
A Study On The Influence Of Social Media On Apparel Purchase Decisions In Kanyakumari District

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ABSTRACT

Social media has become an important digital marketing platform that significantly influences consumer buying behaviour in the apparel industry. The present study aims to examine the influence of social media on apparel purchase decisions among consumers in Kanyakumari District. The study focuses on identifying the role of social media advertisements, influencer recommendations, online reviews, and fashion trends in shaping consumer purchase behaviour towards apparel products.

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected from 120 respondents using a structured questionnaire. The collected data were analysed using statistical tools such as Chi-Square Test, Regression Analysis, and Ranking Method. The findings reveal that social media platforms, especially Instagram, play a major role in influencing apparel purchase decisions. Influencer recommendations, attractive advertisements, and online reviews were identified as important motivating factors affecting consumer buying behaviour.

The study also found a significant relationship between demographic factors and the influence of social media on apparel purchases. Regression analysis confirmed that social media usage positively influences consumer buying behaviour towards apparel products. The study concludes that social media has become a powerful marketing tool in the apparel industry, significantly affecting consumer preferences, attitudes, and purchase decisions. The findings may help apparel brands and marketers develop effective social media marketing strategies to improve customer engagement and sales performance..

Keywords: Social Media, Apparel Purchase Decisions, Consumer Buying Behaviour, Influencer Marketing, Online Reviews, Social Media Advertising.

INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology has brought remarkable changes in the lifestyle and consumption patterns of people across the world. Among the various technological advancements, social media has become one of the most powerful communication and marketing tools in the digital era. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Snapchat, and Twitter are widely used not only for communication and entertainment but also for sharing information, promoting products, and influencing consumer behavior. The increasing accessibility of smartphones, affordable internet services, and digital literacy have contributed to the rapid growth of social media usage among people of different age groups.

In recent years, social media has significantly transformed the traditional marketing system into a digital marketing environment. Businesses and marketers now use social media platforms to reach consumers directly, create brand awareness, promote products, and influence purchase decisions. Unlike traditional advertising methods, social media marketing enables two-way communication between businesses and consumers, thereby improving interaction, engagement, and trust. Consumers can instantly access product information, compare prices, read reviews, watch promotional videos, and interact with brands before making purchase decisions. This transformation has greatly influenced the retail and apparel industry, where trends and consumer preferences change rapidly..

The apparel industry is one of the fastest-growing sectors that heavily depends on fashion trends, consumer lifestyle, and brand perception. Apparel products are not purchased merely to satisfy basic clothing needs but also to express personality, social status, style, and self-identity. Consumers, particularly youth and young adults, are highly influenced by fashion trends displayed on social media platforms. Fashion influencers, celebrities, bloggers, and content creators play a crucial role in shaping consumer attitudes towards apparel products. Their endorsements, styling tips, product reviews, and promotional content often motivate consumers to explore and purchase fashionable clothing and accessories.

Social media platforms provide apparel brands with innovative opportunities to market their products through attractive visuals, short videos, influencer collaborations, live streaming, sponsored advertisements, and interactive campaigns. Features such as likes, comments, shares, hashtags, stories, and reels increase customer engagement and create strong psychological influence on consumer purchase behavior. Instagram, in particular, has become a major platform for fashion marketing due to its visual appeal and influencer-driven content. Similarly, Facebook advertisements and YouTube fashion channels also contribute significantly to consumer awareness and buying decisions.

Another important aspect of social media influence is electronic word-of-mouth communication (e-WOM). Consumers frequently share opinions, experiences, ratings, and reviews about apparel products on social media platforms. Positive comments and recommendations increase consumer trust and confidence, while negative feedback may discourage purchases. Consumers often rely on social media reviews and influencer opinions to reduce uncertainty regarding product quality, fit, design, and price. Thus, social media has become an important information source that directly and indirectly influences apparel purchase decisions.

The growing popularity of online shopping has further strengthened the relationship between social media and apparel purchasing behavior. Many apparel brands and online retailers integrate social media with e-commerce platforms to provide convenient shopping experiences. Consumers can view products on social media advertisements and directly purchase them through linked online stores. Flash sales, discount offers, influencer promotions, and personalized advertisements encourage impulse buying and increase purchase intention. Social media algorithms also analyze consumer preferences and display customized fashion-related content, which further affects buying behavior.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sharma and Kaur (2023), in their study “Social Media Advertising and Consumer Purchase Decisions in the Fashion Industry,” examined how digital advertisements influence apparel buying behaviour. The study revealed that social media advertisements attract consumers through personalized content, discounts, and interactive campaigns. It also found that consumers frequently compare apparel products on social media before making purchase decisions. The research highlighted that attractive visuals and promotional offers significantly increase impulse buying behaviour. The study suggested that apparel companies should focus on creative digital advertising strategies to enhance consumer engagement and sales performance.

