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Direct Social Media Marketing Impact on Consumer Decision-Making Process in the Karachi Marketplace: Implications for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

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Abstract

This study, which had its main focus on Karachi, examined how social media marketing with the sustainable development goals affected customers' choices of which businesses to support. To this end, three distinct goals were established: determining the impact of social media marketing on consumers and how it influences their intentions to make purchases; evaluating the effect of social media marketing on actual customer patronage; and determining the influence of social media marketing on repeat purchases and the decision-making process of consumers. Standardized surveys were used to collect information in order to meet the predetermined goals. 120 survey participants provided the data needed for study. Regression analysis demonstrated the significant influence of social media marketing on customer intention to patronize, consumer patronage, and repeat purchase. According to the study's results, small business owners are encouraged to significantly depend on social media campaigns to efficiently convey information about their products and services to social media users with the sustained decision. Before accurately completed copies were put into the SPSS computer for analysis, the bulk of the questionnaires were delivered, retrieved, and sorted. The collected data were tabulated and charted, and then comprehensive explanations were given. Small business owners should frequently engage in social media interactions to showcase the benefits of their products and services to gain the trust of potential clients. Owners of small businesses should try to provide clients with an excellent experience when they do business with them.

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INTRODUCTION

Customers have traditionally been viewed as the kings of business, and marketers continually examine and assess their decisions to guide their tactics. For this reason, forward-thinking businesses, particularly small and medium-sized ones, need to regularly assess data to better understand how and why consumers behave a specific way while making purchases, which aids businesses in improving their marketing tactics. Scholars and industry professionals largely concur that persuading customers to choose their product and service over alternatives is one of the biggest challenges facing all

marketers today (Hawkins, et al., 2007). Understanding consumer purchasing behavior exposes an organization's marketing staff to the psychology of consumers' emotions, thoughts, arguments, and decisions on retail locations, brands, and items. Additionally, this investigation explores the process of determining purchasing decisions of the consumer typically include his or her environmental concerns, including media, family, and culture. As a consequence, having a detailed grasp of how customers make selections may aid marketing efforts that target certain demographics more successfully. It also reveals the consumer's reasons and unique strategy for picking a product in the face of a competitor. It's noteworthy that the evolution of social media marketing, which offers a novel way to engage customers, has been made possible by the internet. The term "social media marketing" describes a digital business environment that may make use of several well-known social networks to achieve predetermined marketing and branding goals.

These days, everything is changing extremely quickly due to the rapid advancement of information technology, which has changed everything internationally. Folks' networking environment has deeply changed from existence offline to nearly entirely online with the intro of social media programs (such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and other digital communication services (Trattner et al., 2012). For instance, holding a social media competition with the goal of attracting and expanding followers, developing insightful content through the social media handle, encouraging discussions that provoke followers to share their thoughts, going live while maintaining a series of conversations, etc. There are some marketing techniques used on social media platforms to expand and interact with target audiences.

- What impact does social media marketing have on customers' intent to buy?
- How does social media marketing affect the amount of money that customers spend?
- What influence does social media marketing have on repeat business?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media Marketing Overview

Marketing literature defines social media as "digital platforms" that let individuals interact and connect with other people who part their benefits. Three significant changes have occurred in the market as a result of social media, which (Peters et al., 2013) describe as "lively, interrelated, equal, and collaborating entities". First of all, social media gives marketers the opportunity to interact directly and in previously unachievable ways with their target demographic. Through content communities like Facebook and Twitter and microblogging, users may readily interact with people who express their interests (Kaplan et al., 2010). In this instance, "community connection" is identical with "social bonds" (Quintan et al, 2016; Muller et al, 2019), where "strong" and "weak" denote the breadth and depth of the links, respectively (Granovetter 1973). Previous research has shown that a consumer's propensity to refer others is highly impacted by the caliber of their social networks (Verlegh et al., 2013). Additionally, businesses are now available on social media for better relationships and a wealth of information (Libai et al., 2010). Other digital data sources and Social-media generally utilize the "3Vs" (Alharthi et al., 2017). These consist of velocity (the regularity of data updates), diversity of sources, and volume.

According to Moe and Schweidel (2017), modern information technology makes it possible to a substantial amount of data from social networking sites. Thus, the capability to collect and drive data from social media statistics is a fresh tactical asset that might improve marketing outcomes (Gnizy, 2019). Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. As per Michael (2017). Shen, Bissell, Nelson-Field, Riebe, and Sharp (2012) state (2013) discovered that Facebook evaluations utilized "as" content in marketing strategies generate more content overall for specific companies and goods. The users of Facebook are more inclined to view advertisements for goods in which they have indicated interest (Shen & Bissell, 2013).

