

" Social Media Marketing: Uncovering Consumer Sentiments"

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Abstract

The emergence of social media has given birth to a wide range of innovative and advanced marketing strategies. The growth of many brands including e-commerce industries can largely be attributed to the widespread use of social media marketing strategies. The future of marketing is expected to see significant growth due to advancements in the shopping process facilitated by various social media platforms. Among these platforms, Facebook is at the forefront, offering distinctive and pleasurable customer experiences.

Purpose: The primary objective of this study is to examine the influence of social media marketing efforts through sentiment analysis, namely those conducted on the Facebook platform.

Design/methodology/approach: Both Primary and secondary data were collected and analyzed. NVivo Qualitative Analysis software was used for Sentiment analysis. The research employs a purposive selection approach and focuses on respondents who own a smartphone and use Facebook.

Primary data was obtained for the research via an In-depth Interview procedure with 32 participants.

Secondary data was gathered via literature reviews. Journals, books, and e-resources etc.

Findings: The presence of both “moderately” and “very positive” sentiment with a percentage of 75. This gives a sign that Facebook as a social media marketing platform is playing a key role in influencing their consumer decision-making process. The “theme references” reflected the responses that NVivo Software has tracked to analyze sentiments, wherein “Reference1 is 1 response and Reference 2 represents 2 responses” etc. This % of coverage reflected the significance of crucial factors that could help in creating customized marketing campaigns for its target group.

These findings would be of immense importance in academia in relation to in-depth qualitative study and have managerial implications to attract customers with a focus on repetitive and impulse purchases by identifying “sentiments” from their responses.

Keywords: consumer behavior, social media marketing, sentiment analysis, Interview, purchase decision

Introduction

Social media gives e-marketers a new option. Traditional "word of web" publicity has replaced "word of mouth." Because more buyers are reading product reviews on social media before buying online. This trend affects consumer purchasing behavior since more individuals are doing it. Despite many online shops' official websites providing product information like pricing and availability, shoppers typically prefer to read customer reviews and comments. Customers want to know their goods is high-quality and gives a great return on investment before buying. Social media's influence on consumer behavior is vital. Customers who have utilized the product and are willing to offer their thoughts and opinions on its pros and cons will help distribute information.

Western culture is influencing young middle-class Indians to purchase online and be more brand conscious. In contrast, India has the following severe internet marketing issues. Uncertainty: The Indian internet adoption rate is sluggish. Customers without basic computer abilities were more common in rural areas. This is a major issue for Indian internet marketers. The shipping issue is that internet shoppers fear their purchases may arrive damaged. Indian customers often negotiate directly, but internet marketing does not allow this. Indian shoppers want to touch and try products before buying.

Especially housewives, who were buying perishable goods. Online fraud: Online fraud has made Indian customers wary of the internet. Lack of consumer

Understanding cyber rules and justice is difficult for e-marketing companies. Buying decisions: In traditional Indian houses, the housewife made consumer goods purchases. Online marketing is less popular in India than in other nations, particularly for selling everyday products, owing to the Indian population's inadequate online shopping expertise.

Online merchants provide several benefits, including the convenience of home shopping. Online shopping lets you compare costs on various items and merchants, which is one of its many benefits. It may be used 24/7 and is easy to use at home. A buyer who knows precisely what they want may go online, study and assess the material, and then buy from the website with the best pricing or services. It saves time and effort, particularly in restaurants and airport lines. Learn about businesses and products that provide great deals and utilize this knowledge to your advantage. Products are evaluated and given instructions, safety precautions, and demonstrations to help customers make purchases. Online shopping sites incorporate customer ratings, comments, and reviews.

Literature review

(Wong, Ho, Olusanya, Antonini, & Lyness, 2021): The use of social media as a tool for professional communication and education in healthcare is on the rise; the advantages and downsides of such platforms have been thoroughly explored in recent years with varying outcomes. During the COVID-19 pandemic, social media use has increased to the point that it has become an integral part of contemporary healthcare systems. As with any healthcare instrument, its risks and benefits must be carefully evaluated.

