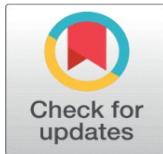
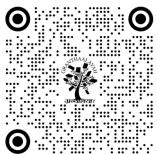


# IMPACT OF PERVERSIVE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING ON YOUTH - A STUDY ON COLLEGE GOING STUDENTS IN TIRUCHIRAPPALLI DISTRICT

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## ABSTRACT

The impact of social media on adolescents has created opportunities for corporate brands and advertising agencies to target and engage with young audiences in unprecedented ways. The use of traditional media by youth has its positive and negative sides, but the impact of social media is less understood. The present study focuses on the exposure of the college going students towards the promotion and marketing of products in the social media platforms. The respondents are youth under the age group of 17- 24yrs. The theory taken in this study is Uses and Gratification theory. Online survey is administered for data collection. Purposive sampling method was chosen to reach the actual respondents and also to minimize error. Social media platforms were mainly accessed through smartphones among the youth. The study revealed that there is relation between internet exposure and social media advertising and rely on social media advertisements for information about a product that is trending in the market. The youth prefers advertisements in Facebook, Instagram, Amazon site, Nykaa, Myntra and the most significant aspect in these platforms that draws their attention is visual design, headline, title and the product itself. The youth feel that Facebook, Instagram triggers them to buy the advertised products. They also felt that Facebook and Instagram as the medium for sharing comments after purchasing and help in pre judgement of products hence leading to the change in the attitude of buying products after reading the comments. The youth also felt that these medium act as the forum for voicing out their opinion about the products. The male users have more impact on the purchase behavior when compared to the female users who are exposed to social media advertisements. The study also concluded that energy dense food advertisements attract the youth and these social media platforms proved to be their ideal medium where they post picture of what they eat.

**Keywords:** Social Media Platforms, Smart Phones, Decision Makers, Pre Judgement, Energy Dense Food Advertisements, Voicing Out Opinion Medium

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The increasing popularity of social media has made a dramatic change in the way the marketers and advertisers promote their brand and also the decision making competency of youth towards their products. Social media advertising has become the cost effective and efficient marketing tool. The youth are a growing segment of consumers in digital technology world, where it has already impacted the lifestyle of youth irrespective of their development stage. Nowadays youth are witnessing numerous advertisement and services through the social media platforms in their daily routine life. The social media hence create an impact on the purchase decision making of youth by attracting them through various visual

exaggeration. As majority of the youth comes under active information seekers, the social media platforms comes as an encouraging factor to research online. The social media influencers also engage the youth consumers by updating them regularly with the latest knowledge about the products. In the recent years, social media marketing has proved itself as a potential endorser. Majority of companies invite social media marketers such as bloggers, vloggers, social marketers, website dealers to be part of their brand ambassadors. emerging countries, as a rule, youth is a growing segment of consumers. The social networking sites, facilitate the consumers to present themselves, establish and maintain social connections with others, and articulate their opinions on these platforms. These social engagement makes the marketers to make these platforms for their promotion. Hence this research aims to investigate the impact of social media marketing on youth buying behavior. This study could be instrumental in finding the consistent patterns of the buying behavior of youth.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A limited researches have attempted to explain the social media marketing and its influence among the youth audience.

Winpenny, Marteau, & Nolte(2014) has found that the most commonly used, and extensively re- searched, social networking platform is Facebook. In 2013, less than a decade after its launch, Facebook had 1.23 billion monthly users worldwide and 90% of 15–24-year-old internet users were accessing Facebook.

Stephen (2016) stated that buying behavior based on social media marketing is growing rapidly due to the increase in technology use. Social media information has become one of the major influencing factors for consumer decision-making. He also stated the consumers are influenced by the social environment.

Jain et al. (2012) explained that youth takes active participation and raises their voices to express their opinions and views on social issues that are being discussed on the social networking sites. He also founded that the youth reciprocates to these events but do not take up any discussions beyond the web and forget about them once they sign off. Thereby, social networking sites prove to be a boon to the youth in terms of spreading awareness about these issues that arise.

According to Lim et al. (2017) nowadays, marketing endorsements have become a key factor in attracting consumers; particularly in the age of Internet, media influencers have emerged as endorsers of marketing. Media influencer engages the consumers by updating them regularly with the latest knowledge about the most recent information (Liu et al., 2012).

Korda, H., & Itani, Z. (2013) found that the promotion of energy dense and nutrient poor food and beverages on social media is quite popular right from cookies to Burger King chicken sandwiches and bottles of Coke. social media platforms had proven to be an ideal avenue for brands to experiment and also to engage with young people. The photo-sharing social media site namely Instagram, with more than 40% of users aged 16–24 has over 71 million posts tagged as #foodporn. Savvy food and beverage companies capitalize on this consumer-driven marketing.

