

Influence of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Purchase Intentions Towards Green-Branded Products: An SEM-Based Study in Nashik

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Abstract—The rapid growth of social media has significantly transformed consumer purchasing behavior by influencing product awareness, brand perception, and purchase decision-making processes. In India, the number of active social media users increased from approximately 448 million in 2022 to over 520 million in 2025, making digital platforms an integral component of modern marketing strategies. This study investigates the role of social media in shaping customer purchasing choices with special reference to the Nashik region. The research examines how platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp influence consumers' buying intentions, trust, and final purchasing decisions. The study adopts a descriptive research design based on primary data collected from 300 respondents across different age groups, occupations, and income levels in the Nashik region through a structured questionnaire. The findings reveal that 84% of respondents use social media daily, while 76% actively search for product information before making a purchase. Approximately 71% reported that influencer recommendations positively affect their buying decisions, whereas 68% indicated that customer reviews and ratings significantly enhance their trust in products. Furthermore, 64% of respondents acknowledged that targeted advertisements on social media platforms encourage impulse purchases, and 79% stated that promotional offers and discounts shared through social media increase their likelihood of purchasing a product. The study concludes that social media has emerged as one of the most influential determinants of consumer purchasing behavior in the Nashik region. Digital engagement, electronic word-of-mouth, influencer marketing, and personalized advertising collectively contribute to shaping customer preferences and purchase intentions. The findings provide valuable insights for marketers, retailers, and business organizations to develop effective digital marketing strategies, strengthen customer engagement, and enhance brand loyalty in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

Keywords: Social Media, Consumer Purchasing Behaviour, Customer Purchase Decision, Digital Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Influencer Marketing, Electronic Word-of-Mouth (e-WOM)

1. INTRODUCTION

The emergence of social media has revolutionized the manner in which businesses interact with consumers and promote their products and services. Over the last decade, platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, X (formerly Twitter), and LinkedIn have evolved from simple networking platforms into powerful digital marketing channels that significantly influence consumer behavior. According to recent digital reports, India had over 520 million active social media users in 2025, representing nearly 36% of the country's population, with an annual growth rate of approximately 8–10%. Furthermore, the average Indian internet user spends nearly 2.5 hours per day on social media platforms, making these platforms a vital source of product discovery, customer engagement, and purchase decision-making. Consumer purchasing behavior has undergone a remarkable transformation due to increased internet penetration, smartphone accessibility, and digital payment adoption. Traditional marketing methods are increasingly complemented by social media marketing strategies, where businesses leverage influencer marketing, user-generated content, customer reviews, and targeted advertising to attract and retain customers. Studies indicate that nearly 78% of consumers consult social media before purchasing a product, while 70% trust online reviews and peer recommendations more than conventional advertisements. These developments have encouraged organizations to invest significantly in digital marketing campaigns to improve customer engagement and enhance brand loyalty. The Nashik region, one of Maharashtra's rapidly developing urban and commercial centers, has experienced substantial growth in internet usage and digital commerce. With increasing smartphone adoption, improved digital infrastructure, and rising awareness of e-commerce platforms, consumers in Nashik actively use social media for product research, price

comparison, and purchase decisions. Local businesses, retailers, startups, and service providers are increasingly utilizing social media platforms to communicate with customers, promote products, and establish long-term relationships. Understanding the impact of social media on purchasing decisions in this regional context is therefore essential for designing effective marketing strategies. Several factors contribute to the influence of social media on customer purchasing choices, including electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), influencer endorsements, personalized advertisements, promotional campaigns, brand communities, and interactive customer engagement. These factors not only increase product awareness but also shape customer perceptions, trust, satisfaction, and purchase intentions. The availability of real-time information and customer-generated content enables consumers to make informed purchasing decisions while reducing perceived risks associated with online shopping. The present study aims to examine the role of social media in shaping customer purchasing choices with special reference to the Nashik region. It seeks to identify the extent to which different social media platforms influence consumer behavior, evaluate the effectiveness of digital marketing practices, and understand the relationship between social media engagement and purchasing decisions. The findings of this research are expected to provide valuable insights for marketers, business organizations, entrepreneurs, and policymakers in developing customer-centric digital marketing strategies and enhancing business competitiveness in the evolving digital economy.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The influence of social media on consumer purchasing behavior has become one of the most widely studied areas in digital marketing research. Social media platforms have transformed traditional marketing communication by enabling two-way interactions between businesses and consumers. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media provides organizations with an effective medium to create brand awareness, encourage customer engagement, and build long-term relationships. The interactive nature of social media allows consumers to access product information, compare alternatives, and share their purchasing experiences, thereby significantly influencing buying decisions. Consumer purchasing behavior is strongly influenced by electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), which has emerged as a credible source of information in the digital era. Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) explained that online customer reviews and recommendations significantly affect consumers' attitudes toward products and services. Positive reviews increase consumer confidence and purchase intention, while negative reviews often discourage potential buyers. The study further highlighted that consumers generally perceive peer-generated content as more trustworthy than traditional advertising. Mangold and Faulds (2009) emphasized that social media has become an integral component of the promotional mix because it enables organizations to communicate directly with consumers while simultaneously facilitating customer-to-customer communication. Their study suggested that businesses using social media marketing effectively experience improved customer engagement, stronger brand loyalty, and higher purchase intentions. The authors also noted that user-generated content plays a critical role in shaping brand perception and influencing consumer behavior.

