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THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON CONSUMER PURCHASING DECISION PROCESS

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ABSTRACT

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Over the past decades, online networks have played an indispensable role in daily lives. More and more people have utilized social media networks for not only communications but also connecting with brands. With the tremendous growth of social media in recent years, it has been leveraged to boost company sales and, most importantly, build customer relationships. There is plenty of research or study about the relationship between online networks and consumer purchasing decisions: about 71% of customer buying decisions have been influenced by social media (Aleh, 2020). It determined that people are heavily affected by social media when deciding on purchasing.

The purpose of this study is to examine how online social networks affect to customer purchasing decision process, how an individual is attending, selecting information on social media before purchasing a decision. Several theoretical frameworks are applied to support the research consisting of the concept of social media and stages decision-making process together with definitions and references to relevant scholarly literature. Furthermore, the theories would explain the relationship between social media and consumers' behavior in people's daily lives. In the mythology chapter, a survey was conducted to examine how, when, and why people rely on social media sites during their purchases. Secondary data was collected from e-articles, emeralds, books, and Theseus, which is available in the UAS school system, Google scholar. The primary resources were gathered from the Internet and a survey.

Keywords   social media, consumer's behavior, decision making process

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1   INTRODUCTION

The advent of Web 2.0 is one of the most significant developments in commercial history. Another term that has emerged is social media, which is an evolution based on Web 2.0 that not only supports user-generated material but also extends the attention to the users by allowing them to show content to share across networks.

Social media is crucial in the current generation. The importance of social media can be observed in several areas, including business, entertainment, cuisine, lifestyle, welfare, and plenty more. It is critical for every business since, as an entrepreneur who owns a brand, firms can keep in touch with their consumers and acquire essential information about them through social media networking, thereby boosting the value of their brand (Sadh, 2019, 1-7)

According to studies, "a large percentage of people spend 25% of their time on social networking platforms, demonstrating how relevant and popular social media platforms have become in recent years" (Saunders & Eaton, 2018, 343-354). Facebook, the world's largest social media platform, has 2,4 billion users. (Fattal, 2012, 927-955). Other social media platforms, also including YouTube and WhatsApp, have over one billion users each. These figures are exceptional: "consistently, 100,000 tweets are sent, 684,478 bits of content are shared on Facebook, 2 million Google look are done, 48 hours of video is transferred to YouTube, 3,600 photographs are shared on Instagram, and 571 sites are created". The total populace is 7.7 billion individuals, with at minimum 3.5 billion among us on the web (Ola & Reem, 2018, 76). This indicates that social media platforms are used by one-third of the world's population and more than two-thirds of all internet users.
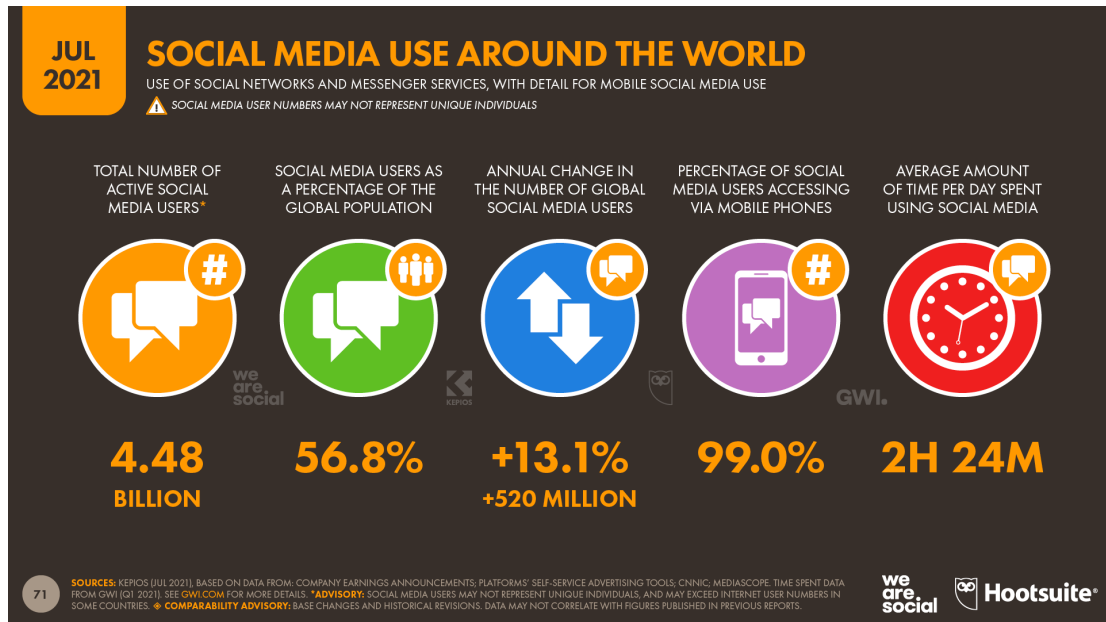
Figure 1: Global social media overview (Datareportal, 2021)

