

## Role Of Ewom, Customer Trust And SMI's On The Purchase Intention Of Consumers - A Systematic Review Of Literature

Ms. Karishma<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Priyanka Srivastava<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

**Aim:** *The paper aims at identifying the factors affecting the purchase intention of social media users through systematic review.*

**Background:** *Social media is a platform where people can easily exchange their views and opinions and is also used as a communicating tool. Now social media has become an e-commerce platform facilitating customers to purchase directly using it.*

**Data sources:** *Electronic database was used to search research articles published between 2015-2023. Google scholar, Emerald Insight and mendeley were used to search the articles with relevant keywords.*

**Review Method:** *Systematic review was carried out; both quantitative and qualitative studies were included.*

**Conclusion:** *22 papers were reviewed before coming to the conclusions. The study concluded that social media has positively affected people's.. Social networking sites have become social commerce, as it helps consumers in gathering product related information and purchasing products. All three factors including E-WOM, Social media Influencer and customer trust have a significant impact on purchase intention.*

**Keywords:** *Social media, E-wom, Customer Trust, social media influencer, purchase intention*

### Introduction

The use of social media is rapidly expanding. Approximately 55% of people around the world use social media, according to smart insights. Social media is now used by businesses, organisations, and marketers to advertise their goods and services rather than solely for conversation and photo sharing ((<sup>1</sup>McClure & Seock, 2020)). Nowadays, consumers are familiar with practically all types of products, and social media has emerged as a treasure for consumers as a means of easily acquiring information, exploring options, and making decisions (Karishma, 2023). There are several factors that affect the purchasing behavior of every consumer which varies from individual to individual for some it can be eWOM, ease of use, e-

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<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Faculty of Commerce and Business Studies, Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies, Faridabad.

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor, Faculty of Management Studies, Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies, Faridabad.

trust, customer trust, social media influencer, perceived risk, brand attitude, subjective norms and various other factors. To get the most out of their marketing efforts, companies should concentrate on gaining the trust of their customers. In this digitized era, Businesses can gain customers' trust by offering high-quality products and services, being open and honest about their business procedures, and promptly and effectively responding to consumer feedback ((Umair Manzoor et al., 2020)). Building trust, improving usability and understanding of value in business, and lowering risk are the elements that significantly influence purchasing intention. When creating a marketing plan, marketers should take into account the product itself, social media, and marketing techniques ((Ali et al., 2020)). Consumer is able to gain more insights on products and services using social media because of ease of information availability. People cross checks product related information through comments and reviews, rather than blindly following advertisements (Karishma, 2022). According to (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020)i, influencer marketing and social media are the two upcoming unavoidable tools for marketing. Earlier we were only familiar about E-commerce but now with the advancement of Web 2.0, social media is transformed into social commerce and facebook in F-Commerce (J. Wang et al., 2022). Social media usage have increased gradually, it means they are spending more time on social media platforms, which have gained the attention of small businesses and start-ups, and now they have started selling using social media. Although before purchasing through social media, consumer has to go through a certain security checks like quality, price, payment method, comments and reviews, return and refund policies and many unknown factors. So this research will work on analyzing the factors which are considered crucial for consumers before purchasing any product using social commerce. Social media is also known as Web 2.0 because it is allowing people not only to communicate but also to share information. Consumer has transmitted social media into social commerce and gradually it will become e-commerce. Social media has given us immense opportunity to identify the

## **The review**

### **Aim**

The aim of the review was to identify and analyze the main factors affecting the purchase intention of Indian consumers.