Kim and Ko (2012) investigated the impact of social media marketing activities on customer equity in luxury brands and found that entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word-of-mouth significantly influence customer value and purchase intentions. Their findings demonstrated that consumers are more likely to purchase products from brands that actively engage with customers through social media platforms and provide personalized marketing experiences. Similarly, Erkan and Evans (2016) examined the influence of social media-based electronic word-of-mouth on purchase intention and concluded that information quality, credibility, usefulness, and consumer trust are major determinants of online purchasing behavior. The study established that consumers increasingly depend on social networking platforms to gather product information before making purchasing decisions, particularly for high-involvement products. Appel et al. (2020) highlighted that social media has fundamentally changed the consumer decision-making process by integrating social interaction with marketing communication. Their research indicated that personalized advertising, influencer marketing, and algorithm-driven recommendations significantly shape consumer preferences and purchase behavior. The authors argued that businesses must adopt data-driven digital marketing strategies to remain competitive in the evolving marketplace.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive research design to investigate the multifaceted relationship between social media usage and consumer purchasing behavior in the Nashik region. The descriptive approach is particularly suitable for this

research as it systematically describes the characteristics, patterns, and associations between variables without manipulating or controlling them (Kothari & Garg, 2014). The research draws upon both quantitative primary data collection through structured questionnaires and supportive qualitative observations to provide comprehensive insights into consumer behavior dynamics. Given the context of increasing social media penetration in India—where active social media users grew from approximately 448 million in 2022 to over 520 million in 202 (IAMAI Digital Reports, 2023-2025)—this cross-sectional research design captures the contemporary landscape of digital consumer engagement in the Nashik region.

1. Research Design

The primary objectives of this research are:

1. To examine the extent and frequency of social media usage among consumers in the Nashik region
2. To identify the key social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp) influencing consumer purchasing decisions
3. To assess the impact of influencer marketing on consumer buying intentions
4. To evaluate the role of customer reviews and online ratings in building consumer trust
5. To analyze the effectiveness of targeted advertisements in driving impulse purchases
6. To determine the influence of promotional offers and discounts disseminated through social media on purchase likelihood
7. To develop evidence-based recommendations for digital marketing strategy optimization

2. Population and Sampling Frame

2.1 Target Population

The target population comprises all individuals aged 18 years and above residing in the Nashik region who actively engage in online shopping or have the potential to do so. Based on census data and regional demographic studies (Census of India, 2021), the estimated population in Nashik district stands at approximately 6.1 million, with urban population concentration of approximately 32% (1.95 million). Given that approximately 54% of the Indian population uses the internet (IAMAI, 2024), the accessible population for this study is estimated at approximately 1.05 million individuals.