## 3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

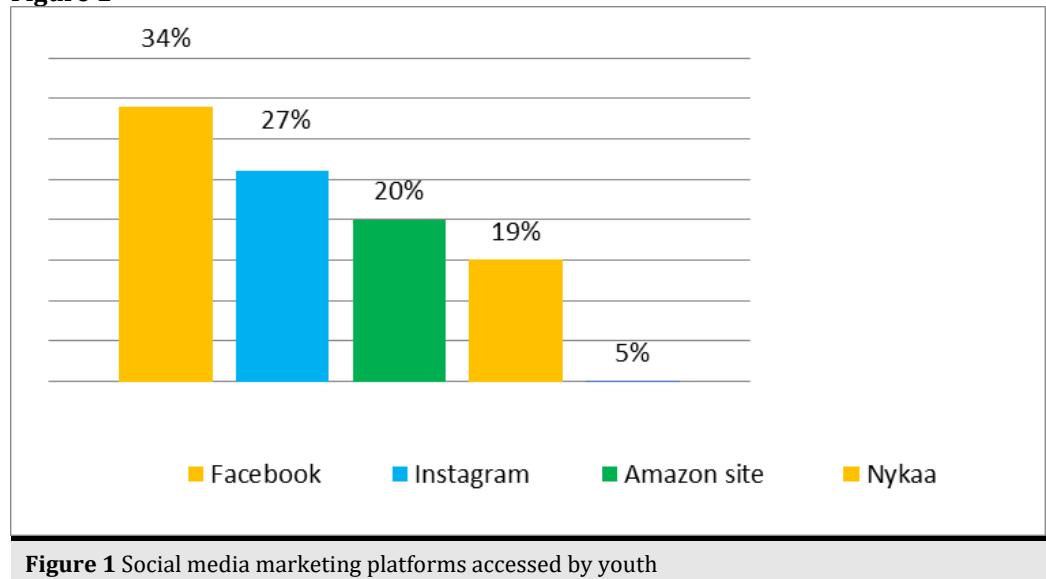
- 1) To identify the various social media marketing platforms accessed by youth.
- 2) Is there any significant relationship between accessing of social media platforms and the attitude towards purchasing among youth respondent.

#### 4. METHODOLOGY

A sample of 200 youth of 17-24 years old were selected in the city of Tiruchirappalli, since social media is new medium and this city has a diverse youth audience as it is an important educational hub. Purposive random sampling techniques was chosen to conduct the survey. Frequency test and Correlation were administered in the study to show the number of occurrences of each response, relationship between variables and it also helps in analyzing the results and drawing conclusions.

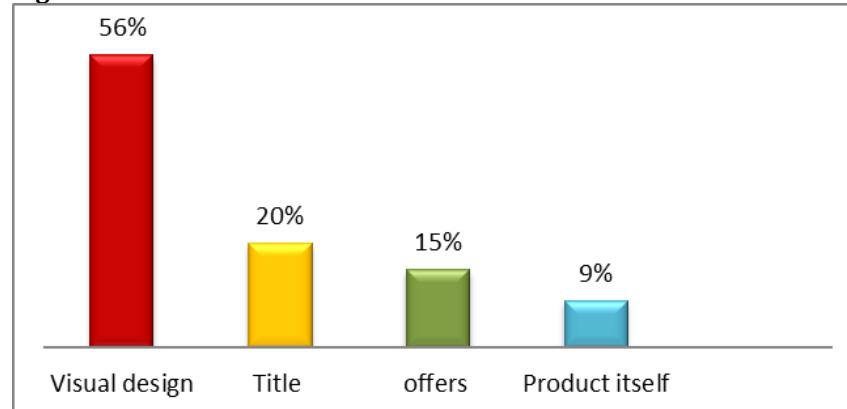
#### 5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

