

Social Media Marketing and Its Effect on Consumer Buying Behavior, Brand Loyalty, and Brand Relationships: A Study of the Media Industry

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Abstract

Consumer behavior is a concept that has drawn attention from academics, and it is undeniable that it has a significant impact on marketing strategy and planning. It is evidently essential to understand consumers in the ever-evolving corporate environment and rising consumer expectations with regard to technological advancements as well as the ease of information flow between organizations and their customers as well as customers to other customers. Due to social media marketing's contributions to the marketing sector, this study compelled to inquire as to how social media marketing affects consumer purchasing patterns, brand loyalty, and relationships within the Bangladeshi media industry. The study aims to investigate the attitudes, use, opinions, and demographics of the population in relation to social media marketing and their behavior in the media industry. The target population of the study was social media users in Chattagram region who follows top ten media brands or media group in Bangladesh. Data analysis revealed a substantial influence and relationship between social media marketing, consumer behavior, and brand loyalty in Bangladesh's media industry. The study faced challenges from non-cooperative individuals and illiterate people who have no knowledge about social media. The study recommended building relationships through social media since it is one of the most crucial elements of social media marketing success. The study was motivated by a general observation of how small and multinational organizations, both for-profit and nonprofit, used social media to improve their marketing efforts, worldwide consumer interactions, and consumer research.

Keywords: Social Media; Consumer Behavior; Brand Relationships; Brand Loyalty.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Every business organization has needed marketing to sell, promote and relation with their consumers that's why company should use different media to further its objectives. As a result, it is important to comprehend the marketing channels and the target market for each brand. Consumer behavior is defined as the activities of people undertake when obtaining, consuming, and disposing of products and services (Blackwell, Miniard and Engel, 2006). Consumer behavior is a concept that has generated interest among scholars and it is undisputed that it is a great part in marketing decisions making and planning. (Assael, 2001) emphasizes on the importance of understanding one's consumers by stating that consumer needs directly influences profitability of organizations, the better organizations understand their consumer's behavior, the better able they are to develop effective marketing strategies to meet consumer needs which translated to sales of products and services. As per (Assael, 2001) many marketers have come to realize the same. Consumer behavior is the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and desires as defined by (Solomon, Bamossy, 2006). (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007) take a similar approach in defining consumer behavior as the behavior that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs. Marketing is based on thinking about the business in terms of customer needs and their satisfaction basically consumer behavior. Consumer behavior has been greatly researched by different scholars for the role it plays in marketing decisions, there has been five main approaches that has been was discussed in this study which are behavioral, psychodynamic, cognitive, humanistic and economical theoretic approaches as discussed by (Foxall, 1990). These approaches have been explored by both contemporary and traditional researchers. Marketing differs from selling as (Levitt, 1960) states that Selling concerns itself with the tricks and techniques of getting people to exchange their cash for your product, it is not concerned with the values that the exchange is all about and it does not, as marketing invariable does, view the entire business process as consisting of a tightly integrated effort to discover, create, arouse and satisfy customer needs. (Neilson, 2009) defines social media marketing as the process of gaining website traffic or attention through social media sites. Social media marketing has become one of the latest medium of marketing that has grown tremendously and continues to grow. Social media marketing growth is greatly accredited to research on consumer behavior, more and more consumers use the platform in search of brands. Through consumer behavior research, marketers and scholars are starting to

appreciate this relatively new medium of marketing.

Media industry has been great part of Bangladesh as a country, the growth of media is determine mainly by content in terms of the interest is generates from the public. Interest is determined by novelty, proximity, prominence and timeliness of the content. Technology has changed the media industry because of the time element, it has made sharing of information as easy as a click of a button and for media brands to be competitive they have been forced to embrace hence the heavy presence of social media use by consumers. Technology has become a key marketing strategy that gives organization a competitive age and contributes in a success of a brand. It is undeniable the role of technology in today market place hence the subject of social media use by media house to gain a competitive age and create customer loyalty. Social Media marketing is key medium for competitiveness of media brands.

