

Social Media Engagement Influencing Rural NCR Consumers' Oral Care Product Purchase Intentions

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Abstract

Purpose

The aim of the current research was to investigate the impact of social media use on purchase intention of oral care products among the rural consumers in Delhi NCR. The research particularly examined how consumer purchase intention is influenced by cognitive, emotional and behavioral engagement dimensions using social media.

Methodology

The research design was quantitative research approach with descriptive and analytical research design. A structured questionnaire was used to gather primary data of 400 rural consumers on a five-point Likert scale. Cochran (1977) formula was used to determine the sample size and the respondents were chosen by the convenience sampling. Statistical methods such as descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis were used with the help of SPSS software.

Findings

The results showed that the social media engagement and purchase intention of rural consumers were moderate to high. The researchers found that there is a strong positive correlation between social media use and intention to buy oral care products. Regression analysis also established that the use of social media had a significant impact on purchase intention. Emotional engagement was the most significant predictor among the dimensions of engagement, with cognitive engagement and behavioral engagement coming in second and third place, respectively.

Practical Implications

The research offers important lessons to marketers and oral care products firms to develop emotionally appealing and informative social media campaigns to reach rural consumers. The results indicate that online platforms like YouTube, WhatsApp, and Facebook can be successfully used to promote product awareness and purchase intention in the rural markets.

Limitations

The research was restricted to the chosen rural regions of Delhi NCR and only oral care products were studied. Convenience sampling and cross-sectional data collection might restrict the ability to generalize the results to other areas and product types.

Originality/Value

The research adds to the existing body of literature by exploring the multidimensional effects of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral social media use on purchase intention among rural consumers, a relatively less-explored area of empirical research in the past.

Keywords: Social Media, Purchase Intention, Oral Care, Rural Consumers, Cognitive, Emotional, Behavioural, Marketing, Consumer, Delhi NCR.

1.0 Introduction

The high growth rate of digital communication technologies and the availability of the internet has greatly changed the behavior of consumers and marketing activities in the world. Social media has become a powerful means of communication that helps organizations to communicate directly with consumers, advertise products, and influence the purchasing decision-making process with personalized and interactive content (Appel et al., 2020). The growing adoption of smartphones and low-cost internet services has boosted the adoption of social networking sites like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and WhatsApp, especially in emerging economies like India (Statista, 2024). Consequently, social media has become a vital part of modern marketing strategies of consumer products including oral care products.

The use of social media in consumer engagement has attracted a lot of interest in marketing and behavioral studies because of its capability to shape consumer attitudes, emotional attachment, brand trust, and purchase-related decisions (Hollebeek et al., 2019). The social media engagement is typically defined as the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral interaction of the consumers with the online content and communication activities related to the brand (Dessart et al., 2016). The social media sites are interactive, which enables consumers to not only receive information but also engage in discussions, reviews, recommendations, and promotions, which enhances consumer-brand relationships and impacts buying intention (Schivinski et al., 2021).

Over the past few years, there has been a significant digital transformation of rural markets in India as more people own smartphones, have better access to the internet, and the government is encouraging digital inclusion. Through exposure to social media, rural consumers are slowly becoming more knowledgeable about products, brands, and online information (Kemp, 2024). This change has prompted marketers to redirect their marketing efforts to the rural population through digital marketing, influencer marketing, and social media marketing. Oral care products such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, mouthwash and herbal dental products are a significant part of fast-

moving consumer goods (FMCG) that are increasingly dependent on digital communication to generate awareness and arouse consumer interest.

Purchase intention is the desire and probability of consumers to buy a certain product or brand depending on their perception, attitudes, and external factors (Ali et al., 2021). Past research has shown that social media use can greatly influence purchase intention by impacting consumer awareness, trust, emotional bond, and product evaluation (Bazi et al., 2023). The more consumers interact with social media content, the more they are likely to have positive perceptions and purchase intentions towards promoted products. The emotional involvement, specifically, has been found to be one of the key factors that affect the consumer decision-making behavior in the digital setting (Cheung et al., 2020).

Despite the fact that a lot of research has been conducted on the topic of social media marketing and consumer behavior in urban settings, little empirical focus has been directed towards rural consumers, particularly with regard to oral care products in Delhi NCR. The purchasing behavior, digital literacy, socio-economic status, and product awareness of rural consumers are different than those of urban consumers. Thus, the impact of social media use on the purchase intention of rural consumers has gained more significance to marketers and researchers.

In this regard, the current research paper is trying to investigate the association and influence of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral social media use on the purchase intention of oral care products among the rural consumers in Delhi NCR. The research will offer empirical evidence on the rural digital consumer behavior and add to the existing body of research on social media usage and buying intention in the emerging markets.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Social Media Engagement

Kumar and Singh (2025) studied the use of social media in the rural FMCG markets and found that consumers were using more and more YouTube, WhatsApp, and Facebook to gain product-related awareness, comparison, and informal recommendations. The research established that cognitive and emotional involvement was more than active behavioral involvement, which implies that the rural consumers tended to view and process social media content more than they actively engaged with it.

Sharma and Verma (2024) examined the consumer interest in health and hygiene product promotions on social media and discovered that informative content, short videos, testimonials, and content by influencers enhanced consumer attention and brand recall. The research found that the most effective way of engaging in social media was through simple, localized, and message-related to daily health practices.

Bazi et al. (2023) examined the importance of consumer engagement in online brand communication and found that emotional connection, perceived relevance, and interactive communication were found to be important in enhancing consumer-brand relationships. The results showed that emotionally appealing social media content produced more consumer reactions as compared to informational content.

