

INTERSECTION OF HOW YOUTH SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE TRENDS ARE SHAPING THE FUTURE OF DIGITAL MARKETING INFLUENCE

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ABSTRACT

How youth engagement with social media influences digital marketing strategies. It examines the behaviour and preferences of younger audiences, highlighting the challenges and opportunities for brands to connect effectively with this demographic through targeted, impactful online marketing tactics. The methodology used in this survey involves selecting the sample, i.e., youth. Then, the sample will be questioned with relevant questions about the topic. After that, data will be analysed using quantitative and qualitative measures. Finally, a recommendation/ conclusion will be given based on the findings of the survey. This survey contains a sample of young people. Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube are the most popular platforms due to the convenience and user interface they provide to their audience. Most of the sample used social media for brand deals and connecting to their friends and families. In this survey, the sample frequently gets the ads on the content they watch in feeds, posts, etc. They find these ads either informative and appealing or misleading if the ads are not relatable to them. Most of the samples have been purchased through social media marketing or clicked the link for more information about the company or brand product. This survey concludes that youth use social media and based on the content they consume marketers influence them to the product either related to them or the content they most consume. Thus, youth media usage trends are dynamic which shapes the future of digital marketing for marketers.

Keywords: Social media, Social Networking sites, Social media marketing, Digital Marketing.

INTRODUCTION

Social Media and Digital Marketing

Businesses used social media to communicate with their employees, interact with shareholders, and gain trust with customers in the 2000s. From 2010 to 2018, social media gained a huge audience because of its convenience and features. Schools, colleges, and business organizations use social media to share important information through groups.

After 2019, Social media acts as a powerful channel with a broader digital marketing ecosystem. These platforms became essential for increasing brand visibility, generating leads, and generating social reputation to build trust and goodwill. Businesses nowadays focus on creating and sharing content tailored to specific platforms through organic or paid ads. The algorithm present in social media helps businesses gain insights into the demographics of the audience that follows them and helps them in research and development to create customer-centric products and promotions to generate leads. Social media is a vital tool for digital marketers to engage and gain more audience.

Social media trends influencing digital marketing strategy

Social media plays a significant role in shaping the direction of digital marketing by evolving how businesses interact with customers. Social media provides a platform for businesses to create visuals, posts, feeds, and reels as a form of ads. The rise of influencers, live streaming, and interactive features like stories have made digital marketing more dynamic. Social media provide algorithms to promoters that help them know about their audiences and create ads accordingly. The rapid feedback loop of social platforms allows brands to adjust campaigns in real time, making marketing strategies more convenient and responsive.

Growing purchasing trends among youth through social media marketing

Increasing purchasing trends among young consumers through social media marketing highlight the impact of digital platforms on consumer behavior.

When we talk about youth, in digital marketing, youth is demographic data. Mobile phones and social media emerged among young people, especially Generation Z and Millennials, making it a part of their lives. Due to the technological enhancement and e-commerce models gaining the interest of many young people, social media has become an essential tool for businesses. Young people use social media to know about the brand, product reviews, and deals. Companies use these platforms to showcase products in visually appealing ways,

forcing the youth to impulse buying. Young people often follow celebrities who promote the content and products, creating trust for the product.

Social media is an important tool because it makes shopping through it easy. Interactive features like swipe-up links and click-post links make it easy for companies to generate leads and then proceed with purchasing processes.

Through social media, brands study the preferences and buying habits of youth, helping them research and develop customer-specific products that attract new customers, increase conversion rates, and build strong brand loyalty.

SCOPE OF STUDY

The scope of this study:

1. How marketers are utilizing their strategies, content, and ads to appeal to a specific demographic of youth.
2. The growing influence of youth on social media is reshaping the ways of marketing and buying behaviour.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study will help in gaining insights that will help to understand the consumer behaviour of youth, and their purchasing habits which will help in managing the content, and ads to resonate with them. Social media is famous for trends, youth follow famous and emerging trends which helps businesses stay connected to these users by creating different strategies. The future of marketing depends upon the new social media platforms that are emerging, so marketers should be ready for the dynamic change in their content and decision making to stay updated.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sarah Silvia, *The Importance of Social Media and Digital Marketing to Attract Millennials' Behavior as a Consumer*, January 2019, Journal of International Business Research and Marketing 4(2):7-10: The author of this paper talks about startups in Indonesia, which use social media management tools for efficient scheduling and monitoring. Social media tools help them understand what customers say about their brands and products. Social media algorithms and analytics help business strategize their marketing to reach millennials, a key target demographic. This segmentation will not only help in engaging the group marketing but also yield significant returns in the long run.

