

Social media: Unite users of the world An Exploratory Study Integrating Social Media and Customer Engagement

Priya Bhonsle^{1*}, Dr. Neha Soni², Dr. Chandra Mohan Singh³

^{1*}Research Scholar, Shri Shankaracharya Professional University, Bhilai (C.G)

²Associate Professor, Shri Shakaracharya, Professional University, Bhilai (CG)

³Assistant Professor, Disha Institute of Management and Technology Raipur (CG)

Abstract

This study explores the impact of social media on customer engagement, focusing on the perception of consumers regarding the use of social media platforms to increase customer engagement. The research utilizes a quantitative methodology with a sample of 300 respondents, examining two hypotheses: H1, which posits a significant impact of social media on customer engagement, and H2, which suggests a positive perception of consumers towards the use of social media platforms for customer engagement. Through a comprehensive analysis, the results show a strong correlation between social media and increased customer engagement, with significant levels of interaction, customer support, and positive purchasing decisions influenced by social media. The study also indicates that consumers generally view social media as a more effective and preferable medium for engaging with businesses compared to traditional methods. The data derived from one-sample tests provide robust support for both hypotheses, with high mean differences indicating a strong agreement among respondents. The conclusions from this research highlight the importance of social media in shaping customer-business relationships, suggesting implications for businesses to focus on social media strategies to meet customer expectations. Future research is encouraged to explore emerging trends and cross-cultural differences to deepen the understanding of social media's role in customer engagement.

Keywords: Social media, Customer engagement, Business-consumer relationships, Quantitative study, Consumer perception.

Introduction

Social media has fundamentally transformed the methods by which people communicate, engage with one another, and exchange information. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn have not only become essential for personal communication but have also significantly altered the dynamics of business-customer interactions. With the growing convergence of businesses and consumers in digital domains, the importance of customer interaction has reached a higher degree of relevance. This research seeks to combine the domains of social media and customer engagement, examining the complex interactions that take place in online settings and their consequences for organisations. Recently, social media has become an essential tool for businesses aiming to connect and interact with their consumers. Social media platforms include intrinsic interactivity and extensive reach, providing organisations with unparalleled opportunity to engage with customers, collect feedback, and cultivate connections. The increased prevalence of social media usage has resulted in corporations making significant investments in social media marketing and engagement techniques, which has therefore led to a rise in academic study examining these phenomena. Customer engagement, within the realm of social media, pertains to the interactions and encounters that customers have with a company via online platforms. Interactions with consumers may be categorised as either active or passive. Active interactions include direct engagement, such as commenting, sharing, or generating material. Passive interactions, on the other hand, refer to customers who just watch or consume information without engaging directly. According to Sashi (2012), customer engagement is a cyclical procedure that includes many phases, starting with establishing a connection and contact, leading to satisfaction, retention, and ultimately loyalty. Gaining a comprehensive understanding of the many types of consumer involvement and how they influence company results is essential for creating successful strategies in social media marketing. Although there is a substantial amount of literature on customer participation in social media, there are still significant gaps in study. Current research frequently concentrates on certain platforms or sectors, resulting in a fragmented comprehension of how consumer involvement functions in many circumstances. Furthermore, although several studies have identified important factors that precede and result from customer engagement, there is a scarcity of research on the correlation between active and passive types of engagement and their influence on business success. This study seeks to fill these voids by undertaking an exploratory analysis that combines several facets of social media and client involvement. This research aims to investigate the fundamental principles of consumer involvement in social media, analysing the factors, trends, and commercial consequences of these interactions. The study seeks to offer a complete viewpoint on consumer involvement by incorporating data from many platforms and sectors. It intends to emphasise both

shared traits and distinct features across diverse situations. The results are anticipated to enhance comprehension of client involvement in the digital era, providing useful insights for both scholarly investigation and company application. Essentially, this study aims to provide a better understanding of the intricate connection between social media and customer engagement. It aims to fill in the gaps in previous research and lay the foundation for more successful customer engagement strategies in the ever-changing world of social media.

Review of Literature

De Oliveira Santini et al. (2020) investigated consumer involvement in social media using a meta-analytic technique. They analysed 814 effect sizes from 97 research with a total of 161,059 participants. The researchers identified important factors that strongly influence consumer involvement, including contentment, pleasant emotions, and trust. However, they found that dedication does not have a major impact. The study found that satisfaction had a greater impact on consumer involvement in high-convenience industries, B2B situations, and on Twitter, as opposed to Facebook and Blogs. The authors observed that consumer participation on social media has a significant influence on corporate performance, with behavioural intentions and word-of-mouth acting as important intermediaries. Nevertheless, it was shown that hedonic consumption has a more significant influence on firm performance in comparison to utilitarian consumption, resulting in an effect that is roughly three times stronger. Surprisingly, the commonly held idea that word-of-mouth has a role in how customer involvement affects a company's success was not confirmed. This suggests that there is a more intricate link between these aspects. This study presents a fundamental paradigm for combining social media and customer engagement, emphasising the intricate roles of happiness and platform selection in facilitating successful consumer-company interactions. It implies that firms that prioritise pleasurable consumption and utilise networks like Twitter may achieve improved consumer engagement results.