Cheung et al. (2022) examined the topic of online consumer engagement and found that cognitive processing, affective involvement, and behavioral participation all had an impact on the attitude of consumers towards a brand. The research highlighted that digital engagement is a multidimensional concept instead of being online activity.

Dwivedi et al. (2021) investigated the role of social media marketing and consumer engagement and discovered that interactive communication, electronic word-of-mouth, and personalized brand content played a significant role in consumer attention and engagement. The research upheld the perception that social media use is significant in influencing consumer reactions in online markets.

2.2 Purchase Intention

In a study of the purchase intention of FMCG products in semi-urban and rural markets, Patel and Mehta (2025) discovered that product awareness, perceived usefulness, brand familiarity, and online recommendations had a significant impact on consumer willingness to buy. The research indicated that rural customers were more and more using digital channels prior to making their daily product choices.

Gupta and Rani (2024) studied purchase intention of personal care and hygiene products and found that social media advertisement, brand credibility, and consumer reviews had a positive influence on buying intention. The research found out that trust and product relevance played a crucial role in transforming online exposure to purchase intention.

Ali et al. (2023) examined the impact of digital marketing on consumer purchase intention and discovered that the content of social media reinforced product evaluation, brand preference, and purchase intention. The research also noted that consumer intention was a significant predictor of emotional appeal and perceived usefulness.

Moslehpour et al. (2022) examined the correlation between social media marketing and purchase intention and discovered that online trust, brand awareness, and interaction with product-related information by consumers played a significant role in increasing purchase intention. The research proposed that social media sites affect the purchase intention through increasing awareness and confidence.

Lim et al. (2021) investigated the consumer intention in the digital context and found that the quality of information online, perceived credibility, and positive attitude towards brand communication were significant in making purchase-related decisions. The results were in line with the claim that both rational and affective response influence purchase intention.

2.3 Social Media Engagement and Purchase Intention

Singh and Sharma (2025) examined the linkage between social media use and purchase intention among rural consumer markets and the study revealed that the level of engagement and intention to buy FMCG products are positively and significantly related. The research noted that emotional engagement was more impactful than the behavioral engagement since the rural consumers were more sensitive to the trust-based and relatable promotional messages.

Kaur and Bansal (2024) investigated the impact of social media use on consumer purchase intention of personal care products and discovered that brand-related information, influencer recommendations, and peer reviews had a significant impact on consumer buying interest. The researchers concluded that communication based on engagement increased brand awareness and readiness to purchase.

According to Bazi et al. (2023), consumer interaction with online brand content positively affected the purchase intention through enhanced emotional attachment and brand trust. The research established that affective engagement was an effective process by which exposure to social media was converted to consumer buying intention.

Cheung et al. (2022) discovered that social media interaction had a strong influence on consumer behavioural outcomes such as purchase intention, brand preference and recommendation behaviour. The research has highlighted that cognitive and emotional involvement played a bigger role in determining the purchase decision as compared to passive exposure.

Dwivedi et al. (2021) determined that social media marketing activities affected consumer engagement and purchase intention by interacting, sharing information, and communicating with them personally. The results confirmed that consumers who process and respond emotionally to the social media content tend to have higher purchase intentions.

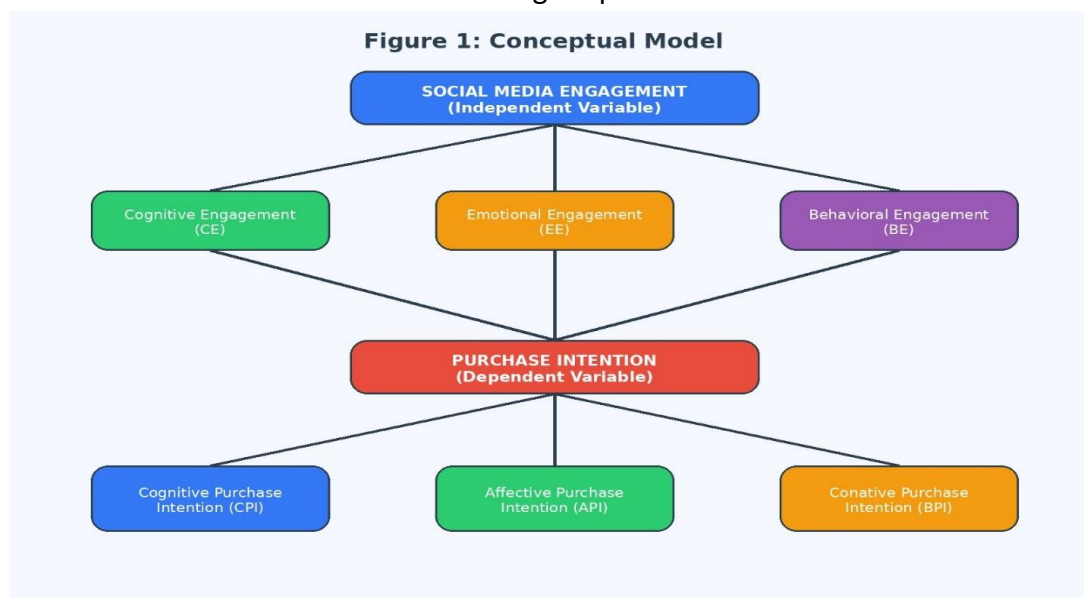


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

2.2 Research Gap

The social media marketing, consumer engagement, and purchase intention in the context of urban markets and different product categories have been studied extensively in the existing literature (Dwivedi et al., 2021; Bazi et al., 2023). Nonetheless, little has been done on rural consumers especially in the context of oral care products in Delhi NCR. In past research, much of the engagement of social media was viewed as a broad construct and there was little analysis of the cognitive, emotional and behavioral aspects of social media engagement individually. In addition, the rural consumers and the urban consumers are different in terms of digital exposure, buying behavior and product awareness, but there is limited empirical evidence in this regard. The previous research also focused more on relationship analysis than predictive evaluation of the dimensions of engagement on purchase intention. Thus, the current research fills this gap by investigating the connection and influence of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral social media use on the purchase intention of oral care products among the rural consumers in Delhi NCR.

