



Social Networking Sites Advertising and Consumer Purchase Intention

The Mediating Role of Trust

Monika Devi¹ & Preeti Devi²

ABSTRACT

The study investigated the relationship of advertising on the social networking sites and the purchase intentions of consumers including brand trust as a mediating variable. Analysis of data has done using structural equation modelling and involved 206 students in Haryana who shared their opinion on major apparel companies. The empirical findings indicated the presence of strong positive relationship between advertising on social networking sites and brand trust that subsequently has a strong impact on consumer purchase intention. Importantly, the study found that trust acts as a mediator in the connection between purchase intention and SNS advertising. This mediation suggests that SNS ads influence customer purchases both directly and indirectly, but only through the necessary psychological process of trust-building. The results improve our theoretical knowledge of the social commerce decision-making funnel and require marketers to change their approach. Practical implications suggest prioritizing the creation of credible and engaging content aimed at earning consumer trust over merely maximizing advertisement reach.

Keywords: Consumer Purchase Intention, Social Networking Sites Advertisements, Trust, Social Media Marketing, Mediation

INTRODUCTION

In the early 21st century, social networking services (SNS) facilitate the exchange of opinion and ideas between businesses and individuals on various platforms. Common ways to share information in a virtual reality network, information is commonly shared through blogs, social media platforms, storytelling, reviews and user comments (Karuhanga, 2010; Salkhordeh, 2010; Thackeray et al., 2008). In particular, social, educational, political and economic spheres, among others, are increasingly influencing the use of social networking sites (Moreno-Munoz et al., 2016). The most popular SNSs are WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat and YouTube. These platforms are crucial for academics, managers and organizations (Noguti et al., 2018; Salkhordeh, 2010). They have also gained more and more attention from fashion brands, service providers and customers (Foster, 2006; Ha & Lee, 2018; Naeem, 2019). Additionally, social media platforms allowed customers

to voice their opinions in order to improve access to product related information and supporting more informed purchasing choices (Estell & Davidson, 2019; Permatasari & Kuswadi, 2017). Additionally, these platforms give marketers the chance to interact directly with customers, customize their marketing strategies, maintain brand awareness in online marketplaces, and exchange information about consumer purchasing patterns (Kshetri & Jha, 2016).

Social networking sites (SNS) have been used by the fashion industry to interact with consumers more effectively. Social media is used by clothing firms to find out why their customers use it and what they buy (Pujadas-Hostench et al., 2019). According to the literature on clothing, consumers view clothing brands on social networking sites so in an effort to locate websites where they make purchases (Karuhanga, 2010). To remain in competitive world of online retailing or e-tailing, many clothing businesses are using social networking sites as a marketing strategy

¹ Research Scholar, Commerce Department, Chaudhary Bansi Lal University, Bhiwani. E-mail: 230000507003@cblu.edu.in

² Assistant Professor, Commerce Department, Chaudhary Bansi Lal University, Bhiwani

(Constantinides et al., 2008). In the regional context, Haryana is a fast urbanizing and education-focused hub, especially in places like Gurugram and Bhiwani, which are home to a sizable student population that is digitally native. Big apparel businesses use SNS marketing as their main means of increasing sales as this group is very interested in fast-fashion trends and social commerce. The potential impact of SNS ads on online sellers reaction has drawn a lot of attention in recent years (Dehghani et al., 2016). However past research has identified SNS advertisements affect fundamental consumer responses like purchase intention (N. Hajli et al., 2017), there is still a theoretical knowledge gap regarding how SNS advertisements affect consumer purchase intention (Erkan & Evans, 2018; Nash, 2019; Zhao & Li, 2020). This study focuses on a gap in the literature regarding the transactional efficacy of Social Networking Sites (SNS) advertisements. While past research often assumes a direct link between SNS ads and CPI (H1), this preliminary measure is an incomplete psychological indicator, resulting in a disconnect between stated intention and revenue generating consumer purchase intention. Eventually it reveals the behavioral pathway through which initial advertising translated into final purchase behavior.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Social Networking Sites (SNSs) Advertisements

Social Networking Sites (SNSs) are e-platforms that enable users to create unique profiles, connect with others (often termed friends, followers or connections) and share various forms of content, including business-related information, images and videos (Rejeesh, 2019; Sundararaj, 2016). Having transcended their original purpose to become an essential part of modern life globally, SNSs facilitate key activities such as information exchange, communication maintenance, cost savings and business expansion (Violino, 2009). Consequently, the pervasive use of these platforms has driven nearly every business to utilize them for communication, marketing and advertising (SSRN-2048614.Pdf.Crdownload, n.d.). The unique feature of SNSs is the ability for businesses to interact closely with customers, learn their needs and assess satisfaction, fostering loyalty, trust and positive brand attitudes. Unlike traditional media, this new technology enables active participation from customers and leveraging the

weak tie theory, allows businesses (especially smaller ones) to gain in-depth information, improve their reputation and enhance communication for product development and support, thereby translating their immense utility into a massive multiplier impact for commercial activity (Lopez & Castaño, 2019; Zafarani & Liu, n.d.).