Consumer Decision Making

Owing to its significance, several specialists have provided a variety of explanations and unique models to clarify the decision-making process of consumers. Consumer choices and purchases are seen by (Rassuli et al., 1990) as means rather than ends in themselves. This idea considers how consumer actions influence their future behavior. According to Court, Elzinga, et al. (2009), consumer decision-making follows a cyclical process involving initial research and deliberation before purchase, an evaluation phase to decide on a purchase, and reflection after purchase on the product's utility. Smith et al. (2003) introduced the concept of internet-based consumer decision-making. The buyer's journey has been divided into five separate stages by Kotler et al. (2012). These stages involve identifying requirements, acquiring information, weighing choices, making a purchase, and altering behavior. By explaining the essential internal psychological processes occurring at each of the five stages of the consumer buying journey, Belch and Belch (2009) provide more explanation.

Consumer Patronage Intention

(Zeithaml, 1988) asserts that a company's choice to buy a product is determined by the value that customers attach to it. The literature has written a great deal on regulatory focus theory (Lwin & Wirtz, 2009), (Brockner, et al, 2004). Customer decision-making study indicates that a customer's decision to purchase a product in-person or online is influenced by their perception of its value.

Consumer Patronage

It is imperative to comprehend the psychological factors that impact their decision-making. Consumers go through five stages in the purchasing process, which managing the purchase after it has been made (Grewal & Levy, 2010). In each step, they must select one option from a range of options. Even when decisions are made after careful consideration of each customer's purchasing options, the economic man's choices differ significantly from those made by individuals who are passive, cognitive, or emotional in their approach.

Repeat Patronage

Because of their "repeat purchase," clients who stick with a business for a long time or make repeated purchases from it show that they have physical, mental, and emotional trust in the caliber of the product or service. The phrase "repeat purchase," or "re-patronage intention," was used by Wirtz et al. (2009) to explain a customer's likelihood to

make future purchases from a particular service provider, the likelihood of a transaction occurring increases with mutual trust between the seller and the buyer. When customers perceive a company's service providers as reliable, they are more likely to engage with them again (Caudill & Murphy, 2000).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section details the research methodology, encompassing various aspects such as research design, methodology, research paradigms, study population, data collection techniques, sampling strategy, research procedures, instrument reliability, and data analysis techniques.

Research Design

The approach and framework utilized to evaluate the link between the variables under inquiry are referred to as study design (Asika, 2006). According to Sekaran (2003), social scientists' ability to connect their findings to logic should be the primary consideration in study design. As per Ahiazu (2016), the particular goal of the study has an impact on the research design selection. To achieve its objectives and provide relevant insights into the research questions, this study utilized an explanatory survey design.

Research Hypothesis

The study's hypotheses are outlined below:

Ho1. The intent of consumers to make a purchase is not significantly impacted by social media marketing.

Ha1. The intent of consumers to make a purchase is significantly impacted by social media marketing.

Ho2. There is no significant influence of social media marketing on customer spending.

Ha2. There is a significant influence of social media marketing on customer spending.

Ho3. There is no significant effect of social media marketing on recurring business.

Ha3. There is a significant effect of social media marketing on recurring business.

Research Approach

As for Silverman's (2013) research, the deductive approach and research assumptions approach to construct a preexisting hypothesis. The positivist approach is preferably coordinated with the reasonable method of expressing hypotheses and evaluating predicted consequences to a rational level of probability (Snieder & Lerner, 2009). Saunders et al. (2009) state that a study's research method should livelihood the concept that correctly relates to the study.