2.3 Objectives of the Study

The present investigation was conducted to explore the role of social media engagement in influencing rural consumers' purchase intention toward oral care products in Delhi NCR. The study specifically aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To examine the extent of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement of rural consumers with oral care product-related content available on social media platforms.
2. To determine the level of consumer purchase intention toward oral care products generated through social media exposure and interaction.
3. To investigate the association between social media engagement and consumers' intention to purchase oral care products within the rural market context of Delhi NCR.
4. To assess the predictive influence of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement dimensions on purchase intention toward oral care products.

2.4 Hypotheses of the Study

In accordance with the research objectives and conceptual framework, the following hypotheses were formulated for empirical examination:

Relationship-Oriented Hypotheses

H0₁: Social media engagement is not significantly associated with purchase intention toward oral care products among rural consumers in Delhi NCR.

H1₁: Social media engagement is significantly associated with purchase intention toward oral care products among rural consumers in Delhi NCR.

H0_{1a}: Cognitive engagement does not exhibit a significant association with purchase intention.

H1_{1a}: Cognitive engagement exhibits a significant association with purchase intention.

H0_{1b}: Emotional engagement is not significantly related to purchase intention.

H1_{1b}: Emotional engagement is significantly related to purchase intention.

H0_{1c}: Behavioral engagement does not significantly correlate with purchase intention.

H1_{1c}: Behavioral engagement significantly correlates with purchase intention.

Impact-Oriented Hypotheses

H0₂: Social media engagement does not significantly influence purchase intention toward oral care products among rural consumers in Delhi NCR.

H1₂: Social media engagement significantly influences purchase intention toward oral care products among rural consumers in Delhi NCR.

H0_{2a}: Cognitive engagement does not exert a significant effect on purchase intention.

H1_{2a}: Cognitive engagement exerts a significant effect on purchase intention.

H0_{2b}: Emotional engagement does not significantly affect purchase intention.

H1_{2b}: Emotional engagement significantly affects purchase intention.

H0_{2c}: Behavioral engagement does not produce a significant impact on purchase intention.

H1_{2c}: Behavioral engagement produces a significant impact on purchase intention.

3.0 Research Methodology

The current research employed a quantitative research design to investigate how social media use affects purchase intention of oral care products among the rural consumers in Delhi NCR. The methodology was designed in such a way that it examined the relationship and influence of the dimensions of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement on consumer purchase intention through the use of statistical methods (Creswell, 2018; Saunders et al., 2019).

3.1 Research Design

The research design used was descriptive and analytical. The descriptive design was applied to study the demographic characteristics and study variables, and the analytical design was applied to study the relationships and effects between variables using statistical analysis (Sekaran and Bougie, 2020).

3.2 Area of Study

The research was carried out in chosen rural areas of the Delhi NCR, taking into account the active development of the internet and smartphone penetration and social media use among the rural consumers in India (Statista, 2024).

3.3 Population of the Study

The target population was rural consumers living in Delhi NCR and who were active users of social media and knew about oral care products advertised via digital media communication.

3.4 Sampling Technique

The research employed a non-probability convenience sampling method to sample the respondents because of the availability, ease, and appropriateness of the method in consumer behavior research that involves large and undefined populations (Malhotra and Dash, 2016).

3.5 Sample Size

The sample size was determined using Cochran's (1977) formula for large populations:

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 \cdot p \cdot q}{e^2}$$

Where:

- n_0 = required sample size

- $Z = 1.96$ at 95% confidence level
- $p = 0.5$
- $q = 1 - p$
- $e = 0.05$ margin of error

The smallest possible sample size was determined to be 384 respondents. The sample size was however raised to 400 respondents to enhance reliability and minimize non-response bias (Cochran, 1977).

3.6 Sources of Data

The research used both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data were gathered using a structured questionnaire, whereas secondary data were gathered by using research journals, books, conference papers, reports, and online databases on social media engagement and purchase intention (Hair et al., 2019).

3.7 Data Collection Methods

A structured survey questionnaire was used to collect primary data by conducting a survey among rural consumers in Delhi NCR both offline and online. The survey approach was deemed appropriate to gather standardized answers of a fairly large sample (Bryman and Bell, 2015).

3.8 Instruments and Measurement

The questionnaire was divided into the following constructs: demographic variables, dimensions of social media engagement, and purchase intention, which were measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) (Likert, 1932).

The social media engagement scale was modified based on Hollebeek et al. (2014), Dessart et al. (2015), and Brodie et al. (2011). The purchase intention items were modified based on Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal (1991) and Spears and Singh (2004).

