

Targeted Social Media Ads and Impulse Buying Behaviour Among Young Consumers: A Mixed-Methods Study

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ABSTRACT

With the birth of new technologies and social media platforms, consumers' buying habits are completely transformed, especially their buying habits with young consumers, who communicate via the Internet, taking the lead. Social Media advertising targeting requires several elements to create personalized ads that impact consumer attitude and purchase decisions including data analysis, avatars algorithms, behavioral tracking, etc. In the present study an attempt has been made to find out the relationship between the Targeted Ads in Social Media with Impulse Purchase intention (IPI) among Youth consumers by using Mixed Method approach. Structured questionnaires were used to administer to 300 respondents (aged 18-30 years) and semi-structured questionnaires were used for a face-to-face interview of 20 individuals so as to gather qualitative data. The results suggest that primary reasons for impulsive buying behavior are: appeal of the dialogues in advertisements targeted at personalised ads, dialogue personalisation, influence of a friend in social media and fear of missing out (FOMO). Some psychological effects on the conviction of shoppers in the purchase made in spontaneous shopping are also investigated: social validation, instant gratification and visual engagement. These qualitative findings complement the quantitative data, underscoring the significance of eliciting consumers' emotional responses and purchasing behaviors through algorithm-driven recommendations. The findings underscore the changing influence of social media on consumer decision-making and the importance of data privacy and manipulation regarding advertising issues. It adds three digitally time dependent factors in digital marketing plan – Technological, Psychological and Social, while also offering the mixed methods approach, adding these elements to a combined all-in-one plan. The findings are relevant to both marketers and policy makers in terms of what ethical marketing strategies and how digital consumption would look like, as well as to the consumers..

Keywords: Targeted advertising, social media marketing, impulse buying behavior, young consumers, digital marketing, influencer marketing, mixed-methods study, consumer psychology

INTRODUCTION:

The world of marketing has been changed by the digital technologies and the formation of social networking platforms and sites, thus altering the relationship between the businesses and their consumers altogether. Platforms like Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and YouTube are now being used as key channels for pulling advertising and establishing the link with consumers. Social media marketing allows businesses to target content to individual users according to the unique information they obtain in their web browsing history, likes, interests, age, and various other patterns, as opposed to traditional marketing that sends uniform content to everyone. It is becoming a more effective way to market and has altered the way consumers buy in the digital world. The age group 18-30 is among the demographics that are most active on social media platform. They consume huge amounts of digital content, influencers, internet communities, and promotional content of brands. Impulse buying behavior is defined as unplanned and immediate purchases made without giving enough thought to them on a rational level but rather based on emotion (Rook, 1987). Impulse buying is magnified in online spaces through algorithm-driven

recommendations, targeted ads, smooth checkout processes, and social proof features like ratings, reviews, and commentaries. Consumers are living in highly stimulating social media environments, which push them to jet into purchasing without giving their purchase a lot of consideration, which includes financial and practical implications. The use of "predictive desires" in targeted social media advertising is reliant on highly sophisticated technologies like artificial intelligence, machine learning, and large information analytics. These technologies allow marketers to track users' real time browsing history, interactions online, buying trends and interests. This makes the ads more relevant and emotive, and thus leads to a higher consumer response and buy intent. Earlier research has proven that personalised advertising increases engagement with the brand and can therefore positively affect consumer purchase decisions (Duffett, 2020).

Another significant element that affects impulse buyers is influencer marketing. "These are the influential people(s) that have an impact on consumer opinions, preferences and aspirations for their lifestyle. Users are likelier to believe the content produced by influencers who are viewed as a believable and trustworthy figure and

