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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

| Chapter No. | Title                                   | Page No. |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------|----------|
|             | Declaration                             | ii       |
|             | Certificate                             | iii      |
|             | Acknowledgement                         | iv       |
|             | Executive Summary                       | v        |
|             | Table of Contents                       | vi       |
|             | List of Tables                          | vii      |
|             | List of Figures                         | viii     |
|             |                                         | 1        |
| 1 1.1       | Introduction                            | 1        |
| 1.2         | Background                              | 3        |
| 1.3         | Supporting Theories                     | 5        |
| 1.4         | Company Profile: Social Media Marketing | 8        |
| 1.5         | Social Media Marketing Statistics       | 9        |
| 1.6         | Problem Statement                       | 9        |
| 1.7 2       | Objectives of the Study                 | 10       |
| 3 3.1       | Scope of Study                          | 11       |
| 3.2         | Review of Literature                    | 16       |
| 3.3         | Research Methodology                    | 16       |
| 3.4         | Problem Statement                       | 16       |
| 3.5 4       | Research Objectives                     | 17       |
| 4.1         | Type of Research                        | 17       |
| 4.2         | Sources of Data                         | 17       |
| 4.3         | Sample Size & Sampling Method           | 18       |
| 4.4         | Data Analysis and Interpretation        | 18       |
| 4.5         | Age Distribution                        | 19       |
| 4.6         | Gender Distribution                     | 20       |
| 4.7         | Occupation                              | 21       |
| 4.8         | Social Media Platforms Used             | 22       |
| 4.9         | Daily Social Media Usage                | 23       |
| 4.10        | Engagement with Brand Content           | 24       |
|             | Types of Content Engaged With           | 25       |
|             | Channel of Brand Discovery              | 26       |
|             | Brand Ad Recall                         | 27       |
|             | Brand Recognition Likelihood            |          |

|      |                                      |    |
|------|--------------------------------------|----|
| 4.11 | Influence on Brand Awareness         | 28 |
| 4.12 | Importance of Social Media Presence  | 29 |
| 4.13 | Social Media and Purchase Likelihood | 30 |
| 4.14 | Brand Loyalty                        | 31 |
| 4.15 | Trust Factors                        | 32 |
| 4.16 | Effectiveness of SMM                 | 33 |
| 4.17 | Lasting Impact on Brand Relationship | 34 |
| 5    | Findings                             | 35 |
| 6    | Limitations                          | 38 |
| 7    | Conclusion                           | 40 |
| 8    | Recommendations                      | 42 |
|      | Bibliography                         | 46 |
|      | Annexure – Survey Questionnaire      | 47 |

## LIST OF TABLES

| Table No.  | Title                                                            | Page No. |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Table 4.1  | Age Distribution of Respondents                                  | 18       |
| Table 4.2  | Gender Distribution                                              | 19       |
| Table 4.3  | Occupation of Respondents                                        | 20       |
| Table 4.4  | Social Media Platforms Used Regularly                            | 21       |
| Table 4.5  | Average Daily Time on Social Media                               | 22       |
| Table 4.6  | Frequency of Engagement with Brand Content                       | 23       |
| Table 4.7  | Types of Brand Content Engaged With Most                         | 24       |
| Table 4.8  | Channel of First Brand Discovery                                 | 25       |
| Table 4.9  | Recall of Brand Advertisements on Social Media                   | 26       |
| Table 4.10 | Likelihood of Recognising a Brand on Social Media                | 27       |
| Table 4.11 | Influence of SMM on New Brand Awareness                          | 28       |
| Table 4.12 | Importance of Brand's Social Media Presence                      | 29       |
| Table 4.13 | Effect of Social Media Engagement on Purchase Likelihood Loyalty | 30       |
| Table 4.14 | to Brands with Active Social Media Presence                      | 31       |
| Table 4.15 | Factors That Build Trust in a Brand's Social Media Presence      | 32       |
| Table 4.16 | Perceived Effectiveness of SMM in Increasing Brand Awareness     | 33       |
| Table 4.17 | Perceived Lasting Impact of SMM on Brand Relationships           | 34       |

## LIST OF FIGURES

| Figure No.  | Title                                                        | Page No. |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Figure 1.1  | Global Monthly Active Users by Social Media Platform (2024)  | 5        |
| Figure 1.2  | Global Social Media Statistics – 2024                        | 6        |
| Figure 1.3  | Key Benefits of Social Media Marketing                       | 7        |
| Figure 1.4  | Brand Awareness Pyramid                                      | 3        |
| Figure 1.5  | Key Elements of a Successful Social Media Marketing Strategy | 9        |
| Figure 2.1  | Social Media's Role Across the Consumer Decision Journey     | 11       |
| Figure 2.2  | Four Stages of Customer Loyalty                              | 12       |
| Figure 3.1  | Research Methodology Flow                                    | 16       |
| Figure 4.1  | Age Distribution of Respondents                              | 18       |
| Figure 4.2  | Gender Distribution                                          | 19       |
| Figure 4.3  | Occupation of Respondents                                    | 20       |
| Figure 4.4  | Social Media Platforms Used Regularly                        | 21       |
| Figure 4.5  | Average Daily Time on Social Media                           | 22       |
| Figure 4.6  | Frequency of Engagement with Brand Content                   | 23       |
| Figure 4.7  | Types of Brand Content Engaged With Most                     | 24       |
| Figure 4.8  | Channel of First Brand Discovery                             | 25       |
| Figure 4.9  | Recall of Brand Advertisements on Social Media               | 26       |
| Figure 4.10 | Likelihood of Recognising a Brand on Social Media            | 27       |
| Figure 4.11 | Influence of SMM on New Brand Awareness                      | 28       |
| Figure 4.12 | Importance of Brand's Social Media Presence                  | 29       |
| Figure 4.13 | Effect of Social Media Engagement on Purchase Likelihood     | 30       |
| Figure 4.14 | Loyalty to Brands with Active Social Media Presence          | 31       |
| Figure 4.15 | Factors That Build Trust in Brand's Social Media Presence    | 32       |
| Figure 4.16 | Perceived Effectiveness of SMM in Increasing Brand Awareness | 33       |
| Figure 4.17 | Perceived Lasting Impact of SMM on Brand Relationships       | 34       |
| Figure 5.1  | Summary of Key Quantitative Findings                         | 35       |

8

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

The current chapter will present the background information relating to the topic for research – Social Media Marketing. In addition, this chapter presents the motivations, objectives, and purposes of the current research, along with defining the research problem and presenting an overview of social media marketing within the industry.

Social media is something that has attracted great interest among both companies and individuals in the world of networking. Social media can basically be described as a digital medium wherein members can engage, interact, and share content including banners, posters, videos, and advertisements. Many businesses utilize social media as a means of promoting their products as well as making people aware of the brand they have. The research intends to identify the relationship between social media marketing and a business brand awareness and see how they lead to customer loyalty.

The development of social media has come far since its inception. As early as 2002, Friendster had emerged as the first popular social networking website. It took only two years before Facebook was introduced in 2004, which transformed the entire global social media environment with the introduction of "The Facebook Effect". Twitter appeared in 2006, followed by Instagram in 2010. TikTok is now the fastest-growing social media app in history with a billion users within just five years of its launch. Currently, there are over 5 billion monthly active social media users globally – over 62% of the world's population.

Business rivalry through social media platforms is accelerating fast. Now companies are aware of this platform as an important tool to reach out to consumers. Effective social media marketing strategies are imperative in order to achieve branding and customer loyalty.

According to the results from the previous research, the impact of marketing communication on social media plays an influential part in building brand awareness in the consumer world. By adopting the practice of integrated marketing communication, organizations can establish a corporate brand image in the minds of customers – starting from awareness to customer satisfaction, followed by brand loyalty.

### 1.2 Supporting Theories

#### A. Brand Awareness

Brand awareness can be described as the capacity of a prospective buyer to recognize a brand within a specific product category. Brand awareness ranges from being vaguely aware to the firm belief that the product is the sole brand within its specific category. The Brand Awareness Pyramid presented below shows the four successive levels of brand awareness.

### Brand Awareness Pyramid



Figure 1.4: Brand Awareness Pyramid

## II. Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing can be termed as a type of digital marketing which uses social media networks to market a product or service or create a brand name. It involves the need for an ongoing and continuously changing strategy, with quantifiable objectives in mind. Marketing communications helps to make a connection between a brand and its people, locations, events, and emotions, which help to create a brand name..

### C. Online/Digital Media

The term online media, which is also known as digital media, covers all types of media that can be accessed over the internet and includes text, pictures, video, and audio content. Examples of online media include e-mail, mailing lists, websites, blogs, WhatsApp, and various other social networking sites. The phenomenon of digital media has become the main medium for mass communication in the 21st century and has changed consumer interaction completely.

### D. Social Media Advertising

Social media advertising refers to the paid form of non-personal communication of ideas, products, or services using sponsorship in digital media. With respect to social media marketing, social media advertising comprises sponsored posts, display ads, video ads, and any other type of promotional communication. What sets social media advertising apart from other forms of advertisements is its ability to target audiences extremely efficiently on various levels such as demographics, interests, behaviors, and geographic location.

### E. Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty can be defined as the dedication of a customer towards buying or using any brand regardless of the competition available. In relation to the use of social media for branding, there are ways through which the customer loyalty can be formed. The first step involves engagement by the brands, then communication between the brands and their customers followed by customer service. Lastly, there are communities that are built based on values and interests.

