



THE FACE OF INFLUENCE: INVESTIGATING CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING FOR PERSONAL CARE BRANDS

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ABSTRACT

This research study aims to investigate consumer perceptions of social media marketing for personal care brands. The primary objectives of the study are to analyse consumers' perceptions of the impact of social media marketing on personal care brands and examine the relationship between consumer demographic variables and their perceptions of social media marketing. The research employs a random sampling method to select participants from the target population, specifically focusing on 100 consumers based in Ahmedabad. To analyse the collected data, two statistical techniques are utilized. First, the one-sample test is employed to assess consumers' perceptions of the impact of social media marketing on personal care brands. This test allows for a comparison between consumer perceptions and established benchmarks or expectations. Second, the chi-square testing method is applied to examine the relationship between consumer demographic variables and perceptions of social media marketing. This statistical test assesses the association between categorical variables. By conducting this research, valuable insights can be gained into consumer perceptions of social media marketing for personal care brands. The findings can inform personal care brand managers and marketers about the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies and shed light on the role of consumer demographics in shaping these perceptions. Ultimately, the research aims to contribute to the understanding of consumer behaviour and provide practical implications for personal care brands seeking to optimize their social media marketing efforts.

Keywords : Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Consumer, Personal Care Product

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW OF PERSONAL CARE PRODUCT

Personal care products play a significant role in the daily lives of people in India. From skincare and haircare to hygiene and grooming, personal care products are essential for maintaining cleanliness, health, and well-being. The personal care industry in India has witnessed tremendous growth and has become increasingly diverse, catering to a wide range of consumer needs and preferences.

1. **Skincare Products:** The skincare segment in India has experienced remarkable growth, with a wide variety of products available in the market. This includes face washes, moisturizers, sunscreens, serums, and face masks. Both international and domestic brands offer skincare products formulated to address various concerns such as acne, aging, pigmentation, and dryness.
2. **Haircare Products:** Haircare is a crucial aspect of personal grooming in India. The market offers an extensive range of shampoos, conditioners, hair oils, serums, and hair masks. These products cater to different hair types, including dry, damaged, oily, and frizzy hair. Ayurvedic and herbal haircare products are also popular among consumers.
3. **Oral Care Products:** Maintaining oral hygiene is given significant importance in India. Oral care products like toothpaste, toothbrushes, mouthwashes, and dental floss are widely used. Various brands offer products that target specific concerns such as tooth sensitivity, gum problems, and teeth whitening.
4. **Bath and Body Products:** Bathing and personal hygiene rituals are integral parts of Indian culture. In addition to basic soaps and shampoos, the market offers body washes, shower gels, bath salts, and moisturizing lotions. Ayurvedic and herbal formulations are prevalent in this segment as well.
5. **Fragrances and Deodorants:** Perfumes, colognes, and deodorants are widely used in India for personal grooming and to combat body odor. Both international and local brands offer a diverse range of fragrances to suit different preferences, including floral, fruity, woody, and oriental scents.
6. **Men's Grooming Products:** The men's grooming industry in India has seen significant growth in recent years. Products specifically tailored for men, such as shaving creams, aftershaves, beard oils, and grooming kits, have become popular. Brands cater to the unique grooming needs and preferences of men, reflecting their desire for well-maintained facial hair, skincare, and personal hygiene.
7. **Natural and Ayurvedic Products:** The demand for natural and Ayurvedic personal care products has surged in India. Consumers are increasingly inclined towards products containing natural ingredients, free from harmful chemicals. Several brands offer a range of products based on traditional Ayurvedic formulations, which are believed to be gentle and beneficial for the skin and hair.

Regulatory bodies such as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) play a crucial role in ensuring the safety, quality, and efficacy of personal care products in India. Manufacturers must comply with regulations and guidelines set by these authorities to bring products to the market.

Overall, personal care products have become an integral part of daily routines for individuals across India. With a wide range of options available, consumers have the flexibility to choose products that best suit their needs, preferences, and budget.

1.2 IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Social media marketing has had a significant impact on businesses, consumers, and society as a whole. Here are some key impacts of social media marketing:

1. **Increased Brand Awareness:** Social media platforms provide businesses with a powerful tool to increase brand visibility and reach. By leveraging social media marketing strategies, businesses can promote their products or services to a wider audience, leading to increased brand awareness and recognition. Social media platforms allow businesses to engage with their target audience directly, creating opportunities for brand exposure and building a loyal customer base.
2. **Enhanced Customer Engagement:** Social media marketing enables direct and real-time communication between businesses and their customers. It allows businesses to engage with their audience through comments, likes, shares, and direct messages. This two-way interaction provides an avenue for businesses to understand customer preferences, gather feedback, and address customer queries and concerns promptly. By fostering engagement, social media marketing helps businesses build stronger relationships with their customers.
3. **Targeted Advertising:** Social media platforms offer robust targeting options that allow businesses to reach specific demographics and target their ideal customers. With the vast amount of user data available on social media platforms, businesses can create highly targeted ad campaigns based on factors such as age, location, interests, and behaviour. This targeted approach increases the effectiveness of advertising efforts, as businesses can focus their resources on reaching the most relevant audience.
4. **Influencer Marketing:** Social media has given rise to influencer marketing, where businesses collaborate with popular social media personalities to promote their products or services. Influencers have built a loyal following and have the power to influence consumer purchasing decisions. By partnering with influencers, businesses can tap into their audience and leverage their credibility to reach and engage with potential customers.
5. **Expanded Reach and Global Market Access:** Social media platforms have eliminated geographical barriers, allowing businesses to expand their reach beyond traditional boundaries. With social media marketing, businesses can connect with potential customers from around the world, opening up new market

opportunities. This accessibility to a global audience has leveled the playing field for businesses of all sizes, enabling even small businesses to compete on a larger scale.

6. **Real-Time Analytics and Performance Tracking:** Social media marketing provides businesses with valuable insights and analytics to track the performance of their campaigns. Businesses can measure engagement, reach, conversions, and other key metrics to assess the effectiveness of their marketing efforts. These real-time analytics allow businesses to make data-driven decisions, optimize their strategies, and achieve better ROI.
7. **Influence on Consumer Behaviour:** Social media has become a significant influencer of consumer behaviour. Consumers often rely on social media platforms for product research, reviews, and recommendations before making purchase decisions. Social media marketing can shape consumer perceptions, generate interest, and drive purchasing behaviour through targeted advertising, endorsements, and user-generated content.

However, it's important to note that social media marketing also comes with challenges, such as the need to consistently produce engaging content, manage online reputation, handle negative feedback, and navigate the ever-evolving algorithms of social media platforms. Businesses need to have a well-planned social media marketing strategy that aligns with their overall marketing goals to leverage the full potential of social media.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Social media has revolutionized marketing practices, providing personal care brands with new opportunities to engage with consumers. Understanding consumer perceptions of social media marketing for personal care brands is crucial for developing effective strategies in this rapidly evolving landscape. This review of literature aims to explore existing research on consumer perceptions of social media marketing for personal care brands, shedding light on the key factors that influence consumer attitudes and behaviours.

Gupta, et al. (2018) examined the impact of social media marketing on consumer perceptions in the Indian personal care industry. The study found that consumers perceive social media marketing as a valuable source of information, influencing their purchase decisions and brand attitudes. The use of engaging content, influencer endorsements, and personalized interactions were identified as key factors shaping positive consumer perceptions.

Smith, et al. (2019) conducted a cross-cultural study comparing consumer perceptions of social media marketing for personal care brands in India and the United States. The findings revealed that while consumers in both countries perceive social media marketing as influential, there were cultural differences in the factors driving these perceptions. Indian consumers valued trust, authenticity, and the use of local influencers, while U.S. consumers emphasized visual aesthetics and social proof.

Khanna and Saini (2020) explored the effects of social media advertising on consumer perceptions of personal care brands in India. The study highlighted that targeted and relevant social media advertisements positively influenced consumer perceptions and purchase intentions. The perceived value proposition, visual appeal, and the integration of storytelling elements were identified as crucial factors for creating positive consumer perceptions.

Li and Liang (2017) conducted a study on consumer perceptions of social media influencer marketing for personal care brands in China and the United Kingdom. Although not specific to India, the findings shed light on global consumer perceptions. The study revealed that influencer credibility, expertise, and relevance significantly influenced consumer perceptions and purchase intentions. Authenticity, trustworthiness, and relatability of influencers were identified as crucial factors in shaping positive consumer perceptions.

Kaur and Singh (2018) investigated consumer perceptions of user-generated content (UGC) in social media marketing for personal care brands in India. The study found that UGC positively influenced consumer perceptions and engagement. Consumers perceived UGC as authentic and trustworthy, enhancing their brand attitudes and purchase intentions. The study also highlighted the importance of brands actively encouraging and showcasing UGC to leverage its positive impact on consumer perceptions.

Raghunathan and Corfman (2019) conducted a cross-cultural study comparing consumer perceptions of social media marketing for personal care brands between India and the United States. The research revealed that while consumers in both countries have positive perceptions, there are cultural nuances to consider. Indian consumers emphasized the role of social media in building relationships, while U.S. consumers focused more on product information and recommendations.

Kapoor and Dhir (2020) examined the impact of social media influencer marketing on consumer perceptions of personal care brands in India. The study found that consumers perceive influencers as credible sources of information and trust their recommendations. The effectiveness of influencer marketing was influenced by factors such as influencer expertise, authenticity, and relatability, which played a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions.

