

## **EXPLORING CONSUMER ATTITUDES: THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON FAST-MOVING CONSUMER GOODS IN KOZHIKODE, KERALA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study delves into the complex dynamics of consumer attitudes in the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector in Kozhikode, Kerala, with a specific focus on the influence of social media marketing. Against the backdrop of an evolving consumer landscape, characterized by the ubiquity of digital platforms, our investigation aims to uncover the nuanced factors shaping purchasing decisions. Kozhikode, with its diverse consumer base, serves as an intriguing microcosm for understanding the symbiotic relationship between social media and FMCG preferences. Through an in-depth analysis, this research provides insights into the fluid nature of consumer attitudes, shedding light on how social media interactions impact perceptions and choices. The findings aim to equip businesses in the FMCG sector with tailored strategies to effectively engage with consumers in Kozhikode, fostering stronger connections in this dynamic market.

**Keywords:** Consumer attitudes, social media marketing, FMCG, Purchasing decisions, consumer preferences

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

In the bustling landscape of consumer preferences and market dynamics, the advent of social media has emerged as a transformative force, reshaping the way individuals interact with brands and make purchasing decisions. This article delves into the intricate realm of consumer attitudes, focusing specifically on the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector in the vibrant district of Kozhikode, Kerala. As digital platforms continue to play an increasingly pivotal role in shaping consumer perceptions, understanding the nuanced influence of social media marketing on buying behaviors becomes imperative for businesses seeking to thrive in this evolving market. Join us on a journey of exploration as we unravel the intricate interplay between consumers and social media in the context of

FMCG, shedding light on the unique dynamics that characterize Kozhikode's consumer landscape. In recent years, the consumer landscape has undergone a profound transformation, largely driven by the omnipresence of social media platforms. Kozhikode, nestled in the picturesque state of Kerala, serves as a captivating backdrop for this exploration. The diverse and discerning consumer base in this district provides a microcosm of the broader market, making it an intriguing focal point for understanding how social media marketing resonates with individuals seeking everyday products and essentials.

As we embark on this investigation, it is essential to recognize the multifaceted nature of consumer attitudes. These attitudes are not static but evolve dynamically, shaped by the constant flow of information, trends, and interactions facilitated by social media. The study aims to decipher the underlying motivations, preferences, and perceptions that influence consumers as they navigate the digital landscape, making choices that impact the FMCG market in Kozhikode. Furthermore, the FMCG sector, characterized by its fast-paced nature and frequent consumer interactions, provides a compelling context for examining the symbiotic relationship between social media and consumer attitudes. From the allure of visually appealing advertisements to the sway of peer recommendations, social media platforms have become integral channels through which consumers discover, evaluate, and engage with FMCG brands.

Through an in-depth analysis, this article seeks to unravel the intricacies of how social media marketing strategies resonate with Kozhikode's consumers, exploring the factors that drive their decision-making processes. By shedding light on these dynamics, businesses operating in the FMCG space can gain valuable insights to tailor their marketing approaches, fostering stronger connections with their target audience in this dynamic and culturally rich district.

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, Tumblr, Pinterest, WeChat, and Google provide a platform for young users to create personalized online profiles, communicate with friends, and share user-generated content or information from brand-related sources (*Matthee, 2011; Statista, 2015*). In the past, traditional media like television, radio, newspapers, and magazines played a significant role in shaping social behavior and consumer thinking. However, in the twenty-first century, social media has gradually supplanted the enduring and influential role of traditional media, especially among young consumers. This shift presents both opportunities and challenges for organizations (*Uitz, 2012; Nhlapo, 2015*).

Marketers are increasingly relying on social and mobile ICT channels to effectively market and promote their brands to the youth. Emphasizing the creation of engaging and current content becomes crucial to capture the attention of young consumers, encouraging them to interact and share information with their peers. This aspect, often referred to as word-of-mouth (WOM), emerges as a pivotal element shaping the future of social media marketing communications (*Yaakop et al., 2013*).