There were 66.94 million internet users in Bangladesh at the start of 2023, when internet penetration stood at 38.9 percent. Now Bangladesh government tries to create memorandum for online news portal. Therefore, almost every media company or brands have a connection with social media like Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, Instagram etc. by which followers are regularly updated with media brands through social media. New communication technologies, including internet and mobile phone are growing and the country has over 179.9 million mobile users and over 66.94 million internet user (BTRC, 2023).

1.1. Research Objectives

On the basis of significance of this study, the researchers are stimulated to set up the following objectives:

- i. To clarify how social media marketing impacts on the consumers buying behavior.
- ii. To evaluate how social media marketing influences the consumers brand loyalty.
- iii. To assess how social media marketing influences the consumers brand relationship.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND HYPOTHESIS BUILDING

2.1. Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing has created a convenient, affordable, interactive, and enjoyable way for consumers to communicate with brands. The concept of Social media marketing can be traced from the Social marketing which was born as a discipline by (Kotler and Zaltman, 1971) when they realized that the same marketing principles that were being used to sell products to consumers could be used to sell ideas, attitudes and behaviors. (Andreasen, 2002) define social marketing as differing from other areas of marketing only with respect to the objectives of the marketer and his or her organization. Social marketing seeks to influence social behaviors not to benefit the marketer, but to benefit the target audience and the general society.

Social media as defined (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010) refers to interaction among people in which they create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks through social media sites. It depends on mobile and web-based technologies. Social media differ from traditional media in many ways, including quality, reach, frequency, usability, immediacy, cost and permanence. Social-media technologies take on many different forms including magazines, Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, micro blogging, wikis, social networks, podcasts, photographs or pictures, video, rating and social bookmarking. The most common social media used in Bangladesh are: Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube.

Today's consumers are very dynamic and demanding hence requires a very dynamic approach to reach and influence their behaviors. Social media in business allows anyone and everyone to express and share an opinion or an idea somewhere along the business's path to market. Each participating customer becomes part of the marketing department, as other customers read their comments or reviews.

2.2. Consumer Behavior

The concept is appreciated by modern marketing philosophies that appreciate the consumer as the center of marketing activities. Consumer behavior is also defined by (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2009) as a field of study of individuals, groups or organizations and the process they use to select, secure, use and dispose of product, services, experiences or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on consumer and society. The two above definition share a lot with the key being activities being undertaken by consumers.

The concept of consumer behavior plays an important role in marketing field in that all marketer wants the insight of the what, when, how and why consumer behave in a given way. Consumer behavior can be traced to over 300 years ago, early economists led by Nicholas Bernoulli, John von Neumann and Oskar Morgenstern started to examine the basis of consumer decision making (Richarme, 2007). There are two main kinds of consumers which are personal consumers and organizational consumers. A personal consumer buys goods and services for his or her own use, for the use of the household or as a gift for a friend. In each of these contexts, the products are bought for final use by individuals who are referred to as end users or ultimate consumers. The second category of consumer- the organizational consumer- includes profit and not profit businesses, government agencies and institutions, all of which must buy products, equipment, and services in order to run their

organizations (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2003)

Consumer behavior has contributed greatly in decision making process by marketers in marketing planning as well enable them to create long lasting relationship with customers. According to (Perner, 1997), the study of consumer behavior helps firms and organizations improve their marketing strategies by understanding issues and continue to describe how the psychology of how consumers think, feel, reason and select between different alternatives. Customer's perceptions are regarding marketing of relationships and special focus on the customer's relationship with retailers and how the retailer relationship with customers leads to customer's perception (Azmat et al, 2021). Customer satisfaction is a measure of how products and services supplied by a company meet or surpass customer expectation. Therefore, it is positive impact on consumer behavior and stimulated the buyers to purchase products and services constantly.