According to the above graph, there is 4.48 billion social media users worldwide in July 2021, equating to almost 57% of the total global population. More than 90% of internet users currently use social media every month, according to these statistics. The number of people using social media has increased dramatically in recent months, with 520 million additional people using social media in the year 2021. This is the equivalent of a 13.1% yearly growth rate, or 1612 new users every second on average. Comparing the number of social media users to the total population may underestimate the proper amount of social media use because most social media firms only allow persons over 13 to access their systems.

To put things in perspective, according to recent estimates, social media users now account for more than 70% of the world's population (Simon, 2021)

Most people use or visit at least 6.6 different social media platforms each month, about 212 hours a day (Jason, 2021)

Globally, people use social networks for more than 10 billion hours a day, equating to roughly 1.2 million years of life. (Simon, 2021)

The facts show that social media platforms are popular and prospering in today's Digital Age, as seen by the data. Social media has changed the modern world. The rapid and widespread advancement of technology is altering how people find partners, access news information, and how people communicate with each other. (Esterban, O. 2019)

Consumers and companies across the world have become more connected than it has ever been (Theodore, 1983). Because social media is one of the most motivating features of modern marketing, there have been many changes in consumer behavior Recognizing that consumer behavior is a broad and broad topic, the researcher will find it difficult to collect, examine, and complete all the necessary data and results in a single study. Thus, the aim of this study is to explain why, and how social media influenced consumer decision making.

This study's theoretical framework is made up of literature and previous studies on consumer behavior, social media, and social media marketing. This study's primary research technique was quantitative, and an online survey was done to explore the aspects of social media influencing customer purchase and decision making. The findings would highlight the fact that there was a significant relationship between consumer and social media, especially the seeking of information in 5 stages of consumer decision making then determine how social media affect this stage among consumers.

2 SOCIAL MEDIA

2.1 What is social media?

In the earliest century, small talk was social contact that existed between people who shared views on anything. Written correspondence delivered by hand was utilized in communities that were limited by the logistics of geography. Until 1972, when the telegraph was invented, short messages were delivered over the long distance (Drew, 2013). In the following centuries, with the evolution of technology with the new

technical invention, communication between people across great distances was not difficult (World 101). Technology began to change rapidly in the 20th century, with the creation of the first computer in the 1940s and the first blogging sites which became popular in 1999 that could be seen as the foundation for modern social media development

People tend to use social media because of the informative content shared on these platforms (Aaron, Laura, Courtney, Kyle, & Jingjing, 2019, 3-58, 12). Social media users found it feasible to remain connected with friends and family. And for this reason, the number of people who use the internet tends to increase year after year. Studies about virtual communities have released different definitions of social networking year in year. As Alan B. Albarran (2013, 2) mentioned: "A search on the Internet and trade literature will generate hundreds of definitions of social media, offered by bloggers, industry analysts, and various types of wikis. For the purposes of this volume, social media represents the technologies or applications that people use in developing and maintaining their social networking sites. This involves the posting of multimedia information (e.g., text, images, audio, video), location – based services (e.g., Foursquare), gaming (e.g. Farmville, Mafia Wars), and many aspects explored throughout this volume."