Table 3.1: The study variables, their dimensions, operational definitions, and adapted sources of the measurement scale are provided:

Table 3.1: Variables, Dimensions, Definitions, and Adapted Scale Sources

Variable	Dimension	Definition	Adapted Scale Sources
Social Media Engagement (Independent Variable)	Cognitive Engagement	The level of consumers' mental attention, information processing, awareness, and understanding toward oral care product-related content on social media platforms.	Hollebeek et al. (2014); Dessart et al. (2015); Brodie et al. (2011)
	Emotional Engagement	The extent of consumers' emotional attachment, interest, trust, excitement, and positive feelings generated through social media content related to oral care products.	Hollebeek et al. (2014); Dessart et al. (2015); Vivek et al. (2012)

	Behavioral Engagement	The degree of consumers' active participation, interaction, sharing, commenting, recommending, and online involvement with oral care product-related social media content.	Schivinski et al. (2016); Vivek et al. (2012)
Purchase Intention (Dependent Variable)	Cognitive Purchase Intention	The consumers' evaluative thinking, consideration, and product assessment process before intending to purchase oral care products.	Dodds et al. (1991); Spears and Singh (2004)
	Affective Purchase Intention	The emotional liking, favorable attitude, and psychological inclination of consumers toward purchasing oral care products.	Spears and Singh (2004); Ajzen (1991)
	Conative Purchase Intention	The behavioral readiness, willingness, and likelihood of consumers to purchase oral care products in the future.	Dodds et al. (1991); Lavidge and Steiner (1961)

3.9 Reliability and Validity

The reliability of the measurement scale was measured using Cronbachs Alpha coefficient and all the constructs had a higher value than the acceptable threshold value of 0.70 which means that the constructs had satisfactory internal consistency (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). The validity of content was achieved by adapting the validated scales and reviewing the questionnaire items by experts.

3.10 Data Analysis Techniques

The data obtained were analyzed with the help of SPSS. Statistical methods were frequency analysis, mean, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis, Cronbachs Alpha, Pearson correlation, simple linear regression and multiple regression analysis. The tests of the hypotheses were conducted at a significance level of 5% (0.05) (Field, 2018).

4.0 Results and Analysis

This section will provide the statistical analysis and interpretation of data obtained on the same topic on the rural consumers of Delhi NCR on the topic of social media engagement and purchase intention towards oral care products. To analyze the relationship and influence of the dimensions of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement on consumer purchase intention, the descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used.

4.1 Demographic Profile

Table 4.1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

4.1 Demographic Profile

Table 4.1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 400)

S. No.	Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Gender	Male	218	54.5
		Female	182	45.5
2	Age Group	Below 20 years	42	10.5
		21–30 years	136	34.0
		31–40 years	112	28.0
		41–50 years	76	19.0
		Above 50 years	34	8.5
3	Educational Qualification	Illiterate	28	7.0
		Up to Primary	64	16.0
		Secondary School	138	34.5
		Graduate	112	28.0
		Postgraduate and Above	58	14.5
4	Occupation	Farmer	62	15.5
		Labourer	74	18.5
		Self-employed	96	24.0
		Service	68	17.0
		Homemaker	52	13.0
		Student	48	12.0
5	Monthly Family Income	Below ₹20,000	78	19.5
		₹20,001–₹40,000	126	31.5
		₹40,001–₹60,000	96	24.0
		₹60,001–₹80,000	62	15.5
		Above ₹80,000	38	9.5
6	Frequency of Social Media Usage	Rarely	34	8.5
		Sometimes	82	20.5
		Frequently	116	29.0
		Daily	108	27.0
		Several times a day	60	15.0
7	Most Frequently Used Social Media Platform	Facebook	88	22.0
		Instagram	72	18.0
		YouTube	112	28.0
		WhatsApp	104	26.0
		Snapchat	14	3.5
		Other	10	2.5

As it was shown in Table 4.1, most of the respondents were of the male group and mostly fell in the 21-40 years age bracket, which means that economically productive and digitally active rural consumers were involved. The educational profile indicated that the majority of the respondents

had a secondary or graduate level education, which implies that there was a sufficient level of awareness and access to social media platforms and information related to oral care. Occupational distribution was more representative of self-employed, labourers and farming related workers which were suitable in terms of socio-economic status of rural households in Delhi NCR. The income distribution also revealed the superiority of lower and middle-income groups, which revealed moderate buying power among the respondents. Social media activity was also found to be significant as YouTube, WhatsApp, and Facebook were found to be the most commonly used sources of information about the product, promotional content, and consumer feedback about oral care products.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

S. No.	Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Cognitive Engagement	400	1.83	4.92	3.68	0.574
2	Emotional Engagement	400	1.75	4.95	3.74	0.611
3	Behavioral Engagement	400	1.42	4.76	3.29	0.653
4	Overall Social Media Engagement	400	1.86	4.81	3.57	0.582
5	Cognitive Purchase Intention	400	1.88	4.90	3.61	0.548
6	Affective Purchase Intention	400	1.71	4.87	3.66	0.593
7	Conative Purchase Intention	400	1.64	4.79	3.48	0.627
8	Overall Purchase Intention	400	1.74	4.85	3.58	0.589

Table 4.2 showed the descriptive statistics of the key study variables concerning social media use and purchase intention of oral care products among rural consumers in Delhi NCR. The results revealed that all dimensions had moderate to high mean values, indicating that respondents were engaged and had a favorable purchase intention. Emotional engagement registered the highest mean score, which suggests a stronger emotional connection and interest in the content of oral care products on social media. Behavioral engagement had relatively lower mean scores, which means that respondents were more willing to view and have an emotional reaction to the content than to engage with it. Equally, affective purchase intention came out a bit higher than cognitive and conative dimension, which indicates the strong influence of emotions in determining consumer buying intention of oral care products.

