

The Influence of Social Media Marketing on FMCG Consumer Behaviour

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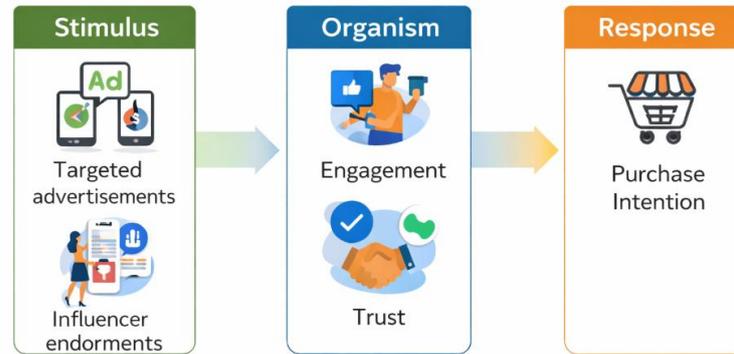
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Graphical Abstract



Research Highlights

- Social media marketing significantly influences consumer behaviour and purchase decisions in the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector.
- Influencer endorsements and visually appealing brand content positively affect consumer trust and purchase intention on social media platforms.
- Consumer engagement with brand posts and user-generated content contributes to stronger brand perception and online interaction.
- Promotional campaigns and positive online reviews moderately increase consumers' likelihood of purchasing FMCG products.
- The Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) framework effectively explains the relationship between social media marketing stimuli and consumer purchase behaviour.

ABSTRACT

Social media has become a dominant promotional channel for Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) brands, reshaping how consumers perceive, evaluate, and purchase everyday products. This study examines the influence of social media marketing on FMCG consumer behaviour using the Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) framework as the theoretical foundation. The research explores how key marketing stimuli—such as content quality, targeted advertising, influencer endorsements, and brand interactions—shape consumers' psychological responses, including engagement and trust, ultimately driving purchase intention. Findings indicate that visually appealing and relevant content, combined with credible influencer communication and active brand engagement, significantly enhances consumer trust and increases the likelihood of purchasing FMCG products through social media. The study highlights the growing importance of digital platforms in shaping purchase decisions and provides strategic insights for FMCG marketers seeking to strengthen brand–consumer relationships in an increasingly digital-driven marketplace.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Fast-Moving Consumer Goods, Consumer Behaviour, SOR (Stimulus – Organism – Response) Model, Consumer Decision-Making, Marketing

INTRODUCTION

The Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) industry is highly dynamic and intensely competitive, driven by strong consumer demand, slim profit margins, and rapid product turnover. FMCG products—including groceries, beverages, personal care items, household necessities, and basic healthcare goods—are purchased frequently and consumed quickly. As a result, maintaining strong brand visibility and customer loyalty is essential for sustained growth in this sector. According to Ali and Muhammad (2021), FMCG products are characterized by high purchase frequency and relatively low prices, which intensifies competition among brands. The industry has experienced substantial expansion, particularly in emerging markets, supported by rising income levels, urbanization, and continuous product innovation. Zou (2016) further notes that the FMCG sector remains one of the fastest-growing industries due to the intense competition among both global and domestic brands. Consequently, companies continuously seek innovative marketing strategies to differentiate their products, influence consumer preferences, and maintain a strong market presence. Consumer behaviour refers to the cognitive, emotional, and psychological processes that influence individuals' purchasing decisions. It involves how consumers select, evaluate, and utilize products and services in various contexts. These behaviours are influenced by cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors that shape consumers' attitudes and preferences. In a modern marketplace characterized by abundant product choices and extensive marketing communication, consumer decision-making has become increasingly complex and dynamic. Understanding these behavioural patterns is therefore crucial for marketers aiming to develop strategies that effectively attract, engage, and retain customers in highly competitive markets. In recent years, social media marketing has emerged as a powerful digital marketing tool that enables brands to interact directly with consumers through platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok. Unlike traditional forms of advertising, social media facilitates real-time interaction, two-way communication, and targeted content delivery. Dwivedi, Kapoor, and Chen (2015) highlight that social media marketing has become one of the most widely adopted strategies among technology-driven marketers, surpassing many traditional promotional approaches. The increasing influence of user-generated content, influencer endorsements, and interactive marketing campaigns has positioned social media as an essential platform for brand communication and customer engagement. The widespread integration of social media into everyday life has significantly transformed consumer behaviour. Modern consumers frequently rely on online reviews, influencer recommendations, brand communities, and peer-generated content when making purchasing decisions. Mangold and Faulds (2009) explain that social media provides a platform where both organizations and consumers can communicate openly, thereby influencing each stage of the consumer decision-making process, from awareness to purchase. Visual storytelling, personalized advertisements, and persuasive digital content further shape consumer perceptions and buying intentions. Within the FMCG sector, social media plays an especially significant role because many FMCG purchases involve low involvement and routine decision-making. Consumers often make quick purchasing decisions influenced by brand visibility, promotional messages, influencer recommendations, and peer feedback on digital