(Wu, 2020), stated that the study advances Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and digital divide research at the organizational level in the cross-cultural setting by surveying 115 social media marketing professionals in 17 different nations and regions. There are three important discoveries. First, there are considerable variations in organization types in terms of perceived ease of use (PEU), perceived usefulness (PU), and behavioral intention (BI) (U.S. vs. non-U.S. and global vs. domestic). The notions of cultural convergence and cultural divergence may complement rather than contradict one another. Lastly, there may be a second-level digital gap between non-U.S.-based domestic organizations and the other three categories of organizations.

As stated, (Yadav, 2017): It has been noticed that Internet technologies and web-based applications continue to expand, and in the present day, technology is more concerned with connecting people than with connecting consumers. In recent years, social media use has increased, making it simpler for enterprises and consumers to interact with one another and their friends, as well as communicate with a big audience. According to the conclusions of research done by the McKinsey Global Institute, 1.5 billion individuals use social networking sites, and of them, 80% communicate with other social media users daily. The popularity of social media has led 70% of businesses to actively use social media. The social and commercial use of social media has reached the point where it is seen as a way of life. However, in addition to being an excellent communication tool, social media carries with its disadvantages. This article introduced the essential vocabulary, ideas, relevance, advantages, and risks associated with using social media as a marketing tool. It also intended to examine how social media influences the performance and marketing strategy of a business. With the aid of a few case studies, this study emphasized the difficulties that businesses may have while using social media as a marketing tool, as well as its management consequences.

(Abiola-Oke & Aina, 2019), discussed that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have a major influence on tourist development and marketing. The research focuses on Online Travel Booking in the tourism business in Nigeria, which has several tourist locations. This research employed primary and secondary data. The main data questionnaire was created. Randomly selected 222 Redeemer's University students completed the survey. Data analysis using Chi-square. 200 of 222 surveys were completed. Online flight and hotel bookings assist in decreasing or eliminating the previous system's time-wasting procedures. Adopting it is crucial for gaining these advantages and ensuring tourism's sustainability.

(Al Asheq, Tanchi, Kamruzzaman, & Karim, 2021), stated that Bangladesh is getting more people to use the Internet,

which has helped online businesses grow and develop at the same time. Due to more people having and being able to use the internet, many small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) still use an online platform that is driven by the internet. In this situation, research is needed to find out the underlying factors that might affect the way online SMEs do business. So, the goal of the study is to look at how e-marketing orientation (EMO), technology orientation (TO), and learning capability (LC) affect the performance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) online in Bangladesh. In this study, the performance of online SMEs is the dependent variable. EMO, too, and LC are the independent variables. To reach this goal, the study used what was already known to make a questionnaire. Using an online survey system (Google form) and a method called "non-probability random sampling," 320 survey forms were sent to online SME owners. In the end, 156 responses were fully completed. So, the number of people in the study is $n = 156$. SPSS version 26 was used to test the hypotheses and look at the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. In statistical analysis, the 5% significance level is used as a cutoff point to decide whether a hypothesis is true. The results of the study show that EMO, too, and LC have a statistically significant effect on how well online SMEs do. Lastly, this paper tries to explain a few important things that this means for online small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) and suggest some directions for future research.

As per (Ahmad & Murad, 2020), the study focused on social media influences self-reported mental health and COVID-19 panic in Iraq's Kurdistan Region.

In Iraqi Kurdistan, 516 social media users were sampled using an online questionnaire. This data analysis used content analysis. Data were examined using SPSS.

(AL-Hawari, Balasa, & Slimi, 2021), stated that the future of electronic grocery in Oman is bright, particularly with the surge of online shoppers in Oman caused by Covid-19. The findings suggested that COVID-19 had altered the purchase habits of consumers. Participants recommended that Omani electronic supermarkets enhance the effectiveness of their services to attract more clients. Additionally, they suggested offering and incorporating a variety of things that clients may desire in all Omani cities, as opposed to merely a select few.

