

A Study on Consumers' Perception of Social Media Marketing and It's Influence on Purchase Decisions

Syed Asif B

Research Scholar, P.G. & Research Dept. of Commerce, The New College, Chennai, Tamil Nadu
(Affiliated to University of Madras)

Dr. N. O. Aarif

Assistant Professor, P.G. & Research Dept. of Commerce, The New College, Chennai, Tamil Nadu
(Affiliated to University of Madras)

Submitted: November 25, 2025 Revised: December 10, 2025 Accepted: December 27, 2025 Published: January 15, 2026

DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18375832](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18375832)



Abstract

Social media communication is more and more influential in marketing communication in the modern digital world. Unlike the traditional media formats, the platforms enable users to actively participate in the form of deciphering, responding to, and sometimes altering messages associated with the brand. As a matter of fact, social networking sites like Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Snapchat and X (formerly Twitter) stand interactive platforms where businesses, influencers and customers share information. Apparently, these exchanges have strong effect on the brand insights and consumers evaluations. Given this fact, the present paper will seek to understand the perception of consumers towards Social Media Marketing (SMM), and also to examine the impact of these perceptions on buying choices pertaining to consumers. Special attention was paid to influencer promotions, user-created reviews, interactive communication with the brand, and digitally delivered advertisements. This research seeks to provide empirical evidence of the influence of SMM on buyer's decision process under real life situation by focusing on each of these components individually. Through the analysis of these aspects separately, this research aims to deliver empirical evidence of the Purpose of SMM in the decision-making behaviour concerning consumers under real life situations.

Keywords: *Social Media Marketing (SMM), Consumer Behaviour, Influencer Marketing, Content, Marketing, Digital Marketing, Brand Perception*

1. Introduction

Marketing communication through SMM is quite different compared to the conventional promotional mechanisms particularly when it comes to the production, distribution, and understanding of information. Through social media systems, there is the ability to have perpetual interaction as opposed to a one-way flow of communication. Users are able to respond to material, rebrand messages as well as redistribute information in their networks. Thus, the customers are currently actively involved in the meaning and eminence of brand communication as opposed to being insensitive receivers of marketing communications. Social media marketing refers to the conscious effort by companies to market their brands, communicate and connect with customers in this vibrant digital era through the social networking sites (Appel, 2020). The rate of posting the content is not however the only determinant of the effectiveness of such efforts. Rather, it is a matter of the ability of organizations to retain the attention of the audience, to encourage interaction and response to the input of users in the

long run. Peer pressure and consumer responses therefore contribute to the outcome of marketing in a great way.

2. Rationale of Study:

It's vital to study the influence of marketing campaigns executed in these media on the buying behaviour, considering the increasing popularity of online networking website in the daily consumer routine. This proposed research will focus on exploring this relationship by focusing on the perceptions of consumers and their effects on purchasing intentions:



Source: Wordstream

Effective social media marketing usually consists of strategic planning and the constant monitoring of the interaction with the audience. Unlike the old method of marketing, social media marketing includes a number of actions that are interrelated and which, when combined, affect the online marketing of an organization and its connection with the customers. Such efforts extend well beyond mere marketing and incorporate efforts to encourage contact, build credibility and maintain a long-term engagement. Such a move is profile optimization that involves keeping the information up-to-date, branding the profile, and ensuring the visual consistency of all platforms. Profiles that are managed properly stand a high chance of being identified and trusted by the users. The important aspects of SMM are the generation & sharing of content. Organizations are becoming more dependent on different types of content, including short videos, visual posts, live events, and updates based on storytelling to draw attention and stay according to the preferences of consumers (Dwivedi et al., 2021). Interactions also attribute to increasing the accomplishment of social media marketing. Quick feedback and reply to user messages, comments and feedbacks may be useful in developing relationships and influencing consumer attitude towards a brand. Also, the paid advertising is often used in addition to the organic activity to reach specific sections of the audience. These aspects highlight the need to discover the attitude pertaining to customers to digital marketing campaigns in addition to implication to the attitude on their purchasing behaviours. The application in respect to numerous platforms with unique features, audience features and the communicational format is becoming an important consideration in social media marketing strategy. Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, X (previously Twitter), LinkedIn, and Snapchat have become the key to companies' development since they enable companies to communicate with their clients using various forms of information and engagement