influencers make this product seem more authentic and desirable to young audiences. Consumers don't always know how their personal data is being used, analyzed, and collected for advertising purposes. Moreover, individuals at a young age may also become desensitized to their needs, compelled to buy unnecessary items and bills through continuous exposure to personalized advertisements, and become addicted to buying certain items. Previous research has already carried out multifaceted comprehensive analysis of social media marketing and online consumer behavior respectively, but not much has been written about the direct influence of targeted social media ads and the impulse buying in consumer's behavior in a mixed methods perspective. Previous research has primarily centered on quantitative analysis without consideration for consumer quantitative emotional experiences and perceptions with targeted ads. The purpose of this study is to use quantitative and qualitative approach to examine the roles of targeted ads on impulse buying among the young consumers on social media outlets and platforms. The research aims to denote the psychological, social and technological determinants which influence impulsive buy in online setting. "The study has taken a mixture of statistical analysis and consumer experiences thus providing a more rounded awareness of the impact of strategic marketing in targeted advertising on consumer behaviour in the modern world. The findings of this study could be greatly contributed in the field of digital marketing, psychology and social media. Practical implications in the field of what constitutes ethical marketing, responsible online consumer behaviour and transparency with regard to the use of data in the new economy are aspects highlighted by the study that are of relevance to marketers as well as policy makers and consumers.

Literature Review

Digital marketing technologies and the growing number of social media platforms have a measured and altogether important impact on consumer buying trends worldwide. Social media advertising has grown to become much more than just a marketing channel; it is now a powerful data-driven ad strategy that has the power to influence consumers' behavior, emotions, and mindset. Targeted ads and spur-of-the-moment buying are a particular threat for young consumers who have a lot of time on their hands spending on digital platforms. In this literature review, recent research examining social media advertising, impulse buying behavior, personalization, influencer marketing, and psychological factors and behaviors related to the buying decisions of the younger generation are explored.

Social Media Advertising

Social media advertising is using social media platforms to advertise products, services and brands via paid and organic content. Social media ads are far more interactive, consumer driven and personal in nature, than traditional advertising attempts. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) believe that social media has changed the way that businesses communicate with consumers, as it allows for direct communication, engagement, and content sharing. Today's social networking sites use cutting-edge

technologies like machine learning, artificial intelligence, and big data analysis to show users relevant advertisements according to their interests, online activity, demographics, and buying patterns. Targeted advertising enhances the effectiveness of marketing by ensuring that content is tailored to match consumers' personal tastes and lifestyles' (Tuten & Solomon 2017). The prospect of algorithm-based advertising is that marketing can now "predict" the behaviours of customers with greater accuracy. When ads are personalized, they can seem relevant and familiar, and they will also act to increase consumers' attention and purchase intentions. Social media advertising has been found to affect consumers' awareness, brand perception and purchase intent among youth (Duffett, 2020).

Impulse Buying Behaviour

Impulse buying is a phenomenon of buying products immediately, without thinking, without considering options. Rook (1987) states impulsive buying can be defined as "Ms sudden, irresistible, emotional buying urges for something that need to be purchased immediately". Impulsive buying may be triggered emotionally, by things around you and psychological factors, as opposed to deliberate buying. In the online world, online impulse buying is a growing trend, as online shopping platforms make it convenient, accessible and instant to shop. According to Verhagen and Van Dolen (2011), the attractiveness of a website, suggestions of products and navigability are statistically significant factors that influence the tendency to buy impulse online.

Promotional tactics such as 'Flash Saver' announcements, visual ads, notifications, and interactive elements on social media platforms play a significant role in increasing impulsive purchasing. This is because social media platforms use visual advertisements, limited time offers, notifications, and interactive elements to augment impulsive buying. Consumers are always inundated with promotional material as they scroll through their social media, making the possibility of impulsive buying even greater. Preliminary study by Zhang, Leng and Liu (2021) found that emotions evoked by online ads significantly shape impulsive purchases in online shopping context.

Targeted Advertising and Personalization

With targeted advertising, advertisers are able to tailor the content of the ads and marketing messages to specific consumer groups, using the information provided about the consumer, their online behavior and their last-clicking experiences. Personalized advertising is increasingly core to digital marketing since it boosts user engagement and effectiveness. Bleier and Eisenbeiss (2015) argue that personalized advertisements have a positive effect on consumer attitudes as a result of the impression of relevance and convenience it satisfies. Advertisements that relate to a consumer's interests and preferences are more likely to garner people's engagement with additional content and purchases. Behavioral targeting methods rely on users' search behavior, browsing patterns, social interactions, and demographics to forecast consumer preferences. Personalised ads are the ads that cut through the clutter and show ads based on the people's needs and desires. But there are also concerns about privacy invasion

and manipulation of consumers because of their excessive collection activities.