### 1.3 Company Profile: Social Media Marketing for Businesses

#### Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing is an effective strategy for companies of all sizes to connect with their prospects and customers. Individuals get to know a brand through social media, learn about it, interact with it, and make purchases. Excellent social media marketing can generate passionate followers who will promote your brand to others. The popular social media sites are listed below.

Global Monthly Active Users by Social Media Platform (2024)

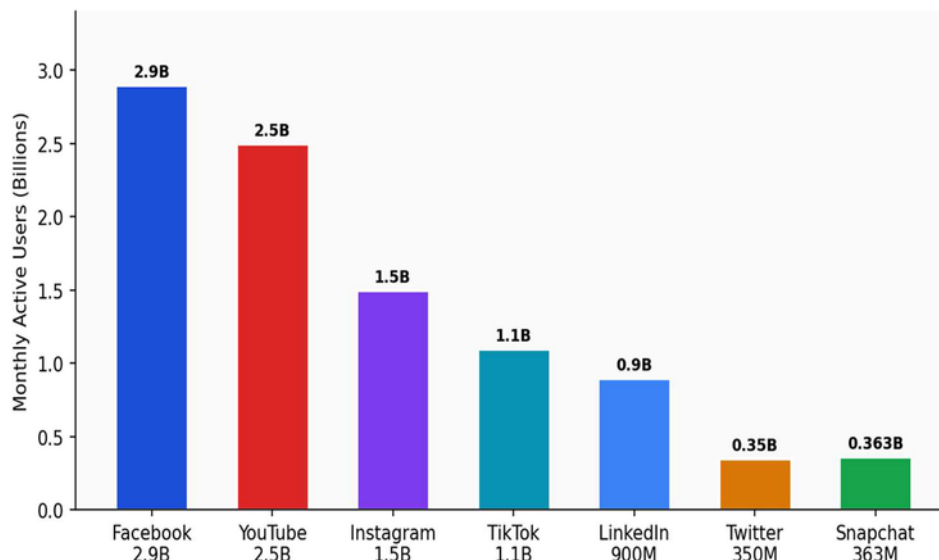


Figure 1.1: Global Monthly Active Users by Social Media Platform (2024)

A successful social media marketing plan needs: (i) Brand account maintenance and optimization on appropriate sites; (ii) Creating posts with various kinds of content such as photos, video, stories, and live streaming videos; (iii) Engagement with comments, likes, and shares; (iv) Creating communities out of followers; and (v) Using social media advertising with highly targeted user groups.

The most effective social media sites for businesses are Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, TikTok, and Snapchat. Each has its unique user community, content, and application for marketing purposes. Facebook is suitable for relationship building and targeting seniors. Instagram, which is used by more than 1.5 billion monthly active users, is best suited for social shopping, influencer marketing, and UGC campaigns. LinkedIn is used for professional networking and B2B marketing activities, and TikTok is best for entertaining, influencer-led brand building campaigns directed at GenZ audiences.

## 1.4 Social Media Marketing Statistics

Global Social Media Statistics - 2024

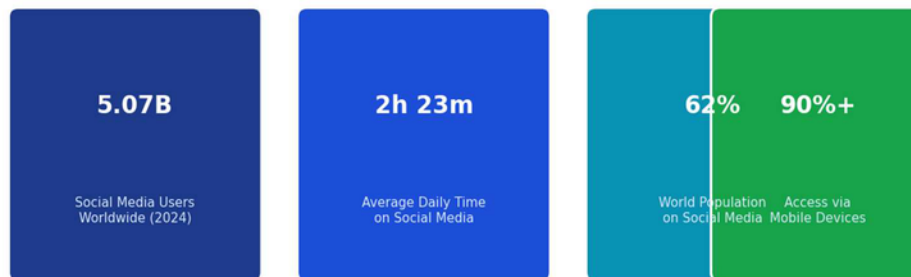


Figure 1.2: Global Social Media Statistics – 2024

Statistics which highlight the impact of social media on consumer behavior can be seen as follows:

1. Adults spend more than 2 hours and 23 minutes each day on social media.
2. 70% of individuals who have a positive experience with a brand online are likely to refer the brand to other people.
3. People on Facebook engage with an average of 12 Facebook advertisements each month.
4. 81% of individuals utilize Instagram for conducting product research prior to purchase.
5. Almost 80% of Twitter users view brands more positively when they reply to tweets.

All the above statistics help in understanding how vital it is for businesses to develop a proper social media marketing strategy.

There are numerous benefits of social media marketing. Following are the benefits of social media marketing listed by businesses, as indicated by Smart Insights (2023):

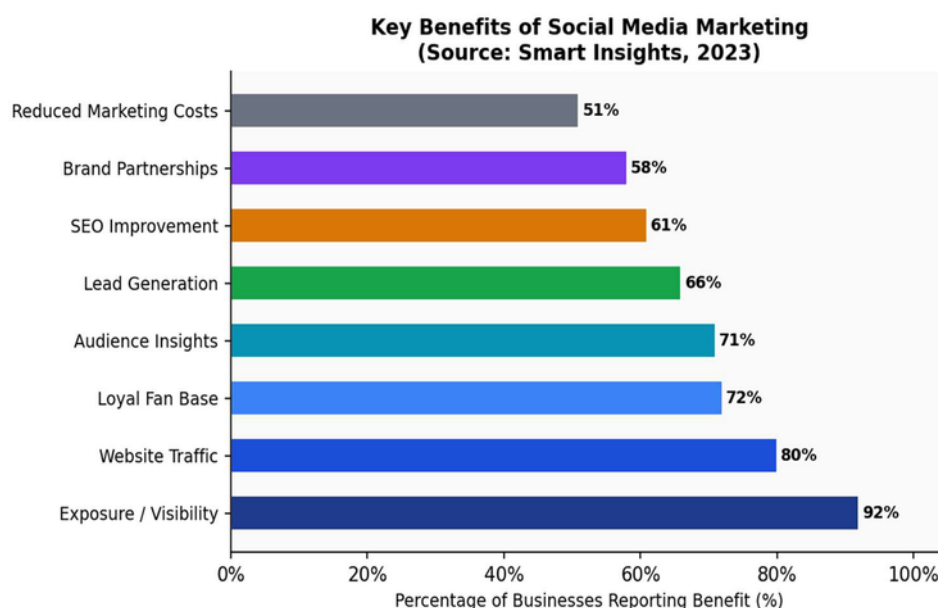


Figure 1.3: Key Benefits of Social Media Marketing (Source: Smart Insights, 2023)

The basic principles that make up a good social media marketing plan include audience knowledge, clear brand identification, a planned content strategy, analytics capability, and an inward-focused marketing strategy. This principle known as the 70-20-10 rule is commonly applied in the field, meaning 70 percent of information, 20 percent of emotional and brand culture content, and 10 percent promotion. Figure 1 below shows the main components of social media marketing.

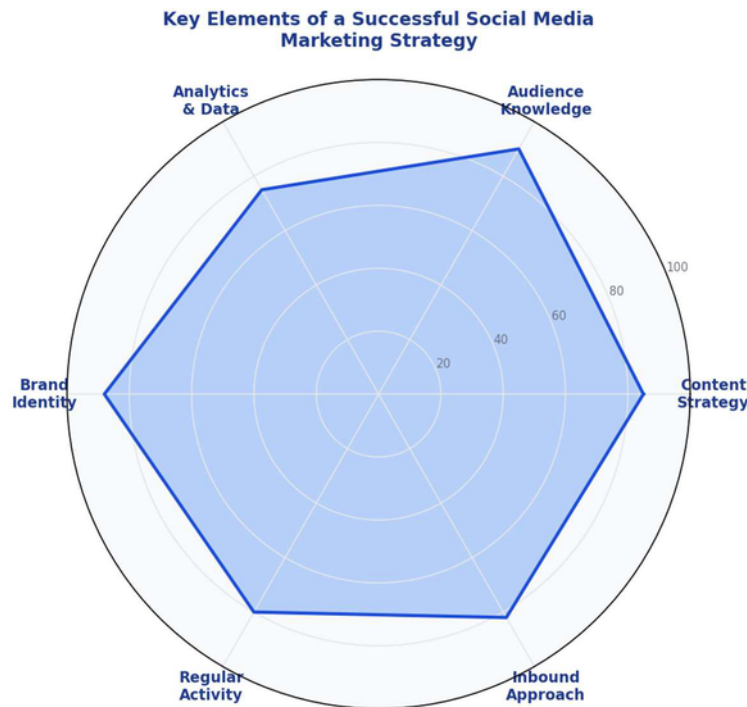


Figure 1.5: Key Elements of a Successful Social Media Marketing Strategy

## 1.5 Problem Statement

In the modern age, social media platforms have emerged as an essential component for companies to reach out to their targeted audience. Although SMM is being widely utilized by organizations nowadays, it lacks clear evidence on how successful it is at shaping brand recognition and brand loyalty among customers. Despite huge amounts being invested in social media strategies, many firms have been unable to see concrete results regarding customer engagement, satisfaction, and brand loyalty.

The current research examined the role played by social media marketing in promoting brand recognition and ensuring loyalty of customers and which methods and channels are more likely to achieve those goals.

## 1.6 Objectives of the Study

Specific objectives that drove this study include:

1. To study the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness.
2. To determine the impact of social media communication on customer loyalty and retention.