### **Methods**

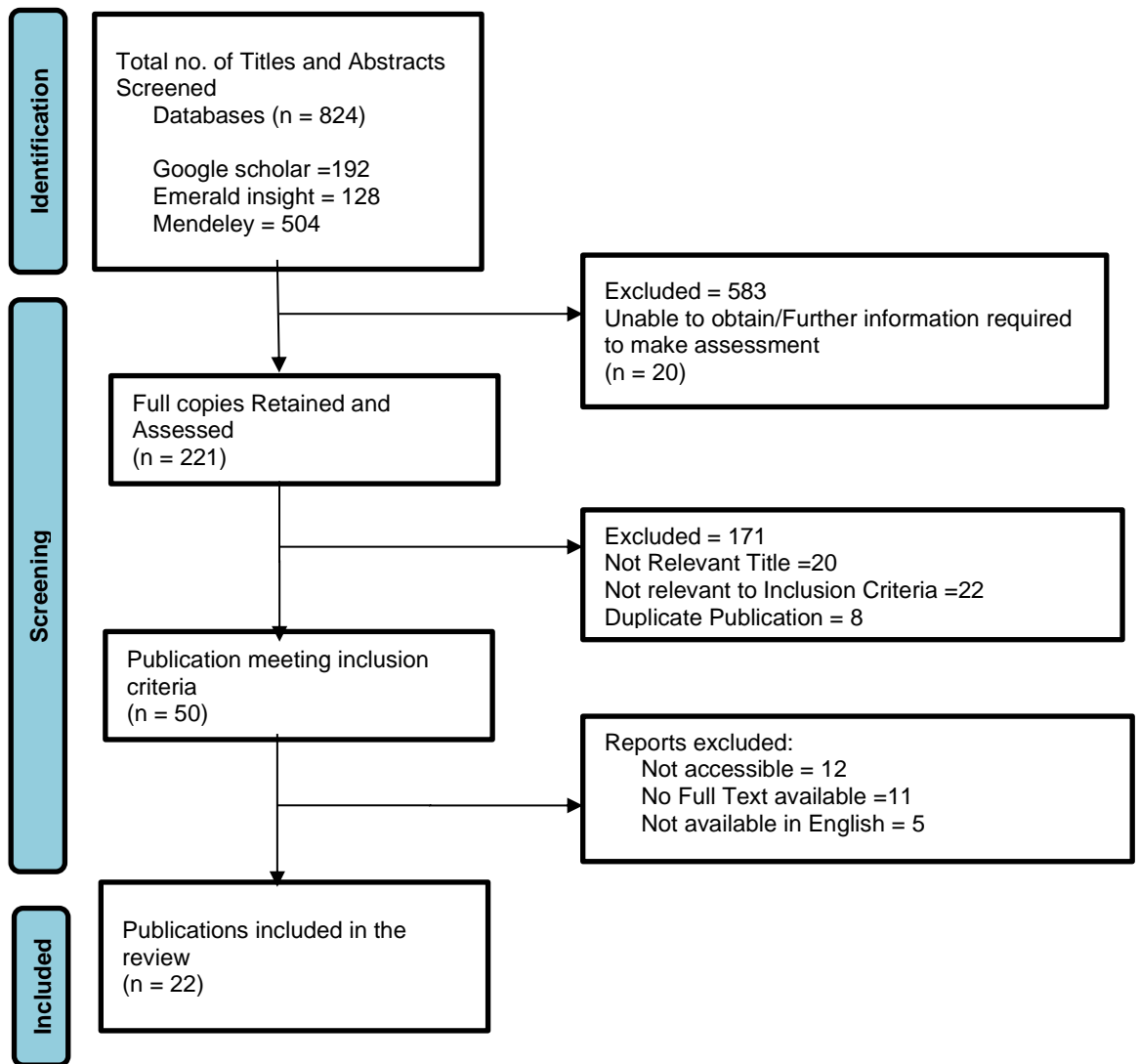
The study emphasizes on analyzing the factors affecting purchase intention of consumer. Factors vary from consumer to consumer, that's why it is significant to understand consumer behavior on continuous basis. The study taken is done to identify different factors which will help us in understanding the consumer perspective. Therefore, Systematic review is one of the relevant research methods for this objective. It recognizes and analyses numerous papers that are relevant to the study questions and the problem to be solved. The study will include both quantitative studies and qualitative studies to identify all the factors affecting consumer purchase intention. Importantly three factors were taken for the study including eWOM, Social Media Influencer (Independent Variables) and purchase intention (Dependent Variable). During my previous research work for my thesis I concluded that these three independent factors were used in various studies and had a positive/negative impact on consumer purchase intention. Through extensive literature review I was able to gain insight about these factors and their impacts. So I decided on work specifically on these three variables. To ascertain the relevant papers, several databases have been used to search. More we dig more relevant studies will be gathered. Electronic databases were used to search the papers, where we chose platforms that publish multidisciplinary papers including Google scholar, Emerald insight and Mendley. The systematic literature review initiated on 23 april 2023 using Keywords

mentioned in below table in three database, only for literature that was published in time period between 2016-2023 in English language only.