Trust

Trust plays a crucial role in relationships, particularly for businesses creating ties with sellers (Information, 2011). Ozanne, (1985) defines trust as the confidence in a trading partner's ability and commitment to follow relationship norms and fulfil agreements. Similarly, Eshaver & Pavlou (2002) view trust as the belief that an exchange will proceed as expected, based on one's assured assumptions. Trust can be understood as either a single-dimensional or a multi-dimensional concept (Gefen, 2001). Despite this, recognizing the aspects of trust leads to a deeper understanding of the concept. The two most common categories of trust are cognitive and affective trust (Aiken & Boush, 2002). Cognitive trust relates to a partner's reliability and competence, while affective trust reflects a customer's emotional sense of how much a company cares and shows concern. Both types of trust cognitive and affective encompass aspects of credibility (the belief that the partner is dependable) and benevolence (the perception that the partner is driven by a desire for mutual benefit). In this article, trust refers to the conviction that "one can rely upon a promise made by another and that the other, in unforeseen circumstances, will act toward oneself with goodwill and in a benign fashion" (Suh & Han, 2003). In the context of social commerce, uncertainty tends to be greater due to the large volume of user-generated content and the absence of direct, face-to-face interactions (Featherman & Hajli, 2016). Nevertheless, as users gain more experience with exchange partners, this uncertainty can be reduced, leading to increased trust and a higher likelihood of adopting online commerce (Gefen & Straub, 2004). The absence of direct interaction in online transactions can cause customers to question the authenticity of the exchange, while limited information about the e-vendor can further intensify the perceived risks associated with online shopping (Kaiser et al., 2014). Trust-building elements and the significant influence

of trust on purchase intentions and word-of-mouth behaviour in social commerce platforms have been extensively examined (S. Kim & Park, 2013). They identify seven key attributes of social commerce that significantly contribute to building trust: reputation, platform size, quality of information, transaction security, communication, economic value and word-of-mouth recommendations. Notably, customer reviews and shared experiences in online forums and communities can play a crucial role in strengthening trust in the platform.

Consumer Purchase Decision

Consumer purchase decision-making is a cognitive process in which individual choose a product or service from various options (Huang & Benyoucef, 2017). Liang & Lai, (2002) outlined a 5-step consumer purchase decision making model: need identification, searching for information, comparing options, making the purchase and evaluating after purchase. When people realize they need something, they are influenced by things like recommendations from others, how easy a website is to use, good visuals, reviews, ratings and social groups (M. N. Hajli, 2014; K. Kim et al., n.d.; Liang & Lai, 2002; Yang et al., 2015). According to Wei, n.d., consumers purchase devices to quickly connect with loved ones, share photos and stay up-to-date on news. During the search stage, consumers seek information to solve their needs for a new product, including accessibility, ability to search, quality of content, ease of navigation, user-friendliness, social assistance and comprehensive information (M. N. Hajli, 2014; Hassanein & Å, 2007; Huang & Benyoucef, 2013; Liang & Lai, 2002; Ranganathan & Ganapathy, 2002; Vila, 2011). Customers can collect information from a lot of available sources which includes friends, family, television ads, personal experience, the internet, periodicals etc. After knowledge collection, individual evaluate available alternatives based on factors such as brand trust, brand reliability, cost and endorsements from others (M. N. Hajli, 2014; Hassanein & Å, 2007; Kang & Park-poaps, 2015; Liang et al., 2012; Liang & Lai, 2002). Consumers can evaluate and pick products based on their requirements and preferences. Purchase intention occurs when a consumer makes a final decision about a product but does not purchase it (M. N. Hajli, 2014; Hassanein & Å, 2007; S. Kim &

Park, 2013; Park & Min, 2009; Vila, 2011; C. Wang, 2012; X. Wang & Yu, 2012). Unexpected events during this period may impact customer purchasing decisions. Post-purchase review includes activities such as product returns, service recommendations and educating customers about better options (Huang & Benyoucef, 2017). Researchers have utilised five-step purchase decision-making model to examine the relationship between e-store design and intentions of consumers (Bai et al., 2008), as well as the impact of social support on quality and social media purchases (M. N. Hajli, 2014). Yadav et al., (2013) focuses that marketers need to address all stages of the consumer purchasing process, rather than focusing only on final purchase. Kang & Park-poaps (2015) demonstrated that the search and evaluation stages play a significant role in shaping consumers' purchase intentions on social networking sites. Numerous studies (Ellahi & Bokhari, 2013; Huang & Benyoucef, 2017; Liu, 2013; Vila, 2011; Zhang & Benyoucef, 2016) have applied the five-stage consumer decision-making model to explore consumer behaviour within social media purchases. Additionally, Huang & Benyoucef (2017) investigated how design features of social commerce platforms, such as sociability, functionality and usability influence the consumer decision-making process.

HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH MODEL

SNS Advertisements and Consumer Purchase Intention

SNS advertisements significantly influence the purchasing process by enhancing service quality and providing essential pre-purchase information, with the utilitarian value of a marketing message determined by its capacity to inform purchasing decisions (W. Wang et al., 2019). The overall value of advertising is linked to its informativeness, entertainment and irritation levels, all of which affect consumer attitude (Waters et al., 2011). While some research, such as studies on Pakistani women's garment purchases, suggests that traditional word-of-mouth may still be preferred over SNS advertising for direct conversion (Nasir, 2012), other studies show that information and criticism shared by others on social media strongly influence user decisions (Nawaz et al., 2015). Despite the general consensus that SNS ads offer great utility and

exposure, a theoretical debate remains regarding their direct ability to convert this exposure into an immediate purchase. However, given the dynamic, collaborative nature of social commerce (Kang & Park-poaps, 2015) and its heavy use for product discovery, it is reasonable to hypothesize a direct positive effect, aligning with the traditional marketing view that increased exposure should lead to increased purchase intention. We therefore explore the following hypothesis for our empirical research:

- **H1:** Advertising on social networking sites has a significant positive impact on consumers' purchasing intention.
- **H2:** Advertising on social networking sites has a significant positive association with building trust.