3. To determine which social media platforms and what kind of content would make the brand more visible and engaging to its customers.
4. To establish the correlation between consumer engagement on social media sites and how customers view the brand.
5. To study how much trust and attachment customers develop toward the brand through social media marketing.
6. To recommend ways businesses can improve their social media marketing efforts.

## 1.7 Scope of Study

The study sample consisted of consumers who were active social media users and who had firsthand experiences with brand communication via digital media. In this regard, the influence of social media marketing on brand awareness and brand loyalty among consumers was explored. Data collection for this study was carried out using a questionnaire-based approach during October – December 2024.

It is worth noting that the study sample comprised mainly urban dwellers in the age group of 18-34 years. The findings of this research need to be taken into account keeping in mind the demographic factors mentioned above and may not hold true across older demographic groups, non-urban areas, or other nations such as India.

## CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

An extensive examination of available literature was done to determine the theoretical basis for social media marketing, brand awareness, and consumer loyalty. The diagram presented below shows the effect that social media interactions have on consumers throughout their entire brand experience process, starting from the moment they discover the brand through to after-sales experiences.

### Social Media's Role Across the Consumer Decision Journey

*Social media touchpoints influence consumers at every stage of their brand journey*

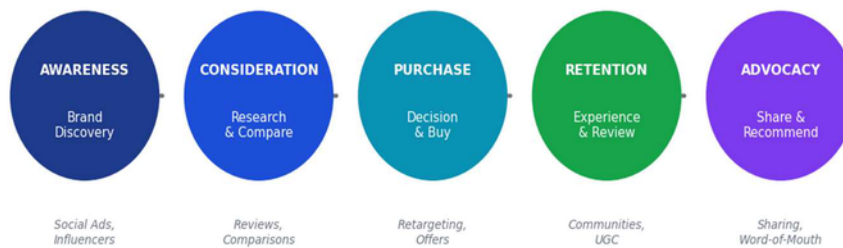


Figure 2.1: Social Media's Role Across the Consumer Decision Journey

## 2.1 Social-First Brands and Share of Culture

Deloitte Digital (2024) in "How Social-First Brands Earn Share of Culture: 3 Principles to Follow" highlighted the way for brands to establish authentic connections with social communities to earn trust and a share of culture, resulting in more revenues and loyal customers. In this context, it was mentioned that social-first brands – those embedding themselves into digital communities organically – produce better brand loyalty indicators than brands resorting to traditional forms of broadcast marketing. Three critical principles were singled out: the principle of social listening instead of broadcasting, community-building as opposed to audience-building, and co-creation instead of communication.

## 2.2 Gen Z Brand Loyalty and Digital Experience

In Vogue Business (2025), "How Can Brands Capture the Loyalty of Gen Z?" investigated the ways for brands to reach out to their Gen Z consumers emotionally and create memorable digital experience. It was found that this generation demanded from brands authenticity, alignment with their personal purposes and values, and a set of consistent actions towards fulfilling the promises regarding their beliefs and mission. In addition, social media became an essential platform for conveying the required message of brands and creating necessary relationships within Gen Z community.

## 2.3 Digital Marketing and Business Success

Investopedia (2024) focused on the role played by digital marketing, including social media, in the recruitment of new customers, precision targeting, and data collection concerning the success of campaigns. In this context, the business would be able to achieve increased levels of awareness and loyalty among the target market segments. The absence of an effective digital marketing strategy was said to be a great drawback for any company in this competitive environment, where customer journey would start and end within the digital environment.

## 2.4 Four Stages of Brand Loyalty

The academic research on brand loyalty has always pointed out that there are four distinct stages that a consumer goes through before brand loyalty can be achieved. The figure below is a presentation of these stages and how social media marketing is involved in each one.



Figure 2.2: Four Stages of Customer Loyalty and Social Media's Influence

## 2.5 Social Media Marketing Activities and Consumer Loyalty Intentions

Tarabieh (2022) investigated how activities performed within social media marketing impacted consumer loyalty intentions via the mediating effect of brand awareness, consumer brand engagement, and brand image. The study proved that brand awareness and brand engagement played a very significant role in the impact of social media marketing activities on consumer loyalty. Furthermore, brand image worked as an additional construct to reinforce the brand awareness-loyalty relationship. This was demonstrated by showing that if consumers have a strong positive brand image of the brand on social media, their loyalty is enhanced even more.

## 2.6 Promotional Campaigns and Content Relevance in Brand Loyalty

Effects of social media marketing on brand loyalty (2012): This study examined the effects of various activities within social media marketing on brand loyalty. These include such actions as promotional activities, as well as the relevancy of their content. Results showed that consumer interaction with brand content relevant on social media had a positive relationship with brand loyalty. In particular, content relevancy had the highest predictive power among all variables considered.

## 2.7 Stages of Brand Loyalty and Social Media Marketing

In their paper titled "Effects of Social Media Marketing and Selected Marketing Constructs on Stages of Brand Loyalty," Salem & Salem (2021) sought to investigate the effect of social media marketing on several stages of brand loyalty, focusing on the role of brand love and brand consciousness. The results of their study indicated that social media marketing had the highest effects on the affective and conative stages of brand loyalty, and brand love was one of the most powerful mediating variables that facilitated transformation from brand awareness into brand commitment.

## 2.8 Brand Awareness, Brand Equity and Social Media

In their recent research, Onggowidjojo and Ellitan (2023) examined the role of social media marketing and brand equity in developing brand awareness and loyalty. Brand equity, which includes brand associations, quality perceptions, and brand loyalty, was substantially increased by effective social media marketing practices, forming a positive feedback loop. The research indicated that brand equity not only is a consequence of successful social media marketing but also serves to strengthen it further.

## 2.9 Brand Experience as Mediator

These researchers, Kumar and Hsieh (2024), found evidence to support the claim that social media marketing efforts have led to different aspects of brand experience. This, in turn, impacted brand loyalty. One important aspect highlighted by the study was that brand experiences that were multi-sensory in nature had far better loyalty outcomes than informational and promotional communications..

## 2.10 Customer Relationship Quality and E-Commerce Loyalty

The impact of various social media marketing activities on the level of relationship quality with customers that would, in turn, mediate the effect of social media marketing on customer loyalty was studied by Banerji and Singh (2024). Relationships of high quality with the brand, marked by trust, commitment, and satisfaction among other features, were established as key drivers of social media marketing impact on consumer loyalty.

## 2.11 Brand Trust as Mediator Between SMM and Loyalty

Srivastava et al. (2021) examined how brand trust mediated the effect of social media marketing on brand loyalty, taking age into consideration as a moderator. It was found that brand trust is an important mediator, while the effect of social media marketing on loyalty was moderated by age since young customers were more responsive to social media branding and showed a greater tendency to form loyalty.

## 2.12 Research Gap

Whereas the above literatures give important perspectives on the interaction between the variables in discussion, there had been little primary empirical research done on the same variables with regard to India. This is because most of the studies that have been carried out before focused either on a world perspective or Western markets. Thus, this research was

1

designed to fill that void by looking at the role played by the use of social media marketing on brand awareness and loyalty in India.

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design, research methodology, sampling technique, and instruments of analysis used in this research study are all described in this chapter. Below is a methodology flow chart for this research, showing how the research process was conducted.



Figure 3.1: Research Methodology Flow

### 3.1 Problem Statement

However, there is still uncertainty regarding the effectiveness of the social media marketing approach towards impacting brand awareness and customer loyalty for the Indian consumer base. The present research aimed at determining the extent to which social media marketing helped establish brand awareness and built loyal customers.

### 3.2 Research Objectives

1. To conduct a study to determine the effects of social media marketing on brand awareness among consumers.
2. To determine the effects of social media interaction on the customer's ability to build and maintain loyalty.
3. To determine which social media sites would be most effective at increasing brand awareness.
4. To investigate the relationship between customer social media activity and perceptions of the brand.
5. To determine the extent to which consumer trust and emotional connections are formed using social media marketing techniques.
6. To recommend how companies can maximise the potential of social media marketing for their brands.

### 3.3 Type of Research

In the above study, an analytical research design was used. Analytical research refers to a type of research where the researcher uses facts or information that have already been collected and analyzes them critically to make conclusions on the matter. This method was chosen for the study because it involved the use of primary as well as secondary data to determine relationships between variables..

### 3.4 Sources of Data

#### 3.4.1 Primary Data Collection

Questionnaire technique was employed as the main source of collecting data. A well-structured questionnaire consisting of 17 closed-ended questions was developed, which addressed issues concerning demographic profile, use of social media, brand awareness parameters, and customer loyalty factors. The questionnaires were distributed to the target sample respondents online using Google Forms between October–December 2024.

#### 3.4.2 Secondary Data Collection

For gathering secondary data, websites, internet, scholarly journals, research articles, and trade magazines were utilized. Some important secondary sources of information included research findings about social media marketing, brand awareness, and customer loyalty. In addition, industry reports from Statista, Nielsen, Smart Insights, and BARC India were also used.

### 3.5 Instrument, Sample Size and Sampling Method

The main tool for data collection was the structured questionnaire that was pre-tested using five samples to eliminate any ambiguities. Four parts made up the final questionnaire: (A) demographic information, (B) social media usage and interaction, (C) brand recognition, and (D) customer loyalty and interaction.