Understanding how to utilize the information gleaned from consumer behavior is the key because with this information, marketers can focus on producing products and services targeted markets are actually interested in. They also figure out how to develop effective campaigns using their market know how. The areas of decision making that consumer behavior has contributed greatly as suggested by (Perner, 1997) includes; First, marketing strategies that deals with grasping good timing, effective advertising techniques and pleasing customers. Second, gaining knowledge on public policy and how products can impact or rather the side effects of products to the public. Third, social marketing which involves ensuring ideas are passed to consumers rather than aggressive sales. This could include awareness of if society is resistant to alternative methods. Lastly, make marketers better consumers. This in the long run this will give organization a competitive advantage over its peers.

2.3. Social Media Marketing and Consumer Behavior

Social media marketing is the process of gaining website traffic or attention through social media sites (Nielsen, 2013). According to (Nielsen, 2013) consumers spend more of their free time browsing the internet more compared to watching TV, reading newspapers and listening to the radio. The study also states that the use of website by consumers to search for brands has increased by over 90% from the year 2017. The targeting done by social media website by profiling their users' makes understanding consumers more easily. Social media site have more data on consumer's personality, likes, interest and peoples they associate than any other medium advertising hence social media marketers are able to more accurately use marketing communication that appeals to the consumers' needs effectively. So, hypothesis can be presented under as follows:

H1: Social media marketing can positively impact consumer buying behavior.

2.4. Brand Loyalty

Loyalty refers to the repurchase and re-patronizes same products from the same outlet with same manner. Due to the increase in internet penetration, it is difficult to obtain loyal customers, but at the same time, brand loyalty plays the most important role in the survival of this era (Mehrabi et al., 2014). And brand loyalty indicates the customer's preferences to acquire a specific brand in a product items. According to Jacoby and Chestnut (1978) defines brand loyalty as the biased, behavioural response, expressed over time, by some decision-making unit, with respect to one or more alternative brands out of a set of such brands, and is a function of psychological decision-making, evaluative processes. Brand image is the perceived performance of brand functional and extrinsic characteristics that a consumer attaches to a specific brand (Ullah et al., 2022). Brand loyalty is a component of brand equity. Brand equity has five categories, they are brand loyalty, name awareness, quality, brand association and several brand assets, such as patent, trademark etc (Aaker et al, 2001). When a brand provides useful advertising campaigns, relevant and popular content, it will positively affect customer loyalty (Laroche et al., 2012). Brand loyalty is a favoritism of brand by conducting a repeat buying (Assael, 1998). Therefore, brand loyalty implies the biasness of consumers to a identical products, brands or ideas and favorable action to stimulate the prospect customers so that they make right decision for purchasing the right brand from the right organization.

2.5. Social Media Marketing and Brand Loyalty

In the competitive market situation social media marketing is required for every company try to enlarge, fast moving and go ahead to achieve its goals or objectives. Social media was used by people only to connect with families and friends but later it was used as a communication medium for the company publicity and providing details about brands worldwide (Ismail, 2017). Okazaki et al. (2015) pointed out that in recent years different organizations had used social media to associate customers with brands. Social Media Marketing plays a crucial role in today's era in allowing the business to maintain existing clients by giving them accurate knowledge about the product or brand (Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2010). Company employed some technique to retain its customer and social media marketing is one of the methods to maintain customer brand loyalty. To maintain customer brand loyalty, marketers are using various methods (Castronovo & Huang, 2012). Companies hire social media experts and consultants to decide on content and characteristics of their offers and activities in social media

environments so that the hearts and minds of the consumers are captured and brand loyalty follows (Coon, 2010).

Customers view social media sites as a service channel, where they can engage on real-time bases with the businesses (Leggat, 2010). However, consumers prefer to see updated content on social media. Every business needs to interact with customers and establish contact with them (Balakrishnan *et al.*, 2014). Thus, in order to attract and keep more devoted customers, many businesses are adopting social media marketing. The companies are creating their products based on their customers' lifestyles and companies are developing a good idea of their potential markets (Zhu *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, the social media marketing is great contribution to retain the customers and convert loyal customers to their brand. So, social media marketing can affect the brand loyalty of an organization. Hence this study hypothesizes that:

H2: Social media marketing can positively impact the brand loyalty of customers.

