A Study On Impact Of Social Media On Consumer Buying Behavior On Fmcg Products In Karnataka

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Abstract: This study explores the impact of social media on consumer buying behavior in the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector, with a specific focus on Karnataka, India. Given the rapid growth of digital platforms like Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube, the research investigates how these channels influence brand discovery, trust, product engagement, and purchase decisions among consumers. Using a descriptive research design, data was collected from 400 respondents across urban, semi-urban, and rural districts. Statistical tools such as ANOVA and correlation were applied to examine platform-specific effects, consumer perceptions, and the role of promotional content. Findings reveal that Instagram and WhatsApp are particularly influential in driving impulse buying and peer-based recommendations, while YouTube and Facebook support brand research and reviews. The study also highlights significant demographic variation in digital engagement. This research fills key gaps by analyzing region-specific consumer behavior and providing strategic insights for FMCG marketers to optimize platform-based marketing in emerging markets.

Index Terms - Consumer Buying Behavior, FMCG (Fast-Moving Consumer Goods), Digital Marketing, Influencer Marketing, Instagram Ads, Facebook Promotions.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the digital age, social media has emerged as a powerful force reshaping the way consumers interact with brands, especially in the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector. With platforms like Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube becoming integral to daily life, consumers are increasingly influenced by online content, peer recommendations, and influencer promotions when making purchase decisions. FMCG products ranging from packaged foods and beverages to personal care and household items are characterized by high volume, low cost, and frequent repurchase, making them highly susceptible to social media influence.

India, with its growing digital penetration and mobile-first consumer base, presents a dynamic landscape for studying this phenomenon. In particular, states like Karnataka, with a mix of urban, semi-urban, and rural populations, offer a unique setting to understand how social media platforms affect buying behavior across diverse demographics. While previous research has largely focused on urban or global contexts, there remains a significant gap in exploring platform-specific and region-specific effects in emerging markets.

This study aims to bridge that gap by examining how various social media platforms influence consumer awareness, engagement, trust, and final purchase decisions related to FMCG products in Karnataka. The insights derived will be valuable for marketers, brands, and researchers seeking to design more effective digital strategies tailored to consumer needs in a rapidly evolving marketplace**.**

II. CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

Social media has revolutionized how consumers interact with brands, particularly in the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector. Defined as platforms that enable users to create, share, and engage with content, social media tools such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and YouTube play a significant role in shaping purchase decisions. According to Mangold and Faulds (2009), social media functions as both a communication and promotional tool, allowing consumers to exchange information, express opinions, and build trust. These interactions are especially impactful in influencing quick, low-involvement FMCG purchases, where brand familiarity and digital presence often outweigh price or in-store promotions.

In the context of consumer behavior, social media impacts all five stages of the buying decision process—need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase, and post-purchase behavior (Kotler & Keller, 2015). Consumers rely on user-generated content, influencer reviews, product demonstrations, and real-time feedback to guide their decisions. Studies by Verhagen and van Dolen (2011) and Araujo et al. (2020) highlight how digital engagement builds emotional connections and increases impulse buying tendencies, particularly when content is tailored or endorsed by credible sources. The immediacy and personalization offered by social media create a more engaging and persuasive environment than traditional advertising channels.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Social media has become a powerful force in influencing consumer behavior, particularly in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector. According to Mangold and Faulds (2009), social media operates both as a promotional and communication channel, enabling users to exchange experiences and build relationships with brands. Palalić et al. (2021) emphasized that social media platforms enhance consumer decision-making by providing peer recommendations, real-time feedback, and direct brand interaction. These platforms offer a sense of immediacy and accessibility that strengthens brand-consumer relationships, particularly among younger demographics who are more engaged with digital media.

Verhagen and van Dolen (2011) explored how impulsive buying behavior in online settings is influenced by both hedonic (emotional pleasure) and utilitarian (functional benefits) shopping values. They argue that elements like influencer endorsements, product scarcity, and engaging content formats (such as unboxing videos) significantly stimulate impulse purchases. Similarly, Zhang and Li (2024) highlighted that scarcity messaging and institutional credibility on social media platforms can drive panic buying, particularly during crises, by increasing perceived risk and urgency. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) further supports the idea that message framing and source credibility can significantly influence consumer attitude and decision-making processes.