Farook and Abeysekara (2016) conducted a study to investigate the impact of social media marketing on consumer engagement. Their research emphasised the importance for organisations to have a clear means of monitoring the effectiveness of their social media investments. Their research, published in the "International Journal of Business and Management Invention," utilised questionnaires to gather data from followers of a particular Facebook brand page, with the objective of identifying the elements that influence consumer involvement on social media. The findings suggest that the media and content formats used in postings have a substantial impact on online customer engagement. Moreover, the research revealed a positive relationship between the extent of social media marketing impact and consumer involvement, indicating a clear connection between successful social media tactics and customer contact. The study revealed five crucial elements that have a substantial influence on client involvement on social media. The results emphasise the significance of self-disclosure as a key factor in establishing robust brand-customer connections, which can ultimately impact consumer buying behaviour. This research emphasises the importance for marketers to carefully assess the information they put online on social networking sites (SNSs), as it has the ability to affect consumer engagement. SNSs provide two-way contact between customers and enterprises. Social media marketing, as a means of promoting interactive communication, has the potential to strengthen consumer connections and promote recurring engagements on platforms such as Facebook, ultimately leading to measurable commercial success. The ramifications for marketers are evident: developing material that strongly appeals to customers and promotes self-revelation can result in a stronger bond and improved customer involvement.

Lim and Rasul (2022) provide a thorough analysis of customer engagement (CE) in the context of social media, acknowledging the significant influence that social media has on the importance of this marketing term. Their research, published in the "Journal of Business Research," fills a significant knowledge vacuum by providing a comprehensive review of studies on the issue of CE from the early 2000s. The authors employed the PRISMA procedure for conducting systematic reviews, allowing them to amalgamate a diverse array of research in order to discern significant patterns and themes pertaining to CE and its expression on social media platforms. The research provides an overview of the main factors, choices, and results of customer involvement on social media. Furthermore, it delves into the many ideas, settings, and methodologies employed in contemporary research, providing a comprehensive perspective of the present state of affairs in this field. The findings of Lim and Rasul emphasise the intricate dynamics that propel consumer involvement, illustrating the essential role of social media in cultivating these relationships. The study also examines the constraints of previous research and suggests novel avenues for future investigations, highlighting the necessity for more meticulousness and inclusiveness to further our comprehension of CE in the digital era. Their study provides significant insights for marketers, academics, and business professionals who want to comprehend the changing dynamics of client participation on social media. Lim and Rasul propose exploring the past to find new and creative directions for future study. Their goal is to improve the understanding of consumer involvement and how it may be applied in the setting of social media. This synthesis provides stakeholders with a framework to create more efficient plans that utilise the distinct features of social media to enhance customer-company relationships and attain marketing success.

Agnihotri (2020) examines the relationship between social media, customer interaction, and sales organisations in the B2B sector, highlighting the significant investments that organisations are making in social media to improve the

performance of their sales force. This paper, published in "Industrial Marketing Management," acknowledges the current academic literature that supports the use of social media in corporate marketplaces. However, it emphasises the need for more study to gain a comprehensive understanding of its consequences. The article establishes a plan for studying the connection between social media and consumer involvement in B2B sales. It relies on recent academic advancements and takes into account the viewpoints of managers. Agnihotri categorises four overarching subjects that might serve as a structure for directing future investigations. The following items are included: The utility of social media technologies is examined in this field, specifically focusing on how these tools and platforms may be optimally utilised to enhance sales operations and foster client engagement in the B2B environment. The theme of this discussion is the significance of recognising the diverse settings in which social media is utilised. It emphasises the impact that various sectors and corporate environments may have on the effectiveness of social media initiatives. In this article, Agnihotri discusses the dangers and difficulties that arise from using social media in sales organisations. He highlights the importance of being mindful of potential problems that might hinder client interaction. Futuristic Social Media Applications: This section explores the potential impact of developing technologies and trends in social media on consumer interaction in the future, proposing new areas for study and innovation. Agnihotri's paper offers a thorough research plan, outlining important inquiries that academics and professionals should investigate to gain a deeper understanding of the influence of social media on B2B sales and its effect on customer engagement. By examining these inquiries, next research may provide more profound understanding of how sales organisations might exploit social media to develop more efficient client connection tactics and eventually enhance commercial triumph.

Guesalaga (2016) examines the advantages of utilising social media in personal selling and sales management, specifically in the business-to-business (B2B) setting. The study, which was published in "Industrial Marketing Management," utilises interactional psychology theory to create and evaluate a model that investigates the use of social media in sales. The model specifically looks at elements connected to individuals, organisations, and customers. The study highlights many crucial factors that influence the use of social media in sales. The importance of organisational competency and dedication to social media is seen in their significant impact on the utilisation of social media by sales teams. Individual dedication also arises as a noteworthy aspect impacting social media involvement in sales settings. The research highlights that consumer interaction with social media is a reliable indicator of its utilisation in sales, both directly and indirectly through organisational and individual characteristics. Organisational competency and dedication are key elements in this relationship. An intriguing discovery from the study is the synergistic relationship between individual competency and commitment. This implies that sales staff who possess both expertise and dedication to social media are more likely to utilise it with greater effectiveness in their sales endeavours. Nevertheless, this cooperative impact is not apparent when considering the overall organisation, suggesting that individual characteristics may have a greater influence on social media usage. Guesalaga's approach relies on doing multiple regression analyses using data obtained from a sample of 220 sales executives in the United States. The study offers useful insights into the elements that influence the adoption of social media in sales, both at the individual and organisational levels. It demonstrates that sales professionals may effectively utilise social media platforms by being motivated by customer involvement. This study enhances our comprehension of how organisations may develop skills and cultivate dedication to maximise the effectiveness of social media in sales and customer interaction. In conclusion, these observations provide valuable advice for companies aiming to utilise social media to improve their sales tactics and cultivate more robust connections with clients in the B2B sector. Carlson et al. (2018) examine consumer engagement behaviours (CEB) on social media, specifically looking at how brand pages on social media platforms might motivate customers to willingly give feedback and work together with others, therefore aiding a business's innovation endeavours. The study, published in the "Journal of Services Marketing," uses the stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) paradigm to investigate how certain design features of online services on social media brand pages can stimulate customers' perception of value. This perception, in turn, encourages customers to provide feedback and collaborate with the brand. The researchers gathered data from 654 American customers who engaged with brand pages on Facebook. They employed structural equation modelling to examine their suggested theoretical framework. The findings confirmed the majority of the proposed connections, illustrating that some attributes of online-service design, such as the quality of content, interactivity of brand pages, sociability, and the quality of customer contact, had a substantial impact on shaping customers' views of value. The study discovered that certain factors, such as the perceived value of brand learning, the perceived value of entitativity, and the perceived value of hedonic experiences, had a positive impact on consumer feedback and intents to collaborate. The research has significant ramifications for professionals in the field of social media marketing, namely in enhancing online services to foster client involvement and creativity. The study proposes that organisations may enhance consumer feedback and cooperation by improving the quality of information, interaction, sociability, and customer contact on their social media brand sites. This strategy not only enhances client involvement but also offers chances for organisations to utilise customer-led innovation. The study provides significant information, but its limits are that it only focuses on Facebook brand pages in the United States, which may not be applicable to other platforms or foreign situations. However, the results emphasise the possibility for companies to strategically create and improve their social media presence in order to take advantage of innovation

