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➢ Priority is given to novelty, originality, and to the extent of contribution that would make to the particular field.

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Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Buying Behavior Among Generation Z

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ABSTRACT

Social media can create a significant change in mindset through social media marketing. It directly affects consumer buying behaviour. But there is no clear understanding of the factors of social media marketing and their impact on consumer buying behaviour. As a result, it will affect business activities in a bad manner. This research study focuses on the impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour among generation Z, who use cosmetic products in Sri Lanka. Through this research study, marketers can identify and get a clear idea about the impact of social media marketing on the consumer buying behaviour of generation Z. Accordingly, marketers can improve their future plans, and they can build up new plans according to new trends. This research study would give value addition to academic readers for their further references. A deductive approach is used in this research study. And the questionnaire survey method was adopted in this research study. The survey of generation Z's consumers in the cosmetic industry found that there is a significant impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour. In addition, it has been found that different variables have different types of results that affect consumer buying behaviour. Online advertising, quality content and customer reviews and ratings are found to have a significant impact on consumer buying behaviour, while posts are found to have an insignificant impact. Marketers and policy makers should carefully evaluate the impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour when taking decisions and making policies, and procedures. This research study was conducted only for consumers who use cosmetic products in Sri Lanka. But there are many products in the marketplace. Therefore generalization of this conclusion is only valid for the cosmetic industry. So future researchers can use any other industries to conduct their research.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Consumer Buying Behavior, Generation Z

1. INTRODUCTION

This study focused on the impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour among generation Z, who use cosmetic products in Sri Lanka. When it concerns social media marketing, in today's fast-moving business environment, it is one of the very trending segments in connection with marketing activities. As the result of innovative technologies and day-by-day developing communication technologies, consumer buying behaviour also has highly related to that innovative changes. During the most rapid period of

technological transformation, in which social media plays a substantial role in every aspect of business, generation Z is changing the marketing world and shaping its future in a way that no generation has before (Artemova, 2018). When looking at a Sri Lankan business context, every business implements various marketing strategies. Many companies in Sri Lanka are well familiar with traditional marketing methods like TV, newspaper advertisements, posters, etc. Many Sri Lankan businesses fail when coming to social media marketing. In Sri Lanka, social media marketing use by entrepreneurs is still in a very nascent stage. Due to the explosion of media and mobile, retailers need to be far more innovative to engage and retain their target audience. So it is very important to have a clear understanding of the most suitable social media platform to do their marketing activities. If there is not a clear understanding of the impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour, marketers will fail to select the most suitable platform and factors that influence to do their marketing campaigns. A social media marketing strategy refers to an organization's integrated activities that turn social media communication and interactions into useful strategic means to achieve desired marketing results (Li, Larimo, & Leonidou, 2020). Using social media in marketing does more than improve site traffics and help businesses reach more customers; it provides a valuable venue for better understanding and learning from your target audiences (Wordstream, 2020) with simple clicks using their chosen social media channel. Because of the easiness, most people use social media to purchase their products, and marketers use social media marketing to sell their products.

Consumer behaviour entails the study of people's needs, motivations, and thought processes used in choosing one product over another and the patterns of purchasing different goods and services (Orji, Sabo, Abubakar, & Usman, 2017). Consumer behaviour contributes greatly to decision making process by marketers in marketing planning as well as authorizing them to create long-lasting relationships with customers. The study of consumer behaviour helps firms and organizations improve their marketing strategies by understanding issues and continuing to describe how the psychology of how consumers think, feel, reason, and select between different alternatives (Ohio University, https://onlinemasters.ohio.edu/blog/social-media-impact-on-businesses/, 2020). So it is important to know how customers are affected by internet use and to recognize how their online preferences affect their buying behaviour for different products (Fennis & Strobe, 2010). When it considers the Sri Lankan context, it is a lack of literature in Sri Lanka to examine the impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour. So there is a clear empirical gap.

The main purpose of this research is to answer the research question: "Does social media marketing significantly impact consumer buying behaviour among Generation Z?" More specially, this research has four objectives:

1) To examine the impact of online advertising on consumer buying behaviour.

2) To examine the impact of posts on consumer buying behaviour.

3) To examine the impact of quality content on consumer buying behaviour.

4) To examine the impact of customer reviews and ratings on consumer buying behaviour.

