

# **Awareness and Influence of Social Media Marketing On Consumer Buying Behaviour in Post-Pandemic Period in Dindigul District**

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## **Abstract**

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly altered consumer behavior, accelerating the transition from traditional shopping to digital platforms, with social media emerging as a dominant driver of purchase decisions. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest, once primarily used for networking, have become vital tools for product discovery, peer reviews, influencer endorsements, and interactive marketing. This study examines the influence of social media on consumer buying behavior in the post-pandemic context, with a specific focus on Dindigul district in Tamil Nadu, India. The objective is to analyze how consumers in this region perceive and rely on social media for purchase decisions, while also exploring the impact of demographic variables such as gender, education, income, and marital status. Existing evidence suggests that gender plays a significant moderating role in consumer responses to online promotions, whereas marital status and income levels exhibit weaker associations. Globally, consumers have increasingly prioritized convenience, accessibility, and safety, alongside conscious consumption of essential goods, and these trends are reflected within the local buying patterns of Dindigul. Both established businesses and small enterprises in the district have recognized this transformation, adopting social media campaigns to engage customers and strengthen their digital presence. The study revealed that age, education, and occupation significantly influence consumer awareness of social media marketing, whereas gender, nativity, and income showed no significant effect. This highlights that awareness levels are strongly shaped by demographic factors, particularly among younger and more educated consumers.

**Keywords:** Consumer Buying Behavior, Consumer Preferences, Online Marketing, Post-Pandemic Consumption, Social Media Marketing

## **1. Introduction**

In the post-pandemic era, consumer buying behavior has undergone a profound transformation, with social media emerging as a central influence on purchase decisions. The restrictions enforced during the COVID-19 crisis such as lockdowns and social distancing significantly reduced in-store shopping, thereby accelerating the adoption of digital platforms. This shift has not only redefined the way consumers access products and services but has also underscored the critical role of social media in shaping preferences, purchase intentions, and brand engagement. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest have evolved into powerful tools for businesses to connect with customers, promote offerings, and influence consumption patterns.

The influence of social media on consumer behavior has proven to be both immediate and enduring. Increasingly, buyers depend on online reviews, influencer recommendations, and interactive advertisements before making purchasing decisions. Research indicates a shift in consumer priorities toward essentials, mindful consumption, and digital commerce, with social media becoming the primary source of information and persuasion. This transformation has compelled businesses to strengthen their digital presence and adapt marketing strategies to align with evolving consumer expectations.

In the specific context of Dindigul district, this digital shift has been particularly noticeable. Local consumers have embraced social media not just as a space for social interaction but also as a trusted platform for shopping and decision-making. Changing demographic factors—such as gender, education levels, and social media usage habits—further highlight the need to examine their impact on consumer buying behavior. Gaining insights into these dynamics will enable businesses, marketers, and policymakers to better navigate the digital-first economy and craft strategies tailored to an increasingly socially connected consumer base.

## 2. Review of Literature

**Rini Johnson (2022)** in her research work on “Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Buying Behaviour with Special Reference to Kollam District in Kerala” showed that social media marketing is the method of using social media as a tool to reach a wide range of customers. This method creates sudden attention to a particular product for a large group of people. Nowadays, this mode of marketing has captured a larger space than traditional marketing media. Now, people seek followers and subscribers by giving information on social media about purchases of goods and services online without wasting time. Through social media, customers can get information about the company and its products, and at the same time, the company can get information about the customers for their requirements. Marketing through social media can change the perception and purchase behavior of customers.

**Sridevi Y (2022)** in her research article on “A Study on Consumer Awareness on Social Media Marketing” aimed to find out the consumer’s awareness of social media marketing, to ascertain the consumer awareness and the variables that are associated with consumer awareness about social media marketing. To analyze the awareness of the consumers in using social media marketing, a sample of 100 respondents were selected and a structured questionnaire was issued and collected. The study reveals that the majority of the respondents are using social media marketing for the discount offers, designs, and other offers. The majority of the respondents agree with the reliability of social media marketing.

**HariananthaRaoNagaraj (2022)** in his research work on “The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Customer Satisfaction: A Study Amongst Working Adults in Malaysia” provides vital information on the impact of social media marketing on customer satisfaction, focusing on working adults in Malaysia. The three independent variables that have a direct impact on the dependent variable, customer satisfaction, are authentic information, captivating content, and responsiveness of marketing tactics. Working adults were chosen as the respondents for this study as they are known to be actively engaged on social media, as social media is mostly utilized in the workplace and even at home. The research questions drafted in this study have a significant result and are shown to be in coherence with the objectives. The research had a sample size of 119 working adults, and convenience sampling was utilized. The instrument used to measure the construct was a Likert scale questionnaire, with a total of four sections, encompassing the demography of respondents, the independent variables, as well as the dependent variable. The result showed a good relationship between each of the independent variables

and the consumer satisfaction of working adults, by using statistical analysis such as the Pearson correlation analysis and ANOVA.