platforms. Prasath and Yoganathen (2018) emphasize that social media significantly affects consumer purchasing behaviour across multiple product categories. As consumers increasingly depend on digital platforms to explore, evaluate, and purchase FMCG products, social media marketing has become an important driver of consumer preferences, perceptions, and brand loyalty. In this context, the present study aims to examine how social media marketing influences FMCG consumer behaviour by applying the Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) framework, focusing on how marketing stimuli such as influencer endorsements, advertisements, and brand content shape consumer perceptions and ultimately affect purchase intentions.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. FMCG Sector Dynamics

The FMCG industry is characterized by rapid inventory turnover, intense competition, and high consumer demand. Nozari et al. (2022) emphasize that FMCG firms face continuous supply chain challenges and are increasingly adopting advanced technologies such as the Artificial Intelligence of Things (AIoT) to optimize operations. According to Zou (2016), the sector's competitive landscape—particularly in emerging markets like China—is shaped by numerous domestic and international brands, resulting in a highly dynamic market environment. Additional pressures arise from sustainability expectations, especially in packaging and environmental responsibility (Nwabekee et al., 2024). Research by Bocken et al. (2018) highlights that disparities in cost structures can diminish profit margins and disrupt competitive pricing strategies. Effective product line management therefore becomes critical for FMCG companies to maintain market relevance (Putsis & Bayus, 2001), while poor product selection may reduce profits and customer value (Acikgöz, 2018).

2. Consumer Behaviour in the FMCG Sector

Consumer behaviour in the FMCG category is driven by a mix of habitual buying, convenience, and brand perception. LeClerc and Little (1997) differentiate between true brand loyalty and habitual purchasing in low-involvement product categories, noting that repeat purchases often arise from routine behaviours rather than strong brand attachment. Understanding consumer needs and tailoring offerings to specific market segments is essential for enhancing satisfaction and driving sales (Rasool & Mahmood, 2018). Given the high purchase frequency in FMCG, companies must consistently engage buyers and adapt to shifting consumer expectations.

3. Evolution and Role of Social Media Marketing

Social media has evolved into a dominant digital marketing tool, transforming how brands communicate with consumers. Dwivedi, Kapoor, and Chen (2015) argue that Social Media Marketing (SMM) has surpassed many traditional promotional methods and has become a preferred strategy for technology-driven marketers. Saravanakumar and SuganthaLakshmi (2012) emphasize that social media technologies continue to advance rapidly, significantly influencing business operations and marketing practices. Constantinides (2014) further explains that the internet operates as a powerful platform leveraging collective intelligence, user-generated content, and interactive digital experiences. Extensive research (Alalwan et al., 2017; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Gensler et al., 2013) highlights how social media enhances brand visibility, strengthens branding strategies, and expands consumer engagement.

4. Influence of Social Media on Consumer Behaviour

Social media plays a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions, purchase decisions, and brand engagement in the FMCG sector. Nadaraja and Yazdanifard (2013) observe that consumers have shifted from passive receivers of marketing content to active creators who influence brand narratives. The digital environment also reduces the cost of acquiring and sharing information, expanding the decision-making landscape for both consumers and businesses (Ziyadin et al., 2019). According to Stephen (2016), consumers use social platforms to search for product information, evaluate alternatives, purchase products, and share their experiences. Chopra et al. (2020) highlight that external information sources—such as peer reviews, social networks, and user-generated content—significantly influence consumer preferences and are often beyond marketers' direct control. Research by Prasath and Yoganathen (2018) confirms that social media affects multiple factors in the purchasing process, including perceptions of price, product quality, advertising, and brand image. Antczak (2024) adds that digital marketing empowers consumers to make informed choices while strengthening engagement and brand loyalty.