A critical review of digital marketing: In this study, the authors highlight the advantages of digital marketing that offers businesses SEO (Search Engine Optimization), SEM (Search Engine Marketing), content marketing, influence marketing, and various strategies. It is also concluded major companies are increasingly viewing social media as strategic assets to make their online presence by hiring dedicated professionals. Social media plays a vital role in an organization's integrated marketing strategy, requiring significant attention and investment. Social media is a rapidly growing platform for business to grow.

A study on the impact of social media marketing trends on digital marketing: This study analyses issues related to digital marketing and highlights that companies need a strong platform to use digital marketing effectively. Social media is based on user interest and how effective it is for businesses. The shift of newspaper (Traditional Marketing) from print to online illustrates the current trends in the digital world.

Mobile social media: The new hybrid element of digital marketing communications: This study states social media is changing the market. The growth of mobile users exceeded 7 billion in 2014, making it a key growth market. It also states that by 2020, mobile phones are expected to be the main way people connect to the internet, which is true as per the current situation. Due to the growth in Generation Z users, companies focus on mobile marketing to cater for them. The study highlights that social media is crucial in modern life, with Facebook and Twitter previously dominating mobile social media. However, recent trends indicate that Instagram and YouTube have since gained greater popularity.

Exploring uses of social media in a global corporation: The author states that the company identified the main uses of social media as communication between employees, sharing information, reaching out to the staff and discussing ideas in the 2010s. At that time companies used social media for interaction with customers, building communities with stakeholder groups to strengthen brand communication and reputation. Earlier that time social media uses were in 3 major areas i.e. communication, collaboration and connections. But in the present world, social media is a platform for business to promote their content, products and services. Not only communication and customer service but now social media also acts as a platform for sales. Nowadays social media pages are the shops for youth.

Impact of social media on consumer behaviour: In this study, the author states how marketers need to understand how digital and social media affect the buying process and influence consumer behavior. Research also states that maybe traditional marketing techniques are now

not popular but the decision-making model used in traditional marketing still applies in social media marketing as well. But all the steps in the decision-making in social media are fast and have a higher satisfaction which includes ease of use, trust, and convenience. Consumers with high trust and confidence also have greater satisfaction with their purchases. Those who focus on satisfaction during their information search are generally happier with the results, while consumers who try to get the best outcome tend to be less satisfied.

Impact of social media on marketing: As the popularity of social media is growing and there is no turning back it seems social media will overtake other functional areas of marketing to a large extent. Social media is trying to fill the gap between marketers and consumers through continual dialogue, building trust and interacting with the right audience in the right way, as fast as possible.

PURPOSE AND RELEVANCE

Purpose:

1. This study aims to find the interrelation between the usage of social media among youth and the influence of digital marketing on them.
2. The study will measure the correlation between social media ad exposure to youth and the decision made in purchasing. It will also measure how effective the content, posts, and ads to influencing youth for conversion and finally purchasing.
3. This survey will be conducted with the help of surveys and interviews from the sample i.e. young people who are engaged with social media. The analysis of the survey will be done on the two measures: qualitative and quantitative.

Relevance: This study helps in understanding how youth interact with digital ads which is crucial for businesses that rely on social media platforms to engage with their target demographic and promote their brands.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this research has the following steps:

1. Collect data from literature reviews and secondary data sites about the related topic.
2. Create samples for the data collected based on age, gender and preference.
3. Survey through Google Form from the sample selected i.e. young people using social media.

4. Analysing the data collected quantitatively and qualitatively to gain insights about the latest trends of usage of social media and the influence of digital marketing on them.
5. Showcasing the findings drawn from the data collected during the survey.
6. Recommending /conclusion based on the findings.