2.6. Brand Relationship

A virtual brand relationship/community is a group of people who buy things from a certain brand. Social media marketing efficiently fosters communications between customers and marketers, besides enabling activities that enhance brand awareness (Hafez, 2021). Consumers and brands may engage as independent entities and form a relationship that connects them, commonly called consumer brand relationships or, simply, brand relationships (Fournier, 1998; Veloutsou, 2007). In brand relationships, consumers often develop deep bonds with brands (Alvarez and Fournier, 2016). In conclusion, brand transactions and experiences are produced by the attitudes, connections, and behaviors of customers.

Customers are interested in building strong relationships with other customers, brands and professionals as well as in purchasing goods and services. Due to the internet's development of numerous apps and tools over time, new channels of communication have been established, and there have been significant changes in how people communicate (Tarsakoo and Charoensukmongkol, 2020). Brand communities refer to certain communities founded based on interactions that are not limited by geographical restrictions between brand consumers (Chen and Lin, 2019). Therefore, brand relationship is a critical factor to build and maintain positive relationship with customers and social media can help to create strong brand relationship with targeted customers.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted descriptive research design. The target population of the study was social media users in Chattogram region who follows top ten media brands or media group in Bangladesh. The questionnaire was administered purposefully. The study collected both primary as well as secondary data. Primary data collection method was questionnaires which included both open ended questions in which respondents gave their views and closed ended questions in which respondents were limited in their responses. The respondents were asked to rate the level of agreement or disagreement of various statements on influence of social media marketing to the consumers buying behavior, brand loyalty and consumer brand relationship in the media industry on a five point Likert scale. The range was from strongly agreed which was represented by five to strongly disagree which was represented by 1. The variables 5 = strongly agree; 4 = agree; 3= neutral; 2 = disagree; 1 = strongly disagree. The study aims to have at least a total of a 100 respondents who are users of social media. From whom 88 respondents were given to fill up the data and give back the questionnaires to research administrator. Secondary data was sourced from published reports and journals.

The data collected from the field was cleared, cleaned and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Descriptive statistics analysis which involves Measures of Central Tendency such as Mean and Measures of Dispersion such as Standard Deviation was used to analysis the data. The results obtained were presented through frequency distribution table for clear presentation and explanations of the research finding.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Response Rate

Table 1: Response Rate

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Number of successful respondents	88	88%
Number non successful respondents	12	12%
Total number of questionnaires administered	100	100%

The data collected from social media users in Chattogram region, 100 questionnaires were administered through and 88 were filled and returned. This represented 88% response rate, which is considered satisfactory to make conclusions for the study. According to (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003) a 50% response rate is adequate, 60% good and above 70% rated very good. This also collaborates with (Bailey, 2000) assertion that a response rate of 50% is adequate, while a response rate greater than 70% is very good. This implies that based on this assertion; the response rate in this case of 88% is very good.

4.2. Demographic Information

Table 2: Respondent's Demographic

Demographic Factors		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	50	56.82
	Female	38	43.18
	Total	88	100
Age of the respondents	21 to 30 years	56	63.64
	31 to 40 years	20	22.75
	41 to 50 years	7	7.95
	Over 50 years	5	5.68
	Total	88	100
Level of education	Secondary level (certificate)	15	17.05
	Diploma (college)	25	28.41
	University (Degree)	37	42.05
	Post graduate	11	12.5
	Total	88	100
Years of interaction	1 to 3 years	20	22.73
	4 to 6 years	46	52.27
	7 to 10 years	12	13.64
	Above 10 years	10	11.36
	Total	88	100

4.2.1. Gender of the Respondents

The study sought to find out the gender disparity of the respondents. From the findings as indicated in figure and table-2, majority (56.82%) were male respondent with (43.18%) being females respondents. This implies there were more male users than female users of social media platforms. This implies that more men than women using the social.