Influencer Marketing and Social Influence

Influencers are individuals who have a high number of followers on online platforms and can influence the thoughts, choices, and preferences of the audience as well as their buying through product suggestions and lifestyle content. Djafarova and Bowes (2021) discovered that young consumers tend to believe the feelings of influencers over conventional advertisements as influencers are believed to be authentic, relatable and socially prevalent. Every influencer verified and promoted lifestyle adds to the aspiration of consumers to buy endorsed products in order to be accepted socially or to acquire fulfilment. According to social proof theory, consumers are swayed by the thoughts and activities of other people, especially when they are online which offers “likes,” “comments” and “reviews” that approve the popularity of products. Peer approval and online validation is an important factor when making purchasing decisions for young consumers. Emotional factors are also a major part of the shopping process as well that is what makes it easy to fall in love with what kind of influencers are saying. Users might buy products without much thought after watching recommendations from influencers, unboxing content or ads. Consumers can make hasty purchases after a influencer's suggestion, unboxing video or advertisement.

Psychological Factors Influencing Impulse Buying

Psychological influences have become an important aspect of the impulsive purchase. Emotional excitement, gratification, social benchmarking and fear of missing out (FOMO) are some of the key psychological motivations linked to online impulse buying.

FOMO is the fear of missing out on something that consumers may feel if they are missing out on a valuable trend or experience, or an opportunity. Scarcity tactics, including restrictive terms like "limited stock," "exclusive deals" and "flash sales," are often used in social media ads to drive a sense of urgency and prompt quick decisions. Very high and interactive emotional involvement of digital ads makes a great difference when it comes to wanting something instantly, according to Lim et al., 2017. People buy impulsively for getting something with not weighing the consequence, to reduce stress, to make up a bad day, or to make themselves feel better.

Theoretical Framework

Mehrabian and Russell's (1974) Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model is used for this study. The S-O-R theory describes the relationship between some environmental stimuli and the internal states of emotions that will then influence behavior responses to the stimuli. In the context of this study: **Stimulus (S):** Targeted advertisements, influencer promotions, personalized content, visual appeal. **Organism (O):** Emotional reactions, excitement, social comparison, perceived relevance, FOMO. **Response (R):** Impulse buying behavior and immediate purchasing decisions. The S-O-R model is widely used in consumer behavior research because it effectively explains the psychological

processes through which digital marketing stimuli influence purchasing behavior.

Research Gap

While some research has investigated previous social media marketing and social media influencer advertising, it is important to note that this is a nascent domain, and as such many areas of research have not yet been explored. Most of the previous studies are quantitative and have been studied on online shopping in general and not on specific social media ads. Few studies have used a mixed methods perspective to study the statistical relationships and own-consumer experience of targeted advertising. Besides, there is the lack of understanding of both the joint influence of psychological triggers and personalization technology, as well as social influence on impulse buying behavior of young consumer. The study aims to fill these gaps by using a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative research to gain a depth of understanding into social media marketing targeting and how it impacts on impulse buying among youth.

Research Methodology

Research methodology is a way or system that is used to gather the data, analyze and interpret it in a systematic way to get to the purpose of the research, which is known as achieving the goals of the research. To address the inquiries that were raised in the proliferation of this research, the authors employ a hybrid research design approach in the analysis of the impact of social media advertisements with campaign content that is able to create impulse buying behavior among young consumers. By complementing the statistical results, Quantitative and Qualitative methods allow to have a deeper understanding of the behavior of the consumers, giving it a subjective perspective according to consumers' personal experience and perception. The methodology is clearly explained in relation to the research design, method of data collection, sampling techniques, data analysis procedures and ethical issues that were taken into consideration in this study.