### 3. Objectives of the Study

- To examine the level of awareness towards social media marketing.

#### Research Methodology

**Research Design:** This study applies Descriptive Research Design

**Source of Data: (i) Primary Data:** Collected through a structured questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. **(ii) Secondary Data:** Sourced from academic journals, articles, and websites.

**Sampling Technique:** Stratified random sampling was employed to collect responses.

**Sampling Size:** Data were gathered from 900 respondents.

#### Research Hypotheses:

$H_0$ : There is no relationship between the demographic factors of the respondents and their awareness of social media.

**Area of Study:** The Study was conducted within the Dindigul District.

**Statistical Tools:** The relevant statistical tools deployed for the present study include descriptive statistics, Chi-Square Analysis test, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), Correlation analysis, Regression Analysis, Factor Analysis, and Structured Equation Model (SEM).

### 4. Analysis and Discussions

**Table: 1 Percentage Analysis of Socio-Economic Profile of the Respondents**

S. No	Independent Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1	<b>Gender</b>		
	Male	475	53%
	Female	425	47%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100%</b>
2	<b>Age</b>		
	Less than 25	496	54%
	25-35	205	23%
	35-45	102	13%
	Above 45	97	10%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100%</b>
3	<b>Educational Qualification</b>		
	Upto HSC	182	20%
	UG/ Diploma	530	59%
	PG / Professional	188	21%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100%</b>
4	<b>Nativity</b>		
	Rural	280	31%
	Semi Urban	303	34%
	Urban	317	35%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100%</b>

5	<b>Occupation</b>		
	Farmer	324	36%
	Entrepreneur	79	9%
	Private Employee	227	25%
	Professional	91	10%
	Homemaker	46	5%
	Govt. Employee	133	15%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100%</b>
6	<b>Monthly Income</b>		
	Less than Rs.20,000	608	68%
	Rs.20,000 – 40,000	196	22%
	More than Rs.40,000	96	10%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Primary Data

Table 1 reveals that among 900 consumers, 53% of consumers are Male and 47% of consumers are Female. It is found that the majority (53%) of consumers are Male. The 54% of consumers are in less than 25 years, 23% of consumers are in 25 – 35 years, 13% of consumers are in 35 – 45 years, and 10% of consumers are in above 45 years. It is inferred that majority (54%) of consumers are in less than 25 years. The 59% of consumers are qualified with UG/ Diploma, followed by 21% of consumers is qualified with PG/ Professional and 20% of consumers are educated up to HSC education. It is found that majority (59%) consumers are qualified with UG/Diploma. The 35% of consumers are living in urban area, 34% of consumers are living in semi urban area 31% of consumers are living in rural area. Majority of consumers are living in urban areas. The 36% of consumers are farmers, 9% of consumers are entrepreneurs, 25% of consumers are private employees, 10% of consumers are professionals, 5% of consumers are homemakers, and 15% of consumers are government employees. Majority of consumers are farmers. The 68% of consumers are in less than Rs.20,000, 22% of consumers are in Rs.20,000 – 40,000, and 10% of consumers are in more than Rs.40,000. Majority of consumers are in less than Rs.20,000 income level.

**Table: 2 Chi-square Test of Awareness on Social Networking Sites**

S. No	Independent Variables	Frequency	Chi-square Value	Df	Sig.
1	Gender				
	Male	475	1.132	2	0.568
	Female	425			
	Total	900			
2	Age				
	Less than 25	496	13.006	6	0.043
	25-35	205			
	35-45	102			
	Above 45	97			
	Total	900			
3	Educational Qualification				

	Upto HSC	182	35.917	4	0.000
	UG/ Diploma	530			
	PG / Professional	188			
		<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>		
4	<b>Nativity</b>				
	Rural	280	3.348	4	0.501
	Semi Urban	303			
	Urban	317			
		<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>		
5	<b>Occupation</b>				
	Farmer	324	10.822	10	0.372
	Entrepreneur	79			
	Private Employee	227			
	Professional	91			
	Homemaker	46			
	Govt. Employee	133			
		<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>		
6	<b>Monthly Income</b>				
	Less than Rs.20,000	608	7.671	4	0.104
	Rs.20,000 – 40,000	196			
	More than Rs.40,000	96			
		<b>Total</b>	<b>900</b>		