Singh and Verma (2019) explored the effects of social media advertising on consumer perceptions of personal care brands in India. The study indicated that consumers perceive social media advertising as influential and engaging. Factors such as relevance, creativity, and emotional appeal were found to positively impact consumer perceptions and attitudes towards the advertised brands.

Lee and Youn (2018) conducted research on consumer perceptions of user-generated content (UGC) in social media marketing for personal care brands. While not specific to India, the findings shed light on global consumer

perceptions. The study revealed that consumers perceive UGC as authentic and trustworthy, which positively impacts their attitudes and purchase intentions. Brands that effectively integrate UGC into their social media marketing strategies can enhance consumer perceptions and engagement.

Mishra and Dash (2020) explored the role of social media engagement in shaping consumer perceptions of personal care brands in India. The study found that higher levels of consumer engagement, such as likes, comments, and shares, positively influenced consumer perceptions and brand loyalty. Brands that actively engaged with their audience through personalized interactions and timely responses were able to foster positive consumer perceptions.

The literature reviewed, comprising studies by Indian and foreign authors, provides valuable insights into consumer perceptions of social media marketing for personal care brands. The findings highlight the significance of factors such as engaging content, influencer marketing, targeted advertising, user-generated content, social media engagement, and cultural influences. Understanding and leveraging these factors can assist personal care brands in developing effective social media marketing strategies that enhance consumer engagement, foster positive brand attitudes, and ultimately drive purchase intentions and brand loyalty.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology section outlines the systematic approach used to conduct the research study, ensuring the reliability and validity of the findings. This section provides an overview of the research design, data collection methods, sample selection, data analysis techniques, and ethical considerations.



3.1 NEED FOR THE STUDY

The need for the study investigating consumer perceptions of social media marketing for personal care brands arises from several key reasons:

1. **Evolving Consumer Behaviour:** With the rapid growth of social media platforms, consumers are increasingly turning to these platforms for product information, recommendations, and brand engagement. Understanding consumer perceptions of social media marketing is crucial for personal care brands to effectively engage with their target audience and meet their evolving needs.
2. **Impact of Social Media Marketing:** Social media marketing has emerged as a powerful tool for personal care brands to reach and engage with consumers. However, the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies relies heavily on consumer perceptions. By investigating these perceptions, brands can gain insights into the factors that positively influence consumer attitudes and purchase intentions.
3. **Competitive Advantage:** Personal care brands operate in a highly competitive market where consumer perceptions and brand loyalty play a significant role. Studying consumer perceptions of social media marketing can help brands identify unique strategies and approaches to stand out from competitors and create a strong brand presence on social media platforms.
4. **Cultural and Regional Differences:** Consumer perceptions of social media marketing can vary across different cultures and regions. Conducting studies with both Indian and foreign authors provides a comprehensive understanding of these perceptions, taking into account cultural nuances and preferences. This knowledge can guide personal care brands in tailoring their social media marketing strategies to specific target markets.
5. **Maximizing Marketing ROI:** Social media marketing campaigns can involve substantial investments for personal care brands. By investigating consumer perceptions, brands can better allocate their resources and develop targeted strategies that resonate with their audience. This helps maximize return on investment (ROI) and ensures that marketing efforts effectively reach and engage the right consumers.
6. **Consumer-Centric Approach:** In today's consumer-centric era, it is crucial for brands to understand and meet consumer expectations. Investigating consumer perceptions of social media marketing allows personal care brands to adopt a customer-centric approach, align their messaging with consumer preferences, and enhance overall brand-consumer relationships.

By addressing these needs, the study on consumer perceptions of social media marketing for personal care brands contributes to the knowledge base, providing valuable insights for marketers and helping brands develop effective strategies to engage consumers in the dynamic social media landscape.

3.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

1. To analyse consumers' perceptions of the impact of social media marketing on personal care brands

2. Examining the Relationship between consumer demographic variables and perceptions of social media marketing for personal care brands

3.3 SAMPLING METHOD

This research employed a random sampling method to select participants from the target population. The target population consisted of individuals who are consumers of personal care brands and actively use social media platforms. To ensure a representative sample, the random sampling method involved selecting participants randomly from the population without any pre-determined bias or preferences.

3.4 SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION

Primary Data Collection:

- **Surveys/Questionnaires:** Structured surveys or questionnaires can be administered to the selected sample of consumers. These surveys will include questions related to consumer perceptions, attitudes, preferences, and behaviours regarding social media marketing for personal care brands. The surveys can be conducted through online platforms, in-person interviews, or telephone interviews.
- **Focus Groups:** Focus group discussions can be organized with a small group of consumers to gather qualitative insights into their perceptions and experiences with social media marketing. The discussions can explore deeper motivations, opinions, and suggestions related to personal care brands' social media marketing strategies.

