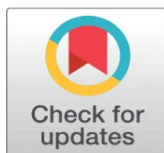


BRAND PERFORMANCE AND IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Dr. Om Singh ¹ 

¹ Assistant Professor, UID, Karnavati University, India



Corresponding Author

Dr. Om Singh, om.max3d@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the correlation between users' engagement with social media, their feedback mechanisms, and their overall satisfaction regarding the social media efficacy of three prominent brands: Myntra, Zomato, and BigBasket. A survey was administered to 44 participants, predominantly from urban locales, concentrating on their social media utilization patterns, brand interaction, and feedback mechanisms. The primary variables assessed encompassed the duration of social media usage, the platforms engaged, satisfaction with brand interaction, and the characteristics of feedback provided.

The findings revealed that individuals categorized as moderate social media users (2-3 hours per day) demonstrated elevated levels of satisfaction with brand performance, with 61% indicating either satisfaction or neutral perspectives, whereas heavy users (4+ hours) tended to express neutrality or dissatisfaction more frequently. Zomato and Myntra emerged as the most engaged brands, with 64% of participants interacting with Zomato and 54% with Myntra, in stark contrast to a mere 2% engagement for BigBasket. Cross-tabulation analysis illustrated that positive feedback exhibited a robust correlation with increased satisfaction levels, as 58% of respondents providing feedback reported being either satisfied or very satisfied. Notably, neutral feedback or the absence of feedback was more prevalent among individuals with diminished satisfaction levels, thereby underscoring the significance of proactive consumer-brand interactions.

This investigation concludes that moderate engagement with social media and constructive feedback play a crucial role in fostering a positive perception of brands, while excessive exposure does not necessarily enhance satisfaction. Hence, brands ought to prioritize responsiveness, tailor content to individual preferences, and capitalize on promotional strategies to sustain and elevate consumer satisfaction on social media platforms.

Keywords: Social Media Engagement, Brand Performance, User Satisfaction, Feedback Analysis, Consumer Behavior

1. INTRODUCTION

Branding builds brand awareness among similar brands in the market and helps in establishing brand recognition. The process of branding includes creating a distinguished design for brands and hence aims at making a particular brand different from other brands. Branding calls for communicating for the brand, with the target audience through its imagery and other visual qualities ((Wheeler, 2013))ⁱ. There are various branding activities that have been adopted by companies since a long period of time, to thrive in the competitive market. The branding process includes creating a visual identity for the brand, various advertisements to promote the brand which can be done through the traditional medium of promotion as well as through the newer digital medium (GoVisually, 2022)ⁱⁱ. Television, press, radio etc., were used in the past decades for product promotion while in the current times, with the advent of technologies everywhere, brands are promoted digitally (Grzesiak & Jackson, 2015)ⁱⁱⁱ.

In the contemporary digital age, social media has become an indispensable tool for brand promotion and consumer engagement, significantly impacting brand performance for companies like Myntra, Zomato, and BigBasket. Social media platforms enable these brands to reach broader audiences, engage with customers, and drive sales by leveraging various strategies such as social listening, influencer marketing, and user-generated content. Social listening and social search are crucial in shaping consumer perceptions and decision-making processes, as they help brands understand consumer sentiments and preferences, thereby enhancing brand loyalty and engagement. In India, where the digital population is rapidly expanding, social media marketing plays a vital role in influencing consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions, making it essential for brands to effectively engage with the market.

As individuals need fresh perspectives, renewed thinking, comprehensive methods, and an in-depth grasp of the factors that influence customer requirements, branding strategies for Indian businesses are quite important. When a brand focuses on investing in proper branding activities, it is believed to be as effective as marketing of the brand. Social media platforms have become very prominent these days and it has changed business operations throughout the world. Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc., are heavily used by the brands to now connect with their target audience on a regular basis.

