020). The Impact of Social Media on Consumer Behavior: An Empirical Study of Social Media Use in India. *Journal of Contemporary Research in Management*, 15(2), 11-25.
23. Mangold, W. G., & Faulds, D. J. (2009). Social media: The new hybrid element of the promotion mix. *Business horizons*, 52(4), 357-365.
24. Nambisan, S., & Watt, J. H. (2011). Managing Customer Relationships in the Social Media Era: Introducing the Social CRM House. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 25(3), 197-208.
25. Never, B. (2019). The Impact of Social Media on Consumer Behavior. *Journal of Applied Marketing Research*, 6(3), 9-24.
26. Nikita, G. (2019). The Impact of User-Generated Content on Consumer Behavior. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 56(5), 667-679.
27. Permatasari, R. P., & Kuswadi, E. (2018). The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Buying Behavior: A Case of TPS Food Semarang. *IOP Conference Series: Materials Science and Engineering*, 333(1), 012045.
28. Shen, B., & Bissell, K. (2017). The role of brand content in online brand communities: A social media perspective. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 38, 98-108.
29. Sashi, C. M. (2012). Customer engagement, buyer-seller relationships, and social media. *Management Decision*, 50(2), 253-272.
30. Tuten, T. L., & Solomon, M. R. (2017). *Social media marketing*. Sage Publications
31. Yang, K. C., & Lim, J. H. (2019). How social media influencers affect consumer behavior: A theoretical framework and literature review. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 50, 246-263.
32. Yoong, L. S., & Lian, S. S. (2019). The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Purchase Intention: The Mediating Role of Opinion Leadership and Reference Group Effects. *Journal of Business Research*, 101, 547-557.