Freberg et al. (2011) and Araujo et al. (2020) emphasized the importance of influencer credibility, authenticity, and relatability in shaping consumer trust and engagement. In the FMCG context, these traits directly affect how consumers respond to marketing content. Meanwhile, Yang et al. (2022) found that electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) has a significant impact on purchase intentions, especially when shared by peers in close social circles through platforms like WhatsApp. Sumi and Ahmed (2022) integrated the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to explain how ease of use, perceived usefulness, and enjoyment influence the adoption of digital shopping behaviors—factors increasingly relevant to the FMCG industry as it moves online.

IV. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Social media has become a key driver of consumer behavior in the FMCG sector, but its impact in semi-urban and rural areas remains underexplored. Most existing studies focus on urban consumers and do not compare platform-specific influences like WhatsApp, Instagram, or YouTube. This study aims to examine how social media affects FMCG buying behavior in Karnataka across diverse demographics.

V. OBJECTIVES

- To understand the platform-specific effects of Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube on FMCG purchases.
- To evaluate the consumer awareness and response towards promotional offers on social media.

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- **Research Design:**
  The study will adopt a descriptive research design to analyze the patterns and influences of social media on consumer buying behavior. This design is appropriate for obtaining accurate profiles of events, persons, or situations and allows for understanding behavior in a real-world setting.

- **Data Collection Method:**
  Primary Data: A structured questionnaire will be administered through Google Forms or other digital platforms to consumers in Karnataka.
  Secondary Data: Previous research studies, journal articles, marketing reports, and online consumer behavior data relevant to FMCG and social media influence in Karnataka.

- **Research Instrument**
  A structured questionnaire with closed-ended questions using a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree) is used to assess opinions and perceptions.

- **Data Analysis Tools**
  Collected data will be analyzed using Microsoft Excel and SPSS to generate descriptive statistics, Anova & Ad Hoc and Correlation.

- **Hypothesis**
  There is no significant change in consumer awareness and response towards promotional offers on social media.

VII. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Objective 1: To understand the platform-specific effects of Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube on FMCG purchases

Table 4.4: Descriptive Statistics Obj-1							
Variance	**Mean**	**SD**	**Variance**	**Skewness**	**S.E**	**Kurtosis**	**S.E**
Instagram stories	3.632	1.548	2.398	-0.648	0.122	-1.144	0.243
Influenced Instagram Ads	3.467	1.162	1.352	-0.795	0.122	-0.383	0.243
Pages on Instagram	3.360	1.244	1.549	-0.402	0.122	-0.717	0.243
Facebook promotions	3.435	1.252	1.569	-0.504	0.122	-0.814	0.243
Follow on Facebook	3.460	1.335	1.782	-0.561	0.122	-0.814	0.243
Facebook reviews	3.417	1.215	1.476	-0.505	0.122	-0.661	0.243
Receive FMCG Info	3.472	1.225	1.503	-0.559	0.122	-0.613	0.243
Trust FMCG recommendation	3.455	1.247	1.556	-0.492	0.122	-0.799	0.243
Purchased FMCG items	3.357	1.272	1.618	-0.474	0.122	-0.803	0.243
YouTube product	3.467	1.165	1.357	-0.508	0.122	-0.596	0.243
Unboxing demo videos	3.502	1.234	1.523	-0.560	0.122	-0.626	0.243
Check before trying	3.502	1.264	1.598	-0.652	0.122	-0.603	0.243
Valid N (listwise)	400						

Descriptive statistics for variables measuring the influence of social media on FMCG purchases, based on responses from 400 participants. The mean values range from 3.36 to 3.63, indicating a generally positive agreement with statements related to Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube influence. The highest mean is for Instagram Stories (3.63), showing it has the strongest impact among variables. Standard deviations vary between 1.16 and 1.55, indicating moderate variability in responses. Skewness values are all negative,

suggesting a slight leftward skew or tendency toward higher agreement. Kurtosis values are also negative across all items, indicating flatter distributions than a normal curve. Overall, the data reflects consistent responses and supports further analysis of social media's role in shaping FMCG consumer behavior.

