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EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR A STUDY ON MOBILE PHONES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO YOUNGSTERS OF KOZHIKODE CORPORATION

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Indian mobile phone market is witnessing explosive growth, fueled by a tech-savvy young generation. Youngsters in Kozhikode Corporation, aged 18-25, emerge as vibrant consumers, with social media playing a crucial role in influencing their purchase decisions. This study looks at how social media ads affect the choices of these young people in Kozhikode Corporation when it comes to buying mobile phones.

Words: Social Media Advertising, Consumer Buying Behavior, Mobile Phones, Youngsters of Kozhikode District)

Introduction
Social media advertising (SMA) has revolutionized marketing, influencing how brands connect with consumers and shaping buying behaviors. Its power lies in its ability to target specific audiences based on demographics, interests, and online activity. Engaging visuals, interactive formats, and influencer endorsements on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube grab attention and build brand awareness. But it's not just about shouting your message; effective social media advertising fosters two-way communication through comments, shares, and reviews, creating a sense of community and brand loyalty. While theories like Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) and Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) shed light on the cognitive processes behind ad effectiveness, understanding social proof, agenda-setting, and even responses helps marketers in navigating the complex interplay between convincing people and building genuine relationships. Ultimately, successful social media advertising relies on finding the right balance between informative content, authentic engagement, and respect for users' preferences, ensuring a win-win for brands and consumers.

Consumer buying behavior is a fascinating and complex interplay between needs, desires, and external influences. It's a journey that starts with recognizing a problem or desire, then progresses through information gathering, evaluation of options, purchase decision, and finally, post-purchase evaluation. Throughout this journey, various factors like personal values, social pressures, marketing messages, and even cultural norms hold sway. Understanding these factors is key for businesses to tailor their offerings and marketing strategies to resonate with their target audience.

On the individual side, consumer buying behavior is driven by a mix of rational and emotional considerations. We weigh practical factors like price and quality against desires for brand image, social approval, and emotional connection. This explains why a seemingly "irrational" purchase, like a luxurious handbag, can bring immense satisfaction despite its cost. Marketers tap into this emotional urgency by crafting compelling narratives that connect with consumers' aspirations and values.

Understanding consumer buying behavior remains an ongoing quest, but by delving into the interplay of emotions, logic, and external stimuli, businesses can unlock valuable insights to connect with their audience on a deeper level, ultimately influencing purchase decisions and forging lasting brand loyalty.

Review of Related Literature on Social Media Advertising and Consumer Buying Behavior
This review delves into the existing research on social media advertising and consumer buying behaviour, exploring key themes and theoretical frameworks to understand this dynamic relationship. Several theories shed light on the influence of SMA on consumer buying behaviour:

- **Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM):** This theory suggests that the depth of processing an ad influences its effectiveness. Ads that trigger deeper elaboration (e.g., through relevance, information richness, or interactivity) are more likely to shape attitudes and purchase decisions. Social media platforms, with their interactive features and user-generated content, provide fertile ground for ELM-based advertising strategies.
- **Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA):** This theory posits that attitudes towards a behaviour (buying a product) and subjective norms (perceived expectations of others) influence purchase intention. SMA can influence both factors: positive emotions evoked by engaging ads can shape positive attitudes, while seeing friends or influencers endorse a product can create the impression that it's socially desirable.
- **Social Learning Theory:** This theory suggests that individuals learn behavior by observing and imitating others. Social media platforms present numerous opportunities for observational learning, with influencer endorsements and user reviews acting as powerful social cues that can influence purchase decisions.
- **Agenda-Setting Theory:** This theory suggests that media can influence the public's perception of what issues are important. SMA can set the agenda for consumer priorities by highlighting specific product features or benefits, potentially shaping purchase decisions.