The reviewed literature highlights that the FMCG sector's competitive nature, coupled with rapidly evolving consumer behaviour, necessitates innovative marketing approaches. Social media has emerged as a powerful tool influencing consumer perceptions, purchase intentions, and brand engagement. Overall, prior studies consistently demonstrate that Social Media Marketing significantly shapes FMCG consumer behaviour, underscoring its relevance for contemporary marketing research.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Design and method: For this study, the responses are collected from the individuals from the general public who are using FMCG consumers and using social media. Using a convenient sampling method, a sample size of 300 out of 343 responses have been used for the study.

Sampling size: In total 343 responses were collected for this analysis from the general public who are using FMCG consumers and using social media, from which 300 have been selected using convenient sampling methods and analysis has been performed.

Data Collection: The study uses both primary and secondary data. Primary data was gathered through a structured questionnaire, while secondary information was obtained from books, journals, websites, and other published sources to strengthen the research.

Tools and Technologies Used: Google Forms was used to collect primary responses, and the data was analyzed and visualized using Microsoft Power BI and Excel. The study employed an independent sample t-test for hypothesis testing and percentage analysis for exploratory insights.

Questionnaire Design: The questionnaire was developed to capture respondents' perceptions of how social media marketing influences FMCG consumer behaviour. A total of 16 well-structured questions with suitable response options were included.

DATA ANALYSIS

Primary data for the analysis was collected through Google Forms. Since the study focuses on the influence of social media marketing on FMCG consumers, responses from individuals without knowledge of social media marketing were excluded. Consequently, 300 out of 343 responses were considered for further analysis. The demographic analysis reveals that the majority of respondents fall within the 26–35 age group (52%), making it the most represented category, while the 46–55 age group (18%) is the least represented. In terms of gender, males constitute the majority (64%), compared to females at 36%. Regarding educational qualification, undergraduates form the largest group (46%), whereas postgraduates account for the lowest proportion (26%). With respect to social media usage duration, the highest proportion of respondents spend more than 4 hours daily (30%), while the lowest spend 2–4 hours (20%). When examining preferred social media platforms, YouTube is the most frequently used (30%), followed closely by Instagram (28%), whereas Facebook alone and the combined use of Instagram–Facebook–Twitter/X each represent the minimum usage (10%). Overall, the table indicates that the sample is dominated by young adults, male respondents, undergraduate users, heavy social media users, and those who prefer visually engaging platforms like YouTube and Instagram. The responses related to Organism from Table 2 (internal consumer responses such as trust, connection, and engagement) reveal varied attitudes toward social media marketing. The statement “Consistent communication on social media builds my confidence in a brand” received the highest neutrality (42%), indicating that many respondents neither fully trust nor distrust brand communication, while 26% strongly agree and only 10% disagree. When assessing whether brands provide honest information, the highest response was Agree (34%), whereas both Disagree and Strongly Disagree recorded equal minimal responses (10%), showing mixed perceptions about brand transparency. The statement “Brands active on social media appear more trustworthy” saw most respondents being neutral (40%) or agreeing (38%), reflecting moderate trust influenced by social media

activity. A similar pattern appears in the perception of connection with brands, where 42% were neutral, followed by 26% agreeing, suggesting a balanced but not strongly emotional attachment. Engagement behaviour shows a different trend: “I often like, comment, or share brand posts” recorded the highest agreement at 54%, indicating active consumer interaction, though 10% strongly disagree, showing a small segment that avoids online engagement. Finally, user-generated content significantly influences perceptions, with 46% being neutral and 22% each for Strongly Agree and Agree, demonstrating that while UGC does affect brand perception, many respondents remain cautious in acknowledging its impact. Overall, the Organism responses show that consumers exhibit moderate trust, a balanced emotional connection, and active engagement influenced by credible and interactive social media content. The responses related to the Stimulus from Table 3 (external marketing cues such as influencer content, advertisements, and brand posts) illustrate how consumers perceive and react to social media marketing elements. For influencer-driven factors, the statement “I trust recommendations made by influencers I follow” shows the highest neutrality (40%), while 20% strongly agree and 22% strongly disagree, indicating a polarized view where consumers are either convinced or skeptical about influencer credibility. Similarly, “Influencer endorsements increase my likelihood of trying a product” received 30% neutral responses, with a combined 48% agreeing or strongly agreeing, suggesting that influencers moderately impact purchase intention, though a smaller proportion (22%) disagree or strongly disagree. Additionally, “Influencers help me discover new brands or products” shows a balanced distribution, with 34% agreeing and equal proportions (22%) strongly agreeing, neutral, and disagreeing, reflecting varied levels of reliance on influencers for product discovery.