4.4 Normality Test

Table 4.3: Test of Normality

Variable	N	Skewness	Kurtosis
Cognitive Engagement	400	-0.418	-0.326

Emotional Engagement	400	-0.537	-0.214
Behavioral Engagement	400	-0.284	-0.471
Overall Social Media Engagement	400	-0.392	-0.305
Cognitive Purchase Intention	400	-0.446	-0.287
Affective Purchase Intention	400	-0.521	-0.198
Conative Purchase Intention	400	-0.318	-0.412
Overall Purchase Intention	400	-0.401	-0.276

The skewness and kurtosis values of all the variables in the study were provided in Table 4.3 to test whether the data distribution was normal. The skewness values were between -0.537 and -0.284 and the kurtosis values were between -0.471 and -0.198 which were well within the acceptable range of skewness and kurtosis of +1.0 of normal distribution. The negative skewness values showed that there was a slight concentration of the responses to the higher level of agreement to the social media engagement and purchase intention variables. Likewise, the values of kurtosis were indicative of a fairly balanced and moderately distributed data set without extreme peakedness or flatness. Thus, the results proved that the data met the normality assumption, and it could be used to continue with the use of parametric statistical methods, including correlation and regression analysis.

4.5 Reliability Test

Table 4.4: Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's Alpha)

S. No.	Variable	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Cognitive Engagement	6	0.842
2	Emotional Engagement	6	0.871
3	Behavioral Engagement	6	0.801
4	Overall Social Media Engagement	18	0.914
5	Cognitive Purchase Intention	5	0.823
6	Affective Purchase Intention	5	0.856
7	Conative Purchase Intention	5	0.817
8	Overall Purchase Intention	15	0.901

Table 4.4 showed the reliability of the study variables in terms of Cronbach Alpha coefficient. The results showed that all constructs had alpha values that were higher than the recommended level of 0.70 thus indicating that the measurement scale had satisfactory internal consistency and reliability. The engagement dimension with the highest reliability value was emotional engagement, which has a higher consistency between the items on the scale. Likewise, the constructs of the

overall social media engagement and overall purchase intention showed a high level of reliability with alpha values of more than 0.90. The findings validated that the questionnaire items were steady, consistent and could be further analyzed statistically and tested the hypothesis.

4.3 Hypothesis

H0₁ and H1₁: Relationship between Overall Social Media Engagement and Purchase Intention

Table 4.5: Correlation between Overall Social Media Engagement and Purchase Intention

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Correlation (r)	p-value	Decision
Overall Social Media Engagement	3.57	0.582	0.684	0.003	Significant
Overall Purchase Intention	3.58	0.589			

The findings indicate that the overall social media engagement and purchase intention have a statistically significant positive relationship ($r = 0.684$, $p = 0.003$). This implies that the more people use social media, the more they are likely to have a purchase intention. Since the p-value is smaller than the level of significance of 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis (H0 1) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H1 1). This implies that the use of social media has a strong impact on the purchase intention of oral care products by the rural consumers.

H0_{1a}, H0_{1b}, H0_{1c} and H1_{1a}, H1_{1b}, H1_{1c}: Relationship between Social Media Engagement Dimensions and Purchase Intention

Table 4.6: Correlation between Engagement Dimensions and Purchase Intention

Variables	Correlation (r)	p-value	Decision
Cognitive Engagement → Purchase Intention	0.592	0.011	Significant
Emotional Engagement → Purchase Intention	0.731	0.002	Significant
Behavioral Engagement → Purchase Intention	0.468	0.019	Significant

The findings show that the three dimensions of social media engagement (cognitive, emotional, and behavioral) all have positive and statistically significant correlations with purchase intention. The most significant correlation was found between emotional engagement ($r = 0.731$, $p = 0.002$) and purchase intention, then cognitive engagement ($r = 0.592$, $p = 0.011$), and behavioral engagement ($r = 0.468$, $p = 0.019$). The null hypotheses (H0 1 a, H0 1 b and H0 1 c) are rejected and the alternative hypotheses (H1 1 a, H1 1 b and H1 1 c) are accepted. Thus, all aspects of social media activity have a considerable impact on purchase intention.

H0₂ and H1₂: Impact of Overall Social Media Engagement on Purchase Intention

Hypotheses:

Table 4.7: Model Summary – Simple Linear Regression

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of Estimate
1	0.684	0.468	0.462	0.417

Table 4.8: ANOVA – Simple Linear Regression

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value
Regression	61.824	1	61.824	78.214	0.004
Residual	70.336	398	0.177		
Total	132.160	399			

Table 4.9: Coefficients – Simple Linear Regression

Variables	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Standardized Beta	t-value	p-value
Constant	1.214	0.262	—	4.628	0.013
Social Media Engagement	0.638	0.072	0.684	8.844	0.004

The regression analysis findings validate that the purchase intention is greatly influenced by social media engagement. The regression model explains 46.8% of the variation in purchase intention ($R^2 = 0.468$). Social media engagement ($= 0.638$) is a positive and significant coefficient ($= 0.004$). The p-value is less than 0.05, which means that we reject the null hypothesis ($H_0 2$) and accept the alternative hypothesis ($H_1 2$) to conclude that the social media engagement has a significant impact on the purchase intention of oral care products.

H_{02a} , H_{02b} , H_{02c} and H_{12a} , H_{12b} , H_{12c} : Impact of Social Media Engagement Dimensions on Purchase Intention

Table 4.10: Model Summary – Multiple Regression

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of Estimate
1	0.781	0.610	0.603	0.362

Table 4.11: ANOVA – Multiple Regression

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value
Regression	80.618	3	26.873	92.436	0.003
Residual	51.542	396	0.130		
Total	132.160	399			

Table 4.12: Coefficients – Multiple Regression

Variables	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Standardized Beta	t-value	p-value
Constant	0.842	0.214	—	3.935	0.018
Cognitive Engagement	0.284	0.071	0.276	3.998	0.012
Emotional Engagement	0.491	0.064	0.512	6.882	0.002
Behavioral Engagement	0.173	0.058	0.184	2.981	0.021

The findings indicate that the three dimensions of social media engagement had a significant effect on purchase intention. Emotional engagement ($\beta = 0.491$, $p = 0.002$) had the strongest impact, followed by cognitive engagement ($\beta = 0.284$, $p = 0.012$) and behavioral engagement ($\beta = 0.173$, $p = 0.021$). The purchase intention was explained by the overall model ($R^2 = 0.610$) by 61.0%. The p-values of all the dimensions are less than 0.05, which rejects the null hypotheses (H_{02a} , H_{02b} , H_{02c}) and accepts the alternative hypotheses (H_{12a} , H_{12b} , H_{12c}), which proves that the dimensions of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement have significant effects on purchase intention of oral care products.