Facebook is popular because of its ability to provide brand pages, communities of customers and direct contact between a customer and the company. YouTube provides a possibility of visual storytelling via lessons, influencer-created videos, and demos. Instagram is particularly effective in terms of influencer collaboration and product discovery since it focuses on the visual aspect and creativity. LinkedIn is primarily used in business-to-business communication and networking, and X (previously Twitter) helps in real-time communication and contact with the customer. Snapchat is often associated with the art of informal communication, especially in younger groups. These channels collaborate to

form a digital space that facilitates long-standing accomplishment of the business, consumer interaction & brand recognition. (Godey et al., 2016).

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING PLATFORMS			
	CONTENT	STRATEGIES	CONS
 Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photos & links • Information • Live video 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local mktg. • Advertising • Relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak organic reach
 YouTube	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How-tos • Webinars • Explainers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organic SEO • Advertising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource-heavy
 Instagram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspiration • S-adventure • Question/polls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecommerce • Organic • Influencer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High ad costs
 Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News • Discussion • Humor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer service • Ads for sales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small ad audience
 LinkedIn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-form content • Core values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B2B • Organic • International 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationshiping
 Snapchat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entertainment • Humor • Challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influencer marketing • Series content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relation-building

Source: Wordstream

3. Significance of Study

The brand messages in the consumer-driven environment of social media marketing are always interpreted, evaluated, and reviewed through the participation of the user. Thus, it is highly imperative that scholars and practitioners understand how customers perceive these marketing programs and the effect of these perceptions on buying choices. The significance pertaining to this work is that it focuses on the consumer-oriented approach and does not emphasize either platform- or organization-oriented one. The information presented in this study can assist marketers in developing more effective ways of implementation and distributing digital resources through realizing which platforms and content types are perceived to be more trustworthy and powerful. Another issue that was raised by the survey in the consumer issues was the concern of privacy, information overload, and credibility. Through these problems, social media marketing will be made more responsible and transparent (Sokolova et al, 2020).

4. Objectives of Study

The study aims of the current work were followings:

- To understand how the customers understand and evaluate marketing efforts conducted through social media platforms
- To establish the degree of influence that different types of posts made by different social media users can have on the intentions of customers to purchase
- To know what social media websites customers, think are reliable and helpful in promoting communications
- To explore the challenges and concerns that customers face whenever they engage in social media marketing campaigns

5. Review of Literature

Widjaya, A. F. (2025) has performed a systematic literature review to investigate the fitting between pricing, product quality, brand image, and consumer purchase intention in e-commerce contexts. The research report had emphasized that, online consumers are very dependent on such external cues during the evaluation of products in the physical absence. Based on a PRISMA approach and bibliometric analysis of 53 peer-reviewed articles covering the years 2019-2024, the results indicated the strong influence of perceived quality products on customer satisfaction, brand-loyalty, and buyback intent, and the brand image on the increase of the trust and engagement. Price is considered to be a rational criterion; however, it is also used as a psychological indicator of value especially when the price is corroborated by good branding or established quality. The review also shows research gaps in the form of a lack of behavioural data, the lack of representation of developing economies, and the lack of focusing on Hyper-Personalize, which offer both theoretic background as well as practical implications on the online market positioning. These research works indicate that consumer confidence, credibility and active participation are major predictors of success of social media marketing.

Antczak B (2024) discussed impact of online marketing and SMM on buyer purchasing behaviour and emphasised the role of social online platforms in interpersonal & international communication that stays increasingly playing. Popularity of mobile phones has also reinforced the significance of social media that gives businesses the ability to reach more people and impact on purchasing behaviours of consumers. But the author has pointed out that there has been the growing rivalry among companies, which has created difficulty in gaining the attention of consumers and influencing their buying patterns. According to earlier research, it is argued that social media marketing is crucial in arousing the purchase intentions and consumer loyalty, hence showing that it has a profound influence on consumer behaviour.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) have noted that social media has emerged as central attraction to both the researchers and practitioners in as much as organizations are turning to the digital platform in marketing and communication. They made important concepts clear by stating that Web 2.0 offers technological background of online collaboration, user-generated material (UGC) can be described as the material created and distributed by users, and online-platform is a collection of medias that let to exchange this material. The authors divided social networking site into six groups, which comprise of collab projects, blog, content creations, social online platforms, simulated game worlds, and cybernetic social worlds that present various forms of interaction between businesses and customers. This is in link with findings by earlier studies that authenticity, consistency, and active engagement are the key attributes to successful use of social networking sites since they stand vital in development regarding consumer engagement and longevity.