**Table1: Keywords for database**

| <b>Database</b>        | <b>Keywords</b>   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Google Scholar</b>  | “Ewom purchase intention” and “social media” + “India”<br>“Customer trust purchase intention” and “social media” + “India”<br>“Social media influencer purchase intention” and “social media” + “India” |
| <b>Emerald Insight</b> | “ewom” “Purchase intention” and “social media”<br>“Customer trust” “Purchase intention” and “social media”<br>“Social media influencer” “Purchase intention” and “social media”                         |
| <b>Mendley</b>         | “ewom” “Purchase intention” and “social media”<br>“Customer trust” “Purchase intention” and “social media”<br>“Social media influencer” “Purchase intention” and “social media”                         |

The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) was applied to conduct a systematic review for analyzing consumer behavior. The study includes cohort and cross-sectional analyses of variables.



**Search Outcome**

Out of 824 research papers which were identified through electronic databases using Google scholar, mendeley and emerald insight, 583 studies proved to be irrelevant and were excluded, 20 studies were excluded because of Unable to obtain/Further information required to make assessment. 221 studies Full copies were retained and assessed, Out of which 171 studies were excluded 20 studies were irrelevant to title, 22 studies were not relevant to inclusion criteria and 8 studies were duplicated publication. 50 studies were further observed for Publication meeting inclusion criteria, out of which 12 studies were no accessible, there was no full text available for 11 studies and 5 studies were not available in English. Finally, 22 papers were included in the research study. The PRISMA framework for this study is shown in Figure 1.

**Results**

**E-wom (Electronic- Word of mouth)**

Four factors of eWOM that affects the purchase intention of consumers are Information Provider's Expertise, the quantity of e-WOM, and the Source credibility of eWOM, and the quality of e-WOM (Ho et al., 2021). eWOM includes comments and ratings and experience of existing customers toward a particular brand or product eWOM aids consumers in mitigating the risk of purchasing bad product by reading positive and negative comments ((Markiones et al., 2023). Millennials may be more inclined to believe a product or service is worthwhile to purchase if they read favorable reviews and suggestions for it on social media. This is so because millennial are more prone to believe the advice of their peers than mainstream media or print marketing. Millennials are also made aware of new products and services through word-of-mouth. Millennial are enthusiastic and curious when they see their friends and relatives posting on social media about a new product or service. Businesses should concentrate on developing effective eWOMs if they want their advertisements to appeal to millennial. This can be accomplished through producing interactive content for social media, enticing users to comment, and hosting prizes and contests (Rahmawati, 2022)). Credibility and personalization are the two factors that affect the eWOM on consumer purchase intention. Customers are more likely to be persuaded by recommendations from people they trust. This includes sites that specialize in products or services, sites that have interests and demographics similar to customers, and sites with a history of providing accurate information. eWOM tailored to a consumer's individual requirements and preferences influences them. This comprises electronic word-of-mouth generated by the consumer usage, interest, and previous purchase history (Y. Wang & Yu, 2017). When customers read eWOM about a brand or product, it can influence their decision to purchase that brand or product. This is due to the fact that customers trust their friends' opinions more than conventional advertisements such as television or newspaper advertising (ArliyariniErlikamilaYanti and TatikSuryani, 2020). Consumers are resorting to eWOM to reduce the risk of uncertainty by reviewing prevailing consumer comments and reviews. Consumer attention, building the correct brand image, and reducing promotional activities all enhance the role of eWOM in consumer's eyes (Ni Kadek Yora, Komang Ayu Puspita Dewi, 2021). According to (Yuniarty et al., 2020) there is a positive significant impact of eWOM on purchase intention of consumers.