**Source:** Primary Data

Table 2 shows that majority of consumers are not aware about social networking sites. The chi-square value is not significant. Result accepts null hypothesis, the gender (1.132;  $p > 0.568$ ) of consumers has no significant effect on awareness about social networking sites. The nativity (3.348;  $p > 0.501$ ) of consumers has no significant effect on awareness about social networking sites. The occupation (10.822;  $p > 0.372$ ) of consumers has no significant effect on awareness about social networking sites. The monthly income (7.671;  $p > 0.104$ ) of consumers has no significant effect on awareness about social networking sites.

The chi-square value is significant. Result rejects null hypothesis, indicate age (13.006;  $p < 0.043$ ) of consumers has significant effect on awareness about social networking sites. The education (35.917;  $p < 0.000$ ) of consumers has significant effect on awareness about social networking sites.

**Table: 3 ANOVA of Awareness on Social Networking Sites**

S. No	Factors	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Age					
	Between Groups	450.073	3	150.024	3.519	0.017
	Within Groups	38198.206	896	42.632		
	Total	38648.279	899			
2	Education					
	Between Groups	801.047	2	400.524	9.493	0.000

	Within Groups	37847.231	897	42.193		
	Total	38648.279	899			
4	Nativity					
	Between Groups	22.578	2	11.289	0.262	0.769
	Within Groups	38625.701	897	43.061		
	Total	38648.279	899			
5	Occupation					
	Between Groups	635.503	5	127.101	2.989	0.011
	Within Groups	38012.776	894	42.520		
	Total	38648.279	899			
6	Monthly Income					
	Between Groups	2.340	2	1.170	0.027	0.973
	Within Groups	38645.938	897	43.084		
	Total	38648.279	899			

Source: Primary Data

Table 3 shows that f-value is significant and so rejects null hypothesis indicates age (3.519;  $p < 0.017$ ) of consumers on awareness about social networking sites are significantly varied. The education (9.493;  $p < 0.000$ ) of consumers on awareness about social networking sites are significantly varied. The occupation (2.989;  $p < 0.011$ ) of consumers on awareness about social networking sites are significantly varied.

The f-value is not significant. Result accepts null hypothesis, indicating that nativity (0.262;  $p > 0.769$ ) of consumers on awareness about social networking sites are not significantly varied. The monthly income (0.027;  $p > 0.973$ ) of consumers on awareness about social networking sites are not significantly varied.

## 5. Suggestions

- ❖ Enhance Awareness Campaigns: Focused campaigns should target less-aware groups such as older consumers and those with lower educational qualifications.
- ❖ Age-Specific Marketing Strategies: For younger consumers (under 25 years), interactive and engaging formats such as reels, stories, and influencer-driven content can be more effective.
- ❖ Education-Oriented Content: Tutorials, vernacular-language promotions, and info graphic-based advertisements can improve reach across different educational levels.
- ❖ Occupation-Specific Engagement: Since occupation also influences awareness, marketers should create customized content for farmers, government employees, and professionals.
- ❖ Strengthening Digital Inclusivity: Awareness is lower in rural and semi-urban consumers compared to urban consumers. Localized digital marketing initiatives in Tamil, combined with awareness drives in semi-urban and rural areas, can help bridge this gap.

## 6. Conclusion

The study analyzed the influence of demographic factors on consumer awareness towards social media marketing in the post-pandemic period in Dindigul district. The findings indicate that while gender, nativity, and income do not significantly affect consumer awareness, age, education, and occupation play a crucial role in shaping awareness levels. Younger consumers, more educated individuals, and

specific occupational groups are significantly more aware of social networking sites and their marketing practices. The results highlight that businesses cannot rely on a one-size-fits-all strategy in social media marketing. Instead, awareness creation should be tailored according to demographic variations, particularly focusing on older consumers, less-educated groups, and certain occupations. The pandemic has accelerated digital adoption, but awareness gaps still exist that require targeted interventions. Overall, the study concludes that enhancing awareness about social media marketing across different demographic groups is essential to maximize its influence on consumer buying behavior. If businesses adopt age-sensitive, education-friendly, and occupation-specific digital marketing strategies, they can improve consumer engagement, strengthen brand visibility, and increase purchase intention in the post-pandemic digital era.

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