The Mediating Effect of Trust

Building on the premise that vendor trust is critical for online purchases, this research posits that trust in the Social Networking Site (SNS) platform itself is a powerful booster of consumer purchase intention in social commerce (Gefen et al., 2003). SNSs facilitate value exchange by exposing customers to e-vendor content, but a customer's reliance on the legitimacy of this information hinges on their faith in the platform (Suh & Han, 2003). This platform trust is multifaceted, classified by Mcknight & Chervany (2002) into four key beliefs: Benevolence, Integrity, Predictability and Competence. Collectively, these beliefs reduce uncertainty, enhance dependence on user-generated content and extend the platform relationship. Crucially, a lack of platform trust even when the e-vendor is trusted will deter consumers from using the social commerce channel for purchase. By assessing the SNS's credibility (Kaiser et al., 2014), users boost their intentions to buy on the platform and are more inclined to recommend it to others (S. Kim & Park 2013). Therefore, we suggest:

- **H3:** There is a significant positive relationship between trust and consumer purchase intention.

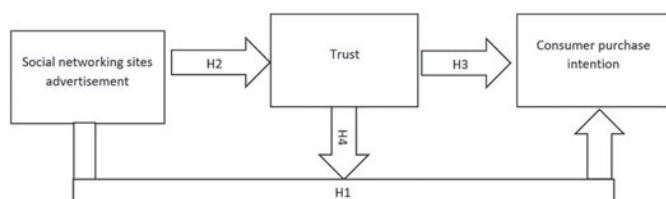


Figure 1: Research Model

- **H4:** Trust significantly mediates the positive relationship between social networking site advertising and consumers' purchase intention.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

It is a quantitative paradigm study that utilizes the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to assess how advertising with social networking sites (SNS) affects consumer purchase intention with trust as a mediating variable. The methodological option is quite appropriate in order to test complex models which incorporate several constructs and indirect effects.

Population and Sample

The focus group of this research was active users of social networking sites (SNS) in the state of Haryana. Specifically, the group of students living in this area was chosen as the sampling, since they are more active in social commerce, use SNS ads, and buy clothes brands on a regular basis, which are also the characteristics of the survey background. A non-probability convenience sampling method using Google Forms was employed to gather data. A total of 206 valid responses were collected through the online survey in Haryana. It is acknowledged that the reliance on a student-centric sample in a specific region (Haryana) constitutes a limitation in terms of generalizability, but it provides valuable insights into the highly engaged youth consumer segment. The demographic profile of respondents is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Respondents Demographic Profile (N = 206)

	Group	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	105	50.97%
	Female	101	49.03%
Age	18-25	180	87.37%
	26-40	26	12.63%
Qualification	Graduation	174	84.46%
	Post-Graduation	25	12.19%
	Others	7	3.35%
Social Media Platform	Instagram	45	21.84%
	YouTube	155	75.24%
	Facebook	6	2.92%

Source: Primary Data

Table 2: Validity and Reliability

	<i>Items</i>	<i>Factor Loading</i>	<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>	<i>Composite Reliability (rho_a)</i>	<i>Composite Reliability (rho_c)</i>	<i>Average Variance Extracted (AVE)</i>
Trst	I believe the brand keeps its promises.	0.893	0.838	0.843	0.903	0.756
	I feel confident that the brand is reliable.	0.877				
	I trust the brand to deliver what it claims.	0.837				
Consumer Intns	After viewing the web advertisement, I became interested in making a purchase.	0.790	0.711	0.712	0.838	0.633
	After viewing the web advertisement, I am willing to purchase the product being advertised.	0.800				
	After viewing the web advertisement, I will probably purchase the product being advertised.	0.797				
SNS	SNS ads are a valuable source of product/service information.	0.817	0.839	0.844	0.892	0.674
	SNS ads are a convenient source of product/service information.	0.845				
	SNS ads help keep me up to date.	0.852				
	I trust SNS advertisements.	0.69				

SNS: Social networking sites advertisement; Trst: Trust; Consumer Intns: Consumer Purchase Intention

Source: Primary Data

Measurement Instrument

A questionnaire was formulated in a structured way using validated items based on past literature. The questionnaire was separated into two parts: the first part contained four demographic questions and the second part contained 10 questions aimed at measuring the three latent constructs: Social Networking Sites Advertisements (SNS), Trust (Trst) and consumer

purchase intention (CPI). Measures were done on all constructs on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The factor loadings, reliability and validity of all items and constructs are detailed in Table 2, while Table 3 provides the HTMT discriminant validity results, confirming conceptual distinctiveness.