Statement of Problem

The booming mobile phone market in India is fueled by a tech-savvy young generation, particularly in cities like Kozhikode. While traditional marketing channels still play a role, SMA has emerged as a dominant force influencing the buying behavior of young mobile phone consumers. However, despite its undeniable influence, the complexities and specificities of how SMA impacts mobile phone purchase decisions among Kozhikode's youngsters remain largely unexplored. This raises significant concerns, for both businesses and consumers:

- **For mobile phone brands:** Understanding the precise mechanisms and preferences driving young Kozhikode consumers' mobile phone purchases through SMA is crucial for developing effective and targeted marketing strategies. Without this knowledge, brands risk wasting resources on ineffective campaigns or missing opportunities to connect with their target audience on the platforms they frequent.
- **For young consumers:** The pervasive nature of SMA raises concerns about potential manipulation and undue influence on purchase decisions. Lack of understanding about the specific factors that sway their choices through Social Media Advertising can leave them vulnerable to impulsive purchases or brand choices not aligned with their actual needs and preferences. Therefore, addressing this problem necessitates a thorough investigation into the impact of social media advertising on mobile phone buying behavior among young consumers in Kozhikode Corporation.

Research Objective:

To investigate the impact of social media advertising on the buying behavior of youngsters in Kozhikode Corporation specifically regarding mobile phones.

Research Design:

- **Quantitative Approach:** A quantitative approach will be used to gather and analyze data through statistical methods.
- **Population:** Youngsters (aged 18-25) residing in Kozhikode Corporation who use social media and own mobile phones.
- **Sample:** A representative sample of the population was selected using a stratified random sampling technique.

Data Collection Methods:

- **Survey:** A self-administered online survey will be developed and distributed through social media platforms and relevant online communities.

Data Analysis:
Quantitative data collected from the survey is analyzed using statistical software (e.g., SPSS and others) to assess the relationships between variables and test hypotheses. Descriptive statistics is used to summarize key findings, while inferential statistics like structural equation modelling is employed to identify significant relationships.

Data Analyses
The table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents chosen for the study.

		Gender of the Respondents	
		Male	Female
Educational Qualification of the respondents	Upto Plus Two	13	
	Degree	30	22
	Post Graduation	8	19
Monthly family income of the respondents	Upto 15000	2	8
	15000-25000	14	5
	25000-40000	27	23
	Above 40000	8	17

From the table, it is observed that there is an almost equal distribution of male and female respondents, with 51 males and 49 females. This suggests that the data is representative of both genders in the target population. The majority of respondents have a degree, followed by those with up to plus two qualification and post-graduation. This indicates that the sample is skewed towards individuals with higher education levels. Also, this distribution suggests that the sample covers a range of income levels, but with a focus on middle-income households.

Exploratory Factor Analyses (EFA)

The provided results (Table 2) indicate that the data is highly suitable for factor analysis based on both the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity:

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.843
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1184.948
	df	45
	Sig.	.000

KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy value of .843 falls within the "good" range (0.8-1.0), indicating that the majority of variance in your data is due to common factors, which is desirable for factor analysis. A significant p-value (.000) indicates that the null hypothesis of sphericity can be rejected. This means the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix, further supporting the presence of common factors suitable for factor analysis. Overall, these results suggest that your sample size is adequate, and the correlations between your variables are strong enough to proceed with factor analysis. This implies that your data likely contains underlying factors that can be identified and analyzed using factor analysis techniques.

Table: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.481	44.811	44.811	4.481	44.811	44.811	4.445	44.449	44.449
2	3.990	39.904	84.715	3.990	39.904	84.715	4.027	40.267	84.715
3	.352	3.517	88.232						
4	.319	3.187	91.420						
5	.277	2.765	94.185						
6	.226	2.262	96.447						
7	.161	1.611	98.059						
8	.099	.993	99.052						
9	.067	.669	99.721						
10	.028	.279	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Based on the eigenvalue criterion and the amount of variance explained, extracting and interpreting two principal components would be a reasonable approach for data analysis. It's important to further analyze the component loadings and interpret their meaning in the context of the research question to understand what these factors represent.