Further, (Barijan, Ariningsih, & Rahmawati, 2021), is of view that the development of technology in the automobile industry has advanced quite fast in recent years. Thus, automotive businesses in Indonesia must fight for market share. Companies that compete in the marketplace provide things that customers need and desire.

(Chusnaini & Rasyid, 2022), performed a quantitative study by distributing a questionnaire to 150 participants. The study's findings indicate that social media marketing, social media content, brand image, and brand awareness have a positive and statistically significant impact on purchase intentions.

The usage of social media by consumers is increasing. According to S-O-R Theory and the Consumer Decision-Making Model, external entities may affect customers. In other words, consumers are susceptible to social influence and, thus, inclined to emulate the actions of others. It is typical for an individual to buy after hearing suggestions from a reliable source. Additionally, buyers might be socially impacted by the communications of pleased customers (Mason, Narcum, & Mason, Social media marketing gains importance after Covid-19. Cogent Business & Management, 2021).

According to (Gupta, Agarwa, & Chauhan, 2018), internet expansion is as quick and extensive as any technical innovation of the previous century, and it is becoming a part of the lives of an increasing number of Indians across the spectrum of online activities. Social media is a phenomenon that has garnered a great deal of attention from businesses and the networking landscape and has become an ever-present part of our lives.

(Hasouneh & Alzeat, 2020), explored how the features of e-marketing influence the views of visitors toward tourism in Jordan investigated via a study using a set of questions and with the approach of open-ended inquiries. A total of 48 visitors were interviewed, and their responses were analyzed using content analysis. The findings demonstrated that the marketing mix components had a significant impact on consumer views. The trends of tourists are affected by the accuracy of the information, pricing, online payment, website, and individual preferences. According to the data, the demographic factors

do not account for any differences in these opinions.

(Kanapathipillai & Kumaran, 2022) highlighted that customers may be inspired by digitalization however digital marketing techniques by themselves will not result in purchase choices alone and thus relationship marketing methods are an added influential component in customers' buying choices.

The research and findings of (Khan, 2019), highlighted that social media marketing activities significantly influence brand loyalty, purchase intentions, value consciousness, and brand consciousness; brand loyalty has a statistically significant impact on eWOM and it further significantly influences purchase intention; brand consciousness does not mediate the relationship between perceived social media marketing and brand loyalty, but value consciousness does.

(Mason, Brown, Mason, & Narcum, 2021), research explores how the COVID-19 outbreak affected social media marketing in India. Little study has been conducted on the effects of a pandemic on consumer behavior. To fill this gap, this exploratory research assessed the social media activities of Indian consumers. Since the onset of the COVID-19 epidemic, observations from 313 Indian consumers were gathered to compare how their social media use for consumer decision-making has altered. Before and after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, mean changes in social media activity were evaluated using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. The results indicated a rise in the use of social media as a tool for consumer decision-making.

Social media plays a crucial role in advertising and consumer connection building. Most companies are beginning to embrace social media as a marketing strategy. In company marketing and public relations, social media is a new concept (PR). Although the rate of social media exchanges as a tool for marketing and public relations for companies is relatively slow, the trend is continually expanding. Various businesses include a communication platform in their marketing efforts to communicate with clients and prospects (Mishra & Khan, 2022).

(Pashootanizadeh & Rafie, 2020), researched and created two questionnaires to gather data, one from the perspective of directors and the other from the perspective of consumers. The survey's validity was assessed by four specialists in libraries and Information Science, and its dependability was established using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. This study's statistical population consists of all directors and patrons of 12 public libraries in Isfahan, one of the major cities in Iran.

A new digital marketing tool that has appeared today is social media influencer marketing. Social media influencers are those individuals who shape consumers' perceptions about a brand or product through photos, videos, and other updates on social media platforms (Saima & Khan, 2020).