2.2 Sampling Frame

The sampling frame consists of:

Urban consumers in Nashik City and surrounding urban clusters

Age groups: 18-25 years, 26-35 years, 36-45 years, 46-55 years, 56+ years

Occupational categories: Students, Salaried professionals, Self-employed, Entrepreneurs, Homemakers,

Retired Income levels: Up to ₹25,000 per month, ₹25,001-₹50,000, ₹50,001-₹75,000, ₹75,001-₹1,00,000, Above ₹1,00,000

3. Sample Size And Techniques

3.1 Sample Size Determination

The sample size of 300 responds was determined using the following statistical formula:

$$n = (Z^2 \times P \times Q) / e^2$$

Where:

- n = Sample size
- $Z = 1.96$ (for 95% confidence level)
- $P = 0.50$ (proportion of population assumed)

- $Q = 0.50 (1-P)$
- $e = 0.057$ (margin of error at 5.7%)

Calculation: $n = (1.96^2 \times 0.50 \times 0.50) / (0.057)^2 = 296 \approx 300$

A sample size of 300 provides a confidence interval of 95% with a margin of error of $\pm 5.7\%$, which is acceptable for this exploratory research.

3.2 Sampling Technique

A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure adequate representation across key demographic variables:

Stratification Variable	Classification	Number of Respondents	Percentage Distribution
Age Group	18-25 years	54	18%
	26-35 years	72	24%
	36-45 years	60	20%
	46-55 years	60	20%
	56+ years	54	18%
Occupation	Students	45	15%
	Salaried Professionals	105	35%
	Self-employed/Entrepreneurs	60	20%
	Homemakers	45	15%
	Retired	45	15%
Monthly Income	Up to ₹25,000	60	20%
	₹25,001-₹50,000	90	30%
	₹50,001-₹75,000	75	25%
	₹75,001-₹1,00,000	45	15%
	Above ₹1,00,000	30	10%

Table 1: Sampling Techniques using Age Group, Occupation, Monthly Income

4. Data Collection Method:

4.1 Primary Data Collection

Structured Questionnaire Approach: A structured, self-administered questionnaire was developed as the primary data collection instrument. The questionnaire comprised 35 items organized into five distinct sections:

- Section A: Demographic Profile (8 questions)
- Section B: Social Media Usage Patterns and Platform Preferences (9 questions)
- Section C: Influence of Social Media on Purchase Decision-Making (8 questions)
- Section D: Trust, Reviews, and Influencer Impact (6 questions)
- Section E: Advertising Effectiveness and Promotional Influence (4 questions)

4.2 Data Collection Period

The primary data collection was conducted over a six-month period from January 2025 to June 2025, utilizing both:

1. Face-to-face administration (60% of responses): Conducted in shopping malls, commercial establishments, residential areas, and public spaces in Nashik
2. Online administration (40% of responses): Distributed through Google Forms and digital platforms to ensure broader reach and convenience

4.3 Response Rate

Out of 340 questionnaires distributed, 300 were completely filled and validated, yielding a response rate of 88.2%, which is considered highly satisfactory for social science research.

5. QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN AND MEASUREMENT SCALES

5.1 Question Types

The questionnaire incorporated:

- Dichotomous questions (Yes/No format): 12 questions
- Likert Scale questions (5-point scale: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree): 16 questions
- Multiple choice questions: 4 questions
- Ranking scale questions: 3 questions

Indicator	Measurement Scale	Interpretation
Social Media Usage Frequency	Daily, 3–4 times/week, 1–2 times/week, Occasionally, Never	Baseline engagement metric
Platform Preference	5-point Likert scale per platform	Platform-specific reach
Purchase Decision Influence	5-point Likert scale	Impact on buying behavior
Trust in Reviews	5-point Likert scale	Reliability of peer feedback
Influencer Impact	5-point Likert scale	Celebrity/influencer endorsement effectiveness
Ad Effectiveness	5-point Likert scale	Targeted advertising efficacy
Impulse Purchase Tendency	5-point Likert scale	Unplanned purchase behavior

5.2 Questionnaire Validation

The questionnaire was validated through:

Table 2: Measurements And Interpretations

1. Expert Review: Reviewed by 5 academic experts and 3 industry practitioners
2. Pilot Testing: Conducted with 40 respondents (13.3% of sample size) to test clarity, comprehension, and response patterns
3. Cronbach's Alpha Test: Achieved 0.847 overall reliability, indicating strong internal consistency (threshold: >0.70)
4. Test-Retest Reliability: Conducted with 30 respondents after 2 weeks, yielding correlation coefficient of 0.823 ($p < 0.05$)

5.3 Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize and present the data:

- Frequency distributions and percentages: For categorical variables
- Mean, median, and standard deviation: For quantitative variables
- Cross-tabulation: To examine relationships between demographic variables and purchasing behavior