Table: Rotated Component Matrix

	Component	
	Social Media Advertisement	Consumer Buying Behavior
Social media advertisements influence my decision to purchase new products.	.984	
Overall, social media advertisements have a positive impact on my shopping experience.	.957	
I am more likely to buy a product if I have seen it recommended by someone I follow on social media.	.942	
Seeing a product advertised on social media makes me more likely to research it online.	.926	
Social media advertisements make me feel more informed about new product launches.	.899	
I am more likely to trust and act on social media advertisements that feel authentic and personalized.		.941
I find social media advertisements that feature user-generated content (UGC) to be more credible.		.900
The use of humor or emotional appeal in social media advertisements makes me more likely to buy a product.		.899
Celebrity endorsements in social media advertisements make me more likely to buy a product.		.884
The quality of the visuals used in social media advertisements influences my purchase decisions.		.855

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

the mixed component analysis reveals two distinct factors influencing consumer buying behavior related to social media advertising. The first factor emphasizes the overall positive influence of social media ads on purchase decisions, while the second focuses on the specific content and credibility of social media advertising strategies that cater to these distinct aspects of consumer behavior.

Social Media Advertisement- One Sample T- Test

The study identified five variables to measure social media advertisement. All these variables were measured on a five points Likert's scale, where 1 indicate strongly disagree, 2 indicate disagree, 3 indicate neutral, 4 indicate agree and 5 indicate strongly agree. Table 2 provides the result of one sample t test.

Table 2: Social Media Advertisement- One Sample T- Test

	Mean	Std. Deviation	T Value	P Value
Social media advertisements influence my decision to purchase new products.	4.3000	.71774	18.112	.000
Seeing a product advertised on social media makes me more likely to research it online.	4.2200	.81128	15.038	.000
I am more likely to buy a product if I have seen it recommended by someone I follow on social media.	4.3200	.73691	17.913	.000
Social media advertisements make me feel more informed about new product launches.	4.3400	.69949	19.157	.000
Overall, social media advertisements have a positive impact on my shopping experience.	4.2900	.74257	17.372	.000

T-Test Value= 3

Based on the analyses, it's clear that social media advertisements have a significant impact on the purchasing decisions and shopping experience of the respondents. All five statements regarding the influence of social media advertising yielded T-values exceeding 15 and P-values much lower than 0.05, which strongly suggests statistically significant positive relationships.

Practically, respondents scored highly on agreeing that social media advertisements influence their decision to purchase new products (mean: 4.30), make them more likely to research products online (4.22), and even increase their purchase likelihood based on influencer recommendations (4.32). Additionally, they felt more informed about new product launches through social media ads (4.34) and reported an overall positive impact on their shopping experience (4.29).

Overall, the data paints a clear picture: social media advertising plays a substantial role in shaping the attitudes and behaviors of these respondents towards product discovery, research, and ultimately, purchasing decisions. This suggests that brands can leverage the power of social media platforms to effectively reach and influence this target audience.

Consumer Buying Behavior- One Sample T- Test

The study identified five variables to measure consumer buying behavior. All these variables were measured on a five points Likert's scale, where 1 indicate strongly disagree, 2 indicate disagree, 3 indicate neutral, 4 indicate agree and 5 indicate strongly agree. Table 3 provides the result of one sample t test.

Table 3: Consumer Buying Behavior - One Sample T- Test

	Mean	Std. Deviation	T Value	P Value
The quality of the visuals used in social media advertisements influences my purchase decisions.	3.6800	.64948	10.470	.000
The use of humor or emotional appeal in social media advertisements makes me more likely to buy a product.	3.8200	.68726	11.931	.000
I am more likely to trust and act on social media advertisements that feel authentic and personalized.	3.8000	.69631	11.489	.000
I find social media advertisements that feature user-generated content (UGC) to be more credible.	3.8200	.67240	12.195	.000
Celebrity endorsements in social media advertisements make me more likely to buy a product.	3.8100	.67712	11.963	.000
Test Value= 3				

Despite statistically significant positive relationships across all statements (T-values > 10, P-values < 0.05), the mean scores here are lower compared to the previous set. This suggests that while respondents acknowledge the impact of visuals (mean: 3.68), humor/emotional appeal (3.82), authenticity/personalization (3.80), user-generated content (3.82), and even celebrity endorsements (3.81) on their decisions, the influence of these elements is seemingly weaker compared to the overall positive impact of social media advertising found earlier. This potentially indicates a more critical and discerning nature towards specific content within advertisements. While respondents might be drawn to social media ads in general, they seem to place greater value on factors like product information, quality visuals, and genuine connections before being swayed by humor, celebrity endorsements, or even user-generated content. This highlights the importance of creating well-rounded and informative social media ads that resonate with the audience through more than just superficial elements.