opportunities by engaging with customers. By utilising these behaviours, firms may strengthen their service design and develop more resilient platforms for consumer participation and feedback, resulting in improved innovation performance. Shawky et al. (2020) examine the changing characteristics of consumer engagement (CE) on social media and suggest a dynamic framework to assist in its management. This research, published in the "Journal of Business Research," recognises the transition from basic one-on-one contacts between consumers and marketers to more intricate interactions that involve several participants, including organisations, stakeholders, and non-customers. The authors want to improve knowledge of consumer interaction on social media by presenting a paradigm that is based on empirical research. This is in response to the need for further study on multi-actor ecosystems. The study employs a methodology that includes conducting thirty-two interviews with professionals and users in the field of social media marketing. These interviews aim to get valuable insights into the strategies and techniques used to build and sustain client engagement. The approach introduced by Shawky et al. examines four discrete tiers of customer involvement on social media, providing a more intricate comprehension of how these interactions occur within a wider ecosystem. The multi-level view acknowledges the intricate nature of contemporary social media landscapes, where communication and interaction take place among several individuals and platforms. An important aspect of this study is the establishment of suitable metrics for evaluating client involvement at different stages. This functionality enables professionals to assess and improve their social media tactics by analysing particular metrics of user interaction, leading to a more focused and efficient method of managing client engagement. The findings highlight the need of recognising the dynamic and interrelated structure of social media interactions. This suggests that effective engagement tactics need to be flexible and sensitive to the changing landscape of customer connections. The work conducted by Shawky et al. is highly helpful for organisations that aim to manage the intricate aspects of engaging with social media. The research presents a framework based on actual data, which serves as a practical tool for marketing professionals to evaluate and enhance their consumer interaction strategies. This research adds to the wider academic discussion by examining the changing role of consumer involvement in multi-actor ecosystems. It sets the stage for future studies to delve further into these dynamics and their impact on marketing strategy and organisational performance.

In his study, Sashi (2012) examines the developing notion of customer engagement (CE) within the framework of the interactive elements of Web 2.0. Specifically, he emphasises the impact of social media in cultivating connections between buyers and sellers. The study, published in "Management Decision," seeks to fill the theoretical void in academic research on customer engagement, which has not kept up with the increasing interest in the subject among professionals. The study aims to improve comprehension by analysing the perspectives of professionals on customer engagement, establishing connections to wider marketing principles, and constructing a model that delineates the customer engagement cycle and a customer engagement matrix. Sashi's customer engagement cycle comprises many stages, including connection, interaction, satisfaction, retention, loyalty, advocacy, and engagement. This cycle illustrates the gradual process by which clients grow increasingly involved with a brand or vendor. The customer engagement matrix classifies customers according to the level of relational interaction and emotional connections they have with merchants, resulting in four distinct relationship types: transactional customers, happy customers, loyal customers, and fans. The study indicates that effective customer involvement has the potential to convert customers into enthusiastic supporters, who not only exhibit loyalty but also actively promote the company. In order for this transition to take place, clients must go through the various stages of the customer engagement cycle. The practical ramifications of this concept are substantial for firms aiming to formulate strategies that enhance consumer engagement by utilising a combination of digital and non-digital technology. Although the paper provides valuable insights into the conceptualization of customer engagement, Sashi acknowledges the need for further research to enhance the theoretical understanding and investigate specific applications, such as the utilisation of various Web 2.0 tools to foster customer engagement in both consumer and business markets. In summary, this study adds to the existing discussion on consumer involvement by offering a well-organized framework that might assist professionals in creating more successful marketing strategies. The research provides a holistic method to developing stronger relationships with consumers through social media and other interactive platforms by linking customer involvement with classic marketing principles like market orientation and relationship marketing.

Ajiboye, Harvey, and Resnick (2019) focus on the important topic of customer engagement behaviours (CEB) on social media platforms, highlighting its importance in nurturing firm-customer interactions. The authors of the paper, published in the "Journal of Customer Behaviour," agree that although the relevance of customer engagement behaviour (CEB) on social media is generally recognised, no extensive assessments have been undertaken to comprehensively examine its antecedents. This gap is filled by conducting a comprehensive literature review, which involves a thorough study of current empirical research that specifically examine CEB within the context of social media platforms. The review findings highlight five primary factors that lead to customer engagement on social media: (1) social connections, (2) perceived value of ownership, (3) information-seeking behaviour, (4) active participation, and (5) functionality. These variables are the main catalysts for consumer engagement in organisations that use social media to communicate with customers. The systematic methodology enables a comprehensive analysis of the literature, providing significant insights into the factors that drive customer engagement with companies on these platforms. In addition to identifying these antecedents, the authors emphasise three epistemological tensions present in the current research on CEB. These tensions

indicate the need for more study to address discrepancies and enhance our knowledge. Recognising the present state of the industry and its limits is essential for directing future research and assisting companies in effectively utilising social media to promote meaningful consumer connection. Ajiboye, Harvey, and Resnick's research enhances the overall discussion on customer involvement by offering a comprehensive analysis that consolidates existing information and proposes potential areas for further investigation. The study's identification of crucial precursors provides a basis for companies hoping to improve consumer involvement on social media, while the analysis of epistemological conflicts gives a guide for future researchers looking to expand on this knowledge base. In summary, the essay is a valuable contribution to the area, providing a well-organized viewpoint on the factors that influence consumer involvement in the digital era.