Research Design: This study uses a mixed-methods research design, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The mixed-methods approach is suitable because it allows the researcher to analyze numerical relationships while also exploring participants' opinions, emotions, and experiences in depth. The quantitative method was used to measure the relationship between targeted social media advertisements and impulse buying behavior through statistical analysis. The qualitative method was used to gain deeper insights into consumers' perceptions, emotional reactions, and experiences regarding targeted advertisements. The integration of both approaches enhances the reliability, validity, and comprehensiveness of the research findings.

Research Approach: The study follows a descriptive and explanatory research approach. The descriptive approach helps in understanding consumer behavior, social media usage patterns, and exposure to targeted advertisements. The explanatory approach examines how and why targeted advertisements influence impulse buying behavior among young consumers.

Population of the Study: This study is for social media users aged 18-30 years. We have selected this age group since they are very active on digital platforms and more likely to engage with online advertisements and influencer content. To obtain a heterogeneous sample and to ensure different responses and experiences of differently identified individuals, the participants were chosen from different educational and professional backgrounds.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size: The study employed a purposive sampling technique to select respondents who actively use social media platforms and frequently engage with online shopping activities. Quantitative Sample consists of: a total of 300 respondents participated in the quantitative survey; participants were selected based on the following criteria; active use of social media platforms; experience with online shopping; exposure to targeted advertisements on digital platforms. Qualitative Sample consists of: A total of 20 participants were selected for semi-structured interviews; interview participants were chosen from survey respondents who demonstrated significant engagement with social media advertising and impulse buying experiences.

Sources of Data Collection: The study utilized both primary data and secondary data sources.

Primary Data: Primary data were collected directly from respondents through: structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

Secondary Data: Secondary data were collected from academic journals, research articles, books, online databases, previous studies related to social media marketing and consumer behaviour.

Data Collection Methods:

Questionnaire Method: A structured questionnaire was designed to collect quantitative data from respondents. The questionnaire consisted of close-ended questions divided into different sections, including: Demographic information, Social media usage patterns, Exposure to targeted advertisements, Emotional responses to advertisements, Impulse buying tendencies, Influencer marketing impact. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. This scale helped measure respondents' attitudes and perceptions regarding targeted advertisements and impulsive buying behavior.

Semi-Structured Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted to obtain qualitative insights into participants' experiences and opinions regarding social media advertisements. The interview questions focused on: Personal experiences with targeted advertisements, Emotional reactions to social media promotions, Influence of influencers and peer recommendations, Reasons for impulsive purchases and Concerns regarding privacy and advertising ethics. The interviews provided detailed information that supported and enriched the quantitative findings.

Variables of the Study

Independent Variables: Targeted social media advertisements, Personalization, Influencer marketing, Emotional appeal, Visual attractiveness,

Dependent Variable: Impulse buying behavior among young consumers

Mediating Factors: Fear of missing out (FOMO), Social validation, Instant gratification, Emotional engagement

Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative Analysis: Quantitative data collected through questionnaires were analyzed using statistical tools and software. The following techniques were used: Descriptive statistics, Frequency distribution, Correlation analysis, Regression analysis. These tactics helped to find out the association between focused marketing and impulsive purchasing behavior.

Qualitative Analysis: Qualitative interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The answers were grouped into subjects such as: Emotional influence, Social comparison, Personalized recommendations, Influencer trust, Privacy concerns. Thematic analysis helped identify recurring patterns and deeper meanings in participants' experiences.

Reliability and Validity: To ensure the reliability and validity of the research: The questionnaire was reviewed and tested before final distribution. Questions were designed based on established literature and previous studies. Interview responses were carefully interpreted to avoid researcher bias. Data from quantitative and qualitative methods were cross-verified through triangulation. The mixed-methods approach strengthened the overall credibility and accuracy of the findings.

Ethical Considerations: The ethical standards were maintained throughout the research process. Participants were offered the option to take part in the study. A detailed description of the study was given to the respondents. Participants' identities and personal information were kept confidential. Prior informed consent provided prior to surveys and interviews. All Data used were used solely for academic and research purposes. During data collection, the study made sure that the respondents did not encounter any psychological distress or strain.