### **Customer Trust**

It takes time and work to earn the trust of your customers. However, it is crucial for organizations seeking long-term success. Businesses that can create trust with customers are more likely to influence purchases and increase sales. The relationship between marketing efforts and purchase intentions is influenced by consumer trust. Businesses that can establish trust with their customers on social media are more likely to influence their purchasing decisions ((Umair Manzoor et al., 2020)). In underdeveloped countries, the association between trust and purchasing intention is stronger than in developed countries. This could be due to the fact that consumers in developing nations are more likely to be provided information about different brands and companies and they are more likely to have had a terrible experience with past brands. As a result, individuals are more likely to favor trusted brands (J. Wang et al., 2022)). Consumers are more likely purchase things from companies they recognize. Building trust requires giving clear and concise information about the products and services offered, responding to customer comments, and offering an excellent customer experience. Consumers are less inclined to acquire a product from a brand if they believe the purchase to be hazardous. Risk can be mitigated by providing clear and comprehensive information about the items and services offered, offering a money-back guarantee, and having a clear and simple return procedure. Consumers are more likely to purchase a brand that has been suggested by their friends and relatives. Encourage customers to share their experiences on social media to broaden their social reach ((Ali et al., 2020)). Trust influences buying intentions of

customers more than security. This could be because of the fact that trust is a wide notion that encompasses a variety of criteria including reputation, customer service, and a dedication to privacy. Security, on the other hand, is a distinct idea that focuses on the safeguarding of personal and financial data ((Sharma et al., 2017)). In social commerce, trust signifies that a consumer is willing to purchase a product on the condition that he or she will not be duped. Favorable electronic-word-of-mouth can build confidence in customers, subsequently leading to a purchase decision ((Jan et al., 2019)).

**Social Media Influencer**

Influencers are mostly netizens, people who gained recognition through the internet and are active in the internet by promoting their self-made contents (Kotler et al., 2016). People are becoming more inclined to social commerce, which has broadened the roles of bloggers and influencers. Influencers can persuade the younger generation to make more purchase. Credibility, relevance, engagement, and product category are some of the factors that influence youth's attitudes towards these influencers. Organizations can employ social media influencers to attract the younger generation, who are increasingly spending time on social media platforms ((Mangoma et al., 2022)). Purchase intention is influenced by variables other than the influencer's behaviors, such as the need for a product, perceived value, price, brand perception, and others. As a result, while an influencer's traits may not be able to make a consumer buy a product, they can undoubtedly make him/her contemplate buying it when the need arises and the rest of the conditions are favorable ((Saima & Khan, 2020)). Social media are taking place of celebrity endorser as brands are using them as a promotion tool. Social media platforms are used to gather the product related information and every social media user follows at least one influencer, which increases the chances of changing their purchasing decision ((Gupta & Singh, 2020), and P.B Singh, 2020). People treat those influencers as their idol that have similar homophile attitude in buying behavior. Social media influencers indirectly influence the purchase intention of consumers through brand image ((Hermanda et al., 2019)). Some of the factors of influencer which affect the purchase intention of consumer include perceived credibility, trust, expertise, perceived behavioral control and subjective norms. Although consumer has less significant impact through subjective norms on purchase intention and has major effect through perceived credibility (Chetioui et al., 2020)). Before embarking on an influencer marketing strategy, it is critical to understand the role of attitude. A positive attitude of customers towards influencers is important, and brands should make sure that the influencers chosen for promotion have certain characteristics such as attractiveness, familiarity, and compatibility ((Bin Alam et al., 2023)). Social media is tremendously rising every day, companies are frequently using micro celebrities for the product promotion as their brand ambassadors. Consumers are more influenced by micro blogger in comparison to macro bloggers due to the fact that they provide information to sponsorship and content is authentic ((Kay et al., 2020)). Consumers are creating intimate connections with influencers through daily social media interaction and have started relating their lives with influencers. GEN Z or also known as our new generation are not attracted by the looks of these influencers whereas they believe more in credibility, PSI and confidence of them ((Huang & Copeland, 2020)).

