



Examining The Relationship Between Social Media Influence and Impulse Buying among Young Adults

Homika Jain, Student Researcher, Class XII, Maharaja Sawai Mansingh Vidyalyaya, Jaipur.

homijain3001@gmail.com

Abstract: Social media has evolved purchasing behavior when young adults look for products online as much as when they make the decision whether or not to buy. Consumers are being heavily influenced by advertisements and influencers, as well as by reviews or recommendations from people who bought something and they also made the purchase in an unplanned buying activity with no prior intent, when people buy things online based on the latest trends from influencers. Due to this phenomenon, there is a need to explore how social media influences impulsive buying behaviors in young adults in order to study its real extent. The current quantitative research applied data collection methods utilizing scales based on standard psychological measures. It found evidence that both variables had an association ($r=0.280$) and as such, concluded by emphasizing how it influences consumer impulse.

Keywords: Social Media, Impulsive Buying, Young Adults.

1. Introduction

“We do not just scroll through social media anymore; we shop through it, think through it, and often make decisions through it.”

In the past ten years, social media have played an increasingly important role in how we communicate with one another and, crucially, in how we make purchases. Social networks like Facebook, Instagram and YouTube affect not only how we perceive trends and ways of life, but

also the products and brands that we buy; especially influential amongst young people who spend much of their time-consuming information online (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

According to Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and enable the creation and exchange of user-generated content." This means social media's shaping role on taste and lifestyle is determined through algorithmic tailoring and social influence through the notion of influencer-led social proof. Hence, social media have been successful in driving consumers' purchasing preferences. A lot of purchases are made by the youth using social networks, by seeing the popular products they can watch videos and products, these purchases is strongly influenced by the trend, the simplicity of the mobile devices and the capability for companies to directly promote and sell goods through this particular platform (Mangold & Faulds, 2009).

Today's marketing strategy seems to revolve around the idea of having celebrity endorsers, widely followed people on the Internet or the individuals who produce interesting products that they can publicize among people. Research has shown that advertisements, product reviews and pleasant pictures, which usually trigger the consumers to purchase goods, exist abundantly on the web and lead to social media's enormous influence on consumers' purchases (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017).

Dennis W. Rook definition of impulse buying: "An unplanned purchase characterised by a sudden and powerful urge to buy immediately". Such a purchase is caused by emotions, peer pressure and marketing influences, but not by the actual needs of the buyer (Rook, 1987). Young people are especially prone to make a purchase that is driven by popularity, friend's opinions and fear of missing out on anything; their perception is deeply molded by influencers' recommendations on trends and product consumption, which inevitably lead to purchases of unnecessary items and shape their buying behavior (Przybylski et al., 2013). Both academia and practitioners are intensely intrigued in the role of social media in influencing people's purchasing decision making process. It is worthwhile to investigate more on the process of how social media impacts on youth's impulse purchasing, its implications on the purchase behaviors of the consumers (Aragoncillo & Ors, 2018).

This paper aims to explore how social media can influence people's purchase, particularly in impulse purchasing behavior among young adults, seeking to identify the underlying causes of

this phenomenon and understand how consumers perceive the social media marketing practices and how marketing affects our psychology.

Social Media

Social media influence is about how the things we see on media platforms affect our thoughts and feelings and the things we do. This influence can happen in a lot of ways for example when we see ads or when our friends post things online or when we join groups and see what other people are saying. Social media influencers also play a role because they share their opinions and tell their followers what they think is a good product or a bad product. As time goes on and technology changes social media has become a way that people talk to each other especially among young adults.

According to a research study, (Alves de Castro, 2023) what influencers say can affect the decisions that people make. It affects some people more than others. The author made a test called the Social Media Influencer Susceptibility Scale or SUSIS. The test found out that younger people often trust influencers because they seem like they know what they are talking about and they seem attractive and smart. When influencers appear to be like this and what they say is more likely to make people want to buy things or like brands that they promote. Thus, it affects how people feel about products and brands. Research shows that social media influence is not just about influencers. We are also affected by what other people say, like when we read reviews or see ratings of a product.

A study suggests that when our friends recommend things to us online it really affects what we buy because it seems real and trustworthy (Erkan & Evans, 2016). This just shows how important it is to see what other people think online when we are deciding what to do. Social media also makes us compare ourselves to people we see online. We often see how they live and what they have. For adults, noticing these things online can make them want things they do not really need just so they can fit in. (Festinger, 1954). Overall studies show that social media influence is complicated and it involves a lot of things like influencers and friends and online recommendations and comparing ourselves to people.