4.2.2. Age of Respondents

From the table-2, the study found out the ages of the respondents. From the findings it was noted that majority of the respondents (63.54%) were between the ages of 21 to 30 years old. This carried a frequency of 56 respondents. The study noted also that ages between 31 to 40 years had a frequency of 20 respondents and was calculated to be 22.73% of the total respondents. The ages between 41 to 50 years was noted to have a frequency of 7 respondents and were calculated 7.95% of the total respondents. The last age bracket of the respondents was of the ages over 50 years. This carried a frequency of 5 respondents and was calculated to have 5.68% of the total responses.

4.2.3. Level of Education of the Respondents

From the findings in table-2 it was noted that majority of the respondents (41%) had done an undergraduate degree at the university level. This carried a frequency 35 respondents. This was closely followed by respondents who said that they had reached up to a degree at college (29%). This level carried a frequency of 25 respondents. Next were respondents who only had a certificate from the secondary level of education and were calculated to be 17% of the total respondents. The respondents who had a post graduate were noted to carry the least percentage (13%) and a frequency of 11 respondents.

4.2.4. Years of Interactions in the Social Media

From the findings illustrated in table-2 it was noted that most respondents had social media interaction for 4 to 6 years. This was noted to carry a frequency of 46 respondents which was calculated to approximately 52.27% of the respondents. This was closely followed by respondents who stated that their interactions with the social media platforms was between 1 to 3 years. This carried a frequency of 20 respondents which was to be 22.73% of the total respondents. Respondents who said they had media interactions for 7 to 10 years followed next with a frequency of 12 respondents. This was calculated to be 12.5% of the total responses.

4.3. Descriptive Statistics Information

4.3.1. Consumer Buying Behavior

The respondents were asked to rate the level of agreement or disagreement of various statements on influence of social media marketing to the consumers buying behavior of the media industry in Bangladesh. A standard deviation of >1.5 implies an insignificantly small variance from mean mark of the variable among respondents.

Table 3: Consumer buying behavior in the media industry

S.L	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	Social media marketing has a real impact on consumer purchasing decisions in media industry.	4.9783	1.41146
2.	I always follow various media brands through social media.	4.9364	1.32106
3.	The use of social media channels, the way consumers want to use them, and not the way the business wants to use them, improves social media marketing.	4.9130	.83253
4.	Consumers use social media to make conversation and connections has a significant influence on social media marketing.	4.0870	1.35344
5.	Making emotional connections through positive consumer experiences, exceptional service and engaging conversations, has a significant positive influence on social media marketing.	4.1957	1.14728
6.	Focusing on issues that are highly personal, and literally close to the consumers instead of pushing their product, has a significant positive influence on social media marketing.	4.9391	1.36567

From the study it was noted that Social media marketing has a real impact on consumer purchasing decisions. This was indicated by the high mean values of 4.9783. The standard deviation calculated from the study indicated of 1.41146, indicated a small variance from the mean mark. The study also showed that Customers are highly follow various media firms through social media indicated by the high mean values of 4.9364 and standard deviation calculated from the study of 1.32106 which indicated a small variance from the mean mark. The study also showed that the use of social media channels the way consumers want to use them, and not the way the business wants to use them improves social media marketing, this was inferred due to the high mean values calculated of 4.9130. This suggested that most respondents strongly agreed to the sub variable. The standard deviation indicated a small variance from the mean. The study also noted that Making emotional connections through positive consumer experiences, exceptional service and engaging conversations has a significant positive influence on social media marketing. This was seen by the high mean values calculated of 4.1957. This according to the Likert scale represented 'agree' and this therefore suggested that most respondents were in agreement with the statement. The standard deviation calculated from the SPSS analysis was 1.14728 which indicated a small variance from the mean mark. From the study it was also noted that focusing on issues that are highly personal, and literally close to the consumers instead of pushing their product, has a significant positive influence on social media marketing. This was evidenced by the mean value calculated of 4.9391 from the SPSS data analysis. The standard deviation calculated of 1.36567 from this analysis indicated a small variance from the mean mark.