**Table 1:** Summary of Baseline Characteristics and Outcomes of Included Studies

| S.N<br>O. | REFERE<br>NCE | LOCAT<br>ION | STUDY<br>DESIGN | STUDY<br>POPULA<br>TION<br>AND | STATISTICA<br>LLYS<br>SIGNIFICAN<br>T FACTORS<br>AFFECTING | Effective<br>Variables<br>Identificat<br>ion |
|-----------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|--|--|
|-----------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|--|--|

|          |  |           |                        | <b>SAMPLE SIZE</b>                    | <b>PURCHASE INTENTION</b>  |   |
|----------|--|-----------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <b>1</b> | Umair Manzoor et.al (2020)                   | Pakistan  | online survey          | 190 Social media users                | social media marketing has a significant 69.6% effect on consumer's purchase intentions, customer trust affects consumer's purchase intention by about 70% | Social media marketing, purchase intention and customer trust |
| <b>2</b> | Ali Abou Ali et.al.                          | Lebanon   | cross sectional survey | 384 judgmental sampling               | Positive relationship between Trust and social commerce  | Trust and social commerce                                     |
| <b>3</b> | Jian Wang et.al.                             | N/A       | Qualitative            | N/A                                   | Trust has a positive influence on consumer purchase intention  | Trust   |
| <b>4</b> | Dr. Muhammad Tahir*                          | Pakistan  | Cross sectional survey | 360 Social media users                | Online reviews and Trust has positive impact on customer's purchase intention  | Online Review and Trust                                       |
| <b>5</b> | Bhuvanesh Kumar Sharma et.al.                | India     | Cross sectional survey | 250 social media users as respondents | Trust and Security has a significant influence on purchase intention   | Trust and Security  |
| <b>6</b> | Yichuan Wang,*, Chiahui Yub                  | Taiwan    | Cross sectional survey | 217 social commerce users             | E-Wom has a positive effect on consumer's purchase intention   | E-wom and purchase intention                                  |
| <b>7</b> | Arliyarini Erlikamila Yanti and TatikSuryani | Indonesia | Qualitative            | N/A                                   | E-Wom has a positive effect on consumer's purchase intention   | E-wom and purchase intention                                  |

|           |                         |                        |                          |                           |  |   |
|-----------|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--|---|
| <b>8</b>  | Vi Truc Ho et.al.       | Vietnam                | Cross sectional survey   | 700 Gen-Y and Gen-Z users | Information provider's Expertise, the quantity of e-WOM, source credibility of e-WOM, and the quality of e-WOM has a significant impact on consumer's purchase intention | e-wom and purchase intention  |
| <b>9</b>  | Asif Iqbal et.al.       | India (Uttar Pradesh)  | Cross sectional survey   | 361 Respondents           | E-wom has significant impact on consumer's purchase decision more through online websites than social networking sites   | e-wom and purchase decision   |
| <b>10</b> | RINA RAHMA WATI         | Indonesia              | Cross sectional survey   | 249 Respondents           | Social media, E-wom and Brand loyalty has a positive impact on consumer's purchase intention   | Social media, E-wom and Bbrand loyalty                                  |
| <b>11</b> | Youssef Chetioui et.al. | North Africa (Morocco) | Structured Questionnaire | 610 Moroccan Respondents  | Social media influencer has positive impact on Brand Attitude and Consumer Purchase intention  | Social media influencer, Brand Attitude and consumer purchase intention |
| <b>12</b> | Saima& M. Altaf Khan    | India                  | Structured Questionnaire | 76 Respondents            | Trustworthiness, Entertainment and Information quality have a direct impact on influencer's credibility and  | Trust, Entertainment, Information quality, influencer credibility and   |



|    |                              |            |                          |                 |  |   |
|----|------------------------------|------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--|---|
|    |                              |            |                          |                 | indirect impact on customer's purchase intention   | purchase intention  |
| 13 | Prosper Mangoma et.al.       | Harare     | Structured Questionnaire | 200 respondents | Blogs of Instagram Influencers have a significant impact on customer's purchase intention                            | Instagram influencer and purchase intention                                       |
| 14 | Yuvika Gupta et.al.          | India      | Structured Questionnaire | 400 respondents | Insta-famous celebrities have a positive significant impact on customer's buying behavior                            | Insta famous celebrity  |
| 15 | Ahnaf Chowdhury NILOY et.al. | Bangladesh | Structured Questionnaire | 500 respondents | influencer's attractiveness, familiarity and compatibility has a significant impact on consumer's purchase intention | influencer's attractiveness, familiarity and compatibility and purchase intention |
| 16 | Atika Hermanda et.al.        | Indonesia  | Structured Questionnaire | 219 respondents | Social Media Influencer has a negative impact on consumer's purchase intention                                       | SMI and purchase intention  |
| 17 | Buyung Romadhoni et.al.      | Indonesia  | Structured Questionnaire | 70 Respondents  | E-wom and Social Media Marketing have a positive significant impact on consumer's purchase intention.                | E-wom, SMM and Purchase intention   |
| 18 | Jay Trivedi & Ramzan Sama    | India      | Structured Questionnaire | 438 Respondents | Expert Influencer has a more positive effect on  | Influencer and purchase decision  |