In Tsiotsou's (2020) study, the author investigates the significant influence of social media on customer engagement, specifically analysing its effects on communication, satisfaction, and customer loyalty. The chapter, which appears in "The Routledge Handbook of Service Research Insights and Ideas," provides a thorough examination of the existing literature on consumer participation via social media. This highlights the extent to which social media has become a widely used medium for consumer interactions, benefiting businesses of all scales by enabling customer participation and cultivating a feeling of community among customers. The chapter introduces a theoretical framework that helps to comprehend consumer involvement in social media. It distinguishes between active and passive kinds of participation. Active engagement refers to the social interaction amongst consumers, where they connect with one other, assess the quality of service, make comments, and exchange material. Passive participation, in contrast, is defined as para-social behaviour, which entails one-way activities including consuming material, reading comments, and witnessing discussions. Tsiotsou's framework provides a comprehensive view of the elements that influence consumer involvement in social media platforms. It encompasses the key aspects that lead to engagement and the resulting results. The antecedents may be classified into two categories: external causes and intrinsic factors. On the other hand, the consequences can be categorised as either relational or value-oriented. This segmentation offers a lucid comprehension of the factors that lead to consumer engagement and the potential outcomes for organisations. Tsiotsou's chapter has practical ramifications for managers who want to utilise social media to improve consumer engagement. By identifying and comprehending the many forms of customer engagement, as well as the factors that lead to it and the resulting consequences, organisations may formulate more efficient approaches to engage consumers, foster connections, and enhance loyalty. The suggested paradigm also provides guidance for future study, indicating areas where more investigation might enhance our comprehension of customer interaction in social media situations. Overall, the chapter provides significant insights for practitioners and scholars who are interested in understanding the changing dynamics of consumer involvement in the era of social media. The systematic methodology and emphasis on the conceptual framework provide a thorough and all-encompassing manual for comprehending and leveraging social media for consumer interaction.

The literature study on consumer involvement in social media provides a comprehensive understanding of the many mechanisms, causes, and consequences associated with customer interaction. Nevertheless, there is still a significant lack of study in comprehending the impact of diverse consumer involvement kinds, namely active and passive forms, on company outcomes across multiple social media platforms. Although there have been studies investigating the causes and effects of customer involvement, there is a lack of study on the different circumstances and industry-specific consequences. This study aims to address this gap by providing a thorough analysis that takes into account various kinds of consumer contact, as well as the wider industry environment and platform-specific behaviours. The study intends to get a more comprehensive knowledge of consumer involvement on social media by examining these less researched areas. This will contribute to a more detailed understanding that can be used to drive both academic research and management practices.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the impact of social media on customer engagement.
2. To understand the perception of the consumers towards the use of social media platforms to increase customer engagement.

Hypotheses

H1: There is a significant impact of social media on customer engagement.

H2: There is a positive perception of the consumers towards the use of social media platforms to increase customer engagement.

Research Methodology

The research methodology employed in this study used a quantitative approach to examine the impact of social media on customer engagement and to understand consumer perception towards the use of social media platforms for this purpose.

Data collection was conducted through a structured survey distributed to a sample of 300 participants drawn from various social media platforms, ensuring a diverse and representative respondent base. The respondents were selected from Durg, Raipur, Bhilai from Chhattisgarh state. The survey included questions designed to measure both the level of customer engagement experienced by participants and their perception of social media's role in enhancing customer engagement. A Likert scale was used to quantify responses, allowing for statistical analysis of the data. Additionally, demographic variables were collected to explore potential variations in customer engagement and perception across different groups. Data analysis was performed using software tools capable of handling large datasets and providing robust statistical results. The findings from this quantitative methodology helped to validate the study's hypotheses and provided insights into the impact and perception of social media in the context of customer engagement.

Data Analysis

Table 1. Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-30 years	17	5.7	5.7	5.7
	30-40 years	223	74.3	74.3	80.0
	40-50 years	29	9.7	9.7	89.7
	50-55 years	17	5.7	5.7	95.3
	Above 55 years	14	4.7	4.7	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

The frequency distribution table displays the age demographics of a sample population comprising 300 respondents. The largest age group is the 30-40 years cohort, which represents 74.3% of the sample, indicating that this is the dominant demographic. Following this, the 40-50 years age group accounts for 9.7%, while the 18-30 years and 50-55 years groups each constitute 5.7%. The smallest segment is those above 55 years, with a 4.7% share. The cumulative percentage shows that by the time the data reaches the 30-40 years age group, 80% of the population is accounted for, and with the 50-55 years group, 95.3% of the total sample is reached. This information suggests that the majority of the respondents fall within the 30-40 years range, with significantly fewer participants in other age brackets. The data could indicate a focused target audience primarily consisting of individuals in their 30s, with diminishing representation from older and younger age groups.

Table 2. Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	154	51.3	51.3	51.3
	Female	146	48.7	48.7	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

The frequency distribution table for gender presents the breakdown of a sample population of 300 respondents. Males constitute 51.3% of the sample, totaling 154 individuals, while females represent 48.7%, with 146 individuals. The total count of 300 reflects an even distribution of respondents, with a slight majority of males. The cumulative percentage indicates that once male respondents are considered, 51.3% of the sample is accounted for, with females completing the remaining 48.7% to reach 100%. The data suggests a balanced gender representation within the sample, with males holding a marginally higher proportion compared to females. This gender distribution can provide insights into the target demographic, showing a nearly equal split between male and female respondents.