Gender wise comparison of Social Media Advertisement and Consumer Buying Behavior

To explore the potential impact of gender on the relationship between exposure to social media advertising and consumer buying behavior, this study employed a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) technique. This statistical method is well-suited for comparing the means of a dependent variable (here, consumer buying behavior) across multiple independent groups (in this case, different genders). By analyzing the variance in consumer buying behavior scores between genders, ANOVA can reveal any statistically significant differences in how men and women perceive and respond to social media advertising.

Based on this, the study formulated the following null hypotheses:

- H01: There is no significant difference in social media advertisement between different genders of the respondents.
- H02: There is no significant difference in consumer buying behavior between different genders of the respondents.

Table 4: Gender wise comparison of Social Media Advertisement and Consumer buying behavior

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F Value	P Value
Social Advertisement	Male	51	4.1529	.73820	4.392	.039
	Female	49	4.4408	.62846		
	Total	100	4.2940	.69831		
Consumer Behavior	Male	51	3.7098	.68971	1.653	.202
	Female	49	3.8653	.50065		
	Total	100	3.7860	.60653		

from the table, it is observed that, in case of Social Media Advertisement, Males score lower (4.15) than females (4.44) on social media advertisement exposure, suggesting females report more exposure to social media advertisements. The F-value (4.392) is statistically significant (p-value = 0.042) at the 5% level, indicating a rejection of the null hypothesis (H01). This means there is a significant difference in social media advertisement exposure between genders. It is inferred that females report experiencing more social media advertisement exposure compared to males.

Case of Consumer Buying Behavior, Both genders have similar mean scores (3.71, females: 3.87) on consumer buying behavior, indicating no significant difference in their buying behavior. The F-value (1.653) is not statistically significant (p-value = 0.212), signifying a failure to reject the null hypothesis (H02). There is no evidence of a difference in consumer buying behavior between genders. It is inferred that the data does not support a difference in consumer buying behavior between genders. Overall, Females perceive themselves as exposed to more social media advertisements than males. However, this difference in exposure does not seem to translate into a significant difference in reported consumer buying behavior between genders.

Impact of Social Media Advertisement on Consumer Buying Behavior

In order to assess the impact of social media advertisement on consumer buying behavior, the study employed structural equation modeling technique. For this, the study fixed the following hypothesis:

There is no significant impact of social media advertisement on consumer buying behavior.

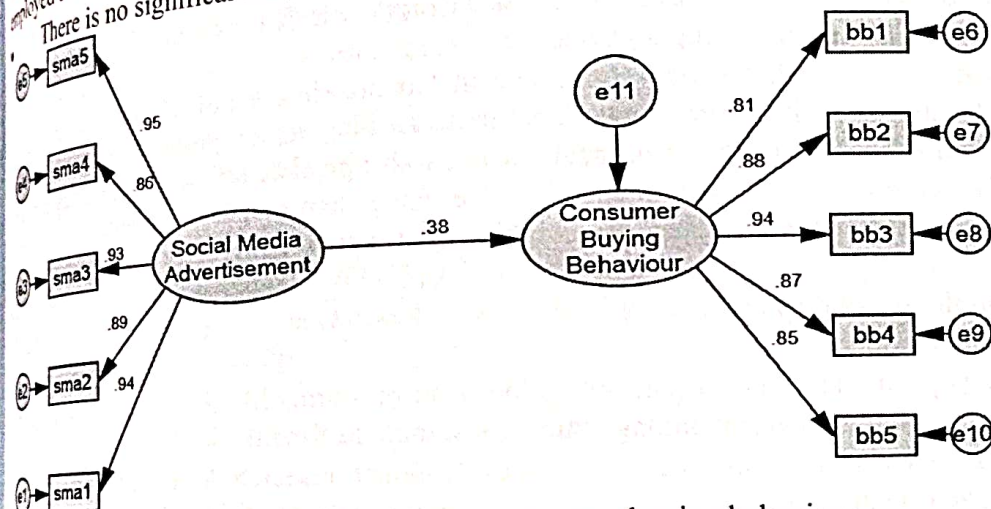


Fig 1: impact of social media advertisement on consumer buying behavior

Table : Model Fit Indices- impact of social media advertisement on consumer buying behavior