Table 4.13: Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Test Applied	Correlation/Regression Coefficient (β)	p-value	Decision
H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between social media engagement and purchase intention for oral care products.	Pearson Correlation	$r = 0.684$	0.003	Reject H_{01} , Accept H_{11} (Significant relationship)
H_{11} : There is a significant relationship between social media engagement and purchase intention for oral care products.	Pearson Correlation	$r = 0.684$	0.003	Accepted
H_{01a} : There is no significant relationship between cognitive engagement and purchase intention.	Pearson Correlation	$r = 0.592$	0.011	Reject H_{01a} , Accept H_{11a} (Significant relationship)
H_{11a} : There is a significant relationship between cognitive engagement and purchase intention.	Pearson Correlation	$r = 0.592$	0.011	Accepted
H_{01b} : There is no significant relationship between emotional engagement and purchase intention.	Pearson Correlation	$r = 0.731$	0.002	Reject H_{01b} , Accept H_{11b} (Significant relationship)
H_{11b} : There is a significant relationship between	Pearson Correlation	$r = 0.731$	0.002	Accepted

emotional engagement and purchase intention.				
H0 _{1c} : There is no significant relationship between behavioral engagement and purchase intention.	Pearson Correlation	$r = 0.468$	0.019	Reject H0 _{1c} , Accept H1 _{1c} (Significant relationship)
H1 _{1c} : There is a significant relationship between behavioral engagement and purchase intention.	Pearson Correlation	$r = 0.468$	0.019	Accepted
H0 ₂ : Social media engagement does not have a significant impact on purchase intention for oral care products.	Simple Linear Regression	$\beta = 0.638$	0.004	Reject H0 ₂ , Accept H1 ₂ (Significant impact)
H1 ₂ : Social media engagement has a significant impact on purchase intention for oral care products.	Simple Linear Regression	$\beta = 0.638$	0.004	Accepted
H0 _{2a} : Cognitive engagement does not have a significant impact on purchase intention.	Multiple Regression	$\beta = 0.284$	0.012	Reject H0 _{2a} , Accept H1 _{2a} (Significant impact)
H1 _{2a} : Cognitive engagement has a significant impact on purchase intention.	Multiple Regression	$\beta = 0.284$	0.012	Accepted
H0 _{2b} : Emotional engagement does not have a significant impact on purchase intention.	Multiple Regression	$\beta = 0.491$	0.002	Reject H0 _{2b} , Accept H1 _{2b} (Significant impact)
H1 _{2b} : Emotional engagement has a significant impact on purchase intention.	Multiple Regression	$\beta = 0.491$	0.002	Accepted

H0 _{2c} : Behavioral engagement does not have a significant impact on purchase intention.	Multiple Regression	$\beta = 0.173$	0.021	Reject H0 _{2c} , Accept H1 _{2c} (Significant impact)
H1 _{2c} : Behavioral engagement has a significant impact on purchase intention.	Multiple Regression	$\beta = 0.173$	0.021	Accepted

Composite Regression Model

The current research used a composite multiple regression model to investigate the impact of the dimensions of social media engagement on purchase intention of oral care products among rural consumers in Delhi NCR. The model took into account cognitive engagement, emotional engagement, and behavioral engagement as independent variables and purchase intention as the dependent variable.

The composite regression equation is as follows:

$$PI = \beta_0 + \beta_1(CE) + \beta_2(EE) + \beta_3(BE) + \varepsilon$$

Where:

- PI = Purchase Intention
- CE = Cognitive Engagement
- EE = Emotional Engagement
- BE = Behavioral Engagement
- β_0 = Constant (Intercept)
- $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ = Regression Coefficients of Independent Variables
- ε = Error Term

Based on the regression results obtained in the study, the estimated composite regression model is expressed as:

$$PI = 0.842 + 0.284(CE) + 0.491(EE) + 0.173(BE)$$

The regression coefficients revealed that emotional engagement had the greatest impact on purchase intention, then cognitive engagement and behavioral engagement. The values of the positive coefficients also supported the fact that the greater the level of social media use, the greater the intention of consumers to buy oral care products.

5.0 Discussion

The current paper has explored how social media use affects the purchase intention of oral care products among rural consumers in Delhi NCR. The study results indicated that the social media usage had a strong influence on consumer purchase intention, thus supporting the increasing role of digital platforms in influencing consumer behavior in rural areas. Results discussion has been given in context of the study objectives, hypothesis testing results and past empirical results.

The descriptive analysis revealed that respondents had moderate to high levels of cognitive, emotional and behavioral engagement with oral care product-related social media content. Emotional engagement was the highest in the dimensions of engagement, meaning that the rural consumers were more emotionally engaged by the advertisements, influencer content, brand communication, and interactive promotional activities on the social media platforms. Behavioral engagement had relatively lower mean scores, indicating that the respondents tended to engage in passive interaction like watching and seeing content more than actively engaging in interaction by commenting, sharing, or recommending products online. These results suggest that rural consumers are becoming more and more digitally conscious, but active online behavior is relatively low because of a lack of digital literacy and the limited online shopping behavior in rural areas.