Social media is made up of various user-driven platforms that facilitate diffusion of compelling content, dialogue creation, and communication to a broader audience. It is essentially a digital space created by the people and for the people, and it provides an environment that is conducive for interactions and networking to occur at different levels (for instance, personal, professional, business, marketing, political, and societal) (Moser & Eijkeren, 2016, 285)

Social media is mentioned as a digital platform that allows people to discover and learn new information, share ideas, and connect with other people or even organizations (Maya, 2021). It has completely changed the way people live today,

making communication much more accessible (Zaryn, 2013). It enables the exchange of user-generated content such as data, images, and videos (Tahir, 2020).

2.2   Types of social media

There are plenty of social media platforms which are using at the present time, thus, it is difficult to determine how many of platforms on the Internet. In this way, people have divided social media based on the wide range of purposes.

There are 6 popular platforms which are the most using now.

2.2.1   Social networking sites

The primary mission of social networking sites is to provide users with platforms to connect directly with others by posting, sharing, and responding to each other's content who have similar personal interests. Interpersonal interaction locales, as a rule, have another client input a rundown of individuals with whom they share an association and afterwards permit the individuals on the rundown to affirm or some interpersonal interaction sites like LinkedIn are utilized for setting up professional associations, while destinations like Facebook ride the line among private and expert. (Chahat C, Sachin G, Raj M. 2020, 1951).

Facebook, for example, has been one of the most popular social networking sites in recent years. According to statistics, over 2 billion Facebook users worldwide have changed over the decades, which meet the user's demands (Maryam, 2021). People can connect with others anywhere through this platform, discovering what is going on in the world and expressing their opinions.

2.2.2   Media sharing sites

Media sharing sites is a platform that allows users to store and share visual content such as images, infographics and illustrations which capture others' attention (Shayne, 2021). While Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn enable users to post photographs, however, these sites are not viewed as media sharing networks. On the other hand, media sharing sites are completely around sharing visual content. These sites are also be seen as a great form for online marketing. By entirely sharing visual

contents, especially pictures, brands have leveraged as their effective marketing channel and increase brand awareness of customers. Social media sharing sites are more attractive when people prefer colorful picture or interesting videos to reading a long text about introducing products.

Similar to Facebook, Instagram is a prevalent social networking site in modern society. Instagram is almost like Facebook, but it's more photo-centric with an emphasis on photos and videos. It's more like a photo-sharing application.

2.2.3   Blogs

A blog (a shortened version of "weblog") is a discussion or informational website on the World Wide Web that consists of discrete, frequently informal diary-style text entries (posts) (ComputerScienceWiki, 2017). Posts are typically represented in reverse chronological order, with the most recent post at the top of the web page (Wikipedia, 2021). A typical blog combines text, digital images, and links to related blogs, web pages, and other media (Toulika, 2021). The ability of readers to leave publicly accessible comments and communicate with other commentators considerably adds to the attraction of many blogs. Blog owners or authors, on the other hand, frequently moderate and filter online comments to remove hate speech or other offensive content (Wikipedia, 2021). Most blogs are primarily textual, though some specialize in art (art blogs), photography (photoblogs), videos (video blogs or "vlogs"), music (MP3 blogs), and audio (audio blogs, podcasts) (Sya, 2013). Blogs can be used as instructional resources in education; these are known as "edublogs".

2.2.4   Microblogging

According to Wikipedia.org (2021) defined: "Microblogging is a particular form that exists as an online broadcast medium. A microblog differs from a traditional blog in that its content is generally smaller in terms of both actual and aggregated file size". To put it simply, Microblogging is another familiar form of Blog; microblogs enable users to exchange little pieces of content such as short comments, individual images, or video links. These short messages have sometimes been referred to as micro-posts

(Lori, 2014). Micro-bloggers, traditional bloggers, for example, post about a variety of topics, from the simple, such as "what I'm doing right now," to the thematic, such as "sports cars."(Melissa, Donald, Nicholas & Krista, 2012, 208). Some microblogging services provide privacy settings that allow users to control who can read their microblogs or alternative methods of publishing entries other than the web-based interface (Di, 2013, 1647). Text messaging, instant messaging, E-mail, digital audio, and digital video are examples of these.