This paper has four parts. Firstly, it reviews the extant literature relating to social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour. Secondly, the research methodology is presented, and data analysis techniques are discussed. Next, the results are summarized. Finally, the paper concludes with a discussion of recommendations as well.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Social media marketing
According to this research study, social media marketing is considered the independent variable. Social media refers to interaction among people in which they create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks through social media sites (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Many businesses use online interactions among their users by encouraging their customers to share their purchases (Bilgin, 2018) with simple clicks using their chosen social media channels. Because of the easiness, most people use social media to purchase their products, and marketers use social media marketing to sell their products. With the rise in social networks, a new era of content creation has emerged, where individuals can easily share experiences and information with other users (Chen, Fay, & Wang, 2011). The scope of social media marketing is the use of social media as a way of interacting with one or a few stakeholders as a necessary tool for communication. According to (Khan & Jan, 2015) there are five dimensions of social media marketing, which means these five things are required to create connections with consumers or to build traffic to company websites. They are online communities, interaction, sharing of content, accessibility and credibility. According to (Neumann, 2018), presented some variables. They are content creation and images, platforms, advertising and promotions. There are five different dimensions of social media marketing activities: Entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization and electronic word-of-mouth (Godey et al., 2016). Social media marketing includes activities like posting text and image updates, videos, and other content that drives audience engagement, as well as paid social media advertising. (Kim & Ko, 2012), developed a construct of social media marketing to emphasize that using social media as a marketing tool will have a different appeal compared to traditional marketing platforms such as printed advertising, billboard, etc.

2.2. Consumer buying behaviour
According to this research study, consumer buying behaviour is considered the dependent variable, which is depend on social media marketing. Consumer buying behaviour refers to the action taken by consumers before buying a product or service. This process may include consulting search engines, engaging with social media posts or a variety of other actions (DJ Team, 2020). Understanding consumer buying behaviour is the key secret to reaching your client and converting them to purchase from you. In the marketing context, it is quite difficult to make a purchase decision as a result of so many available options (Saoula & Auf, 2018). Alternatively, consumer buying behaviour refers

to the buying behaviour of final consumers, both individuals and households, who buy goods and services for personal consumption (Kumar, 2010). A set of activities which involves the purchase and use of goods and services which result from the customers' emotional and mental needs and behavioural responses (Stallworth, 2008). There are more factors in the background playing an important role in taking customers to the final decision. Therefore, it is very crucial for the marketing team to understand the factors that influence the customer's purchasing process and buying decisions (Khaniwale, 2015; Noel, 2017; Salamin & Hassan, 2016). There are many factors that can affect consumer behaviour in various ways. These factors are divided by Ramya & Ali (2016) into five broad categories: psychological, social, cultural, economic and personal factors. Psychological factors can be shown as motivation, perception, learning, beliefs and attitudes. The social factors influencing consumer behaviour are family, reference, role and status. The cultural factors influencing consumer behaviour are culture, sub culture and social class. The economic factors influencing consumer behaviour are personal income, family income, income expectations, liquid assets and government policies. The personal factors influencing consumer behaviour are age, income, occupation, life style and personality. According to (Sydorenko, 2022), there are four types of buying behaviour. They are complex buying behaviour, dissonance-reducing buying behaviour, habitual buying behaviour and variety-seeking behaviour. Complex buying behaviour means the customer is highly involved in the buying process and through research before the purchase because of a high degree of economic or psychological risk. Dissonance-reducing buying behaviour type presupposes lots of involvement in the buying process due to the high price or infrequent purchase. In this case, a 4 customer won't think much about which model to use, choosing between a few brands available. The habitual buying behaviour type of consumer buying behaviour is characterized by low involvement in a purchase decision. A customer sees no significant difference among brands and buys habitual goods over a long period. In variety-seeking behaviour, a customer switches among brands for the sake of variety of curiosity, not dissatisfaction, demonstrating a low level of involvement.

2.3. Relationship between social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour

Electronic media plays an important role in fulfilling people's needs, and this is done through social media marketing (Isra, Elham, & Sara, 2015). Social media is the best way to promote products and take advantage of a diverse population (Weinberg, 2009). Consumer buying behaviour plays an important role in the marketing field in that all marketer wants insights into how, when, why and what consumer behave in a given way. Furthermore, social media could create brand attitudes that influence consumer behaviour. The brand or product's good image will lead the customer to make a decision on their purchases. If the consumer's friend shares or suggests services or goods on their social media on social media, it affects the mindset of the brand and affects their decision making. Asma & Misbah (2018) have presented a linked relationship between social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour, and it shows that social media marketing is an effective marketing tool that affects the perception of customers and ultimately influences their purchase decision.