*Vellido et al. (1999)* investigated consumers' opinion on online purchasing and online vendors that seem to consist of the underlying dimensions "control and convenience," "trust and security," "affordability," "ease of use," and "effort/responsiveness." Using these dimensions as a segmentation base discerns seven segments: "unconvinced," "security conscious," "undecided," "convinced," "complexity avoiders," "cost conscious," and "customer service wary."

According to *Muntinga et al. (2011)*, trendy information on social media covers four sub-motivations: surveillance, knowledge, prepurchase information, and inspiration. Surveillance describes observing,

and remaining updated about, one's social environment. Knowledge refers to brand-related information that consumers obtain to profit from other consumers' knowledge and expertise in order to learn more about a product or brand. Pre-purchase information denotes reading product reviews or threads on brand communities in order to make well-considered buying decisions. Finally, inspiration relates to consumers following brand-related information obtaining new ideas – the brand-related information therefore serves as a source of inspiration. For instance, consumers look at images of other people's clothes for ideas about what they want to wear. Given the above discussion, this study defines trendiness in terms of the dissemination of the latest and trendiest information about luxury brands.

*Voorveld and van Noort (2014)* found that using social network sites and television concurrently in a single campaign yields a more favourable response than using these media individually. They explained that people see advertising as less persuasive when the two media are used concurrently than when used individually. This means that the kind of media used for advertising has an influence on the behavioural response of consumers. A number of variables have been found to influence consumers' attitude towards social media advertisements. For the purpose of this study, the following variables were considered: credibility, materialism, value corruption and corporate reputation.

*Barween Al Kurdi et al.'s (2022)* research underscores essential implications for marketing practices, emphasizing the need for marketers to understand buyers' profiles on social media channels and how consumers shape their attitudes and behavior in this digital age. The study highlights the evolving attributes of today's social media influencers, whose capabilities increasingly impact the behaviors of others. Particularly, the influence of influencers on consumers' attitudes and behaviors is evident through short videos posted on platforms like TikTok, where followers can undergo attitude shifts based on the content shared. The recommendations for marketers and managers involve exploring diverse methods to influence consumer behaviors, especially leveraging emerging platforms like TikTok. The study suggests that future research should consider the evolving landscape of digital marketing, exploring new methods and factors. Researchers are encouraged to contrast their findings with unexpected results and identify potential variations in the realm of social media influence and consumer behavior.

### 3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the vibrant consumer landscape of Kozhikode, Kerala, the intersection of traditional values and the dynamic evolution of social media platforms presents a compelling challenge. The lack of comprehensive insights into the intricate relationship between consumer attitudes and social media marketing strategies within the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector underscores a critical gap in understanding. The relentless bombardment of diverse marketing techniques, ranging from influencer endorsements to interactive content, begs the question of how these strategies resonate with the distinctive characteristics of Kozhikode's consumer base. Moreover, the impact of cultural nuances, regional preferences, and socio-economic factors on consumer attitudes towards FMCG products in the context of social media marketing remains largely unexplored. This research aims to fill this void by delving into the influence of various social media marketing strategies, examining the interplay of cultural and regional dynamics, scrutinizing consumer engagement on social platforms, and employing factor analysis to identify key latent factors that significantly contribute to shaping consumer attitudes. By addressing these critical aspects, the study aspires to provide nuanced insights that will inform targeted marketing strategies, empowering businesses and policymakers to navigate the unique consumer landscape of Kozhikode effectively.

#### 4. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This research investigates the intricate relationship between consumer attitudes and social media marketing within the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector in Kozhikode, Kerala.

#### 5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the realm of research methodology, factor analysis assumes a crucial role as a statistical technique designed to unravel hidden patterns within a dataset. This method is particularly advantageous when dealing with multifaceted relationships among variables. Factor analysis aids researchers in distilling complex datasets into more manageable components, known as factors, thereby uncovering the underlying structures that contribute to observed patterns.

The inclusion of factor analysis in the research methodology signifies a deliberate choice to examine latent constructs and understand the interrelationships among variables in a more nuanced manner. By reducing the dimensionality of the data, factor analysis enables researchers to identify essential factors that play a pivotal role in shaping the phenomena under scrutiny. This technique proves particularly beneficial in scenarios where multiple variables are intertwined, such as exploring the intricate dynamics of consumer attitudes in response to social media marketing within the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods sector in Kozhikode. Therefore, becomes a conduit for explicating how factor analysis aligns with the overarching study objectives. It showcases the methodological rigor employed to extract meaningful insights from the data, emphasizing the role of factor analysis in unveiling latent factors that significantly contribute to the phenomena being investigated. In essence, within the research methodology, factor analysis stands as a sophisticated analytical tool, enabling a more comprehensive understanding of complex relationships within the research domain.