2.2.5   Social new sites

A social news website is one that displays user-submitted stories. The popularity of stories as evaluated by other site users or website administrators is used to rank them. People usually comment on news articles online, and these comments may be ranked in popularity (Natalie, Emily & Cynthia, 2016). Social new sites provide users information about economics, political, and entertainment; it attracts a group of people who have similar interest. The feature of these sites is the specialization and focusing on a specific target group. Since the advent of Web 2.0, social news sites have been used to connect various types of information, such as news, humor, support, and discussion (William, 2017). Users can contribute content to these websites, the articles that receive the most votes from the Reddit and Digg communities would be promoted to the front page. Many social news websites also have an online comment system where users can debate the issues raised in an article. Some of these sites have also integrated their voting system into the comments, presenting the most popular comments first. Some social news websites also provide a social networking service, allowing users to create a user profile and track other users' online activity on the website. Social news websites, like many other Web 2.0 technologies, rely on the collective intelligence of all users (O'Reilliy, 2021, 2).

2.2.6 Bookmarking sites

The technique of saving a certain web page to a social bookmarking site so that you can revisit it later is known as social bookmarking (Rebecca, 2019). Bookmarking sites allows users to store, search, manage and organize the data based on their classified filters; it helps people easy to find which data they need at the time. Users of social bookmarking services may access their bookmarks online at any time and from any device that they do not have to spend hours to search on Google. With a few clicks of the mouse, people would be able to find popular and newly added websites. In this way, it is easy to determine which articles are the most valuable.

Marketers benefit from social bookmarking services because users can add, annotate, and share saved web pages with their team (Chirag, 2021). It can be shared with particular groups or made public, thereby, the sharing and promotion are more effective.

3 CONSUMER

Consumers are any individuals or groups who purchase products or services for primarily personal use. They are the end-users in the distribution chain of goods and services. Buyers are the people who buy the product or service and might or might not use it. The person who ultimately uses the product or service is the consumer. A consumer is the one for whom the services or products are ultimately designed for. (Chahat et al, 2020, 1944).

3.1 Consumer buying behavior

Consumer behavior is a factor which marketer usually based on to build a right marketing strategy, by that, motivating customers to buy products and services.

Consumer behavior has been defined as "a process, which through inputs and their use through process and actions leads to the satisfaction of needs and wants" (Enis, 1974, 228). Numerous elements in consumer buying behavior are thought to have an impact on customers' purchase decisions.

Consumer purchasing behavior, on the other hand, "refers to the purchasing behavior of end consumers, including people and families, who purchase products and services for personal consumptio*n*" (Kumar, 2010, 218). People have experienced the moment shopping and affected by many factors. Likewise, consumer buying behavior is often influenced by typical factors: cultural, social, personal and psychological factors.

From the perspective of marketers, particular aspects of consumer behavior, such as the motivations behind purchases, variables influencing consumer purchase patterns, and a study of societal changes, need to be researched.

As Kotler and Keller (2011) point out, consumer buying behavior is an integral aspect of marketing since it examines how people, groups, and organizations acquire and dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to meet their needs and goals.

Consumer behavior involves consumer's activities associated with purchasing, the use and disposal of products or services, additionally, emotional, and behavioral responses related to these activities (Kimberlyn & Sanchez, 2014). Consumer buying behavior is determined by the level of involvement that a consumer shows towards a purchase decision (Disha, 2018). The degree of risk involved in a transaction also influences purchasing behavior. Larger-priced items tend to have a higher level of risk, necessitating a greater level of engagement in purchasing choices. (Clootrack 2021).