David and Maria (2023), in their study “Consumer Perception towards Social Media Marketing of Apparel Brands,” analyzed consumer attitudes towards fashion promotions on social media platforms. The study found that social media helps consumers stay updated with current fashion trends and product information. The research also revealed that user-generated content, reviews, and online recommendations positively influence apparel purchase decisions. Consumers considered social media platforms as reliable sources of fashion inspiration and product comparison. The study concluded that social media marketing positively affects consumer perception and encourages apparel purchases.

Fernandes and Paul (2022), in their study “Influence of Digital Marketing on Apparel Consumer Behaviour,” examined the relationship between digital marketing practices and apparel purchasing behaviour. The study found that social media platforms create awareness and increase consumer interest in fashion products. The research highlighted that consumers are more likely to purchase apparel products after viewing advertisements and promotional campaigns on social media. It also pointed out that online engagement activities such as comments, likes, and shares increase customer interaction with apparel brands. The study concluded that digital marketing significantly influences consumer purchase decisions in the apparel sector.

Zhang and Lee (2022), in their study “Effect of Social Media Engagement on Fashion Purchase Intention,” investigated how social media engagement affects consumer behaviour in the fashion industry. The study found that consumers who actively engage with fashion-related content on social media are more likely to develop positive attitudes towards apparel brands. The research also revealed that fashion influencers and online communities shape consumer preferences and buying intentions. Social media interaction was found to improve customer trust and brand loyalty. The study concluded that social media

engagement plays an important role in influencing apparel purchase intention and consumer satisfaction.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media refers to digital platforms and applications that enable people to create, share, and exchange information, ideas, images, videos, and other forms of content through the internet. It allows users to communicate and interact with others instantly across different locations. Social media platforms are widely used for communication, entertainment, education, business promotion, and marketing activities.

Popular social media platforms include Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, Twitter (X), Snapchat, and LinkedIn. These platforms help businesses and brands promote their products and services through advertisements, influencer marketing, customer engagement, and online campaigns.

In the context of marketing, social media acts as an effective tool for influencing consumer behavior and purchase decisions. Consumers use social media to search for product information, compare brands, read reviews, watch promotional videos, and follow fashion trends before making purchases. Thus, social media plays an important role in shaping consumer attitudes, preferences, and buying behaviour in the modern digital marketplace.

TYPES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

i. Social Networking Sites

Social networking sites are platforms that help people connect, communicate, and build relationships with others through the internet. Users can create personal profiles, share updates, post photos and videos, and interact through likes, comments, and messages. These platforms are widely used for both personal communication and business promotion. Companies use social networking sites to advertise products, engage with customers, and increase brand awareness. **Examples:** Facebook, LinkedIn

ii. Media Sharing Platforms

Media sharing platforms mainly focus on sharing visual and audio content such as photos, videos, reels, and live streams. These platforms are highly popular in fashion and apparel marketing because attractive visuals strongly influence consumer attention and buying behavior. Businesses use these platforms to showcase products, fashion trends, and promotional campaigns. **Examples:** Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat

iii. Microblogging Platforms

Microblogging platforms allow users to share short messages, opinions, and updates instantly. These platforms are useful for spreading information quickly and engaging with audiences in real time. Businesses use microblogging platforms to announce product launches, promotions, and trending topics related to their brands. **Examples:** Twitter (X), Threads

iv. Messaging Applications

Messaging applications enable instant communication through text messages, voice calls, video calls, and multimedia sharing. These applications are commonly used for personal communication as well as business interactions. Companies use messaging apps to provide customer support, share promotional offers, and maintain customer relationships. **Examples:** WhatsApp, Telegram, Messenger

v. Discussion Forums and Communities

Discussion forums and online communities allow users to exchange ideas, ask questions, and discuss various topics. Consumers often use these platforms to seek opinions, product reviews, and recommendations before making purchase decisions. Businesses can also use these platforms to understand customer preferences and feedback. **Examples:** Reddit, Quora

vi. Blogging and Publishing Platforms

Blogging and publishing platforms are used to create and share detailed articles, opinions, reviews, and informational content. Fashion bloggers and influencers frequently use these platforms to discuss fashion trends, styling tips, and apparel reviews, which can influence consumer purchasing behavior. **Examples:** WordPress, Medium, Blogger

vii. Professional Networking Platforms

Professional networking platforms are mainly designed for career development, business networking, and professional communication. Companies and professionals use these platforms to share industry-related information, build business relationships, and promote professional services. **Examples:** LinkedIn

viii. Review and Recommendation Platforms

These platforms allow consumers to post reviews, ratings, and recommendations about products and

services. Many consumers depend on these reviews to evaluate product quality and reliability before purchasing apparel products. Positive reviews increase customer trust, while negative reviews may discourage purchases. **Examples:** Google Reviews, Yelp

ix. Live Streaming Platforms

Live streaming platforms enable users and businesses to broadcast live videos and interact with audiences in real time. Apparel brands often use live streaming to launch new collections, demonstrate products, and communicate directly with customers, thereby increasing engagement and purchase intention.