The escalating significance of consumer purchasing decisions that occur on social media platforms can undoubtedly be attributed to a multitude of pivotal factors that collectively shape this phenomenon. Trust emerges as an indispensable element within this context, as individuals increasingly depend on the insights provided by online reviews and the endorsements offered by influencers and content creators who wield considerable sway over public opinion. Furthermore, the concept of authenticity is of paramount importance, given that consumers are actively seeking out and valuing genuine connections with brands that resonate with their personal values and beliefs. In addition to these factors, the aspect of convenience assumes a substantial role in this landscape, as the advent of online shopping facilitates an effortless process for consumers to explore, evaluate, and ultimately purchase a diverse array of products with remarkable ease. Finally, the dynamics of social interactions, particularly the engagement that occurs between consumers and brands, play a vital role in fostering brand loyalty and subsequently propelling sales figures to new heights. Consequently, fashion and lifestyle products have experienced a noteworthy surge in popularity, which can be directly linked to the aforementioned contributing factors that shape consumer behavior in the contemporary marketplace (V, Vishakh. (2024)^{iv}. The influence of social media marketing on consumer behavior is profound. It enhances brand visibility and fosters consumer-brand relationships via interactive communication strategies. Utilizing platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram allows businesses to engage a broad audience, elevate brand awareness, and shape purchasing behaviors. Social media facilitates immediate engagement, enabling brands to comprehend customer preferences and adjust marketing strategies accordingly. This reciprocal communication cultivates customer loyalty, encourages brand advocacy, and ultimately leads to increased sales and revenue. (Anjorin et al., 2024)^v. Social media advertising has evolved into an exceptionally potent marketing instrument, empowering businesses to effectively connect with their desired demographic across a multitude of diverse platforms that cater to various user preferences. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube provide an array of format options designed to captivate and engage consumers, which encompass not only visually appealing content but also immersive stories and dynamic live streaming experiences that resonate with users on multiple levels. User-generated content assumes a pivotal role in shaping and influencing consumers' purchase decisions, as it acts as a veritable and authentic indicator of audience receptivity and engagement, reflecting the genuine sentiments and experiences of real users. This type of content can be strategically harnessed by brands to cultivate and enhance trust, credibility, and long-term loyalty among their defined target audience, thereby fostering deeper connections and brand affinity. By seamlessly integrating social media advertising with strategically curated user-generated content, businesses can proficiently drive customer engagement and significantly enhance conversion rates, thereby maximizing their overall marketing effectiveness Gupta, Lokesh & Kumar, Rakesh. (2022)^{vi}. Effective social media marketing serves an indispensable and pivotal function in the enhancement and fortification of brand loyalty among consumers who engage with shopping goods, which encompasses a wide array of products that individuals typically purchase. By disseminating content that is not only relevant but also personalized to the specific preferences and needs of the audience, brands possess the remarkable ability to cultivate and establish a profound emotional connection with their target demographic, thereby significantly increasing the likelihood of repeat purchases. This deep-seated connection, characterized by a sense of being understood and appreciated, ultimately serves to bolster brand loyalty as customers develop a sense of attachment and commitment to the brand. In stark contrast, the utilization of inconsistent or generic content can have detrimental effects, leading to disengagement from the brand and a subsequent decline in brand loyalty, as consumers may feel neglected or

unimportant in the brand's narrative. To optimize return on investment (ROI), it is imperative for marketers to concentrate their efforts on the delivery of experiences that are meticulously tailored to individual customer preferences, while simultaneously igniting emotional responses and fostering the development of long-term, meaningful relationships with their audience that transcend mere transactional interactions Rai, Bharat & Dahal, Rewan. (2024)^{vii}. Customer feedback is very effective and important in terms of business growth as it works as a guide that allows a company to know the rights and wrongs in their business. If a business can adapt according to the customer experience and their feedback, the business is likely to flourish and attract more customers (Scout, n.d.)^{viii} (Wellington).

Overall, for Indian E-commerce brands like Myntra, Zomato, and BigBasket, optimizing social media strategies by focusing on authenticity, consumer engagement, and trust-building can lead to improved brand performance and consumer loyalty in the competitive digital landscape.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are:

- 1) *To analyze how users' social media activity influences their satisfaction with the performance of popular brands*
- 2) *To explore the impact of user feedback on their satisfaction with the social media presence and engagement of these brands.*

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand promotion has been done through a variety of ways ever since the earlier times. As brand promotion helps in establishing a brand among the competitors, companies have been seen to adapt to the necessary mediums, be it print medium or the digital medium. The literature review of the study focuses on branding and how it is done by the companies using the digital medium, especially social media platforms.