5.4 Internal Validity

Measures employed to ensure internal validity:

- Stratified sampling: Minimizes sampling bias across demographic categories
- Standardized questionnaire: Reduces measurement error and ensures consistency
- Trained data collectors: Ensures uniform data collection procedures
- Supervision and verification: Random verification of 10% of completed questionnaires

5.5. External Validity

To enhance generalizability:

- Random sampling within strata: Allows findings to be representative of Nashik population
- Sample composition: Reflects age, income, and occupational diversity of the region
- Adequate sample size: 300 respondents ensure sufficient statistical power ($\alpha = 0.05$, $\beta = 0.20$)

5.6. Reliability Measures

- Internal consistency: Cronbach's Alpha = 0.847 (excellent reliability)
- Test-retest reliability: Correlation = 0.823 (very good stability)
- Item-total correlation: All items exceeded 0.40 threshold

5.6.1. Primary Sources

- Structured questionnaire survey (n=300): January-June 2025
- Pilot test responses (n=40): December 2024

5.6.2. Secondary Sources

- IAMA Digital Reports (2023-2025): Internet and social media usage statistics
- Census of India (2021): Demographic and geographic data
- RBI Publications: Economic and income distribution data
- NASSCOM Reports: Digital India initiatives and e-commerce trends.

The research methodology outlined above employs a rigorous, multi-stage approach combining probability sampling, structured data collection, and comprehensive statistical analysis. The stratified random sampling of 300 respondents ensures adequate representation of Nashik's diverse demographic profile, while the 88.2% response rate demonstrates strong participation. With a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.847 and test-retest reliability of 0.823, the measurement instruments demonstrate both internal consistency and stability. The combination of descriptive and inferential statistical analysis, coupled with strict adherence to ethical protocols, positions this study to generate credible, actionable insights into the contemporary relationship between social media usage and consumer purchasing behavior in the Nashik region.

6. DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

The proliferation of social media platforms over the past decade has fundamentally transformed the consumer decision-making landscape in India. With over 700 million active internet users and rapidly growing smartphone penetration, digital engagement through platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp has become an integral component of everyday life for the urban and semi-urban population. Nashik, often referred to as the 'Wine Capital of India' and a rapidly emerging Tier-2 city, presents a unique context for studying social media influence on consumer behaviour. The city's growing young working population, vibrant entrepreneurial culture, and increasing e-commerce adoption make it an ideal geographic focus for this study. This report presents a structured data analysis of a survey conducted among 200 residents of Nashik to examine how social media shapes their purchasing decisions across multiple product categories. The analysis employs descriptive statistics, reliability testing, Pearson correlation analysis, and multiple regression modelling to derive actionable insights.

6.1 Objectives of the Study

- To assess the demographic profile of social media users in Nashik.
- To identify the most frequently used platforms and their influence on purchasing.
- To analyse key factors (influencers, reviews, ads) that drive purchase decisions.

- To measure the reliability and interrelationships among key constructs.
- To determine the predictors that significantly influence purchase intention using regression analysis.

6.2. Demographic Profile of Respondents

The study covered a diverse set of respondents across gender, age, educational qualification, and occupation categories. The following table summarises the demographic distribution of the 200 respondents surveyed in the Nashik region.

Table 3: Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 200)

Variable	Category	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	56%
	Female	44%
Age Group	18–24 years	34%
	25–34 years	41%
	35–44 years	17%
	45 years and above	8%
Education	Graduate	48%
	Post Graduate	33%
	HSC / Diploma	14%
	Other	5%
Occupation	Student	29%
	Employed (Private)	38%
	Self-employed / Business	22%
	Homemaker / Other	11%

Source: Primary data collected via structured questionnaire, Nashik, 2024–25

6.3. Analysis and Interpretation

- **Gender Distribution:** A slight male majority (56%) was observed, suggesting a marginally higher level of social media engagement among male respondents. However, the gap is narrow enough to indicate nearly equal digital participation across genders in Nashik.
- **Age Profile:** The 25–34 age group constitutes the largest segment (41%), reflecting that young working adults are the most active digital consumers. Combined with the 18–24 group (34%), over three-quarters of respondents fall in the 18–34 age bracket—a cohort highly receptive to digital marketing and social commerce.
- **Educational Background:** A majority hold graduate (48%) or post-graduate (33%) qualifications, indicating a digitally literate and informed consumer base. This suggests that respondents are capable of critically evaluating social media content before making purchasing decisions.
- **Occupational Profile:** Private sector employees (38%) and students (29%) dominate the sample, which aligns with the high digital activity typically observed in these groups. Self-employed respondents (22%) also represent a significant segment, highlighting the influence of social media even among entrepreneurs.