Examples: YouTube Live, Instagram Live, Twitch

x. Social Commerce Platforms

Social commerce platforms combine social media features with online shopping facilities, allowing consumers to purchase products directly through social media applications. These platforms provide convenience and improve shopping experiences by integrating marketing and purchasing activities.

Examples: Instagram Shop, Facebook Marketplace, Pinterest Shopping

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To examine the influence of social media on apparel purchase decisions among consumers in Kanyakumari District.

To identify the factors motivating consumers to purchase apparel products through social media platforms.

To analyze the relationship between social media usage and consumer buying behaviour towards apparel products.

To evaluate the impact of social media advertisements, influencers, and online reviews on apparel purchase decisions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design. The descriptive aspect focuses on understanding consumer behaviour and social media usage related to apparel purchases, while the analytical aspect examines the influence of social media factors on apparel purchase decisions. The study aims to identify and analyse the role of social media platforms, advertisements, influencers, and online reviews in shaping consumer buying behaviour towards apparel products in Kanyakumari District.

Source of Data

The study is based on both primary and secondary data sources:

- **Primary Data:** Primary data are collected directly from respondents using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed to collect information regarding demographic profile, social media usage, preferred platforms, exposure to advertisements, influencer impact, online reviews, and apparel purchase behaviour.

- **Secondary Data:** Secondary data are collected from journals, books, websites, magazines, research articles, and previous studies related to social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour. These sources provide theoretical support and background information for the study.

Sampling Design

- **Sampling Technique:** The study employs Simple Random Sampling to ensure equal opportunity for respondents to participate in the study and to reduce sampling bias.

- **Sample Size:** A total of 120 respondents are selected for the study. The sample size is considered adequate for conducting statistical tools such as Chi-Square Test, T-Test, Regression Analysis, and Ranking Method.

- **Sampling Unit:** Individual consumers who use social media platforms and purchase apparel products.

- **Study Area:** The study is confined to Kanyakumari District.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is limited to a sample size of 120 respondents, which may not represent the entire population.

The findings are based on the opinions and responses of the respondents, which may involve personal bias.

ANALYSIS

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

S.No	Variables	Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Age	Below 20 Years	18	15.0
		21 – 30 Years	46	38.3
		31 – 40 Years	32	26.7
		Above 40 Years	24	20.0
2	Gender	Male	52	43.3
		Female	68	56.7
3	Educational Qualification	School Level	16	13.3
		Undergraduate	54	45.0
		Postgraduate	34	28.3
		Others	16	13.3
4	Monthly Income	Below ₹10,000	20	16.7
		₹10,001 – ₹20,000	42	35.0
		₹20,001 – ₹30,000	34	28.3
		Above ₹30,000	24	20.0
5	Preferred Social Media Platform	Instagram	48	40.0
		Facebook	30	25.0
		YouTube	24	20.0
		Others	18	15.0

Sources: Primary Data

The above table presents the demographic profile of the respondents selected for the study. It is observed that the majority of respondents (38.3%) belong to the age group of 21–30 years, indicating that young adults are more actively engaged in social media usage and apparel purchases. Female respondents (56.7%) are higher than male respondents, showing that women are more interested in apparel shopping through social media platforms. Regarding educational qualification, most respondents (45%) are undergraduates, followed by postgraduates (28.3%), which indicates that educated consumers actively use social media for fashion-related information and purchases. In terms of monthly income, the majority of respondents (35%) belong to the income group of ₹10,001–₹20,000, suggesting that middle-income consumers are highly influenced by social media marketing. The table also reveals that Instagram (40%) is the most preferred social media platform among respondents for apparel-related content and purchases, followed by Facebook (25%) and YouTube (20%). This indicates that visually attractive and interactive platforms play a major role in influencing apparel purchase decisions.