FINDING AND ANALYSIS(sample size=400)

Table 1: The age group of samples

Age	Percentage
16 – 20	30.75%
20 – 24	44.50%
24 – 28	15.25%
28+	09.50%

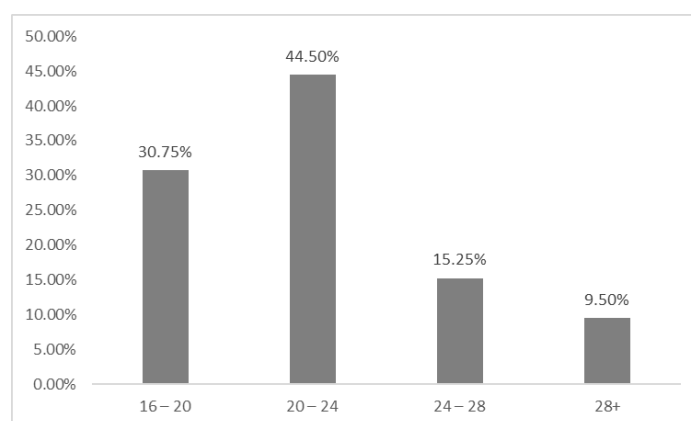


Figure 1

Based on the percentages of the survey, we can see that the majority of our sample belongs to the 16 – 20 and 20 – 24 age groups.

The reason for choosing youth for the survey is obvious. Social media is famous among Gen Z and millennials because they use it in their day-to-day life and social media companies also

developed their user interface according to the demand of young people using it for their entertainment.

Due to the popularity gained during the lockdown, social media became the most powerful tool to convince young people towards any topic or discussion.

Table 2: Gender of the sample

Gender	Percentage
Male	52.25%
Female	47.75%

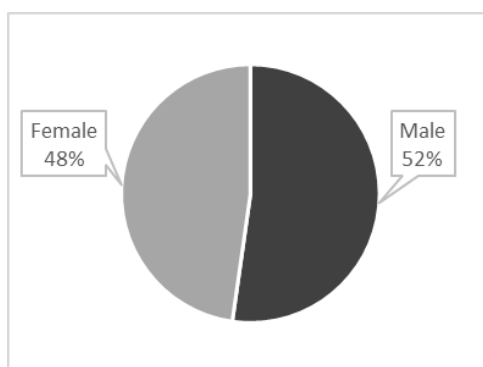


Figure 2

In the survey, the ratio of gender males to females is close to 1. This is good for the survey as we have almost equal responses and points of view from both sides.

By having almost the same number of males and females, we will get correct opinions for the following questions discussed in this survey.

Topics discussed in surveys have a different perspective and opinions. Opinions of both sides should be taken for fair results and conclusions.

Table 3: Occupation of the sample.

Occupation	Percentage
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Student	53.25%
Working professional	30.50%
Business/self-employed	16.25%

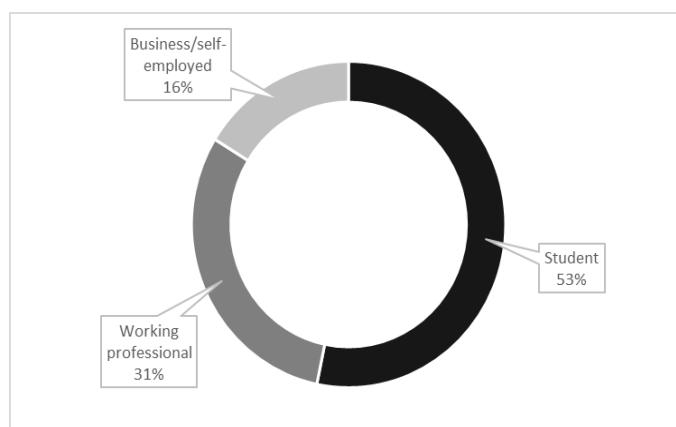


Figure 3

The majority of the respondents in our survey are students, but we have a good number of all three segments to improve the accuracy of the survey.