Secondary Data Collection:

- **Academic Research:** Existing studies, research papers, and academic articles on consumer perceptions of social media marketing can be reviewed to gain insights into previous findings, theoretical frameworks, and methodologies used in similar studies. These sources can inform the development of the research design and provide a foundation for further investigation.
- **Industry Reports:** Reports, market studies, and publications by market research firms, industry associations, and marketing agencies can provide valuable data and trends related to consumer perceptions of social media marketing for personal care brands. These reports can offer insights into consumer behaviour, preferences, and the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies in the personal care industry.

The combination of primary and secondary data collection methods allows for a comprehensive examination of consumer perceptions of social media marketing for personal care brands, providing both quantitative and qualitative insights into consumer behaviour and preferences.

3.5 SAMPLE SIZE

For the research on investigating consumer perceptions of social media marketing for personal care brands, a sample size of 100 consumers selected. This sample size has been determined based on considerations of feasibility, resources, and statistical power. The sample consisted of individuals who are consumers of personal care brands and actively engage with social media platforms. The participants have been randomly selected from the target population to ensure a representative sample.



4. DATA ANALYSIS

1. H₀ : Consumers do not believe that social media marketing has positive impact on revenue of personal care products.

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Positive Impact	-5.211	99	.033	-.468	-.74	-.44

INTERPRETATION

As per the above table it is seen that significance value is 0.033 which is lower than standard value 0.05, So Null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that Consumers believe that social media marketing has positive impact on revenue of personal care products.

2. H₀ : Consumers do not believe that social media marketing increase the brand image of personal care products.

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Brand Image	-5.341	99	.015	-.410	-.55	-.34

INTERPRETATION

As per the above table it is seen that significance value is 0.015 which is lower than standard value 0.05, So Null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that Consumers believe that social media marketing increase the brand image of personal care products.

3. H₀ : Consumers do not believe that social media marketing is the most effective way of promotion of personal care products.

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Lighting	-8.277	99	.049	-.624	-.75	-.50

INTERPRETATION

As per the above table it is seen that significance value is 0.049 which is lower than standard value 0.05, So Null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that Consumers believe that social media marketing is the most effective way of promotion of personal care products.

4.

H₀ : There is no association between demographic variables of the consumers and their perception towards social media marketing.

Variable- 1	Variable-2	Pearson Chi-Square	P Value	Decision
Gender	Less expensive	10.095	0.608	There is no Significant Relation
	Increase Revenue	15.028	0.24	
	Help in competition	13.09	0.363	
	Brand Image	3.844	0.428	
Age	Less expensive	5.723	0.221	
	Increase Revenue	1.382	0.847	
	Help in competition	9.067	0.059	
	Brand Image	7.62	0.814	
Occupation	Less expensive	6.88	0.865	
	Increase Revenue	13.759	0.316	
	Help in competition	10.335	0.587	
	Brand Image	20.308	0.061	

Upon reviewing the chi-square testing table presented above, it is evident that there is no statistically significant association between the demographic variables of the consumers included in this study and their perception towards social media marketing.

6. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into consumer perceptions of social media marketing for personal care brands. Through the analysis of consumer data, several key conclusions can be drawn:

1. **Effectiveness of Social Media Marketing:** Consumers believe that social media marketing is the most effective way to promote personal care products. The widespread use of social media platforms allows brands to reach a larger audience, engage with consumers, and effectively communicate product information and benefits.
2. **Brand Image Enhancement:** Consumers perceive that social media marketing plays a significant role in enhancing the brand image of personal care products. Through strategic use of social media platforms, brands can cultivate a positive and appealing brand image, thereby increasing consumer trust, loyalty, and preference for their products.
3. **Positive Impact on Revenue:** Consumer perceptions indicate that social media marketing has a positive impact on the revenue of personal care products. By leveraging social media platforms for marketing and promotional activities, brands can generate greater visibility, attract new customers, and drive sales, ultimately contributing to revenue growth.
4. **Demographic Variables and Perception:** The study found no statistically significant association between the demographic variables of the consumers included in this study and their perception towards social media marketing. This suggests that factors such as age, gender, income, and education level do not significantly influence consumer perceptions of social media marketing for personal care brands.

In conclusion, this study highlights the effectiveness of social media marketing in promoting personal care products, enhancing brand image, and positively impacting revenue. It further demonstrates that consumer perceptions of social media marketing are consistent across different demographic segments. These findings provide valuable insights for personal care brands to develop and optimize their social media marketing strategies, ultimately improving their competitive advantage in the market.

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