In total, 62 valid samples were gathered for this research. Judgement sampling was used – a type of non-random sampling where samples are chosen depending on their social media activity and brand communication knowledge. Even though judgement sampling suffers from low representativity, it is quite suitable for exploratory studies like this one.

## CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In this chapter, there is an analysis and interpretation of primary data obtained using the structured survey questionnaire. In analyzing each question in the 17-question survey, I have used a frequency distribution table with accompanying chart to make interpretations of the data collected..

### 4.1 Age Distribution of Respondents

Table 4.1: Age Distribution of Respondents

| Age Group  | Under 18 | 18–24 | 25–34 | 35–44 | 45–54 | Above 55 |
|------------|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|----------|
| Percentage | 8.1%     | 38.7% | 51.6% | 1.6%  | 0%    | 0%       |

Source: Primary Survey (n=62)

Q1: Age Distribution of Respondents

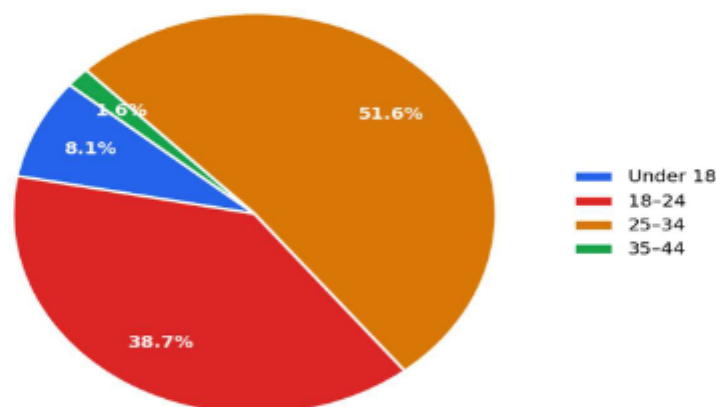


Figure 4.1: Age Distribution of Respondents

#### Interpretation

Most of the participants belonged to the young age group, where 51.6% were between the ages of 25-34, while 38.7% were between 18-24 years old. Only a few had an age below 18 (8.1%), and almost none belonged to the age bracket of 35-44 years old (1.6%). Not a single person was above 45 years old. Such age composition was reflective of the digitally native population that was very active in the use of social media sites and commonly engaged by social media advertisements.

### 4.2 Gender Distribution

Table 4.2: Gender Distribution

| Options    | Male  | Female | Prefer Not to Say |
|------------|-------|--------|-------------------|
| Percentage | 32.3% | 67.7%  | 0%                |

Source: Primary Survey (n=62)

Q2: Gender Distribution

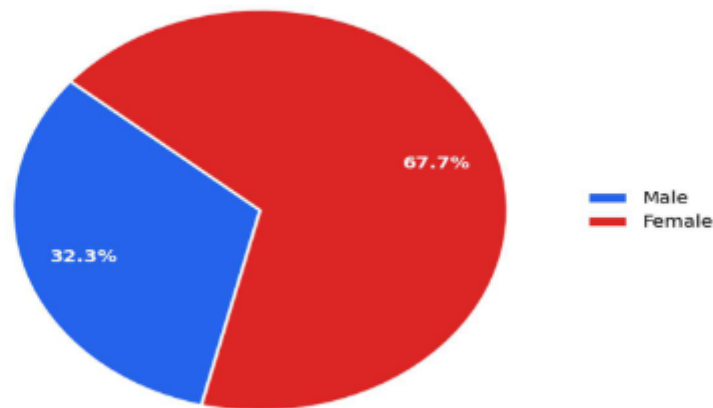


Figure 4.2: Gender Distribution

#### Interpretation

The number of females constituted the largest percentage among the respondents at 67.7% and that of males constituted 32.3%. None of the respondents answered "Prefer Not to Say." These gender ratios might affect the trends that emerged from the survey. According to research, women have high engagement levels in visual platforms like Instagram which emerged to be the favorite platform in this case.

### 4.3 Occupation of Respondents

Table4.3:Occupation of Respondents

| Options    | Student | Professional | Self-Employed | Homemaker | Retired | Other |
|------------|---------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------|-------|
| Percentage | 27.4%   | 11.3%        | 35.5%         | 9.7%      | 0%      | 16.1% |

Source: Primary Survey (n=62)

Q3: Occupation of Respondents

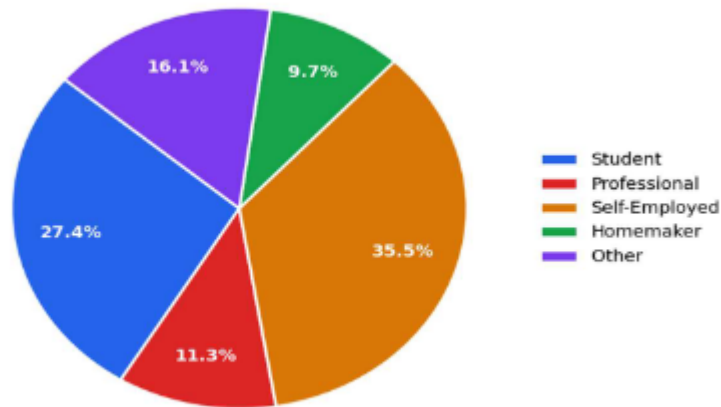


Figure 4.3: Occupation of Respondents

### Interpretation

The most common occupation type was self-employed persons (35.5%), then students (27.4%), and people from the "Other" category (16.1%). There were professionals making up 11.3% of the sample, homemakers accounting for 9.7%, while there were no retirees. The large number of students and self-employed persons implied that the respondents were flexible and knowledgeable about technology, had high use of social media every day, and were more receptive to online interactions with brands.

## 4.4 Social Media Platforms Used Regularly

Table 4.4: Social Media Platforms Used Regularly

| Platform   | Facebook | Instagram | Twitter | Tik Tok | LinkedIn | Snapchat | Pinterest |
|------------|----------|-----------|---------|---------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Percentage | 65.6%    | 96.7%     | 23%     | 1.6%    | 1.6%     | 34.4%    | 6.6%      |

Source: Primary Survey (n=62)

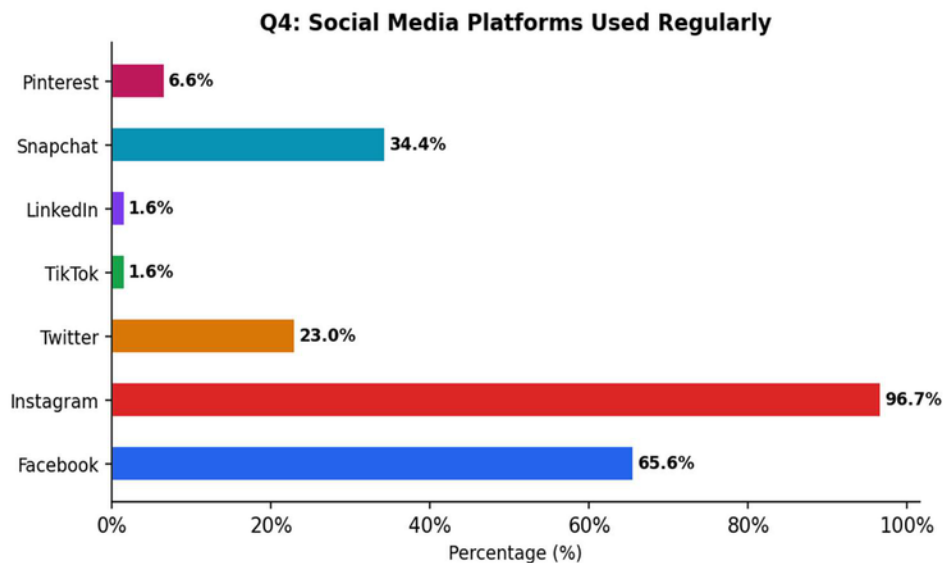


Figure 4.4: Social Media Platforms Used Regularly

## Conclusion

Instagram was most used with a share of 96.7%, followed by Facebook (65.6%) and Snapchat (34.4%). Twitter users accounted for 23%, whereas Pinterest (6.6%), TikTok, and LinkedIn, both 1.6%, had very low usage. It showed that social media sites where visual content played a significant role were popular among this generation. For digital marketing activities, brands should focus on Instagram and Facebook.

## 4.5 Average Daily Time Spent on Social Media

Table 4.5: Average Daily Time Spent on Social Media

| Options    | Less than 1 Hour | 1–2 Hours | 3–4 Hours | 5+ Hours |
|------------|------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Percentage | 1.6%             | 16.4%     | 65.6%     | 16.4%    |

Source: Primary Survey (n=62)

**Q5: Average Daily Time on Social Media**

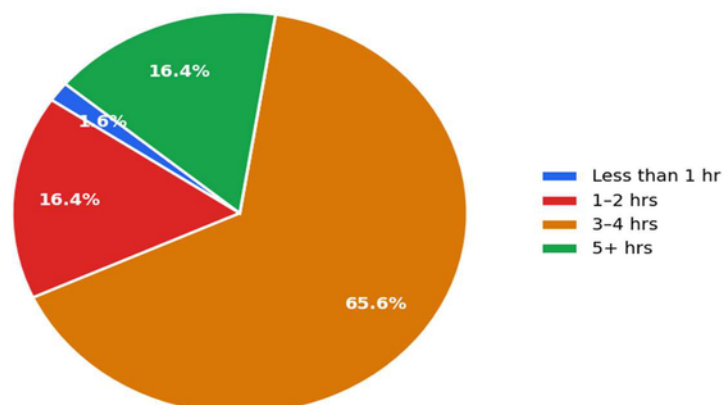


Figure 4.5: Average Daily Time Spent on Social Media

### Interpretation

The majority (65.6%) of the respondents used social media for 3 to 4 hours each day, which suggests a high rate of digital activity. The same percentage (16.4%) used social media from 1 to 2 hours each day and from 5 or more hours each day. Only very few people (1.6%) used social media for less than one hour. It was evident that social media played a very important role in the respondents' daily activities.