Table 4: The social media platform used the most

Options	Instagram	Facebook	YouTube	Twitter (X)	Snapchat	Threads
Percentage	77.25%	49.75%	67.50%	24.50%	51.25%	14.00%

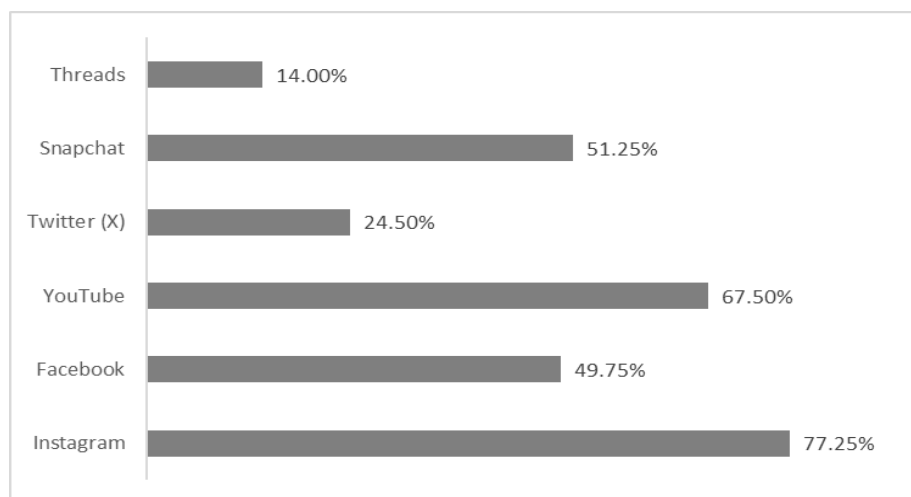


Figure 4

In the period 2005 – 2015, Facebook was very popular among people for sharing opinions, images and videos with relatives and close friends.

After 2015, it has been noticed that the youth has shifted from Facebook to Instagram. It can be because of the better user interface, more content, better functions etc. After the ban of TikTok and the introduction of reels, Instagram gained a large audience and fanbase because celebrities switched to it.

The usage of YouTube during the lockdown gained a significant audience worldwide because of the entertainment it provided through content creators. The gaming industry and gaming content creators on Twitch and YouTube have a large fanbase and business collaborations with these streamers to promote their brands.

These platforms helped businesses promote their service and products through different ads.

Table 5: Uses of social media.

Options	Percentage
Keep up with news/gossip/ trends	61.25%
Contact and connect with friends/ family	57.50%
Brand deals/ New Launches of products	41.75%
Find new Friends	18.25%