Research Model

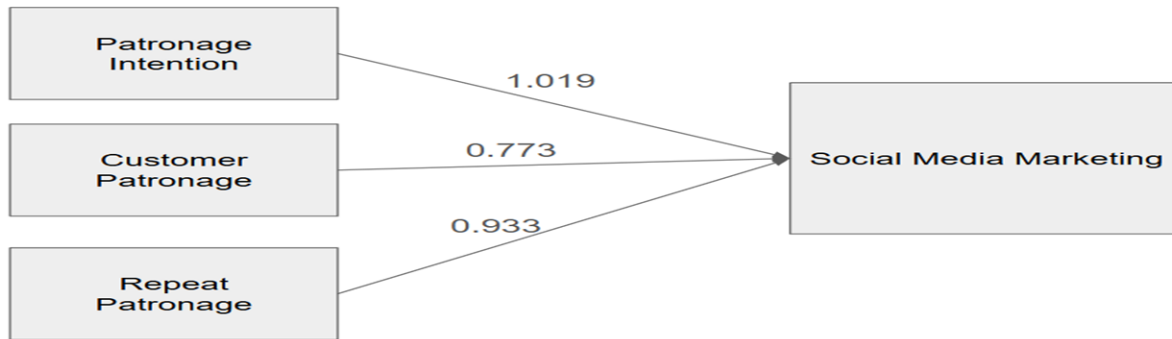


Figure 1.
Research Model

Data Type

This study necessitates primary data collection. The primary method used for gathering data in this investigation was through the distribution of a questionnaire. This approach allows respondents to provide information in a structured manner. The semi-structured questionnaires will serve as the principal tool for collecting data in this study.

Research Instrument

A semi-structured questionnaire served as the research instrument in this study. Each respondent received a physical copy of the questionnaire at several sites around Karachi. The survey participants completed the questionnaire and sent back the printed copies.

Population of the study

Individual customers who use different social media accounts to make purchases make up the population under study. The poll includes people of Karachi who utilize the internet. These were the engaged, active users the ones who bought necessities and often sold goods on the internet. Because this response group has the experience needed for the investigation, they are remarkable. The study's target audience was, therefore, people of Karachi who use social media.

Scope of the Research

Four key areas, namely management, industry, society, and government practices, capture the relevance of this study. We have decided to use quantitative methodologies in our investigation of the direct influence of social media marketing on the decision-making process of consumers in the Karachi marketplace. Numerous important factors that complement the goals and emphasis of the investigation inform this choice. By focusing on the Karachi marketplace, this research provides context-specific insights that can inform localized strategies for leveraging social media marketing to promote sustainable development. The study's findings are expected to encourage businesses to adopt more sustainable practices and utilize their online presence to foster a culture of

sustainability among consumers, thus contributing to the achievement of global sustainability targets. The fact that a higher proportion of Karachi's population is youthful and that individual account users have recently found it simpler and more common to market goods and services were factors in the choice to launch a small business. Furthermore, considering how often social media networks are utilized, it is crucial to explore how social media assists small businesses in effectively attracting clients for the products and services they offer.

Table 1.
Reliability Analysis

Predicting/Criterion Variables	Variables No. of Items	Cronbach Alpha
Social Media Marketing	5	0.821
Patronage Intention	5	0.742
Consumer Purchase	5	0.764
Repeat Patronage	5	0.812

Data Collection

The survey data is presented in this chapter using tables and charts, followed by an analysis of the data using both descriptive and inferential statistics. While univariate analysis was used to describe how respondents answered a particular questionnaire item, percentage analysis was utilized to examine the characteristics of the respondents. This chapter's regression study clarified how social media marketing influences customer choice in Karachi SME. 125 questionnaires were collected from respondents and filled out, 120 respondents provided the data for analysis.

Gender of Respondents

Table 4.1.
Distribution Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	105	85%
Female	15	15%
Total	120	100%

The gender distribution of the study's respondents is depicted in the above table and chart 4.1, where men small- and medium-sized company owners provided 85% of the replies, with female respondents making up the remaining 15%.

Sample Size and Techniques

To meet the necessary standards while contributing to the development of the research's findings, the sample size for this quantitative data analysis in the current study will consist of a total of 125 respondents who use social media in Karachi. The sample for this investigation is chosen with assistance from the sample size chart (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). The representative sample selected for this study is based on basic random sampling rather than aiming to include the entire population. Male and female respondents have both provided information for this study. There are five items used to get responses pertaining to each of the separate factors (predicting and criteria). Five were classified as highly agreeing, four as agreeing, three as undecided/neutral, two as disagreeing, and one as strongly disagreeing. This research used non-probability and convenience sampling techniques for data collection because it's easier to achieve the

objective of study by spending less time and money and further it helps to fill out the main respondent (Sekaran, 2003), and the questionnaire is distributed via Google Forms (online).

Method of Data analysis

From these observations, the data gathered through the online questionnaire were examine dby applying statistical tools, frequency distribution, reliability testing, correlation analysis, factor analysis and regression analysis using SPSS software version 29.

Measurement Items

In examining the effect of SCM Approaches on SCP on the Karachi Pharmaceutical Industry, we adopted measurement items from (Cao & Zhang, 2011) (Sundram, Ibrahim, & Govindaraju, 2011) (Tzempelikos & Gounaris, 2015) (Alahmad , 2021) . These items, encompassing survey questions and performance indicators, were designed to quantitatively assess the effectiveness of various SCM strategies.