Social networking networks nowadays give people the chance to economically preserve their digital information. (Hosain & Mamun, 2023)

To get a deeper comprehension of the phenomena, it is important to investigate the factors that both facilitate and impede the accumulation of social media material (Vinoi, Shankar, Khalil, Mehrotra, & Kumar, 2024)

Social media has become an inclusive tool that may be used with consumers who are at the Bottom of the Pyramid (BOP) to offer a variety of services, from shopping to education (Kumar, Katiyar, Mehrotra, Attri, & Vishnoi, 2024).

Sentiment Analysis

"Sentiment analysis is the use of computer tools to estimate a portion of the sentiment communicated in a text. Understanding the significance of sentiment in communication is a significant issue in and of itself, and the ability to discern changes in sentiment over time and variations in sentiment across settings and items of conversation is very valuable for social web studies.

In general, sentiment analysis is believed to be an automated process of coding in which a computer evaluates textual material and assigns it different sentiment markers (positive/negative, with some algorithms able to comprehend grief, rage, and other emotions).

It is a data mining approach that uses machine learning algorithms to systematically analyze textual material. As a marketing research technique, sentiment analysis provides an efficient and effective examination of real-time customer attitudes.

The sentiment is the expression of optimism or negative language. Sentiment analysis is an efficient method for determining if a written or spoken phrase is positive, negative, or neutral, and to what extent. This provides valuable insight into how the consumer felt about their encounter.

The term "sentiment analysis" refers to the practice of collecting and evaluating people's feelings and perspectives on a wide range of issues, goods, and services. Opinion polls and surveys may be useful for gathering data and making choices for businesses, governments, and people.

It is also the process of gathering primary data from unstructured and disorganized textual materials from different social media and internet resources, such as Facebook and other social media platforms.

The process of analyzing and summarizing the thoughts conveyed in these massive documents. Your sentiment coding resides alongside your nodes and connections in NVivo. Sentiments act similarly to conventional codes, and sentiment analysis may be conducted manually by choosing text and moving it over.

With the help of NVivo Qualitative analysis software, Sentiment analyses have been done.

Sentiment analysis NVivo qualitative analysis software from the response of the participants identified four types of sentiments for analysis as below,

- Very Positive
- Moderately Positive
- Moderately Negative
- Very Negative

Sentiment presence: It reflects the presence and types of sentiments in the responses of the participants as per the analysis done by NVivo Qualitative analysis research software. 'Moderately positive' sentiments were reflected in all responses of participants and the 'Very positive' sentiment was not reflected in PT1, PT12, PT26, PT27, PT3, PT31, PT7, and PT9. The details are presented in Table 1. Both moderately positive and very positive sentiment was identified in 24 out of 32 participants with a percentage of 75 from the analysis based on their responses. The details are represented in Table 2 and Figure 1. Only moderately positive sentiment was identified in 8 out of 32 participants with a percentage of 25. The details are represented in Table 3 and Figure 2. As none of the participants had very or negatively sentiments and all had both moderately positive sentiments and 25% had very positive sentiments, this gives a clear indication that social media marketing in Facebook has influenced their decision-making process in a positive way.

Table 1: Presence status and types of sentiments through NVivo software analysis (*Authors own depiction based on responses from participants and analysis done on NVivo Qualitative software*).

PARTICIPANTS	Very negative	Moderately negative	Moderately positive	Very positive
PT1	No	No	Yes	No

PT2	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT3	No	No	Yes	No
PT4	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT5	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT6	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT7	No	No	Yes	No
PT8	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT9	No	No	Yes	No
PT10	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT11	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT12	No	No	Yes	No
PT13	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT14	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT15	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT16	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT17	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT18	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT19	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT20	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT21	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT22	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT23	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT24	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT25	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT26	No	No	Yes	No
PT27	No	No	Yes	No
PT28	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT29	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT30	No	No	Yes	Yes
PT31	No	No	Yes	No
PT32	No	No	Yes	Yes

Table 2: Total count and % of Moderately and very positive presence status (Authors own depiction based on responses from participants and analysis done on NVivo Qualitative software).