Social media gives an opportunity to consumers to get feedback and reviews about a product and services. The result from the primary and secondary data shows that product recommendations can lead to impulse buying behaviour. This impulsive buying behaviour is decided on the basis of the trust of the recommender and affection towards that particular product. In simple words, it is influenced by both the recommender and the product itself (Liu, Zhang, Huang, Zhang, & Zhao, 2020). In 2012, a theoretical models review was conducted by (Pan & Crotts, 2012) to examine its relevant connection on social media towards the marketing strategies of companies in attracting their consumers. (Pan, 2012), Presented McLuhan's media theory and asserted that with the explosive scale of social media and its growing impact, businesses are looking for ways to make sense of and utilize this media to their benefit. Businesses can quickly test new marketing strategies and concepts online and gain instant feedback from their clients. In like manner, people on social media are revealing themselves more and more and this is done for many reasons, including their position as customers, as they search, purchase and absorb knowledge about goods and communicate about their experiences with others, John agrees that with the development of social media marketing, the buying behaviour of the consumers is being influenced in terms of their perception and attitudes in purchasing products and services (Contractor, 2009).

3. METHODOLOGY

This study is to examine whether there is a significant impact between social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour. A deductive approach is used in this research. This is a cross-sectional study as well. Then the unit of analysis is individual: generation Z who use cosmetic products in Sri Lanka. Both primary and secondary data were used to conduct this research study. With the help of existing studies and theories in the literature, the following model was conceptualized to carry out the research. Social media marketing is considered the independent variable, and consumer buying behaviour is considered the dependent variable. In order to measure social media marketing, the researcher used online advertising, posts, quality content, customer reviews and ratings as well.
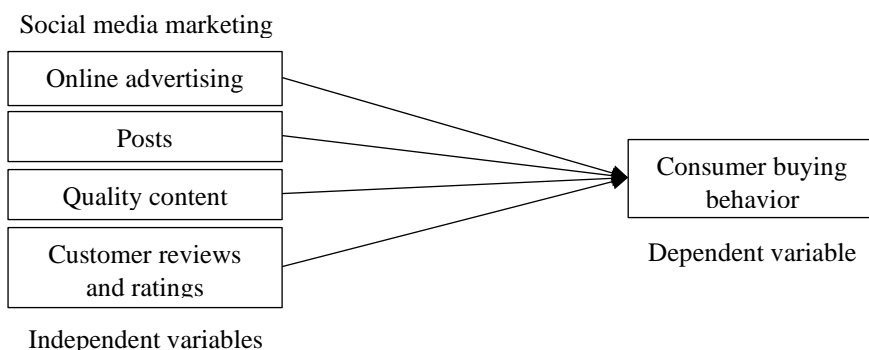
3.1. Conceptual framework

Social media marketing

| Online advertising |
| Posts |
| Quality content |
| Customer reviews and ratings |

Consumer buying behavior

Dependent variable

Independent variables

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3.2. Sampling

The total population of this research study was taken as all the consumers of generation Z who use cosmetic products in Sri Lanka. There were no specific records about the actual number of consumers of generation Z who use cosmetic products in Sri Lanka. So population is unknown. Since every element in the population has a chance of being selected, the probability sampling method has been utilized to determine the sample size. The sample size was determined as 384 according to a formula $n = (Z \alpha/\alpha)^2/(4e^2)$ ($Z \alpha/\alpha$ = +/- 1.96 , e = 5%), which is one of the very popular techniques to determine the sample size when the population is unknown. The unit of analysis was the consumers of generation Z who use cosmetic products. There was a 90% response rate.

3.3. Respondents' demographic profile

Figure 2 provides a socio-demographic profile of the respondents. Out of the total sample of 384, more than half (80.5%) were female respondents. The majority of respondents related to the age group of 22-25 (62.2%). More than half (73.2%) of respondents use Facebook as their daily use social media platform. More than half (63.3%) of the respondents use Facebook as their social media platform to engage in online shopping. More than half (58.9%) of the respondents spend 1-3 hours per day engaging with social media. Among respondents, 356 respondents daily use social media. It takes 92.7%.

3.4. Data Collection

The questionnaire survey method was used to collect data from the respondents, and the researcher used electronic methods to distribute this questionnaire to them. After testing the validity and reliability of collected data, the researcher subjected that gathered data to relevant statistical tests and procedures consisting of multiple regression analysis and correlational analysis through the SPSS statistical software package (version 26) to analyze and meet the expected objectives and findings.