Table 3. Social media has significantly increased my interaction with my favorite brands.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Firmly Disagree	10	3.3	3.3	3.3
	Disagree	14	4.7	4.7	8.0
	Neutral	8	2.7	2.7	10.7
	Agree	40	13.3	13.3	24.0
	Firmly Agree	228	76.0	76.0	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

The frequency distribution table illustrates responses to the statement "Social media has significantly increased my interaction with my favorite brands" among 300 respondents. The majority of the participants, 76.0% (228 individuals), firmly agreed with the statement, indicating a strong consensus about social media's role in increasing brand interaction. A smaller percentage of respondents, 13.3% (40 individuals), agreed, while only 2.7% (8 individuals) were neutral. Those

who disagreed with the statement comprised 4.7% (14 individuals), and a minority of 3.3% (10 individuals) firmly disagreed. The cumulative percentages show that 24% of respondents either agreed or firmly agreed, rising to 100% with the addition of all categories. This distribution indicates that the vast majority of respondents believe social media significantly impacts their interaction with favorite brands, suggesting the influence of social media on consumer engagement is notably high.

Table 4. I often engage with businesses through social media platforms.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Firmly Disagree	22	7.3	7.3	7.3
	Disagree	20	6.7	6.7	14.0
	Neutral	4	1.3	1.3	15.3
	Agree	41	13.7	13.7	29.0
	Firmly Agree	213	71.0	71.0	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

The frequency distribution table shows responses to the statement "I often engage with businesses through social media platforms" among 300 respondents. The majority, representing 71.0% of the sample (213 individuals), firmly agreed with the statement, indicating that a significant portion of respondents frequently use social media platforms to engage with businesses. Additionally, 13.7% (41 individuals) agreed, suggesting that nearly 85% of respondents either agreed or firmly agreed with the statement. A smaller percentage of respondents either disagreed or firmly disagreed with the statement—6.7% (20 individuals) and 7.3% (22 individuals), respectively. Only 1.3% (4 individuals) were neutral. The cumulative percentages confirm this trend, with 29.0% agreeing or firmly agreeing, reaching 100% with the inclusion of all responses. These results suggest that social media plays a prominent role in business-to-customer engagement, with a majority of respondents demonstrating a strong inclination to use these platforms for interaction with businesses. This trend underscores the significance of social media as a communication tool between consumers and businesses.

Table 5. Social media has influenced my purchasing decisions.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Firmly Disagree	16	5.3	5.3	5.3
	Disagree	14	4.7	4.7	10.0
	Neutral	10	3.3	3.3	13.3
	Agree	30	10.0	10.0	23.3
	Firmly Agree	230	76.7	76.7	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

The frequency distribution table represents responses to the statement "Social media has influenced my purchasing decisions" from 300 respondents. The data shows that a large proportion of respondents firmly agreed with the statement, representing 76.7% (230 individuals), suggesting a strong consensus that social media significantly impacts purchasing decisions. Additionally, 10.0% (30 individuals) agreed, bringing the total percentage of those who agreed or firmly agreed to 86.7%. In contrast, 3.3% (10 individuals) were neutral, while 4.7% (14 individuals) disagreed, and 5.3% (16 individuals) firmly disagreed. The cumulative percentages confirm this trend, with a clear majority supporting the influence of social media on purchasing decisions. These results indicate that social media plays a critical role in shaping consumer behavior and purchasing decisions. With such a significant percentage of respondents acknowledging its influence, businesses are encouraged to leverage social media to engage with customers and drive sales.

Table 6. I find that social media provides a better way to connect with brands compared to other channels.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Firmly Disagree	13	4.3	4.3	4.3
	Disagree	15	5.0	5.0	9.3
	Neutral	13	4.3	4.3	13.7
	Agree	37	12.3	12.3	26.0
	Firmly Agree	222	74.0	74.0	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

The frequency distribution table represents responses to the statement "I find that social media provides a better way to connect with brands compared to other channels" from 300 respondents. The results indicate that the majority of respondents firmly agree with this statement, accounting for 74.0% (222 individuals). This implies a strong preference

for social media as a connection channel with brands. A further 12.3% (37 individuals) agreed, bringing the total percentage of those in agreement with the statement to 86.3%. The neutral response was provided by 4.3% (13 individuals), suggesting that they neither agree nor disagree. Among those who expressed disagreement, 5.0% (15 individuals) disagreed, and 4.3% (13 individuals) firmly disagreed. These results suggest that social media is seen as an effective channel for connecting with brands, with a clear majority supporting this view. This insight could guide companies to prioritize social media platforms for customer engagement, recognizing their ability to establish stronger connections with their customer base.

Table 7. My level of customer engagement has increased because of social media.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Firmly Disagree	15	5.0	5.0	5.0
	Disagree	13	4.3	4.3	9.3
	Neutral	11	3.7	3.7	13.0
	Agree	25	8.3	8.3	21.3
	Firmly Agree	236	78.7	78.7	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

The frequency distribution table represents the responses to the statement "My level of customer engagement has increased because of social media" from 300 respondents. The results indicate a significant proportion of respondents firmly agree with this statement, with 78.7% (236 individuals) stating that their customer engagement has increased due to social media. This majority suggests that social media is a crucial factor in enhancing customer engagement. Another 8.3% (25 individuals) agree with the statement, totaling 87% of respondents who perceive an increase in customer engagement through social media. Neutral responses, indicating neither agreement nor disagreement, were 3.7% (11 individuals). A smaller fraction expressed disagreement, with 4.3% (13 individuals) disagreeing and 5.0% (15 individuals) firmly disagreeing, indicating they do not see an increase in their customer engagement due to social media. Overall, these findings demonstrate a strong consensus that social media plays a pivotal role in increasing customer engagement. This evidence highlights the potential for businesses to leverage social media to cultivate stronger relationships with customers and increase customer involvement in their brands or products.