6. Research Methodology

The primary data collected in this research was obtained through active social media users to fill out a standardized questionnaire. The 150 valid replies were obtained through convenience sampling since it was deemed that it was sufficient to get a reasonable sample within a limited period of time as exploratory research. The questionnaire had scaled and closed-ended questions in order to collect data concerning the social networking site use behaviour among the survey participants, and their views about SMM and their buying behaviour. The data were analysed through Descriptive and inferential statistical procedures. The relationships between demographic variables and the parameters linked with SMM and buying intent were explored with help of chi-square tests and analysis of variance (ANOVA). The characteristics of respondents (behaviour) were summarized using percentage analysis.

7. Data Analysis & Interpretation

The data analysis was used to identify the way customers interacted in social media marketing and how they purchased the product. Inductive and descriptive statistical analysis of the survey responses

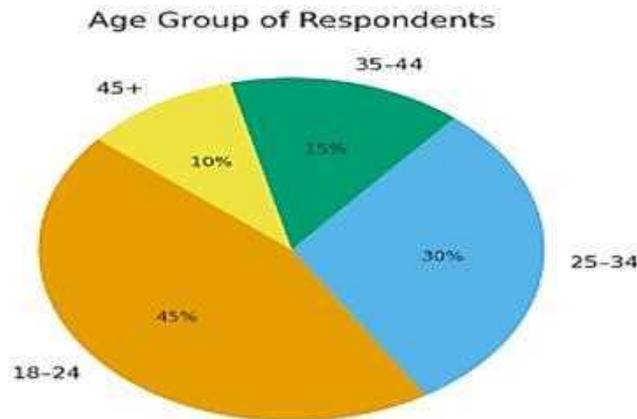
were used in arriving at significant and reliable results. The traits of social network usage habits of the survey participants could be described using descriptive techniques, in this case, percentages. The correlations between demographics and other variables that affect trust, engagement and purchasing behaviour were analysed through two inferential techniques which were the chi-square test and the analysis of variance (ANOVA). These analyses provided some important trends, such as variations in purchase behaviour built on the user involvement, variations in ad exposure between age groups, and the better effect of customer reviews compared to the brand generated ads. All in all, this study generated valuable information on the interface amid the consumers and the SMM and influences that have an impact on their decisions to purchase or not to purchase.

(a) PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

Table 1: Showing Distribution-of-Respondents by Age-Group

Age-Group	Frequency(%)
18-24	45%
25-34	30%
35-44	15%
45+	10%

Chart 1: Showing Distribution of Respondents by Age-Group



Interpretation:

The sample was aged 18-24 (45) and 25-34 (30) with 75-percent being in the 18-24 age group and 25-34 age group. This means that the younger generation of consumers is a relevant group to find the effect of SMM because they have a higher probability of using social media and being subjected to online content in marketing.

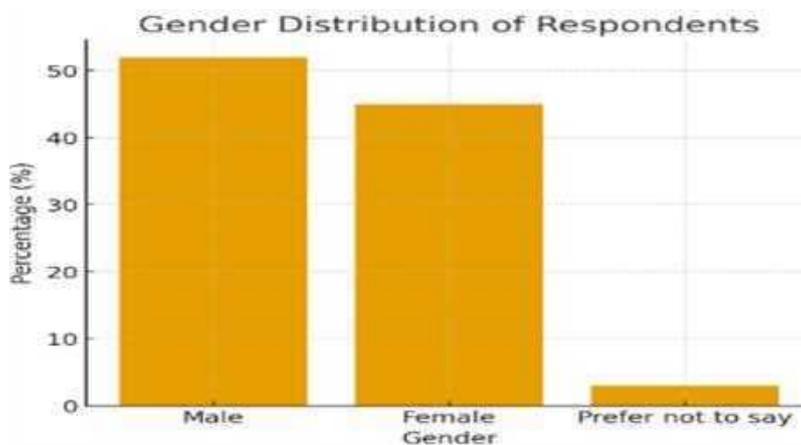
Gender- Distribution	Frequency(%)
Male	52%
Female	45%