**Figure 1**

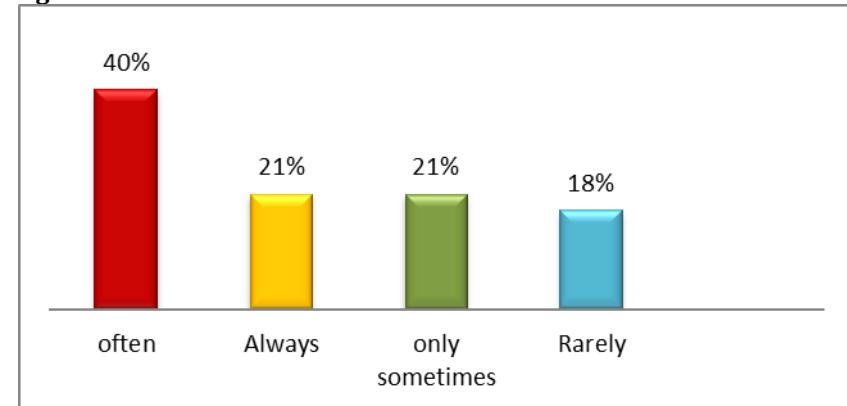


**Figure 1** Social media marketing platforms accessed by youth

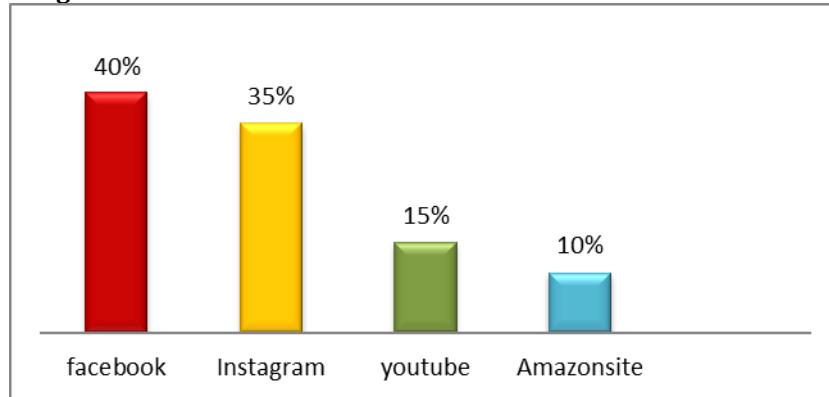
From the fig.1 it is found that 34% of youth prefer to access Facebook as their social media marketing platform as the most, followed by 27% of youth prefer to access Instagram, 20% to Amazon site and only 19% of youth prefer to access Nykaa and Myntra 5%. They preferred to choose Facebook as the most accessed social media marketing platform as it promotes and allows people to have cross-cultural understanding and exchange of ideas. The youth find this platform as to express themselves very creatively and share their innovative self- expression. Youth rely on Facebook to stay connected with employers and seek career opportunities. They find it as an easier platform to buy products from well established brands and keep themselves informed on the awareness of the brand in the market through various feedback from Facebook friends. They also find it as an immediate reviewer on the brands they are unaware of.

**Figure 2****Figure 2** Reasons for choosing social media marketing platforms

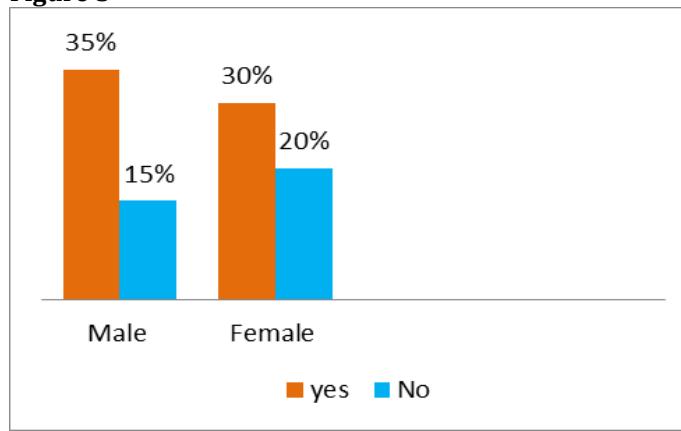
From the fig.2 it is found that 56% of youth has opined the reason that visual design as the best reason to choose social media marketing platforms by them, followed by 20% of youth agreed the title as the reason for choosing the social media marketing platform, 15% of youth for the available offers and only 9% of youth has stated the product itself as the reason for as their least choice of selection. The growth of technology has made it easier for any designer to create any design of an advertisement with necessary designing elements that attract the mass audience and thus influence the youth to buy the product. The design is created to attract the youth by using the abstract and very creative form of idea in the visual design. Youth never prefer to choose usual advertisement seen in the social media platform. They prefer uniqueness in any visual design of the advertisement.

**Figure 3****Figure 3** Social media marketing platforms helps in voicing out opinions

From fig.3 it is found that 40% of youth believe in an opinion that social media marketing platforms often helps them in voicing out opinions. Youth often prefer to master their identity and find place in the society. They express their opinion in social media and experience their improvement in well- being. This had allowed them to develop their voice of advocacy and enhance their confidence. The youth find positive role models and get motivated and inspired by intellectual ideas of the respondents.