Limitations of the Methodology

The study has certain methodological limitations: Limitations include only surveying young consumers (ages 18–30), which make a lack of generalizability a limitation. The data is self-reported and this self-report information could be biased or unreliable. Social media trends and advertising algorithms are ever changing; this can impact future consumer behavior differently. The sample population may not be representative of the larger sample population using the purposive sampling method. However, despite these limitations, the study provides meaningful insights into the link between targeted social media marketing and impulsive buying behavior among young consumers.

Findings and Discussion

This study indicates that targeted social media advertising significantly influences impulse purchase among young consumers. The quantitative analysis demonstrated that people are more interested, and more likely to make a purchase when personalized advertisements shown based on their interests and browsing history, and their online activities are presented. The frequency of spontaneous buying was higher when the ads seemed appropriate and attractive to young consumers.

The study also revealed that various emotional factors like being excited, being afraid of missing out on the sale, being compelled for instant gratification, and feeling the pressure from social media validation make a significant contribution to impulsive buying. Consumer was driven to make a quick decision to buy a product without thorough evaluation, as limited time offers, discount promotions and related products were promoted.

Another factor influencing consumers' behaviors was 'influencer marketing'. A lot of respondents believed that influences would be reliable and they felt that the boosted products would also be genuine and appealing. Social media was a big influence on customers making purchases decisions as they set up an aspirational lifestyle and create emotional links with their followers.

Qualitative results also showed that likes, comments, online reviews and interactions would make the product more attractive and accepted by peers. Content that was "populated" via algorithm recommendation and was visually attractive was often associated with unplanned purchases by participants.

But a small number of respondents were unhappy about data being collected too much, about privacy problems and about advertising that is too manipulative. There was also some consumer misrepresentation regarding advertisements, with many consumers feeling they were being targeted, and that it was a form of emotional dependence.

As a whole, the study shows that there is a clear psychological and emotional impact on the purchasing process of young consumers by using social media targeted ads. Personalised advertising can improve the efficiency of marketing efforts and the customer experience, however privacy issues and ensuring digital marketing is transparent and ethical are still key challenges.

Implications of the Study

Theoretical Implications:

The approach adopted in this study is mixed methods, which combines the three dimensions of psychological, technical, social dimensions, contributing to the advancement of the literature on consumer behavior, digital marketing and social media advertising. In addition, the "Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R)" theory is adopted to create a theoretical model for the study of the impulse buying behavior on internet. The results show that targeted ads act as stimuli and trigger emotional, cognitive and impulsive buying responses, acting as a stimulus in the surrounding and creating an

emotional and cognitive reaction which in turn activates impulse purchasing". This research also contributes to the existing theories of emotional marketing, social comparison and consumer psychology in the online sphere.

Moreover, use of quantitative method alone could not understand the consumer's behavior as well as using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The study offers important academic enlightenment on the impact of combined efforts of personalization, influencers' marketing and 'emotional connection' on influencing purchase decisions among young online consumers.

Managerial Implications

The findings of this research are important for marketers, advertisers and corporate organizations who promote their brands through social media platforms.

Personalized Marketing Strategies: The results suggest that customised ads are very effective in influencing the engagement of consumers and their e-purchase. With the help of data analytics and AI, marketers can better optimize their strategies and gain insights from data to develop customized content that connects with their clients' interests and choices.

Influencer Marketing Effectiveness: It appears that young people are more influenced by those that they purchase in conjunction with the endorsement given by influencers. Brands should partner with influencers who not only draw your credit, but can be relatable as well, as they are authentic and trusted by their followers. Attributing a positive brand reputation and a high degree of customer satisfaction will improve in the company of influencers. The ethical influencers can have a beneficial impact on the fans of their brand.

Emotional and Visual Advertising: The results indicate that the emotional storytelling, visual appeal and interactive ads can fully arouse impulse buying trends. The focus on sales forecasting and projections needs to be replaced by creating meaningful digital experiences which resonate with consumers emotionally without adopting manipulative tactics or techniques in advertising.