Table 1 Demographic Information

Particulars	Options	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18–25	90	30%
	26–35	156	52%
	46–55	54	18%
Gender	Female	108	36%
	Male	192	64%
Education Qualification	Doctorate	84	28%
	Postgraduate	78	26%
	Undergraduate	138	46%
Time In Social Media	1–2 hours	66	22%
	2–4 hours	60	20%
	Less than 1 hour	84	28%
	More than 4 hours	90	30%
Social Medias Used Often	Facebook	30	10%
	Instagram	84	28%
	Instagram, Facebook, Twitter/X	30	10%
	Instagram, YouTube, Twitter/X	66	22%
	YouTube	90	30%

Table 2 Response Distribution for Organism

Particulars	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Consistent communication on social media builds my confidence in a brand.	78	26%	66	22%	126	42%	30	10%	0	0%
I believe brands on social media provide honest information	48	16%	102	34%	90	30%	30	10%	30	10%
Brands active on social media appear more trustworthy	30	10%	114	38%	120	40%	36	12%	0	0%
I feel more connected to brands that interact with users on social media	60	20%	78	26%	126	42%	36	12%	0	0%
I often like, comment, or share brand posts	18	6%	162	54%	54	18%	36	12%	30	10%
User-generated content (reviews, photos, videos) affects my perception of a brand	66	22%	66	22%	138	46%	0	0%	30	10%

When examining social media advertisements, the majority (60%) remained neutral toward the statement “Social media advertisements are relevant to my interests,” showing that while ads are noticed, they may not be perceived as highly personalized. Only 20% strongly agree, and 10% strongly disagree, indicating limited ad relevance. Content quality plays a stronger role, with “The content posted by brands on social media is visually appealing” receiving the highest agreement rate in the table—62% agree and 16% strongly agree—highlighting that visual appeal is a major strength of brand communication. Lastly, “The information provided in brand posts is clear and useful” also received strong positive responses, with 40% agreeing and 26% strongly agreeing, while only 10% strongly disagreed, indicating that most consumers find brand content informative and effective. Overall, the stimulus-related responses show that influencer marketing, visual content quality, and brand information significantly shape consumer attention and perception, while ad relevance remains moderately perceived.

Table 3 Response Distribution for Stimulus

Particulars	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I trust recommendations made by influencers I follow	60	20%	54	18%	120	40%	0	0%	66	22%
Influencer endorsements increase my likelihood of trying a product	78	26%	66	22%	90	30%	36	12%	30	10%
Influencers help me discover new brands or products	66	22%	102	34%	66	22%	66	22%	0	0%
Social media advertisements are relevant to my interests	60	20%	30	10%	180	60%	0	0%	30	10%
The content posted by brands on social media is visually appealing	48	16%	186	62%	36	12%	30	10%	0	0%
The information provided in brand posts is clear and useful	78	26%	120	40%	72	24%	0	0%	30	10%

The responses for the Response from Table 4 construct indicate how social media marketing translates into actual consumer behaviour. Regarding the influence of positive comments or reviews, 40% of respondents remained neutral, while 38% agreed or strongly agreed that such social proof affects their purchase decisions, and 22% disagreed, suggesting mixed but noticeable influence. In terms of social media promotions, a majority of 60% agreed or strongly agreed that promotions have encouraged them to buy products, highlighting the effectiveness of promotional campaigns, while 30% were neutral and 10% disagreed. For overall purchase interest, 58% of respondents were neutral about whether social media marketing increases their interest in a product, though 32% acknowledged a positive impact, and 10% disagreed. Overall, these findings

suggest that social media marketing moderately drives consumer response, with promotions and positive reviews playing key roles, although a significant portion of consumers remains cautious or indifferent.