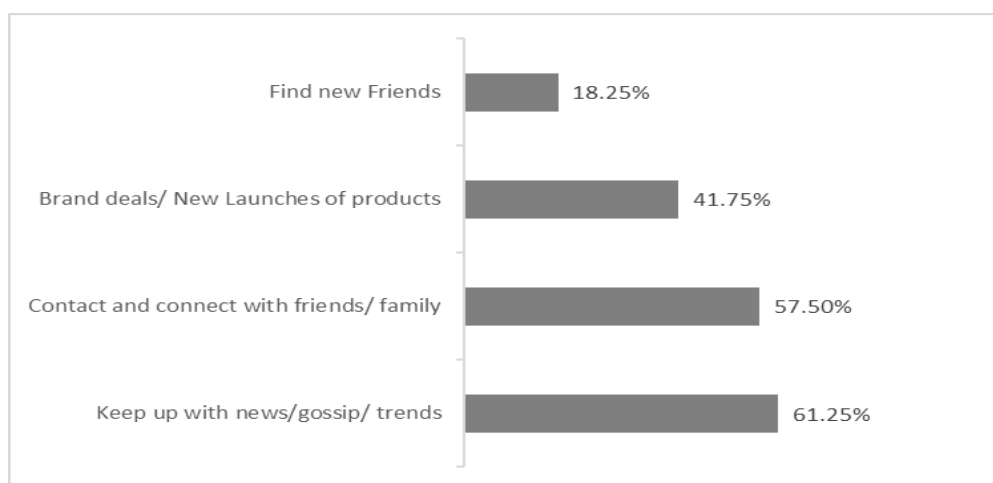


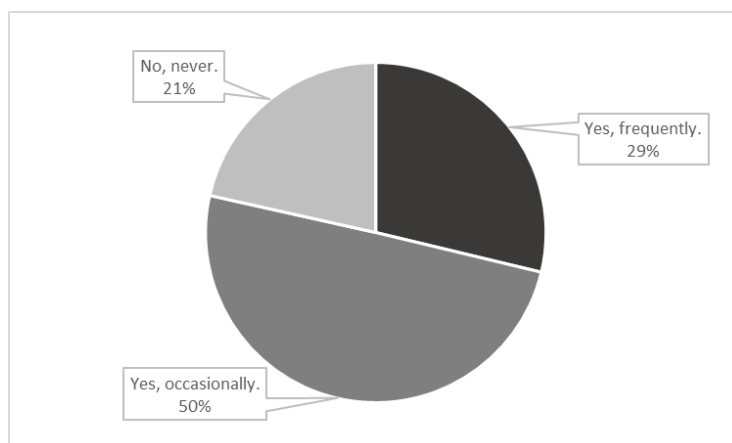
Figure 5

Earlier in the 2010s, people used social media to interact with their close ones and stay updated about their status. But nowadays, there is a significant audience that uses social media for product reviews, specifications, their company's presence in the market, and brand deals.

Businesses/brands use social media platforms to increase their visibility in the markets for their competitive advantages.

Table 6: Encountering any advertisements on social media platforms.

Options	Percentage
Yes, frequently.	28.75%
Yes, occasionally.	49.75%
No, never.	21.50%

**Fig 6.**

Social media platforms offer various ad formats, such as reels, posts, and influencer marketing. Companies invest heavily in advertisements for their products, which are displayed alongside user content.

If the social media are interconnected by the same email ID, ads will be shown according to the content you watched on other social media platforms.

In this section, most samples using social media for entertainment and receiving ads frequently feel annoying. Because of this, platforms like YouTube and Twitch have a premium membership providing ad-free entertainment in which the viewer has to pay a certain amount to skip ads in their content.

Table 7: The attitude of the sample towards these advertising.

Options	Percentage
Informative	38.25%
Misleading	43.50%
Entertaining	13.75%
Can't Say	04.50%

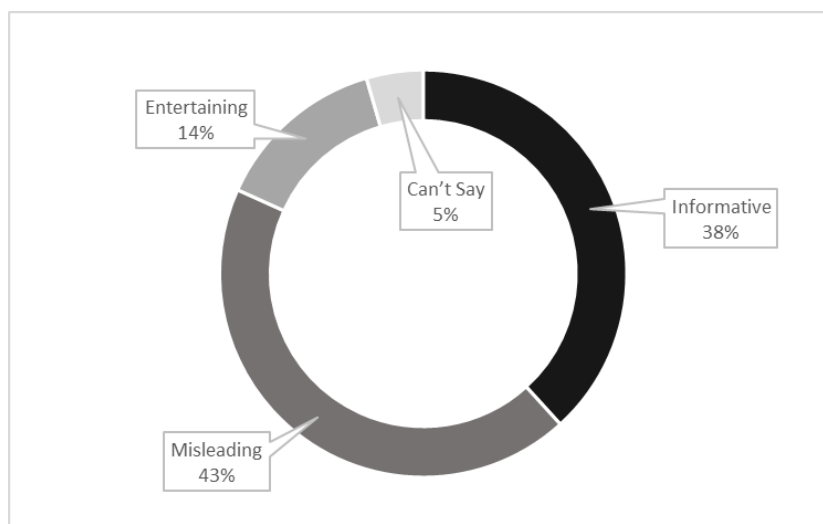


Figure 7

Most times users find the ads shown by the social media platform are irrelevant or misleading as they do not connect or require the product. These viewers hate ads in their content because of a pre-mindset that these ads are fake or do not have credibility, genuineness or authenticity in their brand.

Some find them entertaining because of the engaging visuals and humour that make their ads feel genuine to these people and of course, a considerable audience finds these ads informative by connecting to the product or service and helping the company to generate leads.