## 4.6 Frequency of Engagement with Brand-Related Content

Table 4.6: Frequency of Engagement with Brand-Related Content

| Options    | Never | Occasionally | Rarely | Always | Frequently |
|------------|-------|--------------|--------|--------|------------|
| Percentage | 16.4% | 27.9%        | 36.1%  | 13.1%  | 6.6%       |

Source: Primary Survey (n=62)

Q6: Frequency of Engagement with Brand Content

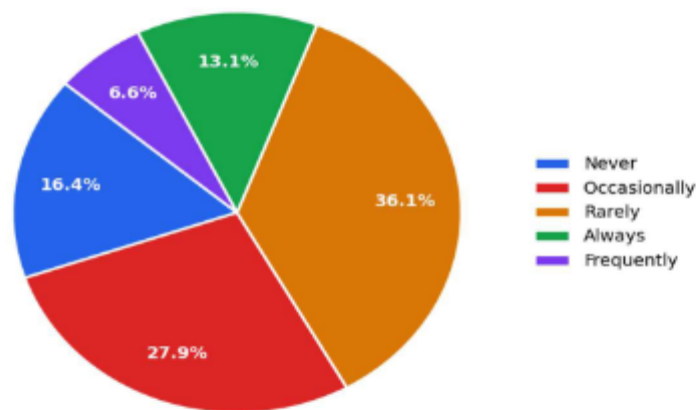


Figure 4.6: Frequency of Engagement with Brand-Related Content

### Interpretation

Majority of the respondents involved were engaging with the brand's content on a very low basis, where 36.1% rarely engaged while 27.9% engaged only occasionally. Those who always engaged were 13.1%, while those who frequently engaged were only 6.6%. The difference between the high rate of social media use and the low engagement with the content was indicating that the brands needed more compelling content to engage the audience.

## 4.7 Types of Brand Content Engaged With Most

Table 4.7: Types of Brand Content Engaged With Most

| Content Type | Promotions | Product Demos | Customer Reviews | Behind-the-Scenes | Contests | Influencer Content |
|--------------|------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|----------|--------------------|
| Percentage   | 17.7%      | 38.7%         | 25.8%            | 22.6%             | 12.9%    | 11.3%              |

Source: Primary Survey (n=62)

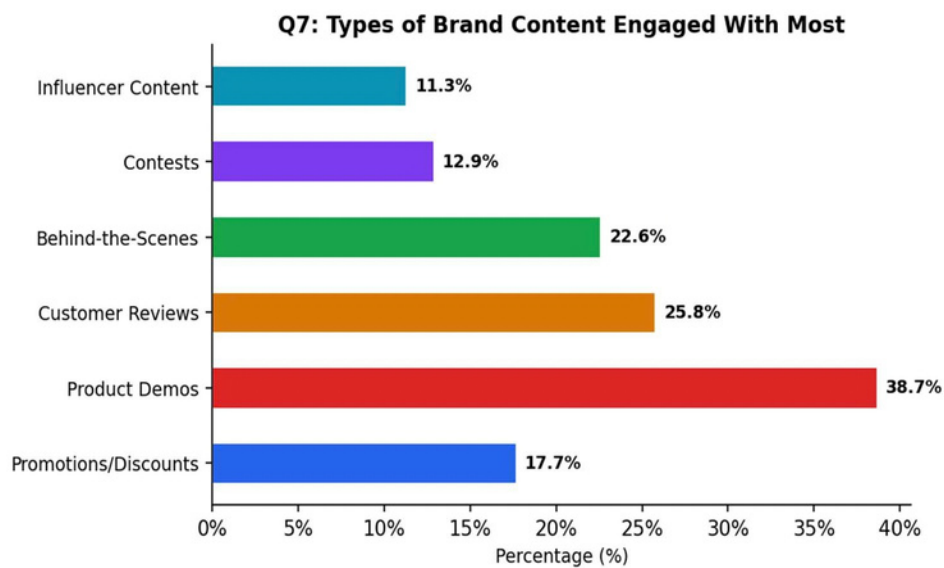


Figure 4.7: Types of Brand Content Engaged With Most

### Interpretation

Demonstration videos emerged as the most popular type of video content at 38.7%, whereas customer reviews/testimonials (25.8%) and behind-the-scenes videos (22.6%) formed the second and third positions, respectively. On the other hand, promotional videos accounted for only 17.7% while influencer videos came last in popularity with 11.3%. These statistics demonstrated that educational and genuine content appealed to customers much more than promotional or celebrity-led content..

## 4.8 Channel of First Brand Discovery

Table4.8:ChannelofFirst Brand Discovery

| Channel    | TV/Radio Ad | Social Media Ad | Word of Mouth | Influencer | Search Engine |
|------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------|------------|---------------|
| Percentage | 6.5%        | 56.5%           | 22.6%         | 6.5%       | 4.8%          |

Source: Primary Survey (n=62)

**Q8: How Did You First Hear About Your Favourite Brand?**

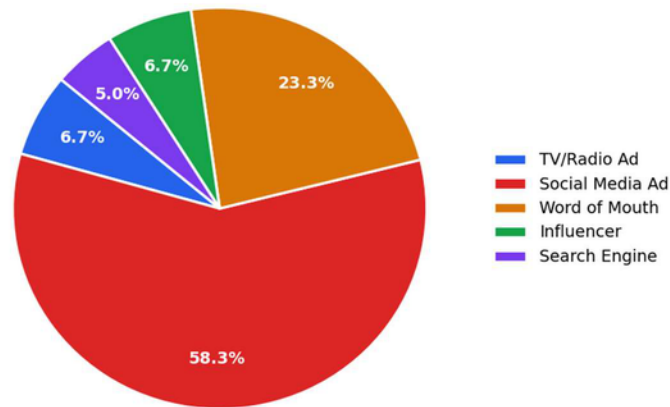


Figure 4.8: Channel of First Brand Discovery

Interpretation

A total of 56.5% of the surveyed consumers mentioned that social media ads were the medium via which they became acquainted with their favourite brand, with word of mouth being the second highest rated at 22.6%. Traditional media ads, influencer endorsements, and search engines accounted for 6.5%, 6.5%, and 4.8% respectively. This emphatically highlighted the importance of social media as the entry point to discovering new brands.

**4.9 Recall of Brand Advertisements on Social Media**

Table 4.9: Recall of Brand Advertisements on Social Media

| Options    | Yes   | No    |
|------------|-------|-------|
| Percentage | 80.6% | 19.4% |

Source: Primary Survey (n=62)

**Q9: Recall of Brand Ads on Social Media**

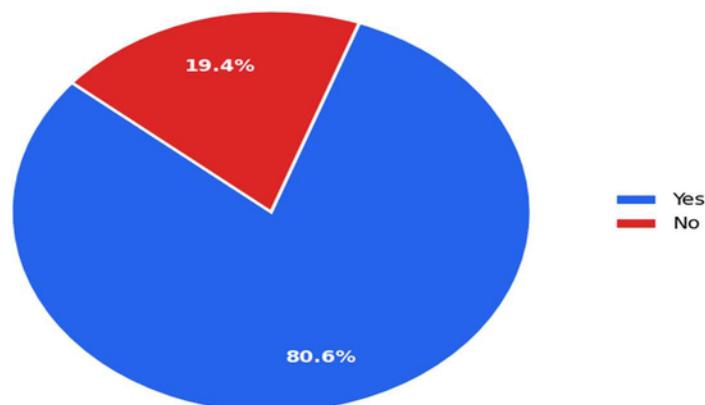


Figure 4.9: Recall of Brand Advertisements on Social Media

### Interpretation

There was a very high percentage (80.6%) of individuals who had seen the ads or promotions of the brand on social media sites. This highlighted that there is a high level of visibility of the brand through social media even among users who are not active regarding the brand on social media. The high percentage emphasized the effectiveness of social media as a platform for creating awareness. The remaining 19.4% might include individuals who block ads on social media.