3.5. Measurements

Consumer buying behaviour is the dependent variable, and Social media marketing is the independent variable. To measure consumer buying behaviour, the researcher used personal factors and social factors. And to measure social media marketing, the researcher used four variables; online advertising, posts, quality content, and customer reviews and ratings. All variables are measured by using seven-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree). Questionnaire items were assessed for internal consistency using Cronbach's Alpha. As the results indicated, Cronbach's Alpha value is greater than 0.70. So it represents a higher level of reliability. And validity was measured by KMO and Bartlett's test. As the results indicated, KMO values are greater than 0.6. So the adequacy of the sample is satisfactory.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The descriptive analysis describes the characteristics and pattern of the sample data set with the values of frequency distribution, mean, median, mode, and standard deviation. The higher values of the standard deviation of the dependent

variable and independent variable showed that they are highly dispersed from the mean value.

Table 01. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Posts	384	5	2	7	5.43	.835
Online advertising	384	6	1	7	4.74	1.525
Quality content	384	6	1	7	5.08	1.218
Customer reviews and ratings	384	6	1	7	5.19	1.224
Consumer buying behaviour	384	6	2	7	4.98	1.245

Source: Survey Data

Correlation analysis is used to measure the strength of the relationship between two variables. A Significant correlation was found between social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour. All the variables showed a positive relationship with consumer buying behaviour.

Table 02. Correlation Statistics

	Variables	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
1.	Online advertising	1				
2.	Posts	.695	1			
3.	Quality content	.826	.707	1		
4.	Customer reviews and ratings	.700	.674	.836	1	
5.	Consumer buying behaviour	.875	.689	.884	.790	1

Source: Survey Data

Table 03. Multiple Regression Statistics

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.925[a]	.855	.853	.477	.855	558.824	4	379	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Customer reviews & ratings, Posts, Online advertising, Quality content

Source: Survey Data

According to the regression analysis, $R^2=0.855$. That means social media marketing explained 85.5% per cent of the variance in consumer buying behaviour. The value of multiple coefficients of correlation (R) has been reordered as 0.925 and emphasizes that there is a strong and positive correlation between social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour.

Table 04. ANOVA Table

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	507.842	4	126.961	558.824	.000[b]
	Residual	86.106	379	.227		
	Total	593.948	383			

Source: Survey Data

The F-ratio in the ANOVA table tests whether the overall regression model is a good fit for the data. The (Table 03 ANOVA Table) shows that online

advertising, posts, quality content, customer reviews and ratings statistically significantly predict consumer buying behaviour, $F_{(4,379)}=558.824, p<0.05$. So the regression model is a good fit for the data. The p-value of the ANOVA table (0.000) is less than the Alpha value (0.05), and it indicates that there is a significant impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour.

<div align="center">Table 05. Test of Coefficient</div>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 (Constant)	.419	.169		2.485	013	.087	.751
Online advertising	.368	.030	.451	12.454	000	.310	.426
Posts	.003	.044	.002	.073	942	-.083	.090
Quality content	.390	.047	.381	8.365	000	.298	.481
Customer reviews and ratings	.157	.037	.154	4.231	000	.084	.230

Source: Survey Data

4.1. Hypotheses Testing

<div align="center">Table 06. Hypotheses testing results</div>

Hypotheses	Significant level	Findings
H1: There is a significant impact between online advertising and consumer buying behaviour.	p<0.05	Accepted
H2: There is a significant impact between posts and consumer buying behaviour.	p>0.05	Rejected
H3: There is a significant impact between quality content and consumer buying behaviour.	p<0.05	Accepted
H4: There is a significant impact between customer reviews and ratings and consumer buying behaviour.	p<0.05	Accepted
H5: There is a significant impact between social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour.	p<0.05	Accepted

Source: Survey Data

The hypotheses testing was carried out based on the results of Pearson's Correlation analysis and the result regression analysis. All the Null hypotheses were tested using those results. A two-tailed test was used in the correlation analysis.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1. Theoretical Contribution
This research study tries to fill the gap of the limited previous studies that investigate, according to existing research studies conducted by various researchers related to the area of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour, there are a number of studies that have been conducted for various countries. But there was a limited number of research studies done for the Asian countries, especially like Sri Lanka, and it will create a gap in the literature. Therefore this research study contributes to the existing limited literature.