4.3.2. Brand Loyalty

The respondents were asked to rate the level of agreement or disagreement of various statements on influence of social media marketing on brand loyalty of the media industry in Bangladesh. A standard deviation of >1.5 implies an insignificantly small variance from mean mark of the variable among respondents.

Table 4: Brand loyalty

S.L	Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	Social media marketing is playing a larger and more important role in today's brand loyalty of products.	4.2391	1.15802
2.	Social media is the best opportunity today for businesses to build brand loyalty and influence perception among their target audience	4.8261	1.22572
3.	Social media users today demand that brands use social networks as more than just additional advertising platforms; rather, they demand engagement, exclusive deals and relevant content	4.0652	1.33020

The study noted that Social media marketing played a larger and more important role in today's brand loyalty of products. This was seen by the high mean value calculated of 4.2391 (agree) which indicated that most respondents agreed that social media marketing played a large and important role on the brand loyalty of the products. The standard deviation calculated in the study of 1.15802 indicated a small variance from the mean mark.

The study also showed that Social media is the best opportunity today for businesses to build brand loyalty and influence perception among their target audience. This was evidenced by the mean value calculated of 4.8261 which represents strongly agree; this therefore means that according to the study most respondents strongly agree that the Social media is the best opportunity today for businesses to build brand loyalty and influence perception among their target audience. The small standard deviation calculated in the study of

1.22572 indicated a small variance from the mean mark. From the SPSS data analysis it was noted that social media users' today demand that brands use social networks as more than just additional advertising platforms; rather, they demand engagement, exclusive deals and relevant content. This was evidenced by the high mean of 4.0652 calculated in the analysis. The standard deviation calculated in the study of 1.33020 showed that there was a very small variation in the responses of the respondents.

4.3.3. Social Media Marketing and Customer Brand Relationship

The respondents were asked to rate the level agreement or disagreement of various statements on influence of social media marketing and customer brand relationship of the media industry in Bangladesh. A standard deviation of >1.5 implies an insignificantly small variance from mean mark of the variable among respondents.

Table 5: Social media marketing and customer brand relationship

S.L	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	Social media can be used to enhance customer brand relationship in the media industry.	3.9763	1.42146
2.	Social media contributes to building and maintaining brand relationships with consumers.	4.5130	.8753
3.	Social media marketing is aimed at promoting inclusive & accountable brand relationships.	3.5435	1.06173

From the study it was noted that Social media can be used to enhance customer brand relationship in the media industry. This was indicated by the high mean values of 3.9763. The standard deviation calculated from the study indicated of 1.42146, indicated a small variance from the mean mark. The study also showed that social media contributes to building and maintaining brand relationships with consumers. This was evidenced by the high mean values calculated of 4.5130. This indicated that most respondents strongly agreed that the social media contributes to building and maintaining brand relationships with consumers. The standard deviation indicated a small variance from the mean. The study also found out that Social media marketing is aimed at promoting inclusive & accountable brand relationships. This was evidenced by the high mean values calculated of 3.5435. The standard deviation calculated was 1.06173 indicated a small deviation from the mean mark.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study came to the conclusion that the social media marketing had a significant impact on consumer purchasing behavior, brand loyalty, and brand relationships. Since the standard deviation estimated was less than 1.5 and the subvariables given to each of the factors had high mean values, it was determined that there was only a small variance from the mean in the responses. According to the study's findings, a corresponding rise in a company's social media marketing would have an impact on a consumer's brand loyalty. As a result, businesses would need to spend a lot of money on social media marketing to enhance consumer brand loyalty. The study also deduced from the investigation that social media marketing in the media industry had an impact on brand relationships with their customers. The high mean values given to the variables working with the relationships between brand relationship and social media marketing served as evidence of this study. Additionally, the study came to the conclusion that social media marketing had a favorable impact on consumers purchasing habits as well as media brand relationship and brand loyalty. This was evidenced by the high mean values calculated in the analysis. The high means suggested that there was widespread agreement regarding the relationship between consumer buying behavior, brand loyalty, brand relationship and social media marketing.

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