### 4.10 Likelihood of Recognising a Brand on Social Media

Table 4.10: Likelihood of Recognising a Brand on Social Media

| Options    | Very Unlikely | Unlikely | Neutral | Likely | Very Likely |
|------------|---------------|----------|---------|--------|-------------|
| Percentage | 14.5%         | 17.7%    | 41.9%   | 16.1%  | 9.7%        |

Source: Primary Survey (n=62)

Q10: Likelihood of Recognising a Brand on Social Media

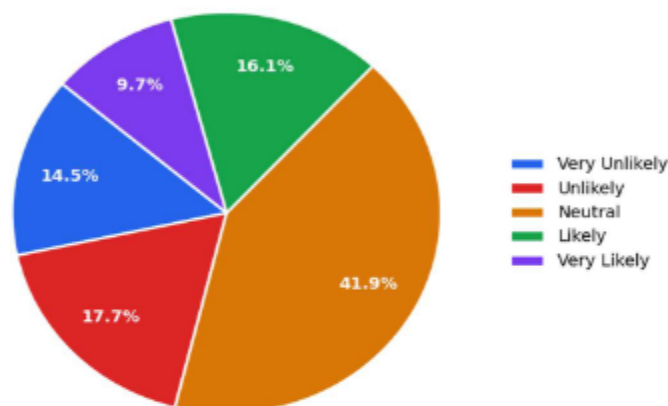


Figure 4.10: Likelihood of Recognising a Brand on Social Media

### Interpretation

Many people indicated they were neutral (41.9%) while others tended to be unlikely to recognize a brand from its social media posts (17.7% and 14.5%). On the other hand, only 16.1% of participants felt likely to recognize a brand in social media and 9.7% felt very likely. This implies that most brands did not develop distinctive strategies for their content creation to ensure that their brand gets recognized.

### 4.11 Social Media Marketing's Influence on New Brand Awareness

Table 4.11: Social Media Marketing's Influence on New Brand Awareness

| Options    | Yes   | No    | Not Sure |
|------------|-------|-------|----------|
| Percentage | 48.4% | 24.2% | 27.4%    |

Source: Primary Survey (n=62)

**Q11: Did Social Media Influence Your Awareness of New Brands?**

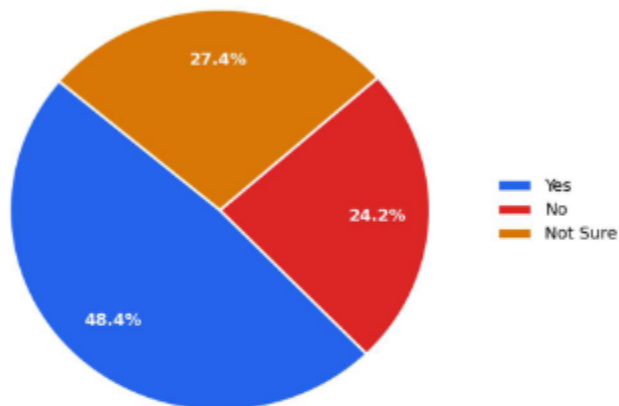


Figure 4.11: Social Media Marketing's Influence on New Brand Awareness

### Interpretation

Over 48.4% of the respondents claimed that social media marketing affected their knowledge about new brands. However, 27.4% of them could not answer whether social media marketing affected their knowledge about new brands, while 24.2% of the respondents answered "No." These results showed that social media was moderately successful in creating brand awareness among the consumers. High percentages of "Not Sure" answers indicated that there is a possibility of consumers being aware of the brand without associating such awareness with a marketing activity.

## 4.12 Importance of Brand's Social Media Presence

Table 4.12: Importance of Brand's Social Media Presence

| Options    | Not Important | Slightly Important | Neutral | Important | Very Important |
|------------|---------------|--------------------|---------|-----------|----------------|
| Percentage | 9.7%          | 54.8%              | 11.3%   | 12.9%     | 11.3%          |

Source: Primary Survey (n=62)

**Q12: Importance of Brand's Social Media Presence**

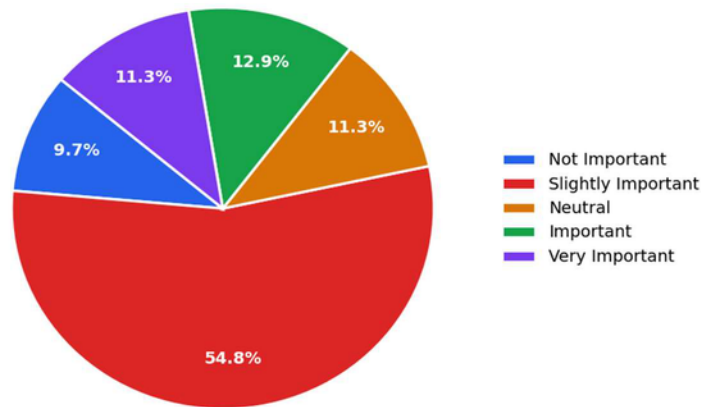


Figure 4.12: Importance of Brand's Social Media Presence

### Interpretation

Over half of the people surveyed (54.8%) felt that the existence of the brand's profile in social networks was somewhat relevant to their decision to be fans and/or interact with them. Just over one tenth (12.9%), while under one tenth (11.3%) believed its presence to be important and very important respectively. Therefore, one can conclude that having a social media profile was viewed by the majority of customers as something useful, yet not crucial.

### 4.13 Effect of Social Media Engagement on Purchase Likelihood

**Table 4.13: Effect of Social Media Engagement on Purchase Likelihood**

| Options    | Significantly Increases | Slightly Increases | No Impact | Decreases | Not Sure |
|------------|-------------------------|--------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Percentage | 21%                     | 45.2%              | 21%       | 4.8%      | 8.1%     |

Source: Primary Survey (n=62)

**Q13: Effect of Social Media Engagement on Purchase Likelihood**

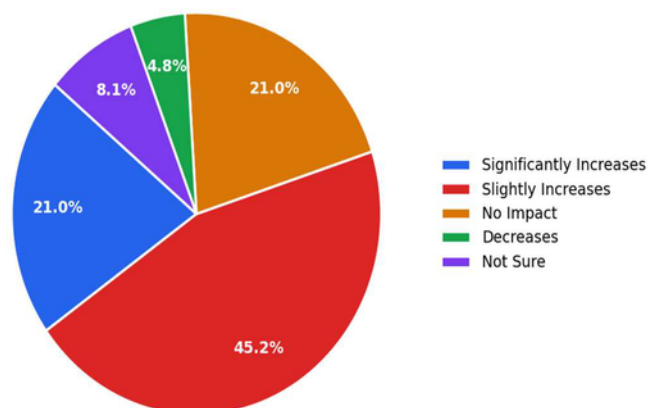


Figure 4.13: Effect of Social Media Engagement on Purchase Likelihood

### Interpretation

The combination of respondents whose answer indicated that their engagement with the brand via social media increased their chances of making a purchase was 66.2%, where 21% strongly agreed and 45.2% slightly agreed. Only 4.8% of the respondents claimed that their chances of making a purchase were reduced by their engagement with the brand on social media.

## 4.14 Loyalty to Brands with Active Social Media Presence

Table 4.14: Loyalty to Brands with Active Social Media Presence

| Options    | Not Loyal | Slightly Loyal | Neutral | Loyal | Very Loyal |
|------------|-----------|----------------|---------|-------|------------|
| Percentage | 3.2%      | 41.9%          | 27.4%   | 16.1% | 11.3%      |

Source: Primary Survey (n=62)

Q14: Loyalty to Brands with Active Social Media Presence

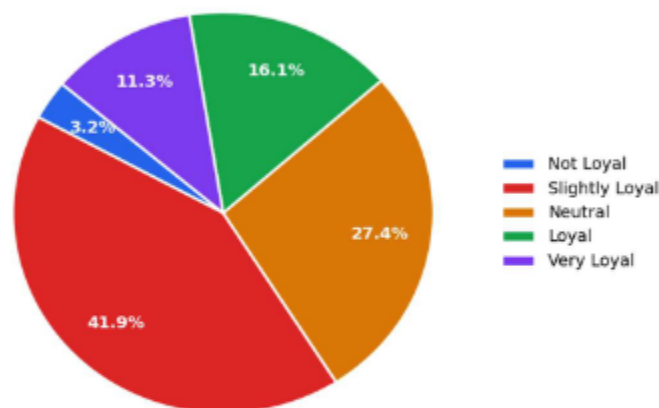


Figure 4.14: Loyalty to Brands with Active Social Media Presence

### Interpretation

The majority of participants favoured minimal brand loyalty (41.9%) and neutral attitudes (27.4%) towards brands with active social media pages. The aggregate figure of participants showing considerable brand loyalty stood at 27.4%, where 16.1% showed loyalty and 11.3% exhibited very strong loyalty towards the brand. Only 3.2% of participants indicated that they showed no brand loyalty. This result implied that although active participation in social media played a key role in creating loyalty for the brands, it was not enough by itself.

The majority of participants indicated some form of brand loyalty (41.9%) or neutrality (27.4%), particularly regarding brands with strong social media accounts. In all, 27.4%

indicated that they have some form of brand loyalty (16.1% were loyal, whereas 11.3% were very loyal). Only 3.2% had zero loyalty towards the brand. This indicated that even though having a social media account helps create loyalty, it was not enough. Other loyalty-building methods had to be employed.