Table 8. I believe social media is an effective tool for engaging with businesses.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Firmly Disagree	25	8.3	8.3	8.3
	Disagree	15	5.0	5.0	13.3
	Neutral	9	3.0	3.0	16.3
	Agree	51	17.0	17.0	33.3
	Firmly Agree	200	66.7	66.7	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

The table reflects responses to the statement, "I believe social media is an effective tool for engaging with businesses," from 300 respondents. A significant proportion of respondents (66.7% or 200 individuals) firmly agree with the statement, indicating a strong belief in the effectiveness of social media for engaging with businesses. An additional 17.0% (51 individuals) agree, bringing the total to 83.7% of respondents who perceive social media as an effective engagement tool. A smaller group either disagreed or firmly disagreed, with 5.0% (15 individuals) disagreeing and 8.3% (25 individuals) firmly disagreeing, indicating that they do not view social media as an effective engagement tool. Neutral responses, representing neither agreement nor disagreement, accounted for 3.0% (9 individuals). These results suggest that a significant majority of respondents believe in the effectiveness of social media for engaging with businesses, underscoring its value in fostering communication and interaction between customers and businesses. The high level of agreement with this statement reinforces the growing role of social media in contemporary business engagement strategies.

Table 9. I view social media platforms as a valuable resource for customer support.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Firmly Disagree	20	6.7	6.7	6.7
	Disagree	15	5.0	5.0	11.7
	Neutral	8	2.7	2.7	14.3
	Agree	27	9.0	9.0	23.3
	Firmly Agree	230	76.7	76.7	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

The distribution of responses to the statement, "I view social media platforms as a valuable resource for customer support," indicates that a large majority of respondents find social media platforms beneficial for customer support. The data shows that 76.7% (230 respondents) firmly agree with this statement, suggesting that they see significant value in using social media for customer support services. Additionally, 9.0% (27 respondents) agree, indicating a positive perception of social media for customer support among a significant portion of the sample. This results in a combined total of 85.7% of respondents who view social media as a valuable resource for customer support. Meanwhile, 5.0% (15 respondents) disagree and 6.7% (20 respondents) firmly disagree with the statement, revealing a minority that does not find social media platforms valuable for customer support. The neutral response was 2.7% (8 respondents), indicating uncertainty or ambivalence about the effectiveness of social media for customer support. Overall, these results suggest that most respondents appreciate the role of social media in providing customer support, reflecting a trend where businesses leverage social media platforms to enhance customer service and interaction. The high rate of agreement underscores the importance of social media as a customer support tool in modern business practices.

Table 10. I am comfortable sharing feedback with companies through social media.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Firmly Disagree	11	3.7	3.7	3.7
	Disagree	23	7.7	7.7	11.3
	Neutral	18	6.0	6.0	17.3
	Agree	87	29.0	29.0	46.3
	Firmly Agree	161	53.7	53.7	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

The distribution of responses to the statement, "I am comfortable sharing feedback with companies through social media," indicates that a significant majority of respondents feel comfortable using social media to share feedback with companies. A substantial 53.7% (161 respondents) firmly agree with this statement, indicating a high level of comfort with providing feedback through social media platforms. An additional 29.0% (87 respondents) agree, further underscoring this trend, resulting in a combined total of 82.7% who are comfortable sharing feedback via social media. On the other hand, 7.7% (23 respondents) disagree, and 3.7% (11 respondents) firmly disagree with the statement, indicating a smaller segment of the population that is not comfortable with this mode of feedback. The neutral response was 6.0% (18 respondents), reflecting some uncertainty or ambivalence about using social media for providing feedback to companies. Overall, these findings suggest that the majority of respondents are open to and comfortable with the idea of sharing feedback with companies through social media. This is a positive sign for businesses that use social media as a platform to engage with their customers and receive valuable feedback to improve products and services.

Table 11. I think social media helps build a positive relationship between customers and businesses.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Firmly Disagree	15	5.0	5.0	5.0
	Disagree	17	5.7	5.7	10.7
	Neutral	12	4.0	4.0	14.7
	Agree	47	15.7	15.7	30.3
	Firmly Agree	209	69.7	69.7	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

The distribution of responses to the statement, "I think social media helps build a positive relationship between customers and businesses," demonstrates that a significant majority of respondents believe in the positive role of social media in fostering customer-business relationships. Among the 300 respondents, 69.7% (209 individuals) firmly agree with the statement, indicating a strong consensus that social media contributes to positive relationship-building. Additionally, 15.7% (47 individuals) agree with the statement, bringing the total proportion of positive responses to 85.4%. Conversely, a smaller proportion of respondents express disagreement, with 5.7% (17 individuals) disagreeing and 5.0% (15 individuals) firmly disagreeing, suggesting a relatively minor skepticism about the role of social media in building positive relationships between customers and businesses. A neutral stance was taken by 4.0% (12 individuals), indicating a slight uncertainty or impartiality towards the idea. Overall, these results indicate that a substantial majority of respondents view social media as a valuable tool for building and maintaining positive relationships between customers and businesses. This trend highlights the importance of social media as a communication channel for fostering customer loyalty and engagement, as well as for cultivating strong customer-business relationships in a digital age.