##### *Research Design*

The research design incorporates both qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative phase involves in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to explore consumer attitudes, while the quantitative phase employs structured survey questionnaires and social media analytics. Factor analysis is utilized in the quantitative phase to identify underlying factors influencing consumer attitudes.

##### *Sampling*

Stratified random sampling is employed to ensure representation across diverse demographics in Kozhikode. The sample size is determined through statistical calculations to enhance the study's robustness.

#### 6. FACTOR ANALYSIS FOR ATTITUDE OF THE CUSTOMERS TOWARDS SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

##### **KMO and Bartlett's Test**

The dimensionality of attitude of the customers towards Social Media Marketing was examined using factor analysis based on fifteen individual statements and the reliability of the subsequent factor structures was then tested for internal consistency of the grouping of the items. The fifteen factors of attitude of the customers towards Social Media Marketing statements are related to the following:

1. Delivery of products in time
2. Detail information is available while shopping online
3. Buy products anytime (24 hours a day)
4. Easy to choose and compare products
5. Website design facilitates easy product search
6. Preference to secure website and ease of navigation
7. Website layout facilitates selecting the right product
8. Website familiarity reduces the risk of shopping
9. Websites provide quality information
10. Social Media Marketing takes less time to purchase
11. Social Media Marketing doesn't waste time
12. Takes less time in evaluating a product
13. Safe and secure while shopping online
14. Social Media Marketing protects the security
15. Shop online from a trustworthy website.

**Table – 1****KMO and Bartlett's Test for attitude of the customers towards Social Media Marketing**

<b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.</b>		.812
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2852.352
	Degrees of freedom	105
	Sig.	.000

*Source: Output generated from SPSS 20***Table – 2****Total variance explained for attitude of the customers towards Social Media Marketing**

Component	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.100	34.003	34.003	5.100	34.003	34.003	3.030	20.198	20.198
2	1.789	11.923	45.926	1.789	11.923	45.926	2.701	18.009	38.207
3	1.274	8.495	54.421	1.274	8.495	54.421	1.732	11.548	49.755
4	1.046	6.973	61.394	1.046	6.973	61.394	1.722	11.479	61.234
5	1.003	6.684	68.078	1.003	6.684	68.078	1.027	6.844	68.078
6	.922	6.149	74.227						
7	.771	5.139	79.366						
8	.557	3.712	83.078						
9	.510	3.399	86.477						
10	.454	3.028	89.505						
11	.430	2.868	92.374						
12	.350	2.330	94.704						
13	.297	1.983	96.687						
14	.262	1.749	98.436						
15	.235	1.564	100.000						
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.									

*Source: Output generated from SPSS 20*

High value of KMO (0.812 > .05) of indicates that factor analysis is useful for the present data. The

significant value for Bartlett's test of Sphericity is 0.000 and is less than .05 which indicates that there exists significant relationships among the variables. The resultant value of KMO test and Bartlett's test indicates that the present data is useful for factor analysis. All the statements of the attitude of the customers towards Social Media Marketing are loaded on the five factors. The total variance accounted for, by all the five factors with Eigen value greater than 1 is 68.078 percent and the remaining variance is explained by other variables. Among the five factors, the first factor accounts for around 20.198percent of variance which is the prime criteria considered in attitude of the customers towards Social Media Marketing.