## 4.15 Factors That Build Trust in a Brand's Social Media Presence

Table 4.15: Factors That Build Trust in a Brand's Social Media Presence

| Factor     | Professionalism | Transparency | Engagement | Post Frequency | Positive Reviews | Influencer Endorsements |
|------------|-----------------|--------------|------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Percentage | 11.3%           | 24.2%        | 32.3%      | 16.1%          | 6.5%             | 9.7%                    |

Source: Primary Survey (n=62)

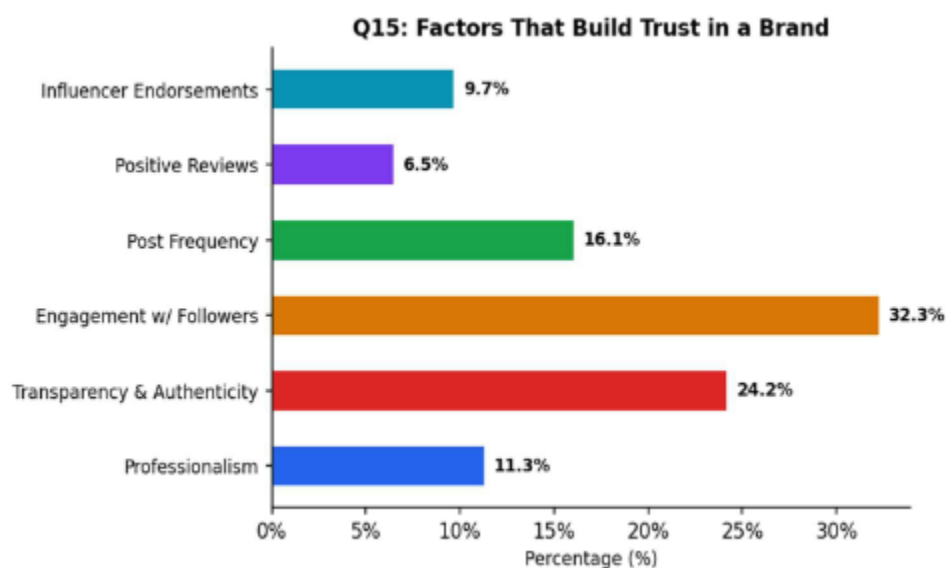


Figure 4.15: Factors That Build Trust in a Brand's Social Media Presence

### Interpretation

The two trust-building dimensions found to be highly effective were engagement with the audience (32.3%) and authenticity & transparency (24.2%). These were followed by post frequency (16.1%) and professionalism & quality content (11.3%), respectively, whereas the least effective methods included endorsement from influencers (9.7%) and positive reviews (6.5%). This proved that trust was created when there was real two-way engagement rather than professional content.

**Factors That Build Trust in a Brand's Social Media Presence**

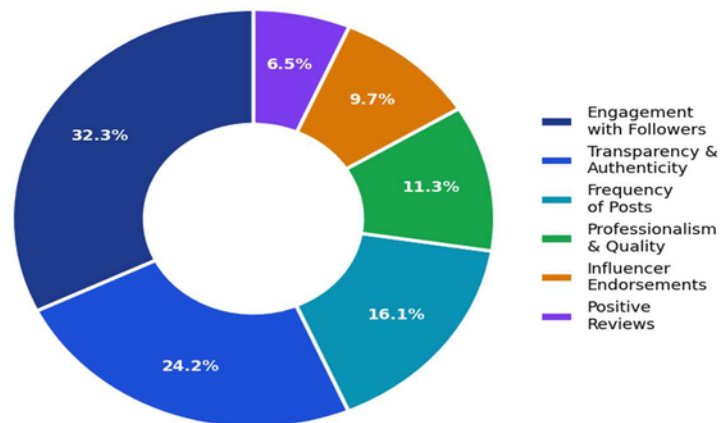


Figure 4.15b: Trust Factor Distribution – Donut Chart

## 4.16 Perceived Effectiveness of SMM in Increasing Brand Awareness

Table 4.16: Perceived Effectiveness of SMM in Increasing Brand Awareness

| Options    | Not Effective | Slightly Effective | Neutral | Effective | Very Effective |
|------------|---------------|--------------------|---------|-----------|----------------|
| Percentage | 12.9%         | 41.9%              | 22.6%   | 16.1%     | 6.5%           |

Source: Primary Survey (n=62)

**Q16: Effectiveness of Social Media Marketing in Brand Awareness**

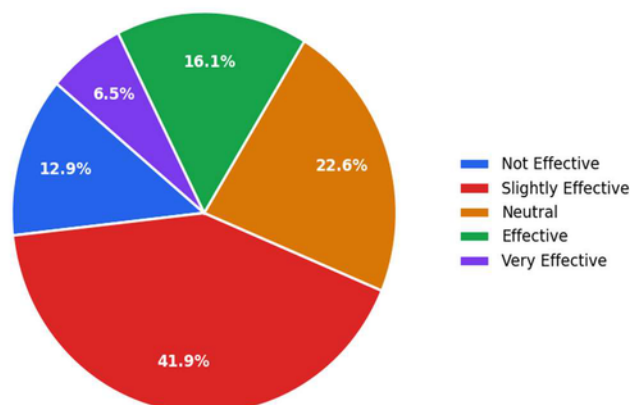


Figure 4.16: Perceived Effectiveness of SMM in Increasing Brand Awareness

### Interpretation

However, most respondents (54.5%) viewed the effectiveness of using social media marketing for creating brand awareness as slightly effective or neutral. Only a small number of individuals felt that social media marketing was effective or very effective, at 22.6%. Those who perceived it to be ineffective stood at 12.9%. This shows that social media marketing was creating a good reach; however, the full potential of this marketing method had not been utilized by the brands.

#### 4.17 Perceived Lasting Impact of SMM on Brand Relationships

Table 4.17: Perceived Lasting Impact of SMM on Brand Relationships

| Options    | Yes   | No    | Not Sure |
|------------|-------|-------|----------|
| Percentage | 22.6% | 59.7% | 17.7%    |

Source: Primary Survey (n=62)

Q17: Does Social Media Have a Lasting Impact on Brand Relationships?

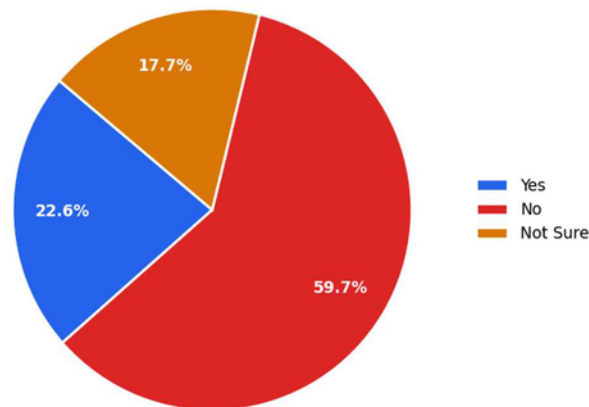


Figure 4.17: Perceived Lasting Impact of SMM on Brand Relationships

#### Interpretation

A majority (59.7%) felt that social media marketing had no effect on their relationships with brands. While 22.6% were of the view that it did have an effect. It suggested that while social media marketing was able to create initial buzz and get the ball rolling, building long-lasting brand relationships would require much more than that; namely multi-dimensional and personalized campaigns..

## CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

From the statistical results presented in chapter four of this study, the following conclusions have been drawn. The table below highlights some of the most important quantitative conclusions of the study.

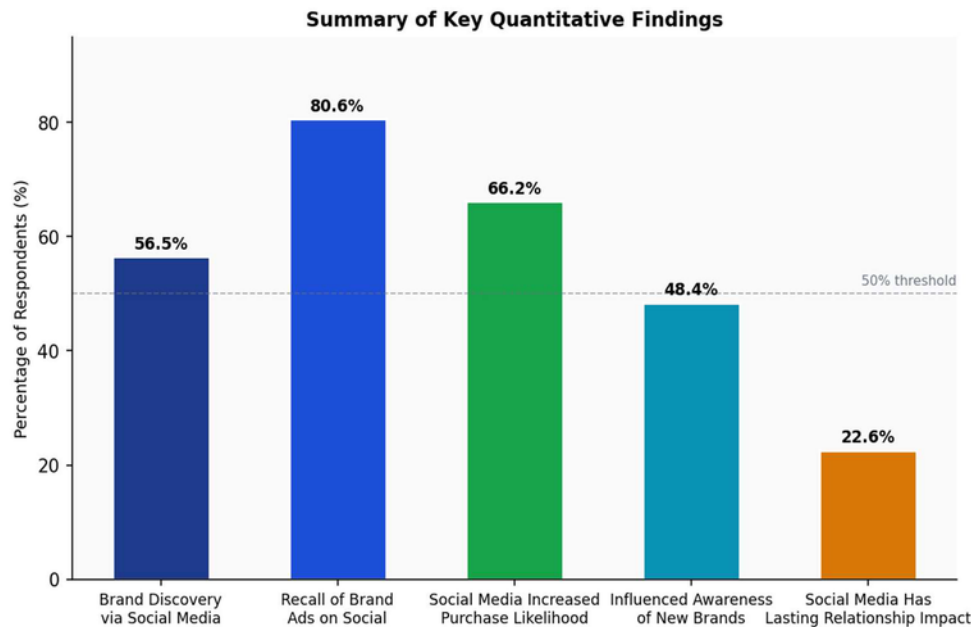


Figure 5.1: Summary of Key Quantitative Findings

### Finding 1: Social Media is the Primary Channel for Brand Discovery

The social media ads came up as the main source through which 56.5 percent of the consumers knew about their favorite brands compared to other means such as word-of-mouth at 22.6 percent and traditional means at 6.5 percent. It is evident that the importance of social media lies in being instrumental in exposing consumers to the brands for the first time in their lives.

### Finding 2: High Visibility but Low Active Engagement

Even though 80.6% had seen promotions about brands through social media platforms, 36.1% stated that they seldom engaged while 27.9% engaged only sometimes in activities relating to brands. The huge gap that existed in relation to the awareness and engagement with brands meant that although brands were reaching their customers, they did not encourage them to engage.