Variable	CFI	GFI	TLI	NFI	RMSEA
Measurement model	.96	.95	.93	.95	.02
Standard	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	<0.05

The high values for CFI, GFI, TLI, and NFI, coupled with the very low RMSEA, provide strong evidence that the measurement model is a good representation of the underlying relationships among the variables. This means the model can be used with confidence to measure the constructs of interest and test hypotheses about their relationships.

Table: Testing of hypothesis

Hypothesis	Beta Coefficient	P Value	Decision
There is no significant impact of social media advertisement on consumer buying behavior.	.38	<0.001	Reject

From the analysis, the hypothesis that "there is no significant impact of social media advertisement on consumer buying behavior" can be rejected. This means that the data suggests a positive and statistically significant relationship between exposure to social media advertising and consumer buying behavior.

Beta Coefficient value of 0.38 indicates the strength and direction of the relationship. A positive coefficient suggests a positive relationship, meaning that as exposure to social media advertising increases, consumer buying behavior also increases. The magnitude of 0.38 suggests a moderate effect size. P- value less than 0.001 signifies highly statistically significant results. This means that the observed relationship between the variables is very unlikely to be due to chance. Given the positive beta coefficient and highly significant p-value, the study rejects the null hypothesis. This implies that there is sufficient evidence to conclude that social media advertising does have a positive impact on consumer buying behavior.

Findings of the study

- From the analyses, it is observed that social media advertising plays a substantial role in shaping the attitudes and behaviors of these respondents towards product discovery, research, and ultimately, purchasing decisions. This suggests that brands can leverage the power of social media platforms to effectively reach and influence this target audience
- The study highlights the importance of creating well-rounded and informative social media ads that resonate with the audience through more than just superficial elements.
- From the analysis, it is observed that females perceive themselves as exposed to more social media advertisements than males. However, this difference in exposure does not seem to translate into a significant difference in reported consumer buying behavior between genders.
- The study found that there is sufficient evidence to conclude that social media advertising does have a positive impact on consumer buying behavior.
- The analysis suggests that young consumers in Kozhikode are influenced by social media advertising when making purchase decisions. They are more likely to buy products recommended by influencers, research products advertised on social media, and appreciate informative and personalized ads. Additionally, they have preferences for specific advertising elements, favoring authentic and user-generated content, humor/emotional appeal, and high-quality visuals.

Suggestion from the study

For Mobile Phone Brands:

- Leverage popular social media platforms: Focus on platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook as they are highly prevalent among young consumers in Kozhikode.
- Tailor advertisements to specific preferences: Conduct research to understand the target audience's preferred content, influencers, and brand values. Utilize this information to create personalized and relevant advertising campaigns.
- Utilize influencer marketing: Partner with local micro-influencers who resonate with your target audience, as they can build trust and promote authenticity.
- Focus on visuals and storytelling: Create visually appealing and engaging advertisements that tell a story and connect with the audience on an emotional level.
- Highlight local relevance: Showcase how your mobile phones cater to the specific needs and aspirations of young people in Kozhikode.
- Offer interactive experiences: Use features like polls, quizzes, and AR filters to increase engagement and brand recall.
- Track and analyze data: Monitor the performance of your social media campaigns and adapt strategies based on audience response and insights.

For Young Consumers:

- Be mindful of advertising influence: Be aware of the persuasive techniques used in social media advertising and critically evaluate their messages.
- Do your research before buying: Don't rely solely on advertisements for information; compare prices, features, and reviews from trusted sources before making a purchase.
- Set budget limits: Stick to your budget and avoid impulse buying triggered by social media ads.

Follow credible accounts: Follow brands and influencers who provide genuine information and those promoting unrealistic expectations.
Report misleading advertising: If you encounter misleading or unethical advertising, report it to the relevant platform or authorities.

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