RESULTS

Common Method Bias

The data were checked before the estimation of the model regarding Common Method Bias (CMB). In the event that similar scales are applied by instruments in measuring latent variables, the measurement may be biased because of the method used in measurement and not the actual structural relations. Full collinearity

Table 3: HTMT Discriminant Reliability

	<i>Trst</i>	<i>Consumer Intns</i>	<i>SNS</i>
Trst			
Consumer Intns	0.736		
SNS	0.751	0.776	

SNS: Social networking sites advertisement; Trst: Trust; Consumer Intns: Consumer Purchase Intention)

Source: Primary Data

testing was conducted since the constructs of this study were measured using a 5-point Likert scale. In this method, there is random selection of an endogenous variable and then it is evaluated against the VIF inner values of constructs. A VIF of more than 3.3 is an indication of a potential CMB concern (Kock & Lynn, 2012). Furthermore, such problems as the socially desirable response as a result of survey instructions may cause common variance (Kock, 2017). The inner VIFs in the current study were all lower than the threshold of 3.3, which confirms that there was no issue of CMB.

Measurement Model Assessment

The assessment of the measurement model confirmed the robust reliability and validity of all constructs. Indicator reliability was ensured as item loadings were acceptable. Construct reliability, assessed using both the conservative Cronbach’s Alpha and the more liberal Composite Reliability, was excellent, with all CR values exceeding the 0.70 threshold (SNS: 0.892; Trust: 0.903; Purchase Intention: 0.838), indicating strong internal Consistency (Haghkhah & Asgari, 2000). Convergent validity was also established, as the AVE for every construct was above the 0.5 threshold (SNS: 0.674; Trust: 0.756; Purchase Intention: 0.633), confirming that each latent variable explains over half the variance in its measured items (Chin, 2010).

Finally, the discriminant validity was evaluated by using an established Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio and the results showed that the concepts are actually different as the HTMT values did not exceed 0.85 (Risher, 2018). Overall, the measurement model satisfied all suggested requirements for reliability and validity. The summary of reliability and validity findings is provided in Table 4.

Table 4: The Assessment Confirmed the Reliability and Validity of the Constructs

Construct	Cronbach’s Alpha	CR	AVE	Finding
SNS	0.839	0.892	0.674	Satisfactory
Trust	0.838	0.903	0.756	Satisfactory
CPI	0.711	0.838	0.633	Satisfactory

Structural Model Assessment

The structural model analysis, after confirming no multicollinearity issues (VIFs < 5), demonstrated strong explanatory power and significant relationships (Bangun & Sunaryo, 2022). The model’s coefficients of determination were satisfactory (see Table 5) and the path coefficients were tested using bootstrapping (10,000 subsamples). Effect size (f^2) analysis (Table 6) revealed that SNS advertisement has a very large effect on trust ($f^2 = 1.295$) and a large effect on consumer purchase intention ($f^2 = 0.333$), while trust