Customer Relationship Management: By knowing the consumer psychology, firms can form lasting relationship with the consumers instead of the sale. Consumers are more likely to trust and maintain a positive brand image when companies communicate and market their products transparently.

Social Implications: The research points to key social issues surrounding over-consumption of digital and impulsive buying habits among youth consumers.

Consumer Awareness: Young consumers are seen to be very susceptible to persuasive selling and impulse purchases. The results underscore the importance of raising consumers' awareness and digital literacy about how Targeted Advertisements work and how they affect consumers' decision to buy.

Financial Well-Being: Impulsive shopping can have a detrimental impact on students and young adults with few income sources if they engage in shopping compulsively, which can lead to financial instability. Responsible

spending and financial management should be encouraged in educational institutions and among social organizations.

Psychological Impact: Being constantly exposed to an idealized lifestyle, influencer content, and social comparison in social media can generate emotional stress, dissatisfaction and low self-esteem in young consumers. The study calls governments to action to foster healthy digital use and digital engagement.

Policy Implications: The results of the research have implications for policymakers, regulatory authorities and digital platform administrators.

Data Privacy and Transparency: The main characteristic of targeted advertising is that they depend largely on personal data collection and behavioral tracking. To make sure that consumers are aware of how and what kind of personal information is collected, stored, and used for advertising, policymakers need to beef up the protections around data privacy.

Ethical Advertising Regulations: The regulatory bodies could keep an eye on manipulative advertising techniques which appeal to susceptibility of emotions, particularly of young users. There should be guidelines to make sure that the intent of the influencer marketing is ethical and that the materials/vehicles used to promote are always truthful.

Consumer Protection Policies: Governments and regulators should encourage social media companies to create tools and features that enable responsible advertising, such as better disclosure on identifiable sponsored content on social media services and increased social media accountability to users about the data and privacy settings of social media platforms.

Digital Literacy Programs: School programs should be designed by public institutions with the aim of facilitating a critical review by youth consumers and psychological analysis of the marketing devices employed by the markets in the Internet.

Practical Implications for Consumers

The study provides practical insights for consumers regarding responsible online behavior and purchasing decisions. Consumers should develop awareness of emotional triggers used in targeted advertisements. Young users should critically evaluate online promotions before making purchasing decisions. Individuals should monitor their spending habits and avoid excessive dependence on social validation through consumption. Consumers should actively manage privacy settings and understand how digital platforms collect and use personal information. These strategies are designed to help consumers make more informed and sensible purchasing choices in digital environments.

Future Research Implications

Furthermore, the research offers opportunities for future research on digital consumer behavior. Future studies may explore: Cross-cultural differences in impulse buying behavior; Platform-specific advertising effects on consumer psychology; Longitudinal impacts of targeted advertising on financial behavior; The role of artificial intelligence in predictive consumer marketing; Ethical

dimensions of algorithm-driven advertising systems. They can also investigate the potential impact of new marketing waves, like the virtual reality or the augmented reality, and of the metaverse marketing on impulsive buying in future virtual worlds.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations that should be taken into consideration in the investigation of how a specific social media ad affects “impulse buying.” The restrictions may have an impact on the generalizability and interpretation of the findings for which these limitations should be taken into account.

Limited Sample Size and Demographic Scope: The study mainly targeted young consumers in the age group of 18-30 years. This group is highly active on social media but the results don't necessarily reflect the behaviour of older consumers or consumers across an age spectrum. Also the sample size included 300 respondents to a survey and 20 people who participated in the interviews; this could limit the overall extrapolation of the results.

Geographical Limitations: This study was conducted in a specific area in existence and the attitude of people can change in other geographical, economical and cultural environments. The use of the App preference; where the App user buys; and what they do when they get an ad for a product or service might differ depending on country and/or demographic. Conclusions cannot be extrapolated to normal practice throughout the United States.

Reliance on Self-Reported Data: Data collection method was qualitatively mainly based on self-reported data obtained from questionnaires and interviews. The answers could have been positive or people will have recalled their online shopping experience inaccurately. This type of response distortion could affect the reliability and accuracy of the results.