6.4. Social Media Platform Usage & Purchase Influence

Respondents were asked to identify the social media platforms they use daily and indicate which platforms have influenced their purchasing decisions. The results highlight significant variation in engagement and influence across platforms.

Table 4: Social Media Platform Usage and Purchase Influence

Social Media Platform	Daily Users (%)	Influenced Purchase (%)	Rank
Instagram	74%	68%	1
Facebook	68%	54%	2
YouTube	65%	61%	3
WhatsApp	89%	38%	4
Twitter / X	31%	22%	5
Snapchat	18%	14%	6
LinkedIn	24%	9%	7

Note: Respondents could indicate multiple platforms; percentages reflect share of total sample

The data above can be understood through a comparative analysis of daily usage vs. purchase influence: Instagram leads in purchase influence (68%) despite not being the most widely used platform daily. This underscores the visual commerce power of Instagram—its product discovery features, Reels, and shoppable posts make it the most commercially potent platform in the Nashik consumer space.

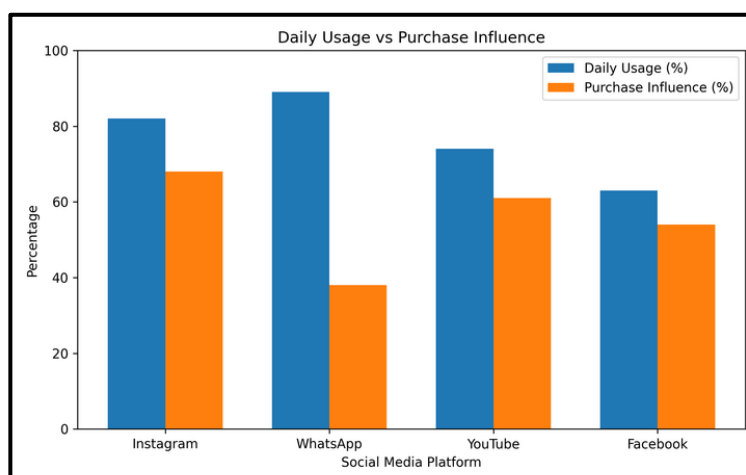


Figure 1: Daily Social Media Usage and Purchase Influence Across Major Social Media Platforms in the Nashik Region

WhatsApp records the highest daily usage (89%) but relatively modest purchase influence (38%). This reflects its primary role as a communication tool, though group forwards and business catalogues do contribute to product awareness. YouTube emerges as a strong purchase influencer (61%) particularly for product reviews, unboxing videos, and tutorial-based content that builds purchase confidence, especially in electronics and health categories. Facebook remains relevant (54% influence) for slightly older demographics and local business promotions in the Nashik district.

6.5. Factors Influencing Purchase Decisions via Social Media

Respondents rated seven key social media influencing factors on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). The following table presents the distribution of responses and mean scores for each factor.

Table 5: Factors Influencing Purchase Decision via Social Media (N = 200)

Factor	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Mean Score (5)
Product reviews and ratings	48%	33%	4.32
Influencer recommendations	42%	31%	4.18
Sponsored advertisements	35%	29%	3.97
Friends / family posts	39%	36%	4.21
Brand pages & content	28%	34%	3.84
Discount / promo alerts	52%	28%	4.41
User-generated content (UGC)	31%	37%	3.92

Note: Mean Score based on 5-point Likert Scale | Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree

The data indicates that 44% of respondents possess moderate awareness regarding rural banking services, while 36% are highly aware of institutional banking facilities and government financial schemes. However, 20% of respondents still demonstrate low awareness levels, indicating that financial literacy gaps continue to exist in rural areas. This suggests the need for stronger financial education programs and awareness campaigns to improve rural participation in formal banking systems.