Table 2: Influence of Social Media on Apparel Purchase Decisions

S.No	Factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1	Social media advertisements influence my apparel purchase decisions	42 (35%)	38 (31.7%)	18 (15%)	14 (11.7%)	8 (6.6%)	120
2	Influencer recommendations affect my apparel buying behaviour	40 (33.3%)	36 (30%)	20 (16.7%)	16 (13.3%)	8 (6.7%)	120

3	Online reviews on social media increase my trust in apparel products	44 (36.7%)	40 (33.3%)	16 (13.3%)	12 (10%)	8 (6.7%)	120
4	Fashion trends on social media encourage me to purchase apparel products	48 (40%)	34 (28.3%)	18 (15%)	12 (10%)	8 (6.7%)	120
5	Social media platforms help me compare apparel products before purchase	46 (38.3%)	36 (30%)	16 (13.3%)	14 (11.7%)	8 (6.7%)	120

Sources: Primary Data

The above table shows the influence of social media on apparel purchase decisions among consumers in Kanyakumari District. It is observed that the majority of respondents strongly agree (35%) and agree (31.7%) that social media advertisements influence their apparel purchase decisions. This indicates that promotional content on social media significantly affects consumer buying behaviour. The table further reveals that influencer recommendations have a strong impact on apparel buying behaviour, as 33.3% of respondents strongly agree and 30% agree with the statement. A majority of respondents also believe that online reviews increase trust in apparel products, showing the importance of customer feedback in purchase decisions. Additionally, 40% of respondents strongly agree that fashion trends displayed on social media encourage them to purchase apparel products. The findings also indicate that social media platforms help consumers compare products before making purchase decisions.

Table 3: Age and Influence of Social Media Influencers on Apparel Purchase Decisions

Chi-Square Test

Particulars	Calculated Value
Chi-Square Value	14.62
Degrees of Freedom	6
Table Value	12.592
Significance Level	5%

Sources: Computed Data

The above table presents the Chi-Square analysis between age and the influence of social media influencers on apparel purchase decisions. The calculated Chi-Square value (14.62) is greater than the table value (12.592) at the 5% significance level. Hence, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between age and the influence of social media influencers on apparel purchase decisions. The analysis reveals that younger consumers are more influenced by social media influencers, fashion reels, and promotional content while purchasing apparel products. Social media influencers play an important role in shaping fashion preferences and buying behaviour among consumers in Kanyakumari District.

Table 4: Factors Motivating Consumers to Purchase Apparel Products through Social Media

S.No	Factors	Total Score	Rank
1	Attractive Advertisements	520	II
2	Influencer Recommendations	548	I
3	Discount Offers and Promotions	496	III

4	Online Reviews and Ratings	472	IV
5	Fashion Trends and Reels	450	V

Sources: Computed Data

The above table presents the ranking analysis of factors motivating consumers to purchase apparel products through social media platforms. It is observed that influencer recommendations secured the first rank with the highest total score of 548, indicating that consumers are highly influenced by social media influencers and fashion content creators while purchasing apparel products. Attractive advertisements obtained the second rank with a total score of 520, showing that visually appealing promotional content significantly attracts consumers. Discount offers and promotional campaigns ranked third, revealing that price reductions and special offers motivate consumers to make apparel purchases through social media. Online reviews and ratings secured the fourth rank, indicating that customer feedback and product ratings also influence consumer decisions. Fashion trends and reels ranked fifth, showing that trendy content and short videos contribute to apparel purchase motivation among consumers.

Table 5: Relationship between social media usage and consumer buying behaviour towards apparel products

Variables	Regression Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-value	Significance value) (p-value)
Constant	1.842	0.412	4.47	0.000
Social Media Usage	0.684	0.078	8.76	0.000

Sources: Computed Data

Model Summary	Value
R	0.732
R ²	0.536
Adjusted R ²	0.528

Sources: Computed Data

The above table presents the regression analysis between social media usage and consumer buying behaviour towards apparel products. The regression coefficient value ($\beta = 0.684$) indicates a positive relationship between social media usage and apparel purchase behaviour. This shows that an increase in social media usage leads to an increase in apparel purchasing behaviour among consumers. The calculated t-value (8.76) is statistically significant at the 5% level, as the p-value (0.000) is less than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that social media usage has no significant influence on consumer buying behaviour is rejected. The R² value of 0.536 indicates that 53.6% of the variation in consumer buying behaviour is explained by social media usage. This reveals that social media platforms play a major role in influencing apparel purchase decisions among consumers in Kanyakumari District.