Social Media Promotion

Communication and branding have been changed with the emergence of social media platforms. Even the word-of-mouth regarding products is now heavily affected by social media platforms. The consumer buying decision is heavily based on what they see or interact with, on social media platforms (Severi, 2014)^{ix}.

Since around the 1990s, branding is seen to have become very personalized on social media. The users of social media platforms like YouTube, Twitter, Facebook,

Instagram etc., are very influenced by these platforms and hence are affected by it a lot. These platforms have successfully convinced the users and other audiences, how important it is for brands to have social media presence to build brand image (Gehl, 2011)^x. Social media allows communication to take place in a faster and instant way, which keeps a brand interaction creative and convenient.

People's perceptions of various brands are significantly influenced by the usage of mass media in brand marketing. Due to the influence it may have among Internet users and how simple it is to use social media to sell and develop a brand's image, it is currently the new marketing trend (Yazdanifar and Jin 3)^{xi}.

Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter

The social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are being used by brands to promote themselves and engage with the target audience. With billions of people who are active on these platforms, it is obvious that these social networking sites are influential and offer several options for a company to interact with customers. Better yet, Facebook and Instagram have been working hard to merge their respective user bases. These platforms have produced moments of synergy for advertisers and consumers alike in ways like enabling an Instagram placement feature for a Facebook ad and enabling users to share Instagram Stories directly to Facebook (Grzesiak & Jackson, 2015)^{xii} (Jackson). Although Facebook and Instagram are utilized for branding, it is not necessary that these platforms will bring out the expected results and outcome. It is very important that the companies are aware of the algorithms of the platforms. While images perform better on Instagram, texts should be left for Facebook. Instagram is totally based on video and images, while on the other hand, Facebook is very informational. Hence, both these platforms are meant to serve different purposes.

Twitter is another prevalent social media platform which is highly interactive and effective. This particular social media platform can uplift and cause downfall of any brand through its trending hashtags. Twitter is also used for the advertising purpose. With more than 217 million active users every day, Twitter could play a significant role in marketing. In addition to having a sizable user base, Twitter is also the sixth most popular network in the world and is predicted to have over 340 million active users by 2024 (Beveridge, 2022)^{xiii}.

Social media affecting consumer buying decision

Social media has a significant impact on companies and enterprises, as has been demonstrated. The use of social media as a marketing, sales, and customer relationship management tool has shifted over the past ten years from major brands to smaller ones. Major social networking platforms now offer a wide range of opportunities for users to interact with brands and businesses, even allowing them to directly buy products or services through an app. Customers like brands that are welcoming, relevant, and humanized, and they anticipate meaningful interactions with businesses that go beyond simple product listings or advertisements. The likelihood that a customer will refer a business to others can be increased by doing actions like responding to questions on Facebook or Instagram or even something as basic as reacting to a

Many elements, including social proof, social media penetration, and the availability of online retail, can be used to explain how social media influences client purchasing decisions. But it is becoming more and more challenging to differentiate a brand on social media. Using modern technologies, developing innovative social media marketing tactics, and concentrating on the appropriate platform will all help a brand in this aspect (Barysevich, 2020)^{xiv}.

Impact of customer feedback on brands

Consumer feedback contains a wealth of knowledge that businesses can use to improve their offers and better meet customer expectations. Customer focus will be one of the most crucial competitive advantages in 2022, making the conversion of consumer input into useful business information even more crucial. This approach is a great tool for any business's success because it makes it easier to get ready for product development, guaranteeing that whatever one show will grab clients' attention and meet their expectations in the market they serve. The feedback can be utilized by companies for their own advantage ("The Impact of Customer Feedback on Your Growth," 2022)^{xv}.

Customer feedback can make or break a brand's reputation in the long run. If a company takes the feedback into consideration, it can thrive in the competition successfully. Listening to the feedback and improving based on it, can make the brand more reliable in the eyes of the audience (Perzynska, 2022)^{xvi}.

4. METHODOLOGY

The methodology section provides a comprehensive delineation of the intricate process and the various sophisticated tools that were employed to meticulously gather, rigorously analyze, and thoughtfully interpret the extensive data collected from the survey that focused on the social media marketing performance of prominent brands such as Myntra, Zomato, and BigBasket. The primary goal of this research initiative was to meticulously analyze the multifaceted connections between users' diverse activities on social media platforms and their related satisfaction levels with the specified brands, as well as to scrutinize the significant role that user feedback plays in shaping the overall performance of these brands in a competitive environment.

Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative research design using an online survey distributed to a diverse group of social media users. The data collected covers demographic information, social media usage habits, brand engagement, and satisfaction with the social media presence of Myntra, Zomato, and BigBasket.

Data Collection

Data were meticulously gathered through the utilization of a meticulously structured survey questionnaire, which was subsequently disseminated via various online platforms specifically designed for such purposes. The comprehensive survey encompassed both multiple-choice questions, which offered respondents a selection of predetermined answers, as well as open-ended inquiries that allowed for unrestricted, qualitative feedback, all directed towards social media users who had engaged in interactions with the specified brands under investigation. The principal variables that were scrutinized and analyzed within the framework of this study include:

Demographic data- This encompasses a range of attributes such as the age, gender, geographical location, and occupation of the respondents, providing a detailed profile of the participants involved in the research.

Social media activity- This variable includes the total number of hours that respondents reported spending on various social media platforms, alongside the specific platforms that they utilized for their online interactions.

Brand engagement- This dimension investigates the specific brands that respondents chose to follow, as well as their levels of satisfaction regarding the engagement and interaction efficacy demonstrated by the brands Myntra, Zomato, and BigBasket within the realm of social media.

Feedback- Respondents were also encouraged to provide open-ended responses detailing their suggestions and recommendations for potential improvements in the overall social media presence and strategies employed by the brands in question.

The total sample size for this study was comprised of 44 respondents, each exhibiting a diverse array of demographic characteristics and varying patterns of behavior in relation to social media usage. The data collection process was conducted over an extensive period of two weeks, ensuring a comprehensive gathering of information reflective of the participants' experiences and insights.

Data Analysis

The comprehensive analysis was meticulously conducted utilizing a multifaceted approach that integrated a combination of descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and cross-tabulation methodologies, all with the primary objective of effectively identifying both trends and intricate relationships that exist between user behavior patterns and the performance metrics associated with various brands.

Descriptive Analysis

The preliminary analysis was systematically carried out to thoroughly explore and understand the demographic characteristics of the respondents participating in the study, alongside a detailed examination of their habitual usage patterns on social media platforms. This initial investigation yielded significant insights into the most frequently utilized social media platforms and the average duration of time that respondents typically spend engaging with these platforms on a daily basis.

Correlation Analysis

In order to delve into the intricate relationship that may exist between social media activity levels and the corresponding satisfaction derived from brand interactions, a rigorous correlation analysis was executed. The encoded variables were scrutinized in detail to ascertain whether any statistically significant relationship could be established between the number of hours individuals spent on social media and their overall satisfaction ratings regarding the brands' engagement strategies on these platforms.

Cross-Tabulation Analysis

Social Media Activity vs. Brand Satisfaction: The method of cross-tabulation was adeptly employed to quantitatively measure the relationship that exists between the number of hours individuals dedicate to social media activities and their reported satisfaction levels with various brands. This analytical approach facilitated the identification of emerging trends across distinct user demographics, such as heavy versus moderate users, and allowed for a comprehensive examination of their respective satisfaction levels in relation to brand performance.

Feedback vs. Brand Satisfaction

In addition, cross-tabulation techniques were utilized to meticulously investigate the relationship between the feedback provided by users and their satisfaction levels concerning brand performance. The feedback was systematically categorized into three distinct types: "positive," "negative," and "no feedback," in order to evaluate whether the nature of the feedback—whether constructive or critical—had any discernible impact on the overall satisfaction ratings attributed to the brands in question.

Categorization of Feedback

For the open-ended responses obtained from participants, a foundational sentiment analysis was conducted to categorize the feedback as either positive or negative, based on the presence of specific improvement suggestions or the occurrence of negative sentiment-laden words such as "poor," "bad," and "improve." This categorization process enabled

a more nuanced analysis of how the nature of the feedback correlates with the performance metrics associated with the respective brands.