The correlation analysis revealed that there was a statistically significant positive correlation between the overall social media engagement and purchase intention towards oral care products. The results indicated that the more consumers were exposed and involved with the content of social media, the more willing they were to consider, evaluate, and purchase oral care products. Emotional engagement had the highest relationship with purchase intention, and then cognitive and behavioral engagement. This means that emotional attachment, trust and positive feelings created during communication via social media had a greater impact on consumer decision making than simple behavioral interaction. These results were also supported by the regression analysis that confirmed that social media engagement was a significant predictor of purchase intention, and emotional engagement was the most significant predictor variable.

The results of the current research are in line with the research conducted by Hollebeek et al. (2014), who found out that the dimensions of consumer engagement had a significant impact on consumer responses and brand-related behavioral outcomes in online settings. In the same vein, Dessart et al. (2015) pointed out that emotional involvement is predominant in enhancing consumer-brand relationships in online communities. The current results also confirm the results of Schivinski et al. (2016), who have concluded that the brand communication via social media has a positive impact on consumer attitudes and intentions to purchase. Moreover, the research is consistent with the Theory of Planned Behavior developed by Ajzen (1991) according to which the external informational and psychological factors have a strong impact on behavioral intentions and purchase decisions.

The findings can also be compared to the findings of Spears and Singh (2004), who determined that positive emotional reactions and positive perceptions elicited by promotional communication are a significant boost to purchase intention. On the same note, Dodds et al. (1991) noted that consumer perceptions, product appraisal and informational exposure have a positive impact on the buying intention. Within the framework of rural consumers, the results show that social media, including YouTube, WhatsApp, and Facebook, have become significant communication tools to create awareness of oral care products, compare products, and familiarize with a brand.

On the whole, the research points to the fact that the social media activity has become a powerful determinant of consumer buying intention even in the rural markets, which were previously

regarded as less digitally advanced. The growing availability of smartphones, internet services and social networking applications has significantly changed the consumer behavior patterns among rural consumers. The results indicate that oral care product marketers need to pay more attention to the emotionally appealing, informative, and interactive social media marketing strategies to reinforce consumer engagement and purchase intention among rural consumers in Delhi NCR.

6.0 Findings

The current research explored how social media use affects purchase intention of oral care products among the rural consumers in Delhi NCR. The results of the descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and regression analysis are summarized as follows:

1. The demographic analysis showed that the most significant proportion of the respondents was in the economically active age bracket of 21-40 years and was mostly related to the lower and middle-income bracket. The majority of the respondents were secondary or graduate level and frequent users of social media platforms like YouTube, WhatsApp, and Facebook to get information about products.
2. The descriptive statistics showed that the social media engagement of rural consumers was moderate to high. The mean value of emotional engagement was the highest, then cognitive engagement, and the mean values of behavioral engagement were relatively lower. This implied that the respondents had an emotional and cognitive attachment to oral care product content as opposed to behavioral active on social media platforms.
3. The results also showed that there was moderate purchase intention of oral care products with the influence of social media communication. Of all the dimensions of purchase intention, affective purchase intention had a relatively higher mean values, which means that emotional attraction and positive feelings played a significant role in consumer buying intention.
4. The normality test was used to ensure that all the variables in the study met the normal distribution assumption since the skewness and kurtosis values were within the acceptable range of ± 1.0 . Thus, the data were deemed to be appropriate to use parametric statistical methods.
5. The reliability test revealed that there was a high internal consistency of all measurement constructs with a Cronbach Alpha value that is greater than the recommended level of 0.70. The constructs of the overall social media engagement and purchase intention showed high reliability.
6. The correlation analysis showed that the overall social media engagement and purchase intention of oral care products had a statistically significant positive relationship. The results showed that the higher the involvement with the content of social media, the better the consumer intention to buy oral care products.
7. The correlation analysis in terms of dimension revealed that emotional engagement was

- most closely related to purchase intention, then cognitive engagement and behavioral engagement. The findings indicated that emotional engagement and trust that is formed by the content of social media had a greater impact on buying behavior than online interaction.
8. The simple regression analysis established that the purchase intention of oral care products among the rural consumers was significantly predicted by the social media engagement. The model attributed a significant percentage of the variation in purchase intention, thus making social media engagement a significant factor in determining consumer buying behavior among rural consumers.
 9. The multiple regression analysis also indicated that the dimensions of cognitive, emotional and behavioral engagement had a significant impact on purchase intention. Emotional engagement proved to be the most significant predictor variable, which means that emotional appeal, brand attachment, and positive psychological reactions created in the process of social media communication had a significant impact on consumer buying intention.
 10. The general results of the research were that social media sites have become a powerful communication and marketing tool even in the rural consumer markets. The growing popularity of smartphones and the availability of the internet has greatly altered the buying habits and product awareness trend of the rural consumers in Delhi NCR.

7.0 Conclusion

The current research investigated how the use of social media affects the purchase intention of oral care products among rural consumers in Delhi NCR. The research specifically examined how the dimensions of cognitive, emotional and behavioral engagement contribute to consumer buying intention development using social media platforms. The study results validated the hypothesis that the level of social media use has a significant impact on purchase intention among rural consumers, hence the increasing applicability of digital communication platforms in rural markets.

The descriptive results indicated that the rural consumers showed moderate to high levels of social media use especially in emotional and cognitive aspects. The respondents were more likely to observe, understand and have an emotional attachment to the content on oral care products as opposed to being active participants in terms of online interactions. The research also determined that exposure to social media communication, advertisements, influencer content, and online product information positively affected purchase intention towards oral care products.