Table 4 Response Distribution for Response

Particulars	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I am likely to buy a product if I see positive comments or reviews on social media	48	16%	66	22%	120	40%	66	22%	0	0%
I have purchased products because of social media promotions	48	16%	132	44%	90	30%	0	0%	30	10%
Social media marketing increases my interest in purchasing a product	18	6%	78	26%	174	58%	30	10%	0	0%

The bar chart illustrates respondents' perceptions of the impact of social media marketing on their purchasing decisions. The largest group, comprising 126 respondents, remained neutral, indicating uncertainty or ambivalence about its influence. Meanwhile, 108 respondents agreed that social media marketing affects their purchase choices, reflecting a substantial positive impact. In contrast, 36 respondents disagreed, and 30 strongly disagreed, showing that a smaller portion of the audience perceives little to no influence. Overall, the data suggest that while social media marketing significantly affects the purchase decisions of many consumers, a considerable number remain uncertain, highlighting the varying degrees of influence across the audience.

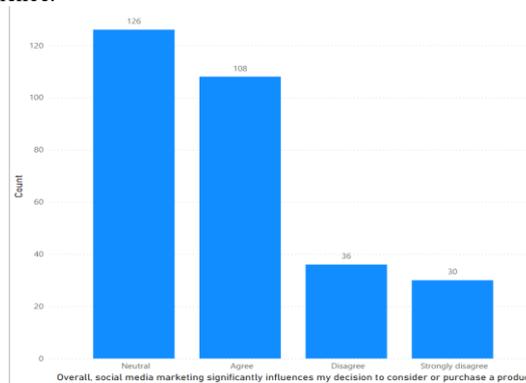


Figure 1 Influence of SMM Response distribution

Hypotheses 1

H₀ (Null): There is no difference between the mean scores of influencer impact and purchase intention.

H₁ (Alternative): There is a significant difference between influencer impact and purchase intention.

Interpretation:

The paired t-test findings show that influencer endorsements play a meaningful role in shaping respondents' likelihood of purchasing a product after viewing positive comments or reviews on social media. Although both variables have an identical mean score of 3.32, indicating similar average responses, the stimulus variable displays greater variation (1.6089) compared to the response variable (0.9809). The Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.8191 reveals a strong positive association, meaning that higher agreement with influencer endorsements corresponds to a higher intention to purchase. The t-test result ($t = 2.375$) and the p-value of 0.0182 (below the 0.05 threshold) provide sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis, showing that the difference between the two means is statistically significant. Overall, these results confirm that influencer endorsements have a notable influence on social media-driven buying behaviour, as increased trust in endorsements tends to raise the likelihood of making a purchase.

t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means		
	<i>Stimulus [Influencer endorsements increase my likelihood of trying a product.]</i>	<i>Response [I am likely to buy a product if I see positive comments or reviews on social media.]</i>
Mean	3.42	3.32
Variance	1.608963211	0.980869565
Observations	300	300
Pearson Correlation	0.819123512	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	299	
t Stat	2.375186189	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.009085311	
t Critical one-tail	1.649965767	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.018170622	
t Critical two-tail	1.967929669	

Figure 2 T Stat output for Hypothesis 1

Hypotheses 2

H₀: Brand trust does not differ from purchase intention.

H₁: Brand trust significantly differs from purchase intention.

Interpretation

The paired t-test results indicate that the perception of brands being active on social media significantly influences respondents' interest in purchasing products through social media marketing. The mean score for the perception that "brands active on social media appear more trustworthy" is 3.46, slightly higher than the mean of 3.28 for the response variable, "social media marketing increases my interest in purchasing

a product.” The Pearson correlation of 0.219 suggests a modest positive relationship, meaning that as trustworthiness perception increases, interest in purchasing also tends to increase. The calculated t-value of 3.197, along with a two-tailed p-value of 0.0015 (less than 0.05), allows us to reject the null hypothesis that there is no difference between the means. Overall, these results indicate that brands’ active presence on social media significantly enhances consumer interest in purchasing products, confirming a meaningful link between perceived trustworthiness and purchase intention.

t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means		
	<i>Organism [Brands active on social media appear more trustworthy.]</i>	<i>Response [Social media marketing increases my interest in purchasing a product.]</i>
Mean	3.46	3.28
Variance	0.690702341	0.523344482
Observations	300	300
Pearson Correlation	0.21894983	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	299	
t Stat	3.197389712	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000767692	
t Critical one-tail	1.649965767	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.001535385	
t Critical two-tail	1.967929669	

Figure 3 T Stat output for Hypothesis 2

Hypotheses 3

H₀: Content quality has no significant association with purchase behaviour.