5. FINDINGS

The comprehensive investigation conducted in this study illuminated a multitude of significant insights pertaining to the intricate relationship between social media engagement and the resultant performance of various brands. Individuals categorized as moderate social media users, who dedicated approximately two to three hours each day to engaging with platforms such as Instagram and YouTube, demonstrated a notably heightened level of satisfaction regarding the social media presence exhibited by brands, including but not limited to Myntra and Zomato. In contrast, those individuals identified as heavy users, who typically engaged with social media for four or more hours daily, displayed a greater tendency to express neutrality or dissatisfaction, thereby implying that an increase in exposure to social media does not inherently correlate with an enhancement in satisfaction levels. This serves the first objective of the study about the relation between social media activity and user's satisfaction.

The second objective which is about the impact of user's feedback on the performance of the brand. The affirmative feedback predominantly highlighted a sense of satisfaction derived from promotional content, user engagement, and the diversity of offerings, with users expressing appreciation for timely interactions and the creative nature of the posts shared by these brands. While a considerable number of users conveyed their satisfaction, there existed a subset of individuals who provided constructive criticism, thereby indicating the potential for improvement in areas such as personalized content delivery and responsiveness to user inquiries. In summation, brands that actively engage with their audience on social media platforms and frequently implement promotional strategies were perceived in a more favorable light; however, achieving and sustaining high levels of consumer satisfaction necessitates ongoing adaptation to the evolving trends and preferences of the consumer base.

6. LIMITATIONS

This study's main limitations include a relatively small sample size, which may not fully represent the diverse population of social media users in India, and a focus on only three e-commerce brands—Myntra, Zomato, and BigBasket—limiting the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, platform bias toward Instagram and YouTube overlooks other influential platforms like WhatsApp. The reliance on self-reported data may introduce response biases, and the study captures only a snapshot in time, whereas social media trends and consumer behaviors evolve rapidly.

7. CONCLUSION

This comprehensive study meticulously examined the multifaceted influence of social media activities on the performance of e-commerce brands operating within the Indian marketplace, with a particular focus on the intricate dynamics of various platforms, the significance of customer feedback, and the nature of brand responses, all of which collectively impact consumer purchasing decisions and shape overall brand perception. The findings reveal that Instagram and YouTube have emerged as the most prevalent and widely utilized platforms for engaging with e-commerce brands, with a considerable proportion of consumers placing significant reliance on customer feedback and reviews as critical elements in their decision-making process pertaining to informed buying choices. Notably, brands such as Zomato, Myntra, and BigBasket exhibit differing levels of effectiveness in their ability to harness the potential of social media, with Zomato demonstrating exceptional capability in fostering customer engagement through its proactive approach to promptly addressing feedback, which in turn contributes significantly to the cultivation of stronger brand loyalty among its consumer base. In contrast, BigBasket's relatively lower levels of engagement with customer reviews and feedback suggest a notable opportunity for enhancement in this area, highlighting the importance of improved interaction. The study underscores the essential notion that in order for brands to successfully establish and maintain trust, it is imperative that they actively manage their social media presence, thereby positively influencing customer perceptions and fostering a favorable brand image. Social media, particularly those platforms that facilitate visual content and promote customer interaction, represents an indispensable arena for brands to meaningfully engage with their target audience, consequently nurturing both brand loyalty and exerting a significant influence over consumer purchasing behavior.

The study profoundly highlights the critical and transformative role that social media plays in shaping brand performance and overall market success. It is imperative for brands such as Myntra, Zomato, and BigBasket to strategically leverage these insightful findings in order to refine and enhance their social media strategies, thereby optimizing their engagement with consumers. By placing a strategic emphasis on the creation of engaging and relevant content, delivering responsive and effective customer service, and diligently addressing consumer feedback, these brands can significantly enhance their social media presence, leading to improved brand performance and stronger connections with their audience.

8. SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of this inquiry could be expanded by analyzing a broader spectrum of e-commerce brands across diverse sectors and by undertaking a more comprehensive examination of platform-specific strategies on social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram. Subsequent inquiries might also integrate avant-garde technologies like artificial intelligence and augmented reality within social media platforms, thereby providing novel perspectives on consumer engagement. Broadening the geographical scope to encompass rural and semi-urban demographics and executing longitudinal studies could yield a more thorough comprehension of the enduring impact of social media on brand efficacy.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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