PARTICIPANTS	Moderately positive	Very positive
PT2	Yes	Yes
PT4	Yes	Yes

PT5	Yes	Yes
PT6	Yes	Yes
PT8	Yes	Yes
PT10	Yes	Yes
PT11	Yes	Yes
PT13	Yes	Yes
PT14	Yes	Yes
PT15	Yes	Yes
PT16	Yes	Yes
PT17	Yes	Yes
PT18	Yes	Yes
PT19	Yes	Yes
PT20	Yes	Yes
PT21	Yes	Yes
PT22	Yes	Yes
PT23	Yes	Yes
PT24	Yes	Yes
PT25	Yes	Yes
PT28	Yes	Yes
PT29	Yes	Yes
PT30	Yes	Yes
PT32	Yes	Yes
TOTAL COUNT	24	
PERCENTAGE	75%	

Distribution of Very Positive Sentiments

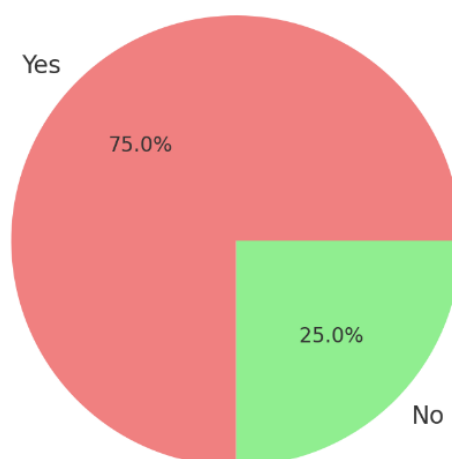


Figure 1: Both moderately and very positive sentiment present in Participant's responses (Authors own depiction based on responses from participants and analysis done on NVivo Qualitative software).

Table: 3 Moderately positive presence status Figure 1: Both moderately and very positive sentiment present in Participant's responses (Authors own depiction based on responses from participants and analysis done on NVivo Qualitative software).

PARTICIPANTS	Moderately positive
PT1	Yes
PT3	Yes
PT7	Yes
PT9	Yes
PT12	Yes
PT26	Yes
PT27	Yes
PT31	Yes
COUNT	8
PERCENTAGE	25

Themes references of sentiments Participants wise:

The theme references reflect the responses which NVivo Software has tracked to analyze their sentiments. Reference 1 represents 1 response and Reference 2 represents 2 responses etc.