### Finding 3: Brand Distinctiveness in Social Media is Insufficient for Reliable Recognition

Only 25.8% of survey participants who responded "likely" or "very likely" could recognize the brands based on their social media posts, while 41.9% were neutral about the question and 32.2% said that they were unlikely or very unlikely to recognize brands based on social

media activity. This result showed that brands have failed to create distinctive and memorable posts for their social media accounts.

#### Finding 4: Social Media Engagement Positively Influences Purchase Intent

An aggregate of 66.2% of respondents reported that interactions with the brand on social media influenced their intention to buy positively, with 21% reporting a significant influence while the rest 45.2% reported a minor one. This highlighted a definite and commercially viable positive correlation between brand engagement through social media and consumer buying behavior.

#### Finding 5: Brand Loyalty from Social Media is Moderate and Conditional

Of the respondents interviewed, only 27.4 percent claimed that they were either “loyal” or “very loyal” to brands which have social media presence, while the others fell into the category of “slightly loyal” or “neutral.” The fact remains that while social media presence is important in determining brand loyalty, it is not the determining factor for brand loyalty..

#### Finding 6: Authenticity and Direct Engagement Drive Trust More Than Influencers

Following engagement was found to be the key element in building up trust (32.3%), followed by transparency and authenticity (24.2%), with a much lower preference for influencer endorsement (9.7%) and good reviews (6.5%). The former created deeper emotional ties through interaction, whereas the latter used polished content marketing strategies.

#### Finding 7: Perceived Effectiveness of SMM in Generating Lasting Loyalty is Low

However, a large percentage of the surveyed people (41.9%) considered the effectiveness of social media marketing campaigns to be moderate. Even worse, 59.7% of the survey respondents felt that social media marketing had no significant influence on their long-term relationship with the brand. Customer loyalty needed more personal and engaging interactions from the organization than mere social media marketing.

#### Finding 8: Product Demonstrations and Customer Reviews are the Most Effective Content Formats

Out of all types of contents analyzed in the survey, product demonstration (38.7 percent) and customer review/testimonial (25.8 percent) produced the highest engagement rates. Behind the scenes (22.6 percent) type was also quite effective. Such results consistently indicated that the most engaging content types on social media were those that are both informative and validated by peers..

## CHAPTER 6: LIMITATIONS

The study, while providing useful insights, is subject to several limitations that should be considered in the findings and recommendations:

- **Lack of Age Diversity:**

The sample population was dominated by younger individuals (90% between the ages of 18 and 34), while there was no representation of people above 45 years old. This has led to a lack of generality of the results for older generations, which would most likely use the platforms in completely different ways from what is suggested here.

- **Lack of Gender Balance:**

There is an excessive amount of women (67.7%) among the respondents, which could have influenced platform choices and consumer engagement behaviours. Having the same number of men would have resulted in more representative research.

- **The Influence of One Platform:**

Due to the near total dependence on one social network (Instagram 96.7%), other platforms such as LinkedIn, TikTok, and Twitter have been ignored, reducing the scope of the comparison.

- **Need for Qualitative Data:**

Apart from measuring the frequency and form of consumer engagement, qualitative information about why users decided to do that (or to refrain from doing so) would have allowed drawing more useful conclusions.

- **Dependence on Self-Reporting:**

The respondents provided all data independently, which can cause memory problems and lead to socially desirable answers regarding the use of social media and personal feelings towards the brands.

- **Lack of Industry/Brand Specificity**

The survey did not differentiate between brands from different industries that might be affected differently by social media marketing and have varied effectiveness.

- **Lack of a Longitudinal Perspective**

Due to the cross-sectional nature of the research, it became impossible to estimate the impact of long-lasting effects on behavioural patterns and whether there were any changes due to prolonged investments in social media marketing.

- **Lack of an Effective Loyalty Measure**

An individual's perception of loyalty was used in the survey; however, actual customer behaviour and loyalty could be estimated via the frequency of repeat purchases, and so forth.

87

17

- **Small Sample Size**  
A relatively small number of respondents (62 people) might prove problematic when conducting further research on sub-groups and obtaining statistically valid results.
- **Geographic Location**  
The study involved consumers living in urban areas of Delhi-NCR only and did not address other cities or their tiers..

2

## CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

The research showed that social media marketing has played an essential part in brand awareness creation and customer loyalty formation. Social media marketing is especially relevant to young generations, namely those between 18 and 34 years of age, as the survey showed. Instagram and Facebook proved to be two leading social networks where brand engagement was concerned, and visual and genuine content, namely product demonstrations and customer testimonials, proved to be most appealing to users.

Social media brand engagement significantly boosted the likelihood of purchase in a majority of cases (66.2%). Nevertheless, such engagement did not correlate with strong customer loyalty to such brands as most of the respondents had neutral or weak attitudes toward social media active brands. Thus, social media marketing proved to be a useful tool in creating awareness and generating interest; however, alone it cannot build sustainable customer loyalty.

Additionally, while social media advertising turned out to be the main source of discovering new brands (56.5%), the majority of participants regarded social media marketing as just barely being able to create any kind of meaningful connections and relationships with brands. The shocking statistics showing that 59.7% of respondents found social media marketing ineffective in building any lasting connection with a brand made an interesting conclusion that social media marketing can reach many people but cannot connect to them emotionally.

Finally, the research revealed that trust is the basic currency in successful social media brand engagement. Participants valued much more highly those brands that communicated sincerely and transparently to their audience by actively managing it, engaging with their community through various forms of content and communication.

Product demonstrations and customer reviews proved to be the most efficient types of content in terms of attracting user attention, which once again proved the fact that value content always performs better than sales-focused or purely promotional content when it comes to establishing a brand relationship via social networks.

Summing up, social networks are a very effective medium in terms of creating brand awareness and engaging consumers. Nonetheless, if social networks are to help create brand loyalty, brands should apply a whole new level of strategy, consistency, personalisation and building of trust among their consumers. Brand marketers that wanted to make sure their social media followers became loyal to their brand had to think of a lot more than simple online engagement. They had to go beyond the limits of the online world and engage people offline as well. Social media marketing, done right, is not advertisement. It is building relationships with customers on a large scale..

22

## CHAPTER 8: RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following strategic recommendations are offered to businesses seeking to enhance their social media marketing effectiveness in terms of brand awareness and customer loyalty:

### 8.1 Prioritise Authentic and Informative Content

Given that the respondents showed the most engagement with product demos (38.7%), customer reviews (25.8%), and behind-the-scenes content (22.6%), it is vital for brands to focus on developing authentic and meaningful content rather than relying too much on promotional content or influencer marketing. The use of educational and authentic content proved more effective in building trust than using direct sales language. It was found that the use of content that highlighted product value by showcasing real-life examples of customers led to increased engagement.

### 8.2 Concentrate Efforts on Instagram and Facebook

Because Instagram (96.7%) and Facebook (65.6%) are the most frequently used social media by the target audience, marketing efforts must focus on these platforms to reach a wider audience. Efforts should be made to produce content which will appeal specifically to the audience using the social media platform. The social media platforms include Instagram Reels, Instagram stories, and Facebook groups.

### 8.3 Strengthen Brand Consistency and Visual Identity

In light of the fact that 25.8% of participants had a chance of recognizing a brand through social media content, organizations need to maintain consistency in terms of messaging, visual identity, and brand voice within their social media communications. It became evident that a unique brand identity in terms of color schemes, font styles, and language used was necessary for increasing brand recognition and brand recall in competitive online environments.

### 8.4 Invest in Two-Way Community Engagement

Because of the identification of interaction with followers (32.3%) as the most influential element in building trust, companies need to work on developing true two-way interactions with their audience through providing timely and personalized responses to comments and direct messages, launching user polls and interactive stories, hosting Q&As with brand representatives, and recognizing user-generated content. Social media platforms should be viewed as communities that need to be developed rather than broadcast channels that need to be controlled.

### 8.5 Develop Integrated Offline-Online Loyalty Strategies

Considering that only 40.3% of those surveyed felt a sense of long-term brand loyalty through their use of social media platforms, brands need to create strategies for loyalty promotion that go past social media use. Brands can create loyalty programs with rewards, offer customized deals based on shopping history, establish unique online spaces where loyal fans can interact

with each other, organize experiential events, and integrate offline and online elements. Social media use can then become just one of many tools used..

## 8.6 Shift Content Strategy from Advertising to Education

Educational content for informed consumers, such as tips and tricks, product demonstrations, and tutorials, was far more engaging than any kind of promotional content. Companies need to change their content focus and provide actual value and information by becoming a trusted source of knowledge in the products they sell. Additionally, educational content was more durable and easier to share organically than promotional content.

## 8.7 Leverage Data for Personalised Campaign Execution

With the bulk of users falling within the 18-34 years demographic, companies must analyze their user behavior metrics such as engagement, click-through, and conversion metrics per type of content and platform to develop more personalized content suited for their age group. They can leverage first-party data approaches to build unique knowledge of their audience with less dependence on the algorithms of social media platforms for audience targeting.

## 8.8 Re-evaluate Influencer Marketing Strategies

In view of the findings from the study that influencer collaboration is one of the least engaging forms of content (11.3%), the brands should reflect on how they spend their money on influencer marketing. Several studies in the research literature suggest that micro-influencers (with follower counts of 10,000 to 100,000) produced more engagement than celebrities. The brands must thus focus on collaborating with micro-influencers who were able to relate to certain communities in a very real way.