Prefer not to say	3%
-------------------	----

Table 2- Showing Respondents Distribution by Gender

Respondents Distribution by Gender

Chart 2- Showing Respondents Distribution by Gender

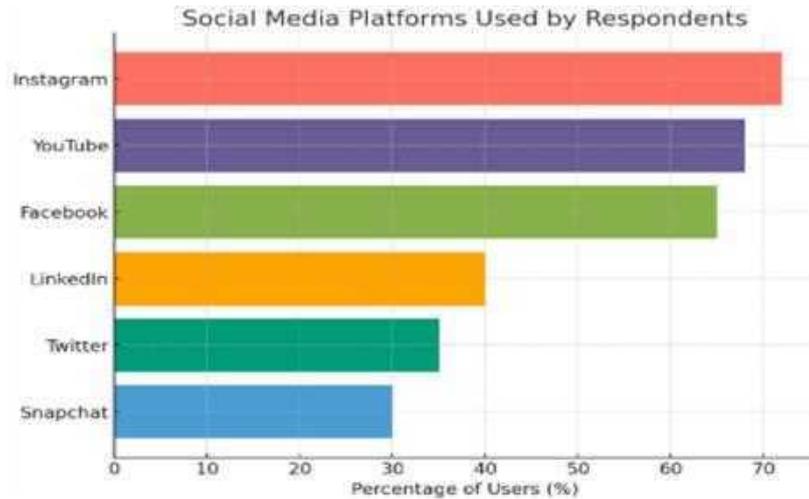


Interpretation: The sample was balanced in terms of gender since 52% of the participants are men & 45% are women. But, 3 percent of the respondents did not disclose their gender. This distribution means that the study did not show any serious bias in the perceptions of social media marketing on individual gender group.

Table 3: Social Media Platforms Used by Respondents

Platform	Percentage of Users (%)
Instagram	72%
YouTube	68%
Facebook	65%
LinkedIn	40%
Twitter	35%
Snapchat	30%

Chart 3: Social Media Platforms Used by Respondents



Interpretation: According to patterns of use, the most used platforms by the respondents were Facebook (65%), Instagram (72%), and YouTube (68%). Snapchat (30%), X/Twitter (35%), and LinkedIn (40%) had less adoption. This means that YouTube and Instagram are more applicable in reaching the majority of consumers and would have a more significant social media marketing impact.

(b) CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS

Table 4: Showing Cross-tabulation of Age Group and Frequency of Seeing Social Media Advertisements

Age Group	Very Often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Row Total
18–25 Years	35	15	7	2	1	60
26–35 Years	15	13	8	3	1	40
36–45 Years	7	10	8	5	2	32
46+ Years	3	7	7	5	6	28
Column Totals	60	45	30	15	10	150

Table 5: Displaying Age-Group and Ad Frequency Chi-Square(χ^2) Test Result

Test Statistic	Values
Pearson Chi-Square(χ^2)	27.85
Degrees of Freedom(df)	12
p-value	0.006

Interpretation: The (χ^2) test showed that age set and frequency of being exposed to social media ads were significantly correlated ($\chi^2 = 27.85$, $p = .006$). Although the respondents aged 46 years and above indicated lower exposure, respondents between 18 and 25 years indicated that they saw commercials rather often. It means that the social-media advertising is aimed at younger and more tech-savvy users.

Table 6: Age Group and Trust in Social Media Marketing Content Cross-tabulation

Response-Category	Age				Row Total
	18-25	26-35	36-45	46+	
Strongly Disagree (1)	5	6	6	3	20
Disagree (2)	5	8	9	8	30
Neutral (3)	10	10	7	6	33
Agree (4)	20	10	4	1	35
Strongly Agree (5)	20	6	2	4	32
Column Total	60	40	28	22	150

Table 7: Chi-Square Test Results for Age Group × Trust in Social Media Marketing Content

Source	SS			df	MS	F	p-value
Between-Group	31.98			4	7.996	17.64	<0.001
Within-Group	65.74	145	0.454				
Total	97.72	149					