All of these things work together to shape what young adults think and what they buy and media influence is about all of these things, including social media influence and how it affects people.

Impulsive buying

Impulse buying is something that people have been studying for a time even before social media existed. Dennis Rook said that impulse buying is when you suddenly feel like you need to buy something away. This feeling can be very strong. It can make you feel bad if you do not buy the thing you want. Impulse buying is also often about feeling good in the moment and not really thinking about what might happen (Dennis Rook, 1987).

Some other researchers looked at a lot of information from over 75,000 people who buy things. They found out that how well you can control yourself and how you are feeling are the reasons why you might buy something on impulse. Some people are more likely to buy things on impulse because they like to try things and they see advertisements that make them want to buy things.

What makes impulse buying different from buying something you need is that you do not take the time to think about it before you buy it. You see something. You buy it right away without thinking about whether you really need it or not. This can be a problem for some people, younger people who are more likely to buy things on impulse than older people. Older people are usually better at controlling themselves and waiting before they buy something. Impulse buying is still buying, no matter what you are buying the problem is that you are not taking the time to think about it before you buy it.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose is to study social media and impulsive buying behaviour among young adults.

1.2 Hypothesis

H1: There is no significant relationship between social media influence and impulsive buying behaviour among young adults.

H2: There is a positive relationship between social media influence and impulsive buying behaviour among young adults.

2. Method**2.1 Sample**

A total sample of 30 young adults between the age range of 16 and 25 was collected.

2.2 Measures

The degree of social media's influence on the consumers' decision process for buying a

product was measured through use of **Social Media Influence Scale (SMIS)** by Nadeem et al. (2015). The scale helped to estimate the impact of social media advertisement, influencer's suggestions, opinions on online forums, friends' opinions, promotions and the influence from different types of social media messages on customers' buying habits. They had to mark responses based on a 5-point **Likert** scale of Strongly Disagree (1 point) to Strongly Agree (5 point).

Impulsive Buying Behavior is the degree to which a customer tends to indulge in impulsive buying was calculated using the **Impulse Buying Tendency Scale (IBTS)** by Rook & Fisher (1995). The tool helped to understand how far the customer is predisposed to making unplanned and spontaneous purchases according to emotion and will and not on rational thinking. The questionnaire asked responses from 30 young adults on a 5-point **Likert** scale from Strongly Disagree (1 point) to Strongly Agree (5 point).

2.3 Procedures

The participants were informed about the research, and consent was taken from them. The data were collected with the help of a structured questionnaire using Google Forms. Each participant was thanked later for their participation and cooperation during the study.

3. Results

Descriptives

	Social Media	Impulse Buying
N	30	30
Mean	4.98	20.4
Standard deviation	9.20	2.85

Correlation Matrix

	Social Media	Impulse Buying
Social Media	—	
Impulse Buying	0.280	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

4. Discussion

In this study on social media and impulsive buying behaviour of young adults, there is a positive relationship between social media usage towards impulsive buying behavior in young

adults ($r = 0.280$). Based on the findings, H1 was rejected and the alternative hypothesis, H2 was accepted, as a positive relationship was found. This supports the research from Verplanken and Herabadi (2001) which says that emotions have an influence on impulse buying and research from Djafarova and Bowes (2021) who says that marketing on social media influences impulse buying behaviour of young adults. In general, the correlation value is in the moderate range, this is because of the other influential variables like income, personality, and self-control on the buying behavior of a young adult. However, it would be better for the future research to involve a larger sample and different variables to reveal a deeper explanation on the impulsive buying behaviour in young adults.

5. Conclusion

The present study aims to explore the correlation between social media influence and impulse buying behaviour in young adults. The obtained results show that there is a positive correlation. That means that more influence of social media in a young adult consumer with online advertisements, influencer reviews, and reviews will have a higher probability of making impulsive buying decisions online.

Impulsive buying is influenced by emotions, self-control and money that present the limitations of this study.

Further research may work with a bigger sample with various demographic characteristics & include more variables such that better conclusion will reach on. Thus, there is a strong implication that social media does influence consumer behaviour in young adults.

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