There is four type of consumer behavior:
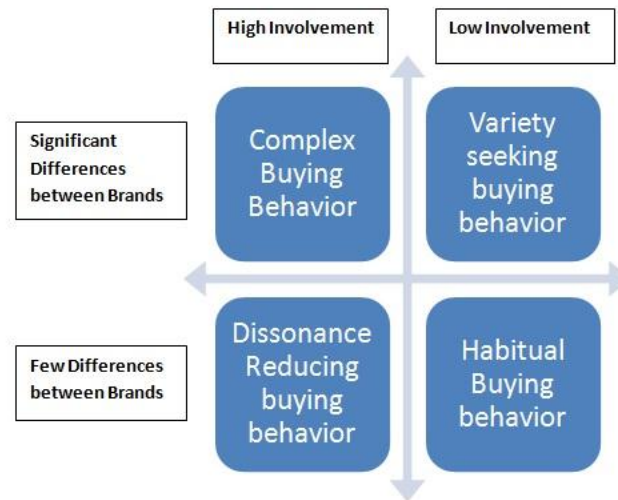
Figure 2: 4 types of consumer buying behavior

3.1.1 Complex buying behavior

Customers demonstrate sophisticated purchasing behavior when they acquire a high-priced item. In this unique transaction, consumers are substantially involved in the purchase decision. Before making an investment choice, extensive research would be performed. (Clootrack, 2021). In complex purchasing behavior, the purchaser would engage in a cognitive encounter. He or she would first acquire the convictions about the object, then viewpoints, and finally an informed purchase choice.

In short, people in complex buying behavior types typically involve in expensive products, infrequently, and highly – self expressive. These buyers usually pass-through learning or do not know much about product category, however, they aware of the differences between brands.

3.1.2 Dissonance reducing buying behavior

Consumer engagement is extremely high in dissonance-reducing purchasing behavior. This might be owing to the high price and occasional purchasing. Furthermore, there is a scarcity of options, with less significant variations across brands. In this type, a buyer purchases a readily available item (Clootrack, 2021).

The buyers tend to involve in purchase processes but there is a difficulty is they cannot see differences between brands. Consumers will be compelled to buy items with few options, leaving them with few options. Different for complex buying behavior, these buyers will learn and seek information of products but they will make purchase when see any good price offers.

3.1.3   Habitual buying behavior

Habitual buying behavior is depicted when a consumer has little input in a purchasing choice, this behavior is represented. In this situation, the buyer perceives only a few major distinctions across brands. Consumers do not give much consideration to purchasing items that they use on a regular basis. They either purchase their favorite brand or the one they use frequently – or the one that is available in the shop or the one that is the least expensive. Habitual buying behavior is influenced by radio, television and print media. Moreover, consumers are buying based on brand familiarity (Clootrack 2021)

3.1.4   Variety seeking buying behavior

Consumer involvement is minimal in variety seeking consumer behavior. There are substantial variations between brands. Consumers frequently swap brands in this region. Because the cost of switching items is minimal, customers may wish to test new products out of curiosity or boredom. Consumers in this area usually purchase a variety of products. (Clootrack, 2021)

3.2   Consumer purchasing decision process

Consumer decision making process is the whole process started when the customer aware and identify their demand, collect information, make decision, and evaluate their purchase as well as alternative for purchase (Mateja, 2011).

During research on consumer process, John Dewey - an American philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer – introduced 5 stages of decision process which every consumers go through when purchasing:

- Problem or need recognition

- Information search

- Evaluation of alternatives

- Purchase

- Post – purchase behavior

The buying process begins when a consumer recognizes a need or a problem, or when a need emerges. Both internal and external stimuli can trigger it.