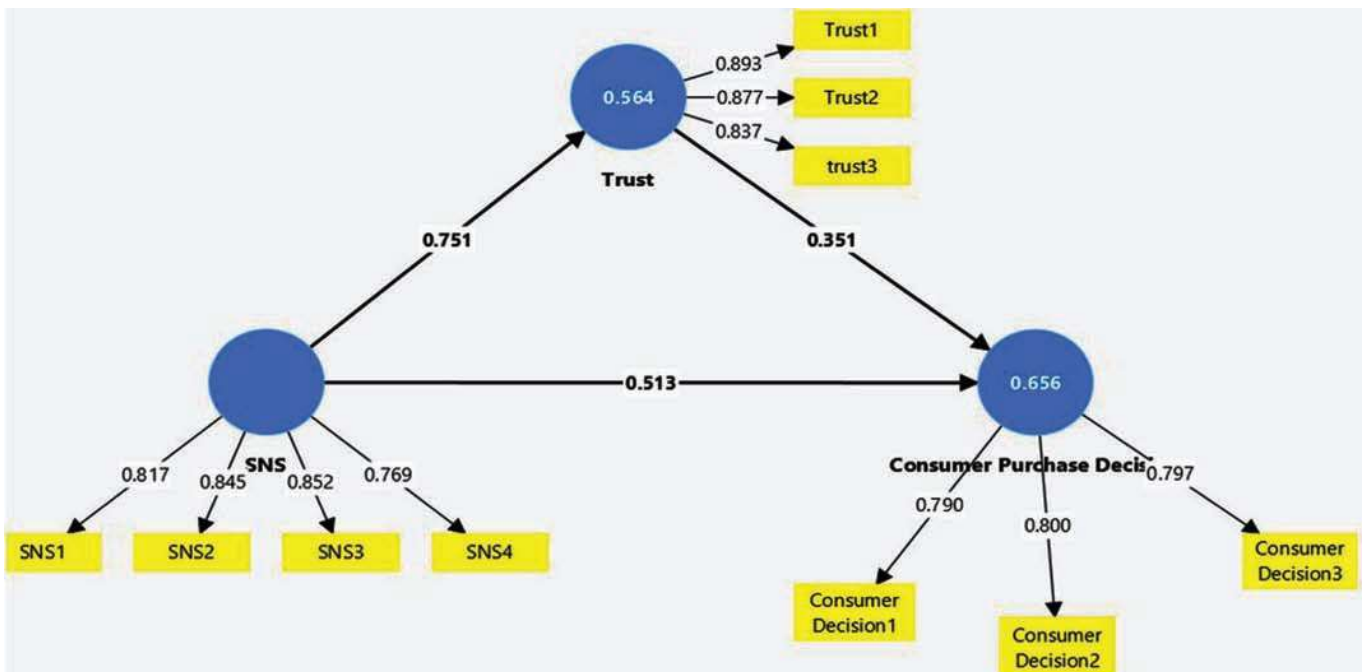


Figure 1: Structural Equation Model
Source: Primary Data

has a medium effect on Purchase Intention ($f^2 = 0.156$) (Gignac & Szodorai 2016). Key direct effects were significant for SNS trust (beta = 0.751, $p < 0.001$) and trust consumer purchase intention (beta = 0.351, $p < 0.001$). Crucially, mediation analysis confirmed trust as a mediator between SNS advertisement and consumer purchase intention, evidenced by a significant indirect effect (beta = 0.263, $t = 4.747$, $p < 0.001$) and a non-significant direct effect of SNS on Purchase Intention when the mediator was included. Overall, the findings strongly support the theoretical framework, confirming that SNS advertisement influences consumer purchase intention primarily by establishing brand trust.

Table 5: R square

	<i>R-square</i>	<i>R-square adjusted</i>
Consumer Intns	0.656	0.652
Trust	0.564	0.562

Source: Primary Data

Table 6: F square

	<i>Consumer Purchase Intention</i>	<i>SNS</i>	<i>Trust</i>
Consumer Intns			1.295
SNS	0.333		
Trust	0.156		

SNS: Social networking sites advertisement; Trst: Trust; Consumer Intns: Consumer Purchase Intention

Source: Primary Data

Mediation Analysis

Bootstrapped indirect effects and confidence interval were used to analyse the mediating role of trust in relationship between SNS advertisement and consumer purchase intention. The overall indirect impact of SNS

on consumer purchase intention by trust was positive and significant ($O = 0.263$, $t = 4.747$, $p = 0.001$), confirming the mediating role of trust (Table 7). The direct effect of SNS on trust to consumer purchase intention was also notable as the confidence interval of 0.156 to 0.370 was 95 percent. Since the confidence interval does not assume zero, this proves the mediation effect to be statistically significant. That is, SNS advertising affects consumer purchase intention, but the effect is not direct, but instead relies on the building of trust. Remarkably, the direct influence of SNS on consumer purchase intention without the mediator was also insignificant and not significant. This implies that trust is a mediator, in other words, SNS advertisements affect purchase intention direct and also indirect way by increasing the trust that the consumers have in the brand or the product. Theoretically, this observation can be taken to be consistent with the proposed model and this is that trust is a vital modulation by which SNS advertisement influences consumer purchase intention. In practice, it underlines that marketer cannot only strive to raise SNS awareness, but also give it a credible, trusting and reliable content that will help promote consumer confidence. In the absence of nurturing trust, SNS advertising may not have a significant effect on the purchasing behaviour.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATION

The structural model provided important insights into how SNS advertising, trust, and consumer purchase intention relate to each other. The fact that the SNS advertising influence on the trust ($f^2 = 1.295$) is exceptionally large, is an important indication that social platforms represent an unusually high vehicle

Table 7: Total Direct Effect and Total Specific Indirect Effect

<i>Path</i>	<i>Original Sample (O)</i>	<i>Sample Mean (M)</i>	<i>Standard Deviation (STDEV)</i>	<i>T Statistics (O/STDEV)</i>	<i>P values</i>
SNS → Consumer Intns	0.513	0.510	0.056	9.16	0.000
SNS → Trst → Consumer Intns	0.263	0.261	0.056	4.747	0.000

SNS: Social networking sites advertisement; Trst: Trust; Consumer Intns: Consumer Purchase Intention

Source: Primary Data

Table 8: Confidence Interval of Specific Effect

<i>Path</i>	<i>Original Sample (O)</i>	<i>Sample Mean (M)</i>	<i>2.5%</i>	<i>97.5%</i>	<i>Mediation Significant</i>
SNS → Trst → Consumer Intns	0.263	0.261	0.156	0.370	Significant

SNS: Social networking sites advertisement; Trst: Trust; Consumer Intns: Consumer Purchase Intention

Source: Primary Data

of creating consumer confidence, which considerably boosts perceived reliability compared to traditional media. Importantly, the mediation analysis revealed that the correlation between SNS ads and purchase intention is partially mediated by trust. This means that the SNS advertisements directly and indirectly stimulate the buying intent, but acts as an invigorator to cause the required psychological process of building trust, which is the real antecedent to conversion. Having explanatory power (R^2 values) in the form of high explanatory power that adequately describes the determinants of consumer behavior, the results provide a concise practical guideline that marketing managers should be strategic in the development of plausible, educational, and entertaining SNS campaigns. The lack of efficiency in online activity is due to the inability to achieve this required confidence that the investment in quality, credible content must be done to be able to convert online presence to real buying behavior.

The structural model gives important information on the relationship between the SNS advertising, trust and consumer purchase intention. The fact that the effect size of SNS advertising on trust ($f^2 = 1.295$) is remarkable, confirms that social platforms represent an exceptional means of consumer confidence development, which substantially increases the perceived reliability more than the conventional media means. More importantly, the mediation analysis proved that trust partially mediates the relationship between SNS ads and purchase intention. This implies that SNS ads will directly and indirectly activate purchasing intention but will serve as an input to start the required psychological action of trust-building, which is the real antecedent to conversion. Having large values of explanatory power (R^2 values) that has been useful in explaining consumer behavior, the findings provide a clear practical commandment, that is, marketing managers need to give strategic priorities to the development of credible, educational, and entertaining SNS campaigns. This lack of efficiency of digital efforts can be explained by the lack of establishment of the necessary trust, which justifies the fact that the investment into quality and trustworthy content is the key to effective conversion of online exposure into real purchasing activity.