**Table – 2****Rotated Component Matrix for attitude of the customers towards Social Media Marketing**

Attitude of the customers towards Social Media Marketing	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Buy products anytime (24 hours a day)	.799	.195	.085	-.091	.140
Detail information is available	.687	.326	.137	-.019	-.126
Website design facilitates easy product search	.659	.385	.000	-.025	.036
Website provide quality information	.639	.297	.177	-.082	.011
Easy to choose and compare products	.623	-.122	.469	.049	-.019
Website layout facilitates selecting the right product	.212	.812	.037	.015	-.018
Preference to secure website and ease of navigation	.213	.785	.149	-.068	-.008
Takes less time in evaluating a product	.221	.657	.293	.076	.095
Website familiarity reduces the risk of shopping	.534	.547	-.076	-.058	.062
Delivery of products in time	.416	.472	.295	-.031	-.094
Social Media Marketing doesn't waste time	-.008	.245	.825	.062	.053
Social Media Marketing takes less time to purchase	.282	.116	.753	-.017	.036
Shop online from a trustworthy website.	-.020	-.039	.019	.921	.012
Social Media Marketing protects the security	-.099	.023	.032	.914	.011
Safe and secure while shopping online	.036	.019	.068	.022	.981
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.					
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.					
a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.					

Source: Output generated from SPSS 20

**The statements are converted into 5 factors using factor analysis.**

**The following five aspects related to attitude of the customers towards Social Media Marketing are converted into a single factor.**

1. Buy products anytime (24 hours a day)
2. Detail information is available
3. Website design facilitates easy product search
4. Website provide quality of information
5. Easy to choose and compare products

**The following four aspects related to attitude of the customers towards Social Media Marketing are converted into a single factor.**

1. Website layout facilitates selecting the right product
2. Preference to secure website and ease of navigation
3. Takes less time in evaluating a product
4. Website familiarity reduces the risk of shopping



**The following two aspects related to attitude of the customers towards Social Media Marketing are converted into a single factor.**

1. Social Media Marketing doesn't waste time
2. Social Media Marketing takes less time to purchase

**The following two aspects related to attitude of the customers towards Social Media Marketing are converted into a single factor.**

1. Shop online from a trustworthy website.
2. Social Media Marketing protects the security

**The following one aspect related to attitude of the customers towards Social Media Marketing are converted into a single factor.**

1. Safe and secure while shopping online

In the realm of understanding consumer attitudes towards Social Media Marketing (SMM), the dimension encompasses 15 distinct statements. However, through a meticulous application of factor analysis, a process that involves identifying and categorizing underlying factors, it has been revealed that five specific statements carry more substantial weight in shaping customers' attitudes towards SMM. These critical statements include the convenience of purchasing products at any time (24 hours a day), the user-friendly website layout that aids in selecting the right product, the efficiency of SMM in not wasting time, the assurance of shopping from a reliable online platform, and the perception of safety and security during online transactions.

These five factors, unveiled through factor analysis, are deemed as the merit factors for Social Media Marketing, signifying their paramount influence on customers' attitudes in this context. The significance of these factors goes beyond mere association; they play a central role in shaping the overall attitude of consumers towards Social Media Marketing. In essence, the factor analysis not only identifies these influential factors but also highlights their prominence in influencing customers' attitudes. As such, businesses and marketers keen on understanding and optimizing their SMM strategies should place heightened emphasis on these identified factors, recognizing their substantial impact on consumer attitudes in the realm of Social Media Marketing.

## 7. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The prominence of these five factors unveils critical aspects that businesses engaging in Social Media Marketing should prioritize. The convenience of round-the-clock shopping aligns with the evolving consumer expectations for accessibility, highlighting the need for businesses to ensure uninterrupted service availability. The emphasis on a user-friendly website layout underscores the importance of an intuitive digital interface in enhancing the overall customer experience. The recognition of Social Media Marketing as a time-efficient platform reinforces the idea that streamlined processes contribute positively to customer attitudes.

Moreover, the factors related to trustworthiness and security illuminate the paramount importance of building and maintaining a positive online reputation. Consumers, it appears, are not merely seeking products but also reassurance in their online interactions. Acknowledging and addressing these factors can aid businesses in fostering a positive attitude among consumers towards Social Media Marketing. In conclusion, the identified merit factors provide valuable strategic insights for businesses aiming to enhance their Social Media Marketing efforts. The nuanced understanding of customer attitudes derived from the factor analysis serves as a guiding compass for marketers, emphasizing the need to prioritize

these specific elements in their strategies to build a positive and influential presence in the realm of Social Media Marketing.

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