The need recognition phase is the first step in the buyer decision-making process. In this case, the customer sees a requirement or problem and notices a discrepancy between the current state and the intended state. They are on the lookout for items to meet these requirements. This leads to the second step of product research: finding out more about the item itself. The customer makes an effort to learn as much as possible about the various brands of the goods. In the third step, the customer utilizes the data to compare other brands. In the fourth step, the customer decides whether or not to purchase by picking the most appropriate product. The most critical step is the post-purchase assessment, which comes after the product has been purchased. With the happiness or discontent, customers will become loyal to or actively shun the brand and advise others through online reviews or word-of-mouth recommendations.
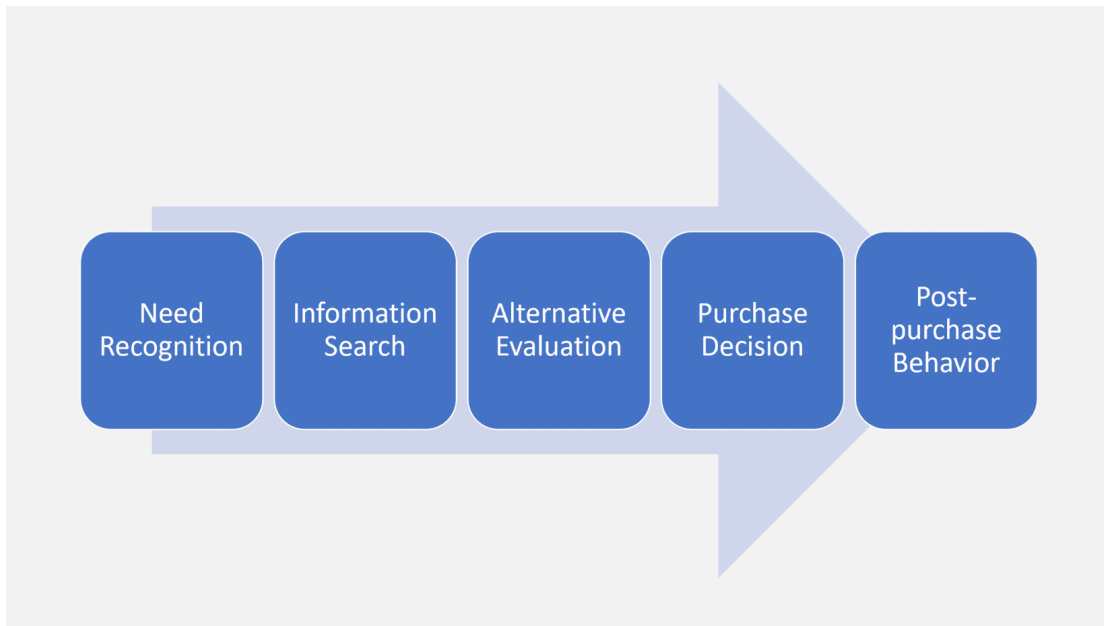
Figure 3: 5 stages of consumer purchasing decision process

3.2.1 Problem recognition/ need recognition

Problem recognition is the first and important stage of the process, the need recognition takes place when customers become aware of needs for products or services, in contrast, he or she generally cannot move to other stage (Gordon, 1988). The consumer notices a difference between their current condition and the intended state. The urge might be triggered by internal stimuli (such as hunger or thirst). This happens when a person's natural demands, such as hunger, thirst, or sex, escalate to a point where they become dangerous (Lumen, 2021). A need may also be triggered by external factors (advertising or word of mouth).

3.2.2 Information search

The next step in the purchase process is to do some research. When a need is identified, the customer is motivated to seek further information and enter the research phase (Lumen 2021).

The customer may be more alert or actively seeking out information. When it comes to how much searching a customer does, it is determined by several factors, including the quantity of information that the consumer must start, how easy it is to acquire

more information, how much he values the extra information, and how satisfied he is with his results (iEduNote, 2021).

Different sources of information are available to buyers or consumers to learn about the products which they tend to purchase (iEduNote, 2021):

- Personal sources include members of one's own family, friends, neighbors, and other acquaintances.
- Advertising, salesmen, dealers, packaging, and display are examples of commercial sources.
- Public sources include mass media, consumer rating agencies, and other such entities. Providing information makes them confidential as well.
- Sources used in experiments include handling, inspecting, and employing. Because of this, the information becomes crucial and private.

3.2.3 Alternatives evaluate

Consumers can now move to alternative evaluation, where they utilize the information, they've gathered to assess different brands in the selection set (Lumen, 2021).