Table 12. I prefer to use social media platforms to engage with businesses rather than traditional methods.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
--	--	-----------	---------	---------------	--------------------

Valid	Firmly Disagree	13	4.3	4.3	4.3
	Disagree	16	5.3	5.3	9.7
	Neutral	10	3.3	3.3	13.0
	Agree	29	9.7	9.7	22.7
	Firmly Agree	232	77.3	77.3	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

The frequency distribution for the statement "I prefer to use social media platforms to engage with businesses rather than traditional methods" illustrates a strong preference for social media as a means of engagement with businesses. Out of the 300 respondents, a significant 77.3% (232 individuals) firmly agree with the statement, indicating a strong consensus on the preference for social media over traditional engagement methods. Additionally, 9.7% (29 individuals) agree, further supporting the preference for social media. Conversely, a smaller proportion of respondents express disagreement with this statement. The data shows that 5.3% (16 individuals) disagree, while 4.3% (13 individuals) firmly disagree, indicating a minority that still favors traditional methods. A neutral stance is held by 3.3% (10 individuals), reflecting some level of uncertainty or indifference toward the preference for social media over traditional engagement methods. The cumulative percentage indicates that over 87% of respondents lean toward preferring social media for business engagement, which points to the growing acceptance and convenience of social media platforms. This preference underscores the importance of businesses embracing social media as a primary channel for customer engagement, while also suggesting that traditional methods may continue to be valued by a smaller segment of the customer base.

H1: There is a significant impact of social media on customer engagement.

Table 13. One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Social media has significantly increased my interaction with my favorite brands.	26.876	299	.000	1.54000	1.4272	1.6528
I often engage with businesses through social media platforms.	18.766	299	.000	1.34333	1.2025	1.4842
Social media has influenced my purchasing decisions.	23.017	299	.000	1.48000	1.3535	1.6065
I find that social media provides a better way to connect with brands compared to other channels.	23.592	299	.000	1.46667	1.3443	1.5890
My level of customer engagement has increased because of social media.	24.057	299	.000	1.51333	1.3895	1.6371

The hypothesis H1 states that social media has a significant impact on customer engagement. To assess this hypothesis, a one-sample t-test was conducted with a test value of 3, indicating a neutral point on the Likert scale. The results presented in Table 13 support the hypothesis, showing that all the observed values significantly deviate from the neutral point, confirming a positive impact of social media on customer engagement. First, the statement "Social media has significantly increased my interaction with my favorite brands" shows a t-value of 26.876 with a high level of significance ($p < 0.001$). The mean difference is 1.54000, with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 1.4272 to 1.6528. This indicates that respondents strongly agree that social media has increased their interaction with their favorite brands, demonstrating that these platforms play a crucial role in fostering customer engagement. Second, the statement "I often engage with businesses through social media platforms" shows a t-value of 18.766, with a similar level of significance ($p < 0.001$). The mean difference of 1.34333 indicates that respondents frequently use social media to engage with businesses, highlighting that these platforms serve as a common medium for customer-business interaction. The confidence interval, ranging from 1.2025 to 1.4842, reflects this consensus. Third, the statement "Social media has influenced my purchasing decisions" has a t-value of 23.017 with a significant p-value ($p < 0.001$). With a mean difference of 1.48000, respondents strongly agree that social media influences their purchasing decisions. This reinforces the role social media plays in affecting customer behavior and engagement through brand awareness and recommendations. The 95% confidence interval, from 1.3535 to 1.6065, aligns with these results. Fourth, the statement "I find that social media provides a better way to connect with brands compared to other channels" has a t-value of 23.592, also indicating high significance ($p < 0.001$). The mean difference of 1.46667 suggests that respondents largely agree that social media is superior to other channels for connecting with brands. This highlights the importance of social media in providing a platform for effective customer engagement, with a confidence interval from 1.3443 to 1.5890. Finally, the statement "My level of customer engagement has increased because of social media" has a t-value of 24.057 with a significant p-value ($p < 0.001$). The mean difference of 1.51333 indicates that respondents experience increased customer engagement through social media. The confidence interval, ranging from 1.3895 to 1.6371, confirms this observation. Overall, these results support the

hypothesis H1, suggesting that social media significantly impacts customer engagement across various dimensions, from interaction with brands to purchasing decisions and increased engagement levels.
 H2: There is a positive perception of the consumers towards the use of social media platforms to increase customer engagement.

Table 14. One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
I believe social media is an effective tool for engaging with businesses.	17.788	299	.000	1.28667	1.1443	1.4290
I view social media platforms as a valuable resource for customer support.	21.046	299	.000	1.44000	1.3054	1.5746
I am comfortable sharing feedback with companies through social media.	19.250	299	.000	1.21333	1.0893	1.3374
I think social media helps build a positive relationship between customers and businesses.	21.475	299	.000	1.39333	1.2657	1.5210
I prefer to use social media platforms to engage with businesses rather than traditional methods.	24.171	299	.000	1.50333	1.3809	1.6257

The hypothesis that consumers have a positive perception towards the use of social media platforms to increase customer engagement is supported by the data presented in Table 14. This table displays the results of a one-sample t-test, with a test value of 3, representing a neutral response on the Likert scale. Each of the statements in the table displays a high t-value and significant p-values, indicating that the responses deviate positively from the neutral point. The first statement, "I believe social media is an effective tool for engaging with businesses," has a t-value of 17.788 and a significant two-tailed p-value of less than 0.001, with a mean difference of 1.28667. The 95% confidence interval ranges from 1.1443 to 1.4290. This indicates that consumers generally agree with the notion that social media serves as an effective tool for engaging with businesses, reinforcing the hypothesis that social media is viewed positively for customer engagement. The second statement, "I view social media platforms as a valuable resource for customer support," has a t-value of 21.046, with a mean difference of 1.44000 and a significant p-value ($p < 0.001$). The 95% confidence interval between 1.3054 and 1.5746 indicates a strong consensus among respondents. This finding suggests that social media is not only seen as a platform for customer engagement but also as a valuable resource for customer support, highlighting the utility of social media in customer-business interactions. The third statement, "I am comfortable sharing feedback with companies through social media," has a t-value of 19.250, a significant p-value, and a mean difference of 1.21333. The confidence interval between 1.0893 and 1.3374 reflects a general agreement with this statement, indicating that consumers feel at ease when providing feedback through social media. This perception underscores the increasing reliance on social media as a platform for customer-business communication. The fourth statement, "I think social media helps build a positive relationship between customers and businesses," has a t-value of 21.475 with a mean difference of 1.39333 and a significant p-value. With a confidence interval between 1.2657 and 1.5210, this result suggests a strong agreement with the statement, indicating that consumers believe social media contributes to building positive relationships with businesses, a crucial aspect of customer engagement. Lastly, the statement "I prefer to use social media platforms to engage with businesses rather than traditional methods" demonstrates a t-value of 24.171, a significant p-value, and a mean difference of 1.50333. The 95% confidence interval ranging from 1.3809 to 1.6257 shows that consumers prefer social media over traditional methods for engaging with businesses. Collectively, these findings strongly support the hypothesis that consumers have a positive perception towards the use of social media platforms to increase customer engagement. Social media is perceived not only as an effective tool for engaging with businesses but also as a preferred platform for customer support and feedback, fostering positive relationships, and outshining traditional methods.