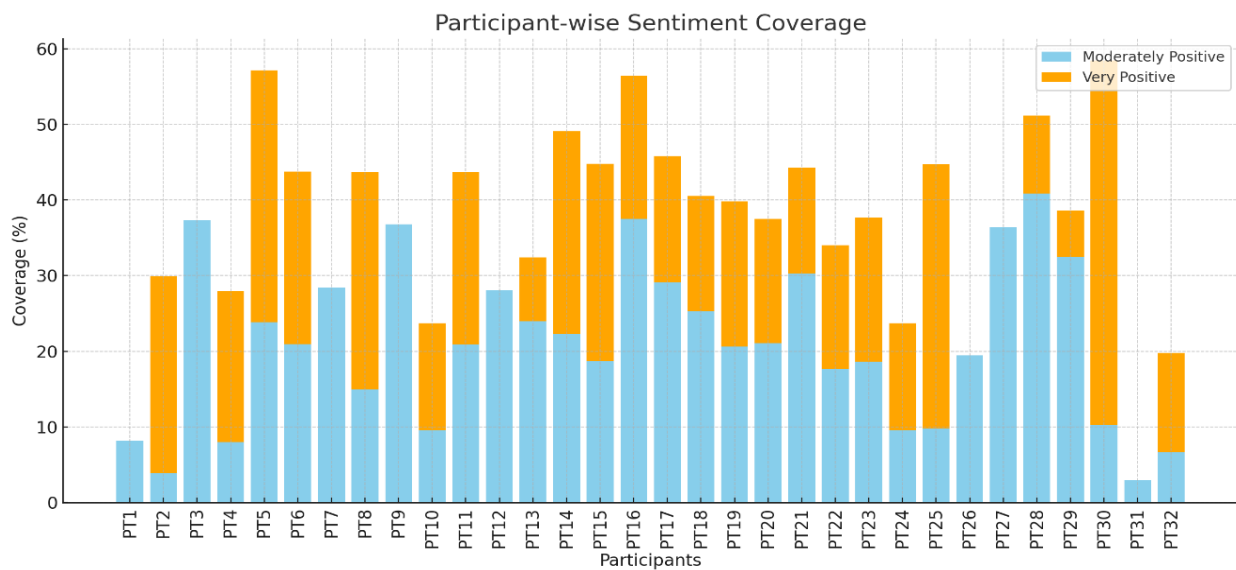
The details are represented in Table 4. In Table 5 the % of coverage participant and sentiment wise is reflected.

Table 4: Existence and count of Reference sentiment wise analysis through NVivo software (Authors own depiction based on responses from participants and analysis done on NVivo Qualitative software).

PARTICIPANTS	A: Very negative	B: Moderately negative	C: Moderately positive	D: Very positive
PT1	0	0	1	0
PT2	0	0	2	2
PT3	0	0	4	0
PT4	0	0	2	2
PT5	0	0	2	3
PT6	0	0	3	2
PT7	0	0	3	0
PT8	0	0	2	2
PT9	0	0	4	0
PT10	0	0	1	2
PT11	0	0	3	2
PT12	0	0	3	0
PT13	0	0	4	2
PT14	0	0	5	4
PT15	0	0	3	4
PT16	0	0	9	5
PT17	0	0	9	4

PT18	0	0	10	3
PT19	0	0	8	5
PT20	0	0	8	3
PT21	0	0	10	3
PT22	0	0	6	3
PT23	0	0	6	5
PT24	0	0	2	2
PT25	0	0	2	4
PT26	0	0	2	0
PT27	0	0	4	0
PT28	0	0	4	1
PT29	0	0	3	1
PT30	0	0	2	3
PT31	0	0	1	0
PT32	0	0	1	1

Fig 1: % of coverage of sentiments (Authors own depiction based on responses from participants and analysis done on NVivo Qualitative software).



v PT1 (Moderately Positive)	Reference 1 – 8.20%
v PT10 (Moderately Positive)	Reference 1- 3.86%
v PT10 (Very Positive)	References 2- 26.01%
v PT11 (Moderately Positive)	References 3- 20.90%

v PT11 (Very positive)	References 2- 22.81%
v PT12 (Moderately Positive)	References 3- 28.11%
v PT13 (Moderately Positive)	References 4-23.96%
v PT13 (Very Positive)	References 2- 8.44%
v PT14 (Moderately Positive)	References 5- 22.29%
v PT14 (Very Positive)	References 4- 26.83%
v PT15 (Moderately Positive)	References 3- 18.66%
v PT15 (Very Positive)	References 4 - 26.11%
v PT16 (Moderately Positive)	References 9- 37.53%
v PT16 (Very Positive)	References 5- 18.93%
v PT17 (Moderately Positive)	References 9- 29.15%
v PT17 (Very Positive)	References 4 – 16.66%
v PT18 (Moderately Positive)	References 10- 25.33%
v PT18 (Very Positive)	References 3 – 15.23%
v PT19 (Moderately Positive)	References 8– 20.65%
v PT19 (Very Positive)	References 5– 19.18%
v PT2 (Very Positive)	References 2– 28.96%
v PT20 (Moderately Positive)	References 8– 21.06%
v PT20 (Very Positive)	References 3– 16.46%
v PT21 (Moderately Positive)	References 10- 30.28%
v PT21 (Very Positive)	References 3 – 14.01%