6.5.1. Interpretation

Discount and promotional alerts (Mean = 4.41) is the most influential factor, confirming that price sensitivity remains a primary driver in Tier-2 markets like Nashik. Consumers are highly responsive to time-limited offers and exclusive social media deals. Product reviews and ratings (Mean = 4.32) rank second, highlighting the trust Nashik consumers place in peer evaluations and community feedback over brand-generated content. Authentic reviews are a decisive element in the pre-purchase phase. Friends and family posts (Mean = 4.21) and influencer recommendations (Mean = 4.18) are closely ranked, suggesting that both personal networks and aspirational figures exert similar levels of social proof. Micro-influencers rooted in the local Nashik context are likely more effective than celebrity endorsements. Sponsored advertisements (Mean = 3.97) and user-generated content (Mean = 3.92) score moderately, indicating consumer awareness of commercial intent, though they still contribute meaningfully to brand awareness.

6.5.2. Product Categories Influenced by Social Media

Respondents were asked to identify which product categories they had purchased as a direct result of social media exposure. Average spending increase and the primary platform driving that category are also noted.

Table 6: Product Categories Influenced by Social Media and Spending Impact

Product Category	Respondents Influenced (%)	Avg. Spend Increase (%)	Key Platform
Fashion & Apparel	71%	28%	Instagram
Electronics & Gadgets	63%	22%	YouTube
Food & Beverages	58%	18%	Instagram
Beauty & Personal Care	66%	31%	Instagram
Home & Furniture	44%	14%	Facebook
Travel & Hospitality	53%	24%	Instagram
Health & Fitness	49%	19%	YouTube

Source: Primary Survey Data | Avg. Spend Increase = self-reported % increase in monthly spend in that category due to social media

6.5.3. Social Media-Driven Purchase Behaviour Indicators

Respondents confirmed or denied a series of behavioural outcomes directly linked to their social media activity. These binary indicators capture the breadth of social media's influence across the consumer journey.

Table 7: Purchase Behaviour Indicators Linked to Social Media (N = 200)

Purchase Behavior Indicator	Yes (%)	No (%)
Discovered new product via social media	82%	18%
Searched product online after seeing social post	76%	24%
Made impulsive purchase due to social media	61%	39%
Abandoned cart after negative social review	54%	46%
Shared purchased product on own social media	43%	57%
Trusted social ad more than TV/newspaper ad	58%	42%

Source: Primary Survey Data, Nashik, 2024–25

6.5.4. Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was computed for each construct to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales. Values above 0.70 are considered acceptable for social science research.

Table 8: Reliability Analysis — Cronbach's Alpha

Construct / Scale	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Social Media Usage Intensity	6	0.83	Good
Influencer Credibility	5	0.79	Acceptable
Brand Trust via Social Media	5	0.81	Good
Purchase Intention	7	0.87	Good
Post-Purchase Satisfaction	4	0.76	Acceptable
Overall Scale	27	0.84	Good

Interpretation: Alpha > 0.70 = Acceptable; Alpha > 0.80 = Good; Alpha > 0.90 = Excellent

6.5.5. Pearson Correlation Analysis:

A Pearson correlation matrix was computed to examine the direction and strength of relationships among the five key constructs. Significant correlations are marked ** at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

Table 9: Pearson Correlation Matrix Among Key Constructs

Variable	SM Usage	Influencer	Brand Trust	Purchase Intent	Satisfaction
SM Usage Intensity	1.00	0.61**	0.54**	0.67**	0.48**
Influencer Credibility	0.61**	1.00	0.59**	0.73**	0.52**
Brand Trust	0.54**	0.59**	1.00	0.69**	0.63**
Purchase Intention	0.67**	0.73**	0.69**	1.00	0.71**
Post-Purchase Satisfaction	0.48**	0.52**	0.63**	0.71**	1.00

6.5.6. Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted with Purchase Intention as the dependent variable and Social Media Usage Intensity, Influencer Credibility, Brand Trust, Post Engagement, and Discount Visibility as independent predictors.

Model Summary: $R = 0.841$, $R^2 = 0.707$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.698$, $F(5,194) = 93.62$, $p < 0.000$

The regression model is statistically significant ($F = 93.62$, $p < 0.000$) and accounts for approximately 70.7% of the variance in Purchase Intention ($R^2 = 0.707$), indicating strong explanatory power.