Theoretical and Empirical Implications

This research contributes greatly to the literature in Social Media Marketing (SMM) because it creates a high-impact theoretical process: brand trust is a mediator in the correlation between SNS advertisements and consumer purchase intention of high involvement products including clothing. The most important and significant discovery provides a theoretical confirmation that the direct relationship between advertising exposure and buying intention is statistically insignificant, which means that SNS advertising is not an impulsive or transactional stimulus. Instead, it is only through the achievement of the credibility and reliance that it persuades. This result contours our perception of SMM by showing that trust is not a positive phenomenon only but a psychological antecedent that transforms the exposure to the digital world into consumer behavior. This empirically requires a complete change in strategic priorities of digital marketing managers and specifically in the apparel industry. Because sales are completely mediated by trust, the central performance indicators of marketers should shift to more mid-funnel measures of building trust, e.g., comment sentiment, save rates, and dwell time on informative content rather than bottom-of-funnel measures, e.g., click-through rates (CTR). This realignment of strategy demands a content strategy that is focused on credible, educative and entertaining messages that cause perceived risk to be alleviated as opposed to high pressure selling tactics. As a result, the research contradicts typical SMM approaches where maximization of reach and impressions is the end goal, and the actual point of purchase conversion is advertising quality content that is being viewed as consistent, informative, and ethical and not necessarily the volume. Lastly, this research paper provides comprehensive, geographically specific information on the drivers behind consumer purchasing behavior by focusing on clothing brands in a area that has often been neglected by social media research, namely, Haryana, which serves as a source of relevant information as to why the element of trust-earning becomes the core goal of advertising on social networks.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

The current study has succeeded to establish that brand trust is a mediating factor between social media advertisement and consumer buying intention, however, its findings are limited due to three major limitations which should be subject to future academic research. Theoretically, it would be wise to ensure a more sophisticated, serial mediation model, i.e., SNS Advertising → Brand Awareness → Trust → Consumer Purchase Intention, to ensure that the cognitive process starts with a digital exposure and then moves on to produce an affective construct of trust and finally drives the intention to purchase. Such model would be further enhanced by inclusion of other constructs like the emotional response and brand loyalty, which would advance the explanatory power of this model. The use of a brief, three-item scale to measure purchase intention is methodologically inadequate; a more comprehensive scale of five stages of consumer decision-making should be used in future studies to achieve more strict measures of buying behaviour. Lastly, to expand the external validity of the results, researchers should not only confine their research to apparel categories that have only hedonic and social risk dimensions but also high-involvement products like smartphones or financial services which would involve high levels of functional and monetary risk. An empirical study of the functioning of trust under these heterogeneous contingencies of risks will provide a more advanced theoretical framework, explaining the adjustment of the persuasive mechanism to the entire range of consumer decision situations.

REFERENCES

- Aiken, K.D., & Boush, D.M. (2002). *Ratings, and Implied Investments in Advertising: Investigating Online Trust and the Context-Specific Nature of Internet Signals*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0092070304271004>
- Bai, B., Law, R., & Wen, I. (2008). *The impact of website quality on customer satisfaction and purchase intentions: Evidence from Chinese online visitors*, 27, 391–402. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2007.10.008>
- Bangun, W., & Sunaryo, T. (2022). *Problems, Common Beliefs and Procedures on the Use of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling in Business Research*, 14(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.9734/SAJSSE/2022/v14i130367>
- Chin, W.W. (2010). How to Write Up and Report PLS Analyses, 655–656. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-540-32827-8>
- Constantinides, E., Romero, C.L., & Boria, M.A.G. (2008). *European Retail*, 22, 1–2.
- Dehghani, M., Niaki, M.K., Ramezani, I., & Sali, R. (2016). Evaluating the influence of YouTube advertising for attraction of young customers. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 59, 165–172. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.01.037>
- Eshaver, B., & Pavlou, P.A. (2002). Evidence of the Effect of Trust Building Technology in Electronic Markets: Price Premiums and Buyer, 1–26.
- Ellahi, A., & Bokhari, R.H. (2013). Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services Key quality factors affecting users' perception of social networking websites. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 20(1), 120–129. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2012.10.013>
- Erkan, I., & Evans, C. (2018). Social media or shopping websites? The influence of eWOM on consumers' online purchase intentions. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 24(6), 617–632. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2016.1184706>
- Estell, P., & Davidson, E. (2019). Employee engagement, voice mechanisms and enterprise social network sites (ESNS). *Proceedings of the Annual Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*, 2019-Janua, 2387–2396. <https://doi.org/10.24251/hicss.2019.288>
- Featherman, M.S., & Hajli, N. (2016). Self-Service Technologies and e-Services Risks in Social Commerce Era. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 251–269. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-2614-4>
- Foster, K. (2006). International Journal of Organizational Analysis changes publisher. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 14(1). <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijoa.2006.34514aaa.001>
- Gefen, D. (2001). Reflections on the Dimensions of Trust and Trustworthiness among Online Consumers.
- Gefen, D., Karahanna, E., & Straub, D.W. (2003). *Inexperience and Experience with Online Stores: The Importance of TAM and Trust*, 50(3), 307–321.
- Gefen, D., & Straub, D.W. (2004). *Consumer Trust in B2C e-Commerce and the Importance of Social Presence: Experiments in e-Products and e-Services*, 32, 407–424. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.omega.2004.01.006>
- Gignac, G.E., & Szodorai, E.T. (2016). *Effect Size Guidelines for Individual Differences Researchers*, 102, 74–78.
- Ha, E.Y., & Lee, H. (2018). Projecting service quality: The effects of social media reviews on service perception. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 69