v PT22 (Moderately Positive)	References 6- 17.68%
v PT22 (Very Positive)	References 3- 16.33%
v PT23 (Moderately Positive)	References 6- 18.61%
v PT23 (Very Positive)	References 5- 19.11%
v PT24 (Moderately Positive)	References 2- 9.55%
v PT24 (Very Positive)	References 2- 14.14%
v PT25 (Moderately Positive)	References 2- 9.79%
v PT25 (Very Positive)	References 4 - 34.92%
v PT26 (Moderately Positive)	References 2- 19.46%
v PT27 (Moderately Positive)	References 4- 36.42%
v PT28 (Moderately Positive)	References 4- 40.88%
v PT28 (Very Positive)	Reference 1- 10.31%
v PT29 (Moderately Positive)	References 3- 32.49%
v PT29 (Very Positive)	Reference 1- 6.09%
v PT3 (Moderately Positive)	References 4- 37.31%
v PT30 (Very Positive)	References 3- 48.21%
v PT30 (Moderately Positive)	References 2-10.24%
v PT31 (Moderately Positive)	Reference 1-2.93%
v PT32 (Moderately Positive)	Reference 1-6.62%
v PT32 (Very Positive)	Reference 1-13.17%
v PT4 (Moderately Positive)	References 2- 8.00%

v PT4 (Very Positive)	References 2- 19.96%
v PT5 (Moderately Positive)	References 2- 23.86%
v PT5 (Very Positive)	References 3- 33.31%
v PT6 (Moderately Positive)	References 3- 20.93%
v PT6 (Very Positive)	References 2 - 22.84%
v PT7 (Moderately Positive)	References 3- 28.41%
v PT8 (Moderately Positive)	References 2- 14.96%
v PT8 (Very Positive)	References 2- 28.72%
v PT9 (Moderately Positive)	References 4- 36.79%

Conclusion

The sentiment analysis of the participants was done based on 4 criteria namely.

- ❖ Very Positive
- ❖ Moderately Positive
- ❖ Moderately Negative
- ❖ Very Negative

“Sentiment presence”

It reflects the presence and types of sentiments in the responses of the participants asper the analysis done by NVivo Qualitative analysis research software.

Moderately positive sentiments were reflected in all responses of participants and very positive sentiments were not reflected in PT1, PT12, PT26, PT27, PT3, and participants’ responses. The presence of both moderately and very positive sentimentwas with 24 of 32 participants with a percentage of 75 as per the analysis done fromthe responses. This indicates that Facebook as a social media marketing platform is playing a keyrole in influencing their consumer decision-making process.

Further, the table below reflects moderately and very positive coverage in percentage based on the analysis.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Measure	Moderately Positive Coverage (%)	Very Positive Coverage (%)
Count	32	32
Mean	21.08	15.37
Standard Deviation	10.74	12.12
Minimum	2.93	0.00
Maximum	40.88	48.21

25 th Percentile	10.13	4.57
50 th Percentile (Median)	20.92	15.78
75 th Percentile	28.60	22.82

“Themes references” of sentiments Participants wise:

The ‘references’ reflect the responses which NVivo Software has tracked to analyze sentiments. (Reference 1 represents 1 statement/response and Reference 2 represents 2statements/responses etc.).

In sentiment analysis from the responses of all the participants all were moderately positive and the majority were very positive and had the view that social media marketing platforms like Facebook created brand awareness and influenced the purchase decision of the target market through attractive and continuous customized marketing offers of varied products and services.

The said research is one of the processes undertaken which will form a steppingstone for a more detailed analysis with wider consumer base inculcating mixed research including other “social media platforms” and its role in impacting and influencing consumer decisions.

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