Objective 2: To evaluate the consumer awareness and response towards promotional offers on social media

Variables	Place		Gender		Age		Education		Occupation	
	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.
Promotional offers	0.371	0.773	0.997	0.31	4.097	0.001	1.815	0.143	1.756	0.173
Discount shared	3.122	0.025	5.386	0.020	3.733	0.002	2.483	0.060	0.317	0.728
Flash sales	12.31	1.02E-	1.508	0.220	5.130	0.000	0.995	0.394	1.627	0.197
Promotional deals	6.615	0.000	8.638	0.003	2.292	0.045	1.066	0.362	0.488	0.614
New products offers	3.343	0.019	1.394	0.238	3.042	0.010	2.247	0.082	0.388	0.678
Social media first	3.388	0.018	3.739	0.053	4.439	0.000	1.103	0.347	0.389	0.677
Save FMCG deals	3.242	0.022	6.203	0.013	3.758	0.002	1.316	0.268	0.271	0.762
Budget planning	4.079	0.007	9.566	0.002	2.061	0.069	1.078	0.358	0.949	0.387
Follow FMCG pages	1.549	0.201	3.441	0.064	2.116	0.062	0.716	0.542	1.265	0.283
Limited time offer	3.365	0.018	5.176	0.023	1.609	0.156	1.802	0.146	0.424	0.654
Bogo bundle deals	6.718	0.000	1.906	0.168	3.608	0.003	0.238	0.869	2.320	0.099
Trust promotional offers	3.407	0.017	1.222	0.269	1.443	0.207	0.700	0.551	0.086	0.917

Table 4.11: Anova Obj-2

Demographic factors (Place, Gender, Age, Education, Occupation) influence responses to various promotional aspects of FMCG marketing. Place has a statistically significant effect ($p < 0.05$) on variables such as Promotional offers, Discount shared, Flash sales, Promotional deals, new product offers, social media-first promotions, Saving FMCG deals, Budget planning, Limited time offers, BOGO bundle deals, and Trust in promotional offers. Gender shows significance in Discount shared, Promotional deals, Save FMCG deals, Budget planning, and Limited time offers, indicating gender-based differences in how promotions are perceived. Age significantly influences responses to Flash sales, Promotional deals, new product offers, social media-first promos, Save FMCG deals, and BOGO deals, implying younger and older consumers respond differently to certain types of offers. Education does not show significant influence on most variables, suggesting promotional preferences may cut across education levels. Occupation shows limited significance, only marginally affecting BOGO bundle deals. Overall, the data highlights that place, age, and gender are the most influential demographics affecting consumer response to FMCG promotional strategies.

VIII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- WhatsApp and Facebook emerged as most influential platforms, especially in regions like Mandya and Ramanagar.
- Instagram Stories had the highest mean score ($\bar{x} = 3.63$), indicating strong product discovery behavior, particularly in Mysore and Mandya.
- YouTube unboxing/demo videos ($\bar{x} = 3.50$) encouraged trial of new products, showing the persuasive power of visual content.
- Facebook promotions and brand pages drew strong engagement in Chamarajanagar.
- WhatsApp recommendations drove purchase behavior significantly in Mandya and Chamarajanagar.
- T-test results showed all 12 variables under Objective 1 had *p-values < 0.001*, confirming statistically significant influence.
- Highest emotional impact was observed with Instagram stories and YouTube reviews.
- Consumers strongly agreed that they trust social media interactions more than traditional advertising in certain districts.

IX. CONCLUSION

The research clearly demonstrates that social media platforms play a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior in the FMCG sector. Findings under Objective 1 reveal that Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube each have distinct impacts—Instagram and YouTube are more effective for product discovery and visual engagement, while WhatsApp and Facebook foster peer influence and trust through recommendations and promotions. Consumers across Karnataka actively respond to content on these platforms, especially in Mandya and Chamarajanagar, indicating strong platform-specific purchasing trends. Under Objective 4, promotional offers on social media—such as flash sales, bundle deals, and discount alerts—show a significant effect on consumer buying behavior, particularly among younger demographics and female respondents. The study highlights that consumers actively seek and share offers, plan their grocery budgets around deals, and show increased loyalty to brands with consistent and transparent promotional activity online. Overall, the analysis confirms that both social media engagement and promotional responsiveness are tightly interlinked with FMCG brand success, making platform-specific strategies essential for marketers.