Sometimes the literature reveals a positive impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour. But some literature reveals that there is a negative relationship. So, still, there is no exact and clear justification towards the subject matter, and there is a theoretical gap. So, through implementing this research study, the researcher tried to fulfil that theoretical gap and find the exact nature of that relationship. With the help of that important findings, the researcher could ensure that exactly there is a positive impact of social media marketing on the consumer buying behaviour and got the ability to fulfil the theoretical gap on that subject matter in the literature. So, this research study has been able to provide a valuable theoretical contribution to the existing limited knowledge on the matter. Not only the above findings but also the researcher could identify that online advertising, posts, quality content and customer reviews and ratings have a significant impact on consumer buying behaviour, and those factors can always determine the nature and strength of the relationship between social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour.

With the help of all the above significant findings, the researcher has been able to make an important theoretical contribution to the existing knowledge and literature on the subject matter by implementing this study. The research has made a significant theoretical contribution by introducing a new conceptual model to the existing knowledge and theories on the subject. And it will be a valuable resource for future researchers who wish to explore the knowledge further on this same subject matter. Further, it will become significant for market researchers to survive in the market place and it will help to get a competitive advantage as well.

5.2. Methodological Contribution
There are some important contributions the study offers to the existing literature based on the research findings. When conducting this research study researcher used the researcher's own variable mix. There were four sub-independent variables in this research study, and it was a researcher's own variable mix. Therefore in this study researcher give the contribution as methodological.

When it considers the current situation of the country's economy, it is very crucial. So, including businesses, all the sectors of the economy face lots of inconveniences. So these findings will help marketers to think about their business activities in a new way. Since the study has considered the relationship between social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour in depth and since it has identified the important determinants and indicators of that relationship with the newest data analysis, important findings can be utilized to implement new methods of achieving customers to the business.

This study has identified four indicators, and through these indicators, it has identified the nature of the impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour. According to that, the study has identified the major causes of consumer buying behaviour. Therefore, this research has methodologically contributed to the relationship between social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour by using a quantitative approach. And with the use of correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis for the data analysis and investigating of the impact of one independent variable on a dependent variable.

So, this research study has made a vast methodological contribution to future researchers as well.

5.3. Practical implications and Recommendations

According to the above findings and conclusions of the research study, there are some recommendations that are made by the researcher. With the help of these recommendations, various parties like businessmen, marketers and policymakers can make some important decisions to succeed in their business activities. Marketers and businessmen can implement ongoing development and improvement programs in order to identify the new aspects of consumers' social media behaviour. And they need to introduce promotional programs like give away and competitions in order to improve consumers' interaction with online advertising launched by the company. Furthermore, they have the ability to involve with consumer surveys in order to identify the perceptions of consumers towards product features and quality and expectations towards the benefits and accordingly develop the most attractive and effective posts and other online advertising campaigns. And also, marketers need to develop an ongoing platform through social media in order to identify consumer grievances and their opinions towards the product and services by the company and accordingly maintain a close relationship with them always. Furthermore, marketers and businessmen need to actively involve with social media marketing with up-to-date information in order to make the buying behaviour of consumers more satisfied and motivated.

5.4. Limitations

This research study was conducted only with consumers who use cosmetic products in Sri Lanka. But there are many products in the marketplace. Therefore generalization of this conclusion is only valid for the cosmetic industry.

In this research, the study researcher used a questionnaire method for collecting data. The researcher used 384 samples for this study, and the researcher used one independent variable focusing on four dimensions to test the significance of social media marketing. According to the collected data, important results were generated from used statistical techniques such as correlation and regression. That result showed that there was a significant impact of social media marketing on the consumer buying behaviour of consumers who use cosmetic products in Sri Lanka. Further, the findings of this significant study may be limited by the extent to which the respondents were unbiased and honest in responding to the survey questionnaire.

5.5. Future Research

After considering the limitations of the study, the researcher may build some guidance for future research. Future research could include a larger sample size to analyse the in-depth relationship. This research sample only consisted of consumers who use cosmetic products in Sri Lanka. So future researchers can use any other industries to conduct their research. Future researchers can involve with studies which are subjected to multiple sectors than selecting a single sector only for more accurate and depth findings. The qualitative method would allow future researchers to use interviews to collect data from the

respondents, as in-depth interviews give more information compared to questionnaires. The researcher conducted this research study by using four independent variables. So researcher suggested to future researchers to get more affecting variables to find the impact, such as simple and friendly user interface, secure login, real-time notifications, open forum etc.

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