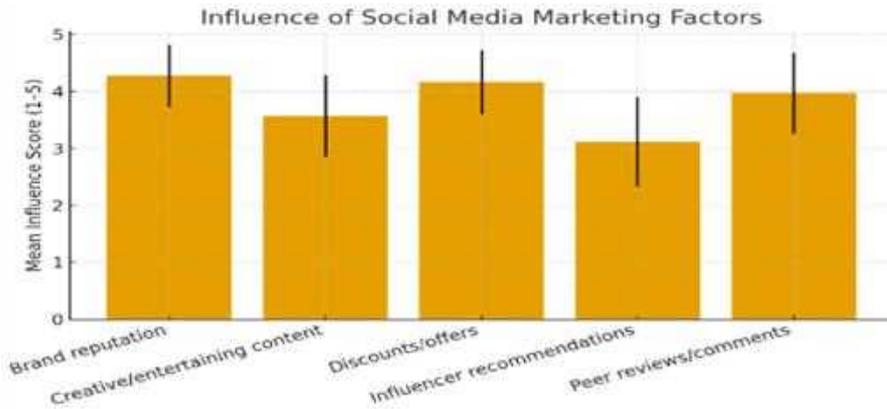
Interpretation: The older groups and especially those aged 36 years and above were more skeptical as compared to the respondents who were younger (18-25 years old) and more faithful to social media marketing. This means the older users remain cautious about authenticity and reliability as compared to the younger users who are much more liberal about social media marketing.

(C) ANOVA Test

Table 6: Social Media Marketing Factors' Influence

Test Statistic	Value
Pearson Chi-Square (χ^2)	27.49
Degrees of freedom(df)	12
p-value	0.007

Chart 4: Showing Influence of SMM Factors

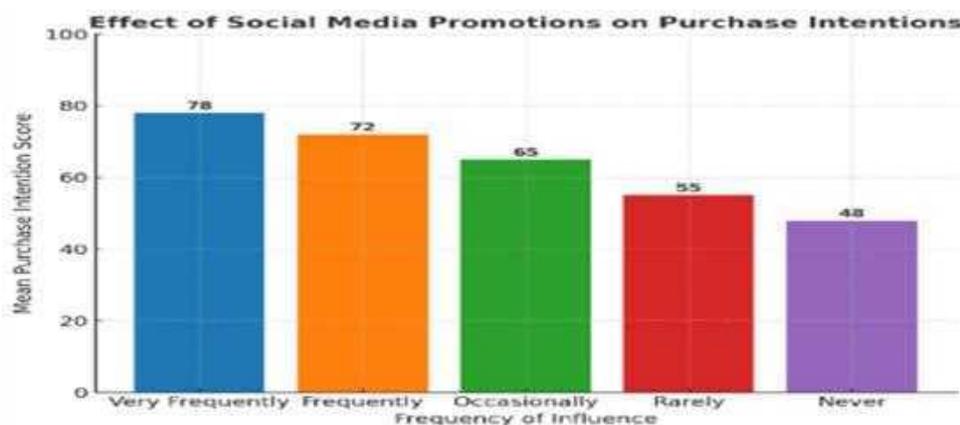


Interpretation: The outcomes of ANOVA specify the consequence of different parameters of SMM is significantly different ($F = 17.64, p < .001$). Value and trust-related factors, including deals and discounts, reputation of the company, and peer reviews are the most impactful factors to consumers; influencer referrals and creative content influence them to a relatively lesser extent. It implies that real benefits and credibility are stronger drivers of consumers than entertainment-oriented or influencer-driven content.

Table 7: Illustrating How Social Media Promotions Affect Buying Intents

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	p-value
Between Group	12,854.6	4	3,213.65	28.47	<0.001
Within Group	16,234.1	145	111.96		
Total	29,088.7	149			

Chart 5: Illustrating Effects of Social Media Promotions on Purchase Intentions



8. Findings of Study

These results portray a scenario in which the younger consumers are more actively involved in the practice of the Social online platforms and being exposed to SMM materials more often than their older counterparts. Such platforms as Instagram, YouTube and Facebook became the most popular and powerful platforms among the respondents. The statistical results obtained showed structural significance between age and exposure to social media advertisements and age and trust in social media marketing content. Peer reviews, brand reputation, and value-based promotions were observed to be trust-oriented and thus were more likely to affect the purchase intentions, accompanied by the promotional intensity, rather than the promotional intensity alone. In general, the findings indicate that

social media marketing can make a significant contribution to the consumer buying behaviour, especially when credibility and perceived value are highlighted.