The correlation and regression analyses confirmed the statistically significant positive correlations between social media engagement and purchase intention. Emotional engagement was the most significant predictor of purchase intention of all the dimensions of engagement, which suggests that emotional attachment, trust, positive feelings, and psychological connection created by social media content have a significant influence on consumer decision-making behavior. Cognitive

engagement also proved to have a significant contribution whereas behavioral engagement had a relatively less but significant impact on purchase intention.

The research came to the conclusion that the social media like YouTube, WhatsApp, and Facebook have become powerful platforms to generate awareness, increase product familiarity, and affect purchasing behavior among rural consumers. The high adoption of smart phones, availability of the internet, and digital communication technology has drastically changed the traditional rural buying behavior and consumer information seeking behavior.

Managerially, the results indicate that oral care product marketers need to focus on emotionally appealing, informative, and consumer-focused social media marketing to enhance consumer engagement and purchase intention in rural markets. Engaging brand communication, influencer marketing, informative product content, and localized online marketing strategies can boost consumer confidence and increase market penetration among rural communities.

On the whole, the research adds to the existing literature on social media marketing and rural consumer behavior by empirically showing that social media use is an important factor influencing purchase intention towards oral care products among rural consumers in Delhi NCR.

8.0 Limitations of the Study

Although the current study offers valuable information on the correlation between social media use and purchase intention of oral care products among rural consumers, it has some limitations that must be taken into consideration when interpreting the results.

1. The research was geographically limited to the chosen rural regions of the Delhi NCR; hence, the results might not be entirely applicable to the rural consumers in other parts of India with varying socio-economic, cultural and technological factors.
2. The research was limited to oral care products and this restricted the analysis of consumer behavior to one type of product. The level of consumer engagement and purchase intention might vary in other high-involvement product or fast-moving consumer goods.
3. The research design was cross-sectional research design where data were taken at one time. The study was therefore unable to measure the changes in consumer engagement behavior and purchase intention in the long run.
4. The research was based mostly on self-reported data gathered using structured questionnaires. These responses can be in the form of response bias, social desirability bias or subjective interpretation by the respondents.

5. The study was limited to cognitive, emotional and behavioral aspects of social media use. The study model did not include other influential factors like brand trust, perceived value, electronic word-of-mouth, digital literacy, cultural orientation, and peer influence.
6. The research used correlation and regression to test the hypothesis. Though these methods were successful in studying relationships and effects, more sophisticated methods of analysis like Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) might be used to gain more information about mediating and moderating relationships between variables.
7. The behavioral engagement dimension showed a relatively lower level of interaction between respondents, which can be explained by a lack of digital involvement and access to the internet in the countryside. Thus, the real online behavioral impact might be different among various rural populations.
8. The research primarily took into account popular social media sites like YouTube, WhatsApp, and Facebook. The new digital platforms and the changing trends in social media were not thoroughly studied in the context of the current study.

9.0 Recommendations and Future Research

According to the results of the current research, a number of practical recommendations and future research directions are suggested to deepen the knowledge about the social media engagement and consumer purchase intention towards oral care products among rural consumers.

9.1 Recommendations

1. The marketers of oral care products must create emotionally appealing and consumer-focused social media campaigns, since emotional appeal was found to be the best predictor of purchase intention. Trust, family health, confidence, and personal well-being advertisements can produce a better consumer reaction in the rural markets.
2. Firms need to focus on informative and educative information about oral health, product use, dental health awareness, and health benefits because cognitive involvement had a significant impact on the purchase intention. Easy to understand and localized content can enhance consumer knowledge and product awareness.
3. As YouTube, WhatsApp, and Facebook were found to be the most commonly used platforms among rural consumers, marketers need to strategically use these platforms to conduct targeted digital communication, product demonstrations, influencer partnerships, and localized promotions.
4. Social media campaigns should include regional languages, culturally relevant messages and locally relatable communication styles in the brands to enhance consumer trust and engagement among rural population.

5. Digital marketing approaches that are interactive like short videos, promotion based on testimonials, influencer endorsements, quizzes, contests and user-generated content must be promoted to improve behavioral involvement and online engagement among rural consumers.
6. Firms ought to partner with local influencers, medical practitioners, and community-based online marketers to enhance product trust and acceptance of oral care products in the rural setting.
7. Digital awareness agencies and policymakers ought to encourage digital literacy programs in rural areas to increase responsible use of social media, consumer awareness and informed buying habits.

9.2 Future Research Directions

1. Future research can be extended to cover geographical areas outside of Delhi NCR to rural populations in various states and regions of India to enhance the generalizability of the results.
2. Comparative research can be carried out on rural and urban consumers to investigate the difference in social media engagement behavior and purchase intention in terms of demographic and socio-economic settings.
3. Further variables like electronic word-of-mouth, brand trust, perceived value, consumer attitude, digital literacy, influencer credibility, and customer satisfaction can be explored by future researchers to create a more detailed behavioral framework.
4. In future research, more sophisticated methods of analysis like Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), Partial Least Squares-SEM (PLS-SEM), or Artificial Neural Networks (ANN) can be used to investigate mediating, moderating, and nonlinear relationships between variables.
5. Longitudinal research designs can be embraced to investigate the changes in consumer engagement and purchase intention with time as digital adoption keeps growing in rural markets.
6. The future study can investigate how various forms of social media content, such as influencer marketing, short-form videos, live streaming, and interactive advertising, affect consumer behavior towards oral care and other FMCG products.
7. Researchers can also carry out comparative studies based on product category of the healthcare products, cosmetics, food products, and household goods to determine whether engagement in social media influences the different categories in the same or different ways.
8. Future research can focus on the generational variations, gender-based variations, and income-based variations on social media usage and purchase intention among rural consumer groups.

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