Ads with good narration of the content in an engaging manner convert these entertaining samples into leads.

Table 8: The relatability of ads to the content being watched or the interest of the sample.

Options	Percentage
Yes always	36.75%
Sometimes	40.75%
Not related at all	22.50%

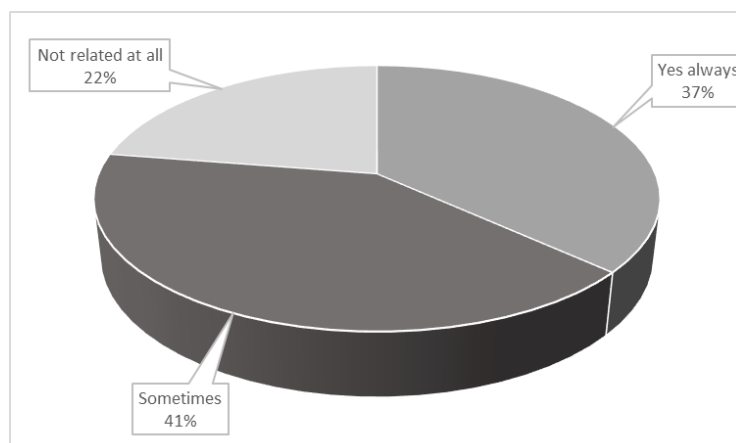


Figure 8

Due to the feature of algorithms in social media, platforms mostly show relevant ads to their users based on different demographics such as age, gender, occupation, etc. Most of the times social media algorithms shows ads similar to the previous one that the user showed interest in.

Users who have less usage of social media or spend less time on social media find ads irrelevant to them or the content they watch. This is because social media have no set of calculations about the user's preference.

Nowadays, entrepreneurs started using these algorithms to find the latest trends that are famous among young people because market trends are very dynamic and change every day even every hour. These people make customer-centric products to satisfy a particular segment of people with similar demographics. They gain insights about choices and preferences from the data available on social media platforms.

Many individuals started their shops online on these media platforms without having any websites. They have catalogues of their product available on the platform and get orders directly from the bookings or DMs (Direct messages).

Table 9:Purchase made through advertisements or search for additional information by clicking on the links or posts.

Options	Percentage
Yes, I have purchased or clicked for more information.	52.00%
No, I have never purchased or clicked for more information.	26.50%

I don't remember.	21.50%
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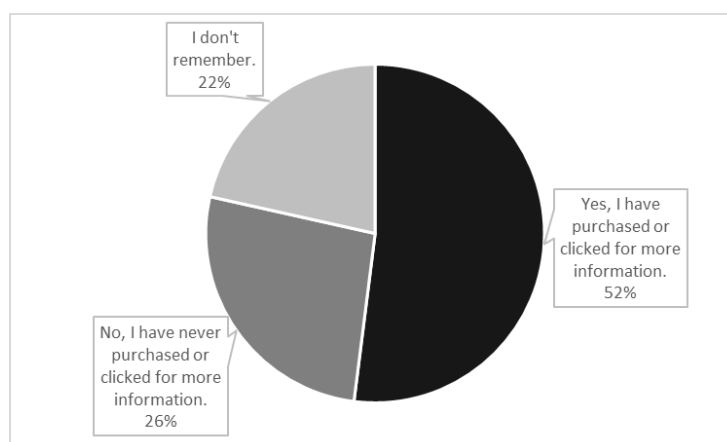


Figure 9

During the survey, half of the sample selected the option that they have clicked the link or posts for more information or have interest in the product. These people find the brand or its positive reviews engaging and trustful, or they connect to the product and find its need in their lives. Brand promote their product in such a manner that it can satisfy all the queries of the leads so that they make further decisions in the purchasing process.

Nowadays, people look for special discounts or offers. These people look for more specifications or check the company's authenticity by visiting the sites through links. These activities help the companies in generating leads.

Popular brands, and companies having a large customer base post ads related to the offers to make youth for impulse buying. These brands have high reputations and trustworthiness so people do not doubt their authenticity.