9. Suggestions and Recommendations

On the basis of these observations, companies must vigorously promote customer reviews and feedbacks since they seem to amplify trust and credibility. The marketing content must be such that it is attractive to the younger generation with interactive and engaging content. More attention can be paid to such platforms as Instagram and YouTube, whereas Facebook can be used to support the communities, and LinkedIn can be employed in professional communication. Marketers should not only depend on promotional advertising, but they should instead emphasize on value-based communication that is transparent. Consumer engagement and trust can be further enhanced with the help of ethical practices and interactive elements, including polls, live sessions, and short-form videos.

10. Conclusion

The research has shown that consumer reactions towards social media marketing differ depending on the age group and the nature of the content. Promotional intensity does not seem to have the same strength as trusted factors, including peer reviews and brand credibility, and value-based incentives. This implies that the extent of advertising exposure does not entirely decide the effectiveness of marketing but the perceived authenticity, relevance and trustworthiness to the content by consumers. Through the further progress of social networking sites as amongst the foremost important marketing channels, organizations can probably gain advantages in focusing on transparency, engagement and trust in marketing approaches by the consumers. When the marketing is based on the alignment of the marketing Activities With the expectations of consumers and the features that are peculiar to the platform, the businesses can make their social media marketing more efficient and contribute to sustainable brand building. “Content doesn’t win. Optimized content wins”- Liana Evans.

References:

- Appel, G., Grewal, L., Hadi, R., & Stephen, A. T. (2020). The future of social media in marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 48(1), 79–95. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-019-00695-1>
- Balakrishnan, B. K. P. D., Dahnil, M. I., & Yi, W. J. (2014). The impact of social media marketing medium toward purchase intention and brand loyalty among generation Y. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 148, 177–185. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.07.032>
- Dwivedi, Y. K., Ismagilova, E., Hughes, D. L., Carlson, J., Jacobson, J., Jain, V., ... Wang, Y. (2021). Setting the future of digital and social media marketing research. *International Journal of Information Management*, 59, 102168. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2020.102168>
- HubSpot. (2025). The state of social media marketing report 2025. HubSpot. <https://www.hubspot.com/state-of-marketing>
- Kaplan, A.M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons*, 53(1), 59–68.
- Mangold, W.G., & Faulds, D.J. (2009). Social media: The new hybrid element of the promotion mix. *Business Horizons*, 52(4), 357–365.
- Smart Insights. (2025). Global social media research summary 2025. Smart Insights. <https://www.smartinsights.com/social-media-marketing/social-media-strategy/new-global-social-media-research/>

- Social Media Examiner. (2025). Social media marketing industry report. Social Media Examiner. <https://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/social-media-marketing-industry-report/>
- Sokolova, K., & Kefi, H. (2020). Instagram and YouTube bloggers promote it, why should I buy? How credibility and parasocial interaction influence purchase intentions. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 53, 101742. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.01.011>
- Sprinklr. (2025). Latest social media marketing statistics. Sprinklr. <https://www.sprinklr.com/blog/social-media-marketing-statistics/>
- Statista. (2024). Social media usage statistics worldwide.
- Statista. (2025). Global social media usage and consumer behaviour. Statista. <https://www.statista.com/topics/1164/social-media-usage-worldwide/>
- Synup. (2025). Social media marketing statistics you need to know.
- Synup. <https://www.synup.com/en/social-media-marketing-statistics>
- Tuten, T., & Solomon, M. (2017). *Social Media Marketing*. Sage Publications.
- Widjaja, A. F. (2025). Factors influencing purchase intention in e-commerce: an analysis of brand image, product quality, and price. *Jumder: Jurnal Bisnis Digital dan Ekonomi Kreatif*, 1(3), 32-47.
- Xu, J., Patel, R., & Gomez, L. (2025). E-commerce and multi-platform marketing effects. arXiv preprint arXiv:2503.09083. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2503.09083>