- (September 2017), 132–141. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2017.09.006>
- Haghkhah, A., & Asgari, A.A. (2000). Effects of customer value and service quality on customer loyalty: Mediation role of trust and commitment in business-to-business context, 27–47.
 - Hajli, M.N. (2014). *Technological Forecasting & Social Change the Role of Social Support on Relationship Quality and Social Commerce*, 87, 17–27.
 - Hajli, N., Sims, J., Zadeh, A.H., & Richard, M.O. (2017). A social commerce investigation of the role of trust in a social networking site on purchase intentions. *Journal of Business Research*, 71, 133–141. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.10.004>
 - Hassanein, K., & Å, M.H. (2007). *Manipulating Perceived Social Presence through the Web Interface and its Impact on Attitude towards Online Shopping*, 65, 689–708. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhcs.2006.11.018>
 - Huang, Z., & Benyoucef, M. (2013). *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications from e-Commerce to Social Commerce: A Close Look at Design Features*. 12, 246–259.
 - Huang, Z., & Benyoucef, M. (2017). Electronic Commerce Research and Applications the effects of social commerce design on consumer purchase decision-making: An empirical study. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 25, 40–58. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.elerap.2017.08.003>
 - Information, M. (2011). No Title. 27(1), 51–90.
 - Kaiser, S., Kaiser, S., & Mu, G. (2014). Leveraging Lead User Knowledge in Software Development – The Case of Weblog Technology Leveraging Lead User Knowledge in Software Development – The Case of Weblog Technology. April 2008. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13662710801954542>
 - Kang, J., & Park-poaps, H. (2015). Motivational Antecedents of Social Shopping for Fashion and its Contribution to Shopping Satisfaction. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0887302X11422443>
 - Karuhanga, B.N. (2010). 기사 (Article) 와 안내문 (Information). *The Eletronic Library*, 34(1), 1–5.
 - Kim, K., Paulson, B.C., & Cutkosky, M. (n.d.). Trust-based Facilitator: Handling Word-of-mouth Trust for.
 - Kim, S., & Park, H. (2013). International Journal of Information Management Effects of various characteristics of social commerce (s-commerce) on consumers' trust and trust performance. *International Journal of Information Management*, 33(2), 318–332. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2012.11.006>
 - Kock, N. (n.d.). Common Method Bias: A Full Collinearity Assessment Method for PLS-SEM. 245–257. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-64069-3>
 - Kock, N., & Lynn, G.S. (n.d.). Lateral Collinearity and Misleading Results in Variance-Based SEM: An Illustration and Recommendations, 1–40.
 - Kshetri, A., & Jha, B. (2016). Online Purchase Intention: A Study of Automobile Sector in India. *Review of Integrative Business and Economics Research*, 5(3), 35. <http://buscompress.com/journal-home.html>
 - Liang, T., Ho, Y., Li, Y., & Turban, E. (2012). *What Drives Social Commerce: The Role of Social Support and Relationship Quality*, 16(2), 69–90. <https://doi.org/10.2753/JEC1086-4415160204>
 - Liang, T., & Lai, H. (2002). Effect of store design on consumer purchases: van empirical study of on-line bookstores. 39.
 - Liu, X. (2013). Full-Text Citation Analysis: A New Method to Enhance. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 64(July), 1852–1863. <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi>
 - Lopez, A., & Castaño, R. (2019). Consumer Behavior on Social Media: A Thematic Exploration and an Agenda for Future Inquiry BT – Business Governance and Society: Analyzing Shifts, Conflicts, and Challenges (Rajagopal & R. Behl, Eds., pp. 281–301). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-94613-9_17
 - Mcknight, D.H., & Chervany, N.L. (2002). *What Trust Means in E-Commerce Customer Relationships: An Interdisciplinary Conceptual Typology*, 6(2), 35–59.
 - Moreno-Munoz, A., Bellido-Outeirino, F.J., Siano, P., & Gomez-Nieto, M.A. (2016). Mobile social media for smart grids customer engagement: Emerging trends and challenges. *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews*, 53 (2016), 1611–1616A. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rser.2015.09.077>
 - Naeem, M. (2019). Uncovering the role of social media and cross-platform applications as tools for knowledge sharing. *VINE Journal of Information and Knowledge Management Systems*, 49(3), 257–276. <https://doi.org/10.1108/VJKMS-01-2019-0001>
 - Nash, J. (2019). Exploring how social media platforms influence fashion consumer decisions in the UK retail sector. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 23(1), 82–103. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JFMM-01-2018-0012>
 - Nasir, S. (2012). *Social Media and Buying Behaviour of Women in Pakistan towards the Purchase of Textile Garments*, 61–69.
 - Nawaz, A., Abbas, G., Javed, M. F., Mughal, N., & Nabeel, M. (2015). *Impact of Social Media and Voice of Customer (VOC) in Decision Making Process an Empirical Study of Higher Education Institutions of Pakistan*, 23(6), 1069–1075. <https://doi.org/10.5829/idosi.mejsr.2015.23.06.22193>