The third step in the purchasing process is to evaluate the options. Different alternatives and their attractiveness are evaluated using various pieces of information gathered from various sources (iEduNote, 2021).

Different customers utilize various grounds for assessing goods and services. To make an informed decision, buyers often weigh the benefits and drawbacks of several options based on the product's features, importance, trust in the brand, and other factors (Lucid, 2021).

Consumers do not always follow a simple and single evaluation procedure. There is a slew of different assessment methods in use (Chenyan, 2021).

A few fundamental ideas assist explain how consumers evaluate products (iEduNote, 2021):

1. It is believed that every customer view a product as a collection of different features. For example, product characteristics for refrigerators may include things like cooling capacity, storage space, cost, and other aspects. Buyers will place a higher value on features that address their needs

2. It is critical to cater to their specific goals and requirements.

3. The customer will form a set of brand perceptions about where each brand sits in relation to each attribute. Brand image refers to the belief's customers have about a certain brand. Consumers' views may differ from real qualities depending on their experience and the impacts of selective perception, distortion, and memory.

4. The total pleasure of the consumer with the product is predicted to alter with the levels of distinct qualities.

5. A consumer's opinion regarding several brands is formed through an assessment method. Buyers employ a variety of evaluation techniques, depending on the buyer and the purchase decision.

The way a buyer evaluates purchase options is determined by the particular buyer and the specific purchasing scenario. Consumers are known to use exact calculations and logical reasoning in certain situations. In other instances, it is possible that the same customers will not provide any feedback. Instead, they buy on the spur of the moment based on gut instinct. Consumers are capable of making purchasing decisions on their own. When it comes to shopping advice, consumers often turn to family, friends, consumer guides, or salespeople (iEduNote, 2021).

3.2.4 Purchase decision

At this point in the buying process when the consumer makes their purchase. Consumers make purchases after weighing their options. They go for the most reputable brand when making a purchase. However, the attitudes and situational factors of others would affect their decision. Typically, they will go with the brand that is most familiar to them. However, buying intention and purchase choice can be influenced by two things. The first thing to consider is what other people think of the

consumer. Unexpected situational variables are the second consideration. The consumer's purchasing intention may be influenced by variables including the expected price and the expected advantages of the product. (iEduNote,2021).

3.2.5 Post – purchase behavior

Post – purchase behavior is a reflection of how satisfied or dissatisfied that consumer are with their purchase. "Did I make the correct decision?" is a common thought when dealing with a difficult choice. At this point in the buying process, customers decide whether to proceed with the purchase based on their level of satisfaction. If the product doesn't meet expectations, the customer is dissatisfied; if it does, the clients are satisfied; if it exceeds expectations, the customer is thrilled (iEduNote, 2021).

4 SOCIAL MEDIA AND CONSUMER

4.1 Social media as a marketing tool

Using marketing as an integral component of a company's business strategy helps to draw in new clients, delight current customers, and retain existing customers. the management and the analysis of relationships between a brand, its future consumers and its existing clients are central to the marketing idea. A variety of marketing strategies emerge as a result of the expansion of marketing over time, digital marketing is one of them. Digital has become an essential aspect of our lives with over 4 billion people connected and spending an average of 6 hours each day online (Simon, 2021). This connectivity is utilized for a variety of purposes, including talking with friends and monitoring data. This means that for a brand's audience to be recognized, it must be fully digitally integrated.

Social media marketing is part of digital marketing. Weinberg (2009) defined "social media marketing as the process that empowers individuals to promote their websites, products, or services through online social channels and tap into a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional channels". As a digital platform for "socializing," social media has evolved into one of the most effective

marketing tools available to companies and enterprises now. It is proved to be such a cost-effective strategy to advertise and promote (Risqo, 2020, 312-321). A study by Gordhamer (2009) found a link between social media marketing and the shift from "trying to sell" to "creating connections" with the customers; fostering relationships with potential customers is the key to repeat purchases and increased brand loyalty. "Social Media is an innovative tool that organisations use for creating a very strong public relations with customers on virtual network*s"* (Jan & Khan