Table 10: Factors that influence the sample to know more about products or purchase them

Options	Percentage
Attractive visuals or design.	68.75%
Clear and concise product information.	34.25%
Positive reviews or testimonials.	26.00%

Special offers or discounts.	43.75%
Personal relevance or need for the product.	19.00%

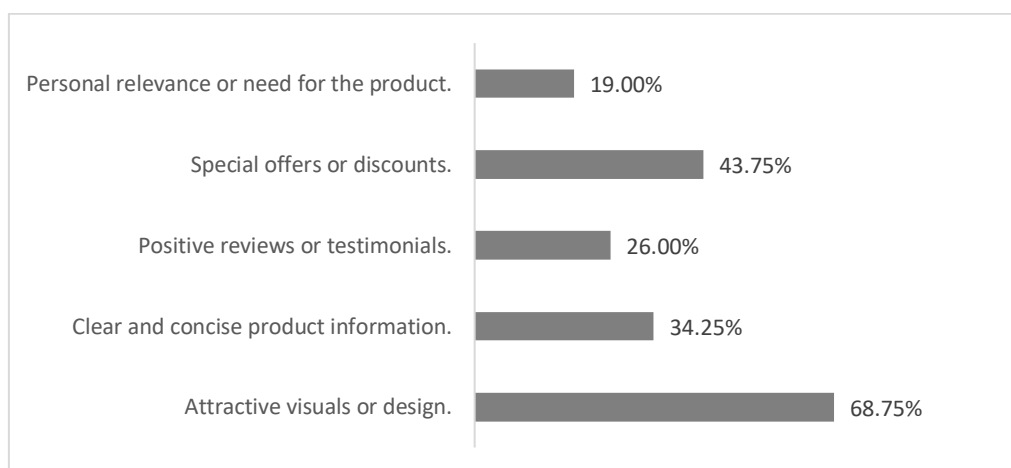


Figure 10

Advertisements on social media are presented in various formats, including visual content, written narratives, and posts. The algorithms utilized by social media platforms recommend similar products and branded content to users based on their previous interactions, particularly when users have engaged with links to related product posts.

Sometimes attractive visuals or designs make people click the link and find out that the product displayed in ads is completely different from the actual product. Creative visuals can be made with the help of AI which then makes these people fall into the category of misleading (Table 7).

Clear and concise information and positive reviews are the primary indicators for the customer to look for a brand as it will help them in actual analysis of the product and its reliability.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There are many limitations to conducting a survey. Conducting a survey should contain a greater number of samples because the larger the sample size, the more findings and accurate the results of the survey. A professional or a research expert should be involved while performing research for better guidance and analysis of the data and content. Last but not

least, the questionnaire asked in the survey should be more direct and related to the topic because it helps the responder get familiar with the topic and answer accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION BASED ON FINDINGS

In conclusion, Businesses have gained a significant amount of audience through social media which have an interest in their product as they click through the link or post they have interest in.

Among this audience, youth have greater participation because of the higher usage and engagement with social media. Because of the larger youth proportion in social media usage, businesses switched from traditional marketing to social media marketing to attract the youth. Businesses also switched their product and service dynamics according to the youth so that they can engage larger audience through social media. Social media help businesses to gain insights about who all are watching their content and what they want after which businesses research and develop their product by Algorithms.

The social media algorithm system works based on what content viewers watch and shows them ads according to their watching or preferences. It means businesses use this data for their marketing agendas and campaigns, thus navigating the digital wave among youth.

Nowadays, companies provide customer-centric products according to their preference and body type such as beauty products, etc.

Hence, the emergence of social media in the past few years has helped businesses gain more youth audiences because of the craze of digital identity and entertainment among young people that social media provides through its platform.

RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Future studies could explore areas like influencer marketing and the content utilized by the youth, and how digital marketers create content according to the algorithms. For this, there should be an improvement in conducting the survey. The survey should contain different methods of gaining responses like interviews, and group discussions which could offer deeper insights.

With the gaining popularity of metaverse and virtual reality, future research should contain information on how digital marketers are working over their influence on these new platforms. There is a psychological and cultural approach as well in this topic on how these

marketers are playing with the minds of youth to promote their content and how cultural promoting of these products influences the people towards them.

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