**Figure 4****Figure 4** Social media marketing platforms that triggers in buying the products

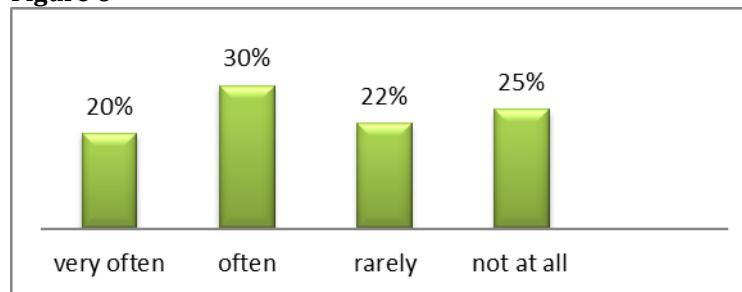
From fig.4 it is found that among the social media marketing platforms 40% of the youth has stated that Facebook triggers them in buying the products, followed by 35% of youth found Instagram triggers them, 15% of youth stated as YouTube and only 10% of youth has stated that Amazon triggers them in buying the products. As Facebook is the most preferred social media marketing platform for the youth, they are very interactive and often be active in the online platform, they are more exposed to the advertisements of new products and brands with creative visual design. They also access regularly to their favorite personalities who may access to these products. The youth access to the comments and reviews of the product users that may differ to individuals based on geographic locations and other demographic and personal factors too. But the continuous access to the Facebook and the exposure to advertisements triggers the youth in buying the products.

**Figure 5****Figure 5** Gender based influence of accessing social media marketing

From fig.5 it is found that 35% of male and 30% of female has agreed that there is gender based influence in accessing social media marketing, 15% of male and 20% of female has disagreed to gender based influence of accessing social media marketing. Most of the advertisements are created to influence the particular gender to access the brand or the particular product. This influence is made possible by the advertisers to influence the particular gender based on the cultural, social and economic stigma in the society. The peer group of the same gender also influences the other youth of the same gender to access the social media

advertisements. The male gender in youth believe it more as a credible one to access for.

**Figure 6**



**Figure 6** Prejudgment of product and changing attitude towards purchasing

From the fig.6 it is found that 30% of youth often change their attitude towards purchasing the product based on the prejudgment of the product, 25% as not at all, 22% as rarely, and 20% are very often change their attitude towards purchasing the product due to the prejudgment of the product. The continuous exposure to the advertisements in facebook and being very active in the online platform the youth are exposed to variety of new brands and products. The youth having more friends and views and reacts to every comment give priority to others views and ideas on the products too. They spend less time to verify the facts and has less patience to analyze the research on the product before buying it. They do prejudgment on product and change their attitude towards purchasing the product.

Objective 2: Is there any significant relationship between accessing of social media marketing and attitude towards purchasing among the youth respondent.

In order to find out the significant relationship between number of hours accessing social media and purchasing attitude among the youth Pearson's correlation was administered. The Pearson's correlation was done with the following variables

- 1) Number of hours accessing social media
- 2) Facebook triggers to purchase
- 3) Instagram as the medium for sharing comments regarding the product
- 4) Refusal of purchasing after reading the comments.
- 5) Posting pictures of food products in social media platforms

**Table 1**

**Table 1** Correlation matrix- Relationship between accessing of social media platforms and distraction among the youth

	1	2	3	4	5
1	1				
2		.248**	1		
3			.175**	- 1	
4				.118**	.177**
					.174** 1

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\*\* Correlation significant at 0.01 levels

The correlation matrix shows its value as significant at 0.01, the table shows the more the exposure to social media by the youth the more they are triggered to purchase the product. Youth are influenced to access Instagram to read comments and reviews of the product that influence them to change the attitude on the purchasing behavior of the product. As they prioritize the comments they see on the social media they do not do in depth research or analysis on the product but they refuse to purchase the product after reading to the comments. The youth post pictures on food products that influence their attitude towards purchasing and thus influence the attitude on health or fitness.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Social media marketing platform enhance the confidence and creativity among youth. The youth believes that it connects young people with a world of innovative and intellectual ideas and create a globe of possibilities. The social media marketing platforms encourage youth to exercise their creative skills in terms of receiving acceptance from their friends and engage with the audience of like-minded people. This helps them to expand their knowledge and reach. The youth are more attracted towards trendy products available in the market and are more influenced to buy the product. Their usage of the product and preference to the product for further purchase purely relies on the impact of social media advertisements and based on comments and views in the online platform. Their attitude towards change in the purchasing behavior relies on the social media marketing platform audience. The online platform plays a zone of comfortability to the youth to express their opinions and views. This motivates them to be an extrovert at the same time the acceptance and belief of the information is high. The youth need further education to verify the facts and figures displayed on the content of social media marketing and the mandatory research on the content is essential. The media education on social media content analysis and understanding has become necessary for the youth today to help them in decision making and purchase behavior of any product in the social media platform.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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