H₁: Content quality has a significant association with purchase behaviour.

Interpretation:

The paired t-test examines whether the visually appealing content posted by brands on social media (stimulus) has a significant effect on consumers purchasing products due to social media promotions (response). The mean score for the stimulus (3.84) is slightly higher than the response (3.56), indicating that respondents generally found the content visually appealing more often than they reported making purchases based on promotions. The Pearson correlation of 0.812 suggests a strong positive relationship between the two variables, meaning that as the perception of visually appealing content increases, the likelihood of purchasing due to promotions also tends to increase. The calculated t-statistic (7.64) exceeds the critical t-value for both one-tailed (1.65) and two-tailed (1.97) tests, and the p-values are extremely small ($p \approx 0$), indicating that the difference in means is statistically significant at conventional significance levels. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no difference between the stimulus and response can be rejected, confirming that visually appealing social media content significantly influences consumers’ purchase behavior.

t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means		
	<i>Stimulus [The content posted by brands on social media is visually appealing.]</i>	<i>Response [I have purchased products because of social media promotions.]</i>
Mean	3.84	3.56
Variance	0.656588629	1.170301003
Observations	300	300
Pearson Correlation	0.812209764	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	299	
t Stat	7.640060074	
P(T<=t) one-tail	1.48138E-13	
t Critical one-tail	1.649965767	
P(T<=t) two-tail	2.96275E-13	
t Critical two-tail	1.967929669	

Figure 4 T Stat output for Hypothesis 3

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present study examined the influence of social media marketing on FMCG consumer behavior, focusing on the interplay between stimulus (external marketing cues), organism (internal consumer responses), and response (consumer behavioral outcomes). The analysis of primary data from 300 valid responses provides insights into demographic patterns, engagement behaviors, perceptions of marketing cues, and purchase responses.

The demographic analysis reveals that the sample predominantly consists of young adults aged 26–35 (52%), males (64%), undergraduates (46%), and heavy social media users (30% spending more than 4 hours daily). Platforms such as YouTube (30%) and Instagram (28%) dominate usage, highlighting the preference for visually engaging content among FMCG consumers. This demographic skew toward younger, tech-savvy

users suggests that social media marketing strategies targeting this group may be more effective, particularly for campaigns leveraging visual content and influencer endorsements.

Responses indicate moderate trust and a balanced emotional connection toward brands active on social media. Neutral responses dominate statements such as “Consistent communication on social media builds my confidence in a brand” (42%) and “Brands active on social media appear more trustworthy” (40%), suggesting that while consumers recognize brand presence, their trust is cautious and not fully established. Engagement behaviors, however, are higher, with 54% actively interacting with brand posts, indicating that consumers are willing to participate in online brand activities even when trust is moderate. User-generated content also plays a role in shaping perceptions, though nearly half of the respondents remained neutral, reflecting a cautious but receptive attitude toward peer-influenced content.

Influencer endorsements show a mixed effect: while 48% of respondents agree that influencers increase their likelihood of trying a product, neutrality (30–40%) remains high, and skepticism persists among a notable minority. Social media advertisements are often perceived as moderately relevant, with 60% remaining neutral, suggesting that ad targeting may need further refinement. Visual content quality and informative brand posts, however, received strong positive responses (62% agree that content is visually appealing), emphasizing the importance of aesthetics and clarity in social media marketing for FMCG products.

The responses indicate that social media marketing moderately drives purchasing behavior. Promotions and positive reviews exert the most influence: 60% agreed or strongly agreed that promotions encouraged them to buy, while 38% acknowledged the effect of positive comments or reviews. Overall purchase interest, however, shows a significant proportion of neutral responses (58%), reflecting cautious consumer behavior despite active engagement.