|           |  |           |                          |                      |   |  |
|-----------|--|-----------|--------------------------|----------------------|---|--|
|           |  |           |                          |                      | consumer's purchasing decision comparative to Celebrity Endorser.   |  |
| <b>19</b> | Samantha Kay, Rory Mulcahy & Joy Parkinson | Australia | Structured Questionnaire | 334 female consumers | Micro bloggers and macro bloggers have a significant effect on consumer's purchase intention  | Micro bloggers and macro bloggers                    |
| <b>20</b> | Ouya Huang et.al.                          | Ohio      | Structured Questionnaire | 304 respondents      | Consumers are influenced by Social media influencers but they doesn't use hash tags so frequently and they are more attracted towards influencers credibility, PSI and confidence rather than physical attractiveness | PSI, Influencer credibility and confidence           |
| <b>21</b> | Ni Kadek Yora Yohana et.al.                | Indonesia | Structured Questionnaire | 100 respondents      | There is no significant impact of e-wom on consumer's purchase intention. E-wom and brand image has a positive impact on purchase intention. Also, there is a positive relationship between e-wom and brand image     | E-wom, social media, purchase intention, brand image |

|    |                 |           |                            |                 |  |  |
|----|-----------------|-----------|----------------------------|-----------------|--|--|
| 22 | Yuniarty et.al. | Indonesia | Structure d Question naire | 398 respindents | There is a significant impact on eWOM on consumer's purchase intention | eWOM, Perceived behavioral control, subjective norms, purchase |
|----|-----------------|-----------|----------------------------|-----------------|--|--|

## Conclusion

In this era, social media has become inevitable and a daily routine for every social media users. 60% of the world's population uses social media and people spent approx 2.5 hours daily on social media (smart insights). We can infer that scrolling their social media platforms has become habit for them. Social media is rapidly moving toward becoming social commerce, by providing opportunities for small businesses to use social media platform as a promotional and commerce tool. E-commerce has changed buying habits of people by providing variety of products to choose from. This gave social media the advantage to access people to start selling their product on social media platforms also, and the response from consumer turn out to be positive. Now people have started purchasing more through these social media platforms Facebook and Instagram and now it is called social commerce. Some of the significant factors of social media which have a significant impact on consumer's purchase intention are eWOM (Electronic word of mouth), Social media influencer and Customer Trust. eWOM has positively affected consumer purchase intention. When consumer plans to purchase a product, they prefer to reach the comment section of particular product, and the information provided by existing consumer is termed as eWOM. Studies have shown that consumers purchase product on the basis comments, reviews and recommendations made by the customers. Significance of social media influencer is rapidly increasing and has shown a steady growth, some studies have also mentioned that consumer have more faith in influencers when compared with celebrity endorsements. Influencer marketing or social media influencers have a positive significant effect on consumer's purchase intention. Third factor which has a huge impact is customer trust towards a particular brand/ product. Precise and reliable information of a product creates faith in the minds of customer, which enables them to believe that the product is worth buying. Customer purchases those products which provide the quality as mentioned in description and is up to mark. So the study concludes on the basis of extensive literature review that consumer has a positive impact of many factors including e-wom, social media marketing and customer trust.

## Research Implications

The research will aid marketers to understand the role of comments and reviews and how maintaining or improving CRM is important. Understanding the importance of social media influencer will help them in promotional activities because it has been witnessed that consumer are now more reliable on SMI's compared to celebrity endorsers. This will not only help marketers in reducing their promotional cost but also in attracting customers. Next is customer's trust towards brand/ product which plays a vital role, it is important to stand for the customer when required and providing product as specified in advertisement, ensuring quality and quantity. The study will also help scholar in their research work for understanding consumer buying decision through social media platforms.

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