Table 2.
Testing for Hypothesis 1.

Findings from the regression analysis that address the first research question

Model Summary										
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change	Durbin - Watson
						F Change	df1	df2		
1	.993	.987	.987	.45719	.360	112.330	1	200	<.001	1.576

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	8576.106	1	8576.106	18663.640	.000 ^b
	Residual	113.958	248	.460		
	Total	8690.064	249			

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	-.689	.158		-4.358	.000
	Social Media Marketing	1.019	.007	.993	136.615	.000

The score of 0.993 indicates a high correlation rate between customer patronage intention and social media marketing. The (R)-value represents the simple correlation between these two variables. The R square value determines how much social media marketing has influenced the variance in customer patronage intention. In this instance, up to 99.3 percent of the variance is attributable to social media marketing. As per the

ANOVA report from the initial hypothesis test, it was found that social media marketing does have a substantial effect on consumers' purchase intentions. With a p-value of 0.000, which is below the study's significance threshold, the null hypothesis was rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis. This indicates that social media marketing indeed influences consumers' intentions to make purchases. The regression model was also effective in predicting customer patronage intentions. Table 4.10, the coefficient table, provides additional insights into how social media contributes statistically significantly to the model and offers valuable information for forecasting consumer patronage intentions from social media marketing. The regression equation that results is $CPI = -.69 + 1.02 (SMM)$, where SMM stands for social media marketing and CPI stands for consumer patronage intention.

Table 3.
Testing of Hypothesis 2.

Findings from the Regression Analysis that address Research Question Two

Model Summary ^b										
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change in R Square	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	Durbin-Watson
1	.976	.976	.953	.98861	.392	129.092	1	200	.001	1.629

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4938.100	1	4938.100	5052.516	.000 ^b
	Residual	242.384	248	.977		
	Total	5180.484	249			

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5.742	.230		24.920	.000
	Social Media Marketing	.773	.011	.976	71.081	.000

The simple correlation coefficient (R) between customer patronage and social media marketing is 0.976, indicating a high rate of association. The degree of variance in customer preference brought about by social media marketing is determined by the R square value of 0.953. In this instance, up to 95.3% of the change is attributable to social media marketing. The ANOVA result for the initial hypothesis test shows that social media marketing has a substantial impact on customer spending. The above data reveals a p-value of 0.000, which falls below the study's predefined significance level. As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected in favor of the alternative, indicating that social media marketing indeed affects customer patronage significantly. This reinforces the effectiveness of the regression model in predicting sales. Additionally, using the p-value of 0.000, the coefficient table provides valuable information on forecasting customer patronage via social media marketing and if social media contributes statistically

significantly to the model. This results in a regression equation: $CPI = 5.74 + 0.77 (SMM)$. SMM represents social media marketing and CPI represents consumer patronage.

Table 4.
Testing for Hypothesis 3

Model Summary ^b Change Statistics											
	R	Change	Square	F	Change	df1	df2	Sig.	F	Change	
1	.995 ^a	.990	.990	.55227	.510	207.812	1	200	<.001	1.625	

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.503	.129		11.670	.000
	Social Media Marketing	.933	.006	.995	153.310	.000

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	7168.904	1	7168.904	23504.022	.000 ^b
	Residual	75.337	247	.305		
	Total	7244.241	248			

The correlation coefficient (R) among social media marketing and repeat business is 0.995, indicating a substantial correlation. The degree of variance in recurring business brought about by social media marketing is determined by the R square value of 0.990. In this instance, up to 99 percent of the fluctuation is attributable to social media marketing. The ANOVA result for the 1st hypothesis, which examines the impact of social media marketing on repeat business, shows a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that the study's significance threshold is not met, allowing the rejection of the null hypothesis in favor of the alternative. This confirms that social media marketing significantly influences repeat business. It further underscores the regression model's effectiveness in predicting repeat business. Additionally, Table 4.16, the coefficient table, illustrates how social media marketing contributes significantly to the model, with a p-value of 0.000. This results in the reg equation: $CPI = 5.74 + 0.77 (SMM)$, where CPI represents repeat business and SMM stands for social media marketing.