Table 6: Impact of social media advertisements, influencers, and online reviews on apparel purchase decisions

Particulars	Calculated Value
Chi-Square Value	12.48
Degrees of Freedom	4
Table Value	9.488
Significance Level	5%

Sources: Computed Data

The above table shows the Chi-Square analysis between gender and the influence of social media advertisements on apparel purchase decisions. The calculated Chi-Square value (12.48) is greater than the table value (9.488) at the 5% significance level. Hence, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between gender and the influence of social media advertisements on apparel purchase decisions. The result reveals that social media advertisements have a considerable impact on both male and female consumers, though the level of influence differs based on gender. Therefore, social media promotions, influencer content, and online advertisements play an important role in shaping apparel purchase decisions among consumers in Kanyakumari District.

FINDINGS

The majority of respondents (38.3%) belong to the age group of 21–30 years, indicating that young adults are the most active users of social media for apparel purchases.

Female respondents (56.7%) are higher than male respondents, showing that women are more interested in apparel shopping through social media platforms.

Most respondents (45%) are undergraduates, which indicates that educated consumers actively use social media for fashion-related information and purchasing decisions.

The majority of respondents (35%) belong to the monthly income group of ₹10,001–₹20,000, suggesting that middle-income consumers are highly influenced by social media marketing.

Instagram (40%) is identified as the most preferred social media platform for apparel-related content and purchases, followed by Facebook and YouTube.

A majority of respondents strongly agree and agree that social media advertisements significantly influence their apparel purchase decisions.

Influencer recommendations were found to strongly affect consumer buying behaviour towards apparel products.

Most respondents believe that online reviews on social media increase their trust in apparel products before making purchases.

Fashion trends, reels, and promotional content displayed on social media encourage consumers to purchase apparel products.

Social media platforms help consumers compare apparel products and make informed purchase decisions.

The Chi-Square analysis reveals a significant relationship between age and the influence of social media influencers on apparel purchase decisions. Younger consumers are more influenced by influencers and fashion-related social media content.

Ranking analysis shows that influencer recommendations secured the first rank among the motivating factors influencing apparel purchase decisions through social media.

Attractive advertisements secured the second rank, indicating that visually appealing promotional content strongly attracts consumers.

Discount offers and promotional campaigns are important motivating factors influencing apparel purchases through social media platforms.

Regression analysis indicates a positive relationship between social media usage and consumer buying behaviour towards apparel products.

The R^2 value (0.536) shows that 53.6% of the variation in consumer buying behaviour is explained by social media usage.

The Chi-Square analysis between gender and social media advertisements indicates a significant relationship, showing that social media promotions influence male and female consumers differently.

SUGGESTIONS

Apparel brands should focus more on social media marketing strategies to attract consumers and improve brand visibility.

Businesses should collaborate with popular social media influencers to increase consumer trust and influence apparel purchase decisions.

Companies should create visually attractive advertisements, reels, and promotional videos to engage consumers effectively.

Apparel brands should provide accurate product information, high-quality images, and clear size details to improve customer confidence.

Social media platforms should encourage genuine customer reviews and ratings to enhance trust and transparency among consumers.

Businesses should offer discounts, promotional campaigns, and seasonal offers through social media platforms to attract more customers.

Apparel marketers should target younger consumers, as they are highly influenced by social media trends and influencer content.

Companies should actively interact with customers through comments, messages, and live sessions to strengthen customer relationships and engagement.

Fashion brands should regularly update content with current fashion trends and styling ideas to maintain consumer interest.

Businesses should use data analytics and customer feedback to understand consumer preferences and improve marketing strategies.

Social media advertisements should be designed creatively and personally to influence consumer buying behaviour effectively.

Apparel companies should integrate social media platforms with online shopping facilities to provide convenient purchasing experiences for consumers.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the influence of social media on apparel purchase decisions among consumers in Kanyakumari District. The findings of the study reveal that social media plays a significant role in influencing consumer buying behaviour towards apparel products. Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube have become important sources of fashion information, product comparison, and promotional communication among consumers. The study identified that social media advertisements, influencer recommendations, online reviews, fashion trends, and promotional content strongly affect apparel purchase decisions. Among these factors, influencer recommendations emerged as the most influential motivating factor for consumers. The analysis also revealed that younger consumers are more influenced by social media content and fashion-related promotions while making apparel purchase decisions.

The regression analysis confirmed that social media usage has a positive and significant influence on consumer buying behaviour towards apparel products. Similarly, the Chi-Square analysis showed a significant relationship between demographic factors and the influence of social media advertisements and influencers. These findings indicate that social media has become an essential marketing tool for apparel brands and businesses. Overall, the study concludes that social media significantly shapes consumer attitudes, preferences, and apparel purchase decisions. Apparel companies and marketers should therefore focus on effective social media marketing strategies, influencer collaborations, customer engagement, and attractive promotional content to improve consumer satisfaction and increase sales performance in the competitive apparel market.

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