Paired t-Test Findings

The paired t-test analyses reveal statistically significant relationships between social media marketing elements and consumer purchase behavior:

1. Influencer endorsements and purchase likelihood: Strong positive correlation ($r = 0.8191$) confirms that influencer credibility is closely linked to consumer purchase intention.
2. Brand activity on social media and purchase interest: A modest positive correlation ($r = 0.219$) indicates that perceived trustworthiness enhances purchase interest, reinforcing the role of active brand engagement.
3. Visually appealing content and purchase due to promotions: A strong correlation ($r = 0.812$) and significant t-test results demonstrate that high-quality visual content directly influences promotional-driven purchases.

These results collectively highlight that influencer marketing, brand presence, and visual content quality are key drivers of FMCG consumer engagement and purchasing behavior on social media, while ad relevance and brand trust remain areas for improvement.

Limitations

Despite providing valuable insights into the influence of social media marketing on FMCG consumer behaviour, the study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the demographic composition of the sample is largely concentrated among young, male, undergraduate social media users. This concentration may limit the generalizability of the findings to other demographic groups such as older consumers, female consumers, or individuals with different educational backgrounds. Second, the study excludes respondents who are not familiar with social media marketing. Although this approach ensures that responses are relevant to the research topic, it may overlook consumers who are indirectly influenced by social media through peer interactions or traditional marketing channels. Finally, the study does not differentiate between various FMCG product categories, which may vary in terms of consumer involvement and purchasing patterns. As a result, the findings may not fully represent behavioural differences across all FMCG product segments.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of the study, several practical recommendations can be proposed for marketers and researchers. FMCG companies should prioritize visually engaging and informative content on social media platforms, particularly on highly popular platforms such as YouTube and Instagram, to effectively attract and engage young consumers. Additionally, brands should focus on building trust and transparency through consistent and authentic communication, as consumer confidence plays a critical role in shaping purchase intentions. Improving the relevance and personalization of social media advertisements may also enhance consumer engagement and reduce neutral perceptions toward online advertising. Furthermore, encouraging user-generated content such as reviews, testimonials, and shared experiences can strengthen brand credibility and influence consumer perceptions. Future research may expand the scope of the study by including more diverse demographic groups, examining specific FMCG product categories, and adopting longitudinal approaches to better understand how consumer perceptions and behaviours evolve over time.

CONCLUSION

This study offers valuable insights into how social media marketing affects consumer behaviour in the FMCG sector. The results show that social media plays a crucial role in shaping consumer attitudes, driving engagement, and influencing buying decisions, especially through influencer promotions, attractive visual content, and targeted marketing campaigns. Consumers exhibit moderate trust in brands, a balanced emotional connection, and active engagement behaviors, highlighting the nuanced role of internal responses in mediating the effectiveness of social media marketing. Paired t-test results confirm that influencer credibility, brand activity, and high-quality visual content significantly enhance purchase likelihood, demonstrating that social media marketing is not merely informational but a potent driver of consumer behavior in the FMCG sector. However, the study also shows that a substantial portion of consumers remains neutral or cautious, emphasizing the need for brands to build trust, ensure transparency, and increase content relevance.

Overall, the study underscores that effective social media marketing requires a strategic combination of credible influencer partnerships, engaging visual content, clear and informative brand communication, and well-targeted promotions. By leveraging these elements, FMCG brands can enhance consumer engagement, strengthen brand trust, and drive purchase intentions in a highly competitive digital environment. In conclusion, social media marketing holds considerable potential to influence consumer behavior, yet its effectiveness depends on a careful balance of engagement, authenticity, and content quality. Future research addressing broader demographics and longitudinal behavioral trends could provide deeper insights into the evolving impact of social media on consumer decision-making.

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DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

Conceptualization and funding acquisition: **Dr. R. Geetha and Dr. S. Jagatheeswari**; Data collection and statistical analysis: **S. J. Sembakalakshmi and S. Muruganatham**; Data interpretation: **Dr. R. Geetha and Dr. G. Ilakkia**; Writing – original draft preparation: **S. J. Sembakalakshmi**; Writing – review and editing: **Dr. S. Jagatheeswari and Dr. P. Sathya Priya**; Project administration: **Dr. R. Geetha**. All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The datasets generated and analyzed during the current study are not publicly available as the study is ongoing; however, they are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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