The main aim of this study is to explore how social media marketing impacts purchasing decisions among people of Karachi. The study formulated several research questions and hypotheses to achieve its objectives. Hypothesis one was supported, as the p-value is 0.000, its implying that customers' desire to purchase products promoted through social media marketing is significantly influenced by it. Similarly, the study found that social media significantly affects consumers' likelihood to support businesses, supported by data showing a 99.3% correlation between social media and sales for small businesses. This underscores social media's role as a tool for information dissemination and gathering. The phase of patronage intention, critical in the consumer decision-making process, relies

heavily on identifying needs, gathering information about available options, and critically evaluating those choices before making a purchase. In today's digital global business environment, social media can facilitate almost every transaction a customer desires or requires. Additional studies by Chukwu and Uzoma (2014) and Mehrdad (2012) have also shown that Internet merchants significantly influence customer expectations and purchasing decisions. Hypothesis 2 similarly found support, with the alternative hypothesis accepted based on a p-value of 0.000, implying a statistically significant impact of social media marketing on consumer spending. Regression analysis further illustrated this impact, demonstrating a 95.3% influence of social media marketing on consumer purchase decisions.

Moreover, the study revealed that social media marketing significantly influences repeat purchases, with a 99.5% impact observed. Post-purchase decision-making is crucial for predicting the long-term profitability and sustainability of businesses. Overall, these findings underscore the strategic importance of social media marketing in enhancing customer engagement, influencing purchase decisions, and fostering repeat business. They align with assertions from Michael (2017) on the strategic benefits of social media in customer acquisition and retention, and support the shift from traditional media to online platforms for consumer interaction and commerce, as highlighted by Mangold and Faulds (2009).

CONCLUSION

The necessity for objective, quantifiable, and generalizable data to comprehend the direct influence of social media marketing on consumer decision-making in Karachi justifies the use of quantitative methodologies in this study. This strategy is in line with the goals of the study and offers a strong basis for assessing how digital marketing tactics may encourage sustainable consumer behavior, which in turn helps to advance the SDGs. In this section looks at the theories and addresses the research questions from the first chapter. It is recommended that small company owners heavily rely on social media campaigns to effectively enlighten social media users who are making sustained decisions about their products and services. To this end, three distinct goals were established: determining the impact of social media marketing on consumers and how it influences their intentions to make purchases; evaluating the effect of social media marketing on actual customer patronage; and determining the influence of social media marketing on repeat purchases and the decision-making process of consumers.

Here, the report hypotheses that were introduced in chapter one are tested in order to determine which ones should be accepted and which should be rejected. Although there are other ways this study may have evaluated its hypotheses, for this report, the researcher employed basic regression analysis methodology, utilizing SPSS version 29 for the study. This strategy is in line with the goals of the study and offers a strong basis for assessing how digital marketing tactics may encourage sustainable consumer behavior, which in turn helps to advance the SDGs. In this section looks at the theories and addresses the research questions from the first chapter. It is recommended that small company owners heavily rely on social media campaigns to effectively enlighten social media users who are making sustained decisions about their products and services. To this end, three distinct goals were established: determining the impact of social media marketing on consumers and how it influences their intentions to make purchases;

evaluating the effect of social media marketing on actual customer patronage; and determining the influence of social media marketing on repeat purchases and the decision-making process of consumers. The rationale behind using SPSS as an analytical tool is its ability to minimize residual squares while still being a user-friendly tool. According to the decision-making criteria, the alternative hypothesis is accepted if the p-value from the analysis is below the study's chosen significance level, typically set at 0.05 (5%). Conversely, if the p-value exceeds this threshold, the null hypothesis is accepted, and the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study's dissemination of this state-of-the-art research has improved and updated management practitioners' comprehension how social media marketing influences customer customer patronage choice-making. As a result, HRM would have more power to affect consumer choice, market involvement, and spending trends. Researchers and practitioners in management should consider the consequences of this work. The ability to perform statistical analyses on large datasets is a significant advantage of quantitative research. This study aims to generalize findings across a broad population in Karachi, making it essential to use statistical tools to analyze data from a large sample size. Quantitative methods facilitate this by enabling the use of descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and regression analysis to identify patterns, correlations, and causations.

FUTURE RESEARCH

It would be beneficial to expand this study to include customers in other parts of Karachi and in other provinces. Although the study attempts to generalize findings throughout the Karachi marketplace, the socioeconomic conditions and varied range of demographics in Karachi may restrict the data's generalizability to other markets or areas. Karachi's particular cultural, economic, and social elements may have an impact on consumer behavior that is not applicable in other settings. As a result, the results might be limited in scope and might not accurately represent long-term patterns or potential changes in consumer behavior.

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Consent to Participate: Yes

Consent for publication and Ethical approval: Because this study does not include human or animal data, ethical approval is not required for publication. All authors have given their consent.

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