- Noguti, V., Singh, S., & Waller, D.S. (2018). Gender differences in motivations to use social networking sites. *Social Media Marketing: Breakthroughs in Research and Practice*, 680–695. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-5637-4.ch034>
- Ozanne, J.L. (1985). Influences on Exchange Processes: Buyers' Preconceptions of a Seller's Trustworthiness and Bargaining Toughness.
- Park, C., & Min, T. (2009). *Antecedents of Online Reviews' Usage and Purchase Influence: An Empirical Comparison of U.S. and Korean Consumers*, 23, 332–340. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2009.07.001>
- Permatasari, A., & Kuswadi, E. (2017). The Impact of Social Media on Consumers' Purchase Intention: A Study of Ecommerce Sites in Jakarta, Indonesia. *Review of Integrative Business and Economics Research*, 6(1), 321–335. <http://buscompress.com/journal-home.html>
- Pujadas-Hostench, J., Palau-Saumell, R., Forgas-Coll, S., & Matute, J. (2019). Integrating Theories to Predict Clothing Purchase on SNS. *Industrial Management and Data Systems*, 119(5), 1015–1030. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IMDS-10-2018-0430>
- Ranganathan, C., & Ganapathy, S. (2002). Key dimensions of business-to-consumer web sites. 39.
- Rejeesh, M.R. (2019). Interest point based face recognition using adaptive neuro fuzzy inference system. *Multimedia Tools and Applications*, 78(16), 22691–22710. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11042-019-7577-5>
- Risher, J. (2018). When to use and how to report the results of PLS-SEM. December. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EBR-11-2018-0203>
- Salkhordeh, P. (2010). An Exploratory Content Analysis of the Use of Facebook.
- SSRN-2048614.pdf.crdownload. (n.d.).
- Suh, B., & Han, I. (2003). *The Impact of Customer Trust and Perception of Security Control on the Acceptance of Electronic Commerce* Bomil Suh and Ingoo Han, 7(3), 135–161.
- Sundararaj, V. (2016). *An Efficient Threshold Prediction Scheme for Wavelet Based ECG Signal Noise Reduction Using Variable Step Size Firefly Algorithm*, 9(3), 117–126. <https://doi.org/10.22266/ijies2016.0930.12>
- Thackeray, R., Neiger, B. L., Hanson, C. L., & Mckenzie, J. F. (2008). Enhancing Promotional Strategies Within Social Marketing Programs: Use of Web 2.0 Social Media. *Health Promotion Practice*, 9(4), 338–343. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839908325335>
- Vila, N. (2011). *Information & Management Consumer Feelings and Behaviours towards Well Designed Websites*, 48, 166–177. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.im.2011.04.003>
- Violino, B. (2009). The buzz on campus: Social networking takes hold. *Community College Journal*, 79(6), 28.
- Wang, C. (2012). The Evolution of Social Commerce: The People, Management, Technology, and Information Dimensions and Information Dimensions. 31. <https://doi.org/10.17705/1CAIS.03105>
- Wang, W., Rui, R., Xiaojuan, C., & Jifan, S. (2019). Computers in Human Behavior Media or message, which is the king in social commerce?: An empirical study of participants' intention to repost marketing messages on social media. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 93(December 2018), 176–191. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.12.007>
- Wang, X., & Yu, C. (2012). *Social Media Peer Communication and Impacts on Purchase Intentions: A Consumer Socialization Framework*, 26, 2011–2013. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2011.11.004>
- Waters, R.D., Canfield, R.R., Foster, J.M. & Hardy, E.E. (2011). Applying the dialogic theory to social networking sites Examining how university health centers convey health messages on Facebook. <https://doi.org/10.1108/20426761111170713>
- Wei, Y. (n.d.). Does Consumer Ethnocentrism Affect Purchase Intentions of Chinese Consumers? Mediating Effect of Brand Sensitivity and Moderating Effect of Product Cues.
- Yadav, M.S., Valck, K. De, Hennig-thurau, T., Hoffman, D.L., & Spann, M. (2013). ScienceDirect Social Commerce: A Contingency Framework for Assessing Marketing Potential. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 27(4), 311–323. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2013.09.001>
- Yang, K., Li, X., Kim, H., & Kim, Y.H. (2015). Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services Social shopping website quality attributes increasing consumer participation, positive eWOM, and co-shopping: The reciprocating role of participation. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 24, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2015.01.008>
- Zafarani, R., & Liu, H. (n.d.). *Behavior Analysis in Social Media*, 29(4), 4–7.
- Zhang, K. Z. K., & Benyoucef, M. (2016). Consumer behavior in social commerce: A literature review. *Decision Support Systems*, 86, 95–108. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dss.2016.04.001>
- Zhao, N., & Li, H. (2020). How can social commerce be boosted? The impact of consumer behaviors on the information dissemination mechanism in a social commerce network. *Electronic Commerce Research*, 20(4), 833–856. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10660-018-09326-3>