Findings

The findings from the study demonstrate a significant impact of social media on customer engagement and a positive consumer perception towards its use for increasing engagement. Analysis of the first hypothesis (H1) shows that social media has greatly influenced customer interaction with their favorite brands, as evidenced by the high t-values and significant p-values in the one-sample test. The majority of respondents firmly agree that social media has increased their engagement with businesses, influenced their purchasing decisions, and provided a better way to connect with brands compared to traditional methods. This consistent trend underscores the transformative role that social media plays in shaping consumer behavior and driving customer engagement. Moreover, the responses indicate that social media has become a critical channel for customers to interact with businesses and has the potential to influence purchasing patterns.

Regarding the second hypothesis (H2), the findings reveal that consumers generally perceive social media platforms as valuable tools for engaging with businesses. Respondents believe that social media facilitates customer support and is a suitable platform for providing feedback to companies. The data further suggest that consumers view social media as a positive force for building relationships between customers and businesses, fostering a more connected and customer-centric approach. A significant proportion of respondents prefer using social media platforms over traditional methods, indicating a shift in customer engagement preferences. This trend reflects the growing acceptance of social media as an effective and efficient medium for business-customer interaction, further emphasizing its importance in customer engagement strategies. The overall results point to the evolving dynamics of customer engagement and the pivotal role that social media plays in this context.

Conclusion

The conclusions drawn from this study reaffirm the significant impact that social media has on customer engagement. Social media platforms have redefined the way customers interact with businesses, leading to increased engagement, improved communication, and more personalized experiences. The findings confirm that customers are engaging more frequently with brands via social media, influencing purchasing decisions and fostering a greater sense of connection. This shift towards digital engagement represents a major change in the business-consumer relationship, highlighting the importance of social media as a crucial component in modern customer engagement strategies.

Implications for businesses are considerable. Given that customers now prefer social media for interactions, companies must adapt their strategies to meet these changing expectations. Businesses should focus on creating engaging social media content, providing customer support through these platforms, and encouraging customer feedback. This approach can lead to enhanced customer loyalty and advocacy, as well as an increase in customer satisfaction. Moreover, companies should invest in social media analytics to better understand customer behavior and preferences, allowing for more effective targeting and personalized experiences. By embracing social media, businesses can build stronger relationships with their customers and stay competitive in an increasingly digital marketplace.

Future research should explore the evolving nature of customer engagement on social media, focusing on emerging trends and technologies. Studies could examine the effectiveness of various social media platforms in different industries, as well as the impact of new technologies such as artificial intelligence and machine learning on customer engagement. Additionally, future research could investigate the role of social media in customer retention and loyalty, seeking to identify best practices for businesses to build long-lasting relationships with their customers. Exploring cross-cultural differences in social media usage and customer engagement could also provide valuable insights for multinational businesses. Ultimately, further research can help businesses better understand the dynamics of customer engagement on social media and guide them in implementing effective strategies to meet the needs of an ever-evolving customer base.

References

- Agnihotri, R. (2020). Social media, customer engagement, and sales organizations: A research agenda. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 90, 291-299.
- Ajiboye, T., Harvey, J., & Resnick, S. (2019). Customer engagement behaviour on social media platforms: A systematic literature review. *Journal of Customer Behaviour*, 18(3), 239-256.
- Carlson, J., Rahman, M., Voola, R., & De Vries, N. (2018). Customer engagement behaviours in social media: capturing innovation opportunities. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 32(1), 83-94.
- de Oliveira Santini, F., Ladeira, W. J., Pinto, D. C., Herter, M. M., Sampaio, C. H., & Babin, B. J. (2020). Customer engagement in social media: a framework and meta-analysis. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 48, 1211-1228.
- Farook, F. S., & Abeyssekara, N. (2016). Influence of social media marketing on customer engagement. *International Journal of Business and Management Invention*, 5(12), 115-125.
- Guesalaga, R. (2016). The use of social media in sales: Individual and organizational antecedents, and the role of customer engagement in social media. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 54, 71-79.
- Lim, W. M., & Rasul, T. (2022). Customer engagement and social media: Revisiting the past to inform the future. *Journal of Business Research*, 148, 325-342.
- Sashi, C. M. (2012). Customer engagement, buyer-seller relationships, and social media. *Management Decision*, 50(2), 253-272.
- Shawky, S., Kubacki, K., Dietrich, T., & Weaven, S. (2020). A dynamic framework for managing customer engagement on social media. *Journal of Business Research*, 121, 567-577.
- Tsiotsou, R. H. (2020). Social media and customer engagement. In *The Routledge handbook of service research insights and ideas* (pp. 373-387). Routledge.