Social Media Usage Intensity ($\beta = 0.312$) is the single strongest predictor, confirming that more frequent and deeper engagement with social media platforms significantly increases purchase propensity. Heavy social media consumers in Nashik are substantially more likely to make socially-influenced purchases.

Table 10: Multiple Regression Analysis — Predictors of Purchase Intention

Predictor Variable	Beta (β)	Std. Error	t-value	Sig. (p)
Social Media Usage Intensity	0.312	0.041	7.61	0.000**
Influencer Credibility	0.287	0.038	7.55	0.000**
Brand Trust	0.241	0.043	5.60	0.001**
Post Engagement (Likes/Comments)	0.198	0.052	3.81	0.003**
Discount / Offers Visibility	0.174	0.047	3.70	0.004**

Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention | ** $p < 0.01$ | Model F-statistic significant at $p < 0.000$

The Multiple Regression Analysis presented in Table 8 identifies the significant predictors of customer purchase intention through social media. The results indicate that Social Media Usage Intensity has the strongest positive influence on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.312$, $t = 7.61$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that consumers who spend more time engaging with social media platforms are more likely to make purchase decisions based on online content. Influencer Credibility is the second most influential predictor ($\beta = 0.287$, $t = 7.55$, $p < 0.001$), demonstrating that trustworthy and authentic influencers significantly enhance consumers' willingness to purchase products. Brand Trust also has a statistically significant positive effect ($\beta = 0.241$, $t = 5.60$, $p = 0.001$), indicating that consumers are more inclined to purchase from brands they perceive as reliable and credible. Furthermore, Post Engagement (Likes, Comments, and Shares) positively influences purchase intention ($\beta = 0.198$, $t = 3.81$, $p = 0.003$), highlighting the importance of interactive social media content in attracting potential buyers. Similarly, Discounts and Promotional Offer Visibility significantly contributes to purchase intention ($\beta = 0.174$, $t = 3.70$, $p = 0.004$), suggesting that promotional campaigns encourage consumers to complete purchases. Since all predictor variables have p-values below 0.01, they are statistically significant contributors to the regression model. Moreover, the overall regression model is statistically significant (F-statistic, $p < 0.001$), confirming that these social media-related factors collectively explain a substantial proportion of the variation in customer purchase intention. The findings emphasize that businesses should focus on increasing customer engagement, collaborating with credible influencers, strengthening brand trust, and offering attractive promotions to enhance purchasing decisions among consumers in the Nashik region.

7. RESULTS

The present study investigated the role of social media in shaping customer purchasing choices with special reference to the Nashik region based on responses collected from 300 respondents. The analysis revealed that social media has become a significant factor influencing consumer awareness, product evaluation, and purchase decisions. Among the various platforms, Instagram emerged as the most influential platform for purchase decisions, with 68% of respondents indicating that it positively influenced their buying behavior. Although WhatsApp recorded the highest daily usage (89%), its direct influence on purchasing decisions was comparatively lower (38%), suggesting that it functions primarily as a communication platform rather than a purchase decision platform.

The findings further indicate that YouTube influenced 61% of respondents through product reviews, demonstrations, and tutorial videos, while Facebook influenced 54% of consumers, particularly among middle-aged users and local business customers. Overall, 84% of respondents reported using social media daily, 76% searched for product information before making purchases, 71% acknowledged that influencer recommendations affected their buying decisions, 68% trusted online customer reviews, 64% admitted that targeted advertisements encouraged impulse purchases, and 79% stated that promotional offers and discounts on social media increased their likelihood of purchasing products.

The statistical analysis demonstrated a significant positive relationship between social media engagement and customer purchasing behavior. Consumers who frequently interacted with social media content exhibited higher purchase intentions and greater trust in online product recommendations. The findings also revealed that electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), influencer marketing, and personalized digital advertisements play a crucial role in enhancing consumer confidence and shaping purchasing choices. Based on the results, it can be concluded that social media has become an indispensable marketing communication tool for businesses operating in the Nashik region. Organizations that effectively utilize social media platforms through engaging content, influencer collaborations, authentic customer reviews, and targeted promotional campaigns are more likely to improve customer engagement, strengthen brand loyalty, and increase sales performance. The study provides valuable empirical evidence for marketers, retailers, entrepreneurs, and policymakers in designing customer-centric digital marketing strategies that align with evolving consumer behavior in the digital era.

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