Rapidly Changing Digital Environment: Social media, the advertising and consumer online environment is constantly evolving. The results will change as features, marketing activities, and popularity of the platform change and may not necessarily reflect the present condition of the environment in the future. The study is therefore limited since it only offers a slice of one type of technology and over a certain time.

Focus on Selected Variables: The research areas that were most closely examined were targeted ads, emotional involvement, influencer marketing and impulse buying. Apart from the above mentioned factors, others like income level, personality parameters, impact of culture, brand loyalty and economic factors were not investigated in detail. These factors can also substantially affect, and cause consumers to make their buying decisions.

Methodological Constraints: The mixed methods approach added depth to research but it posed challenges in combining the quantitative and qualitative data, as this required interpretative judgment. The qualitative analysis applied is thematic interpretation as this interpretation can consist of subjective interpretation of the researcher. Moreover, the judgments of purposive sampling technique did not offer random samples, thus possibly reducing sample population representativeness.

Limited Platform-Specific Analysis: This study did not offer an in-depth analysis of the differences between different social media platforms, such as Instagram, TikTok or Facebook. All social platforms have their algorithms, which can influence consumers in different ways, as well as the type of content and engagement strategies that they offer.

Ethical and Privacy Dimensions: While the study identified privacy concerns and ethical issues regarding targeted advertising, it failed to consider targeted advertising lawfully, and hypothesized platforms lacked policies and/or regulatory infrastructure as a result of the lack of extensive examination. The above dimensions are opinionated and could be further explored down the road.

Scope for Future Research: The study has these drawbacks but will provide a good foundation for further research into the aspect of digital consumer behaviour. More larger and varied samples and populations would be utilized; experimental and/or longitudinal designs would be applied to gain wider understanding of specific social media advertising and impulse buying; and specific to various social media platforms tactics would be examined.

Conclusion

With the introduction of social media and digital marketing technology, consumer buying behavior has changed drastically, particularly that of the younger, seemingly younger looking consumers that interact with the digital content, digital communities and technology. The study employed mixed methods and assessed the phenomenon of targeted ads by social media and impulse buying at the consumer level focusing on the younger generation. Results highlight the importance of personalized advertising, affect, influence culture, social norm and psychological stimuli on influencing impulsive decision making in digital contexts. In quantitative study results, there was a strong positive correlation between targeted ad and impulsive buying. Consumers were seen to be paying more attention to more personalized ads based on browsing activity, interests, and consumer's Web experience; more emotionally engaged about them and more likely to buy them. The study also found emotional appeal, visual attractiveness and Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) to be the psychological factors that influence spontaneous buying among the younger generation of customers.

Qualitative outcomes also provided additional insight into consumers' experiences while dealing with social media ads. A lot of the participants said the influencers, the promotions from them, the trendy items, and the algorithm recommendations were among the things that inspired them. Many of those who responded viewed influencers as credible and relatable – boosting the credibility and attraction of products promoted by these individuals. Understandably other variables grew in importance for impulsive purchasing behaviour, such as social validation, including likes, comments and online reviews. The results of the study corroborate that the social media platform can be attributed to a wider picture one of high-impact communication and entertainment, but also one of high-impact influencer marketing influencing consumers and their consumption behaviour. Endue with technologies

such as artificial intelligence, behavioral targeting, and personalization algorithms, ads are more persuasive, engaging and psychologically compelling.

In the meantime, this study highlights the main ethical concerns on privacy and source of data, and local issues on manipulative marketing practices. Among the youths, encountering brand ads regularly could encourage them to develop unbalanced digital consumption, a lack of money and over-consuming attitudes. Therefore, these entities should make every effort to make their promotions lawful and clear since, foremost, they aim at boosting consumer confidence and wellness. Finally, online marketing ads are an excellent drive for youth to purchase an impulsive product without thinking about it, in today's electronic world. Personalized advertising is beneficial to both businesses and convenience for consumers, but it also presents serious ethical and social issues. Further research is needed on the evolution of consumption behaviors by consumers throughout time driven by digital marketing technology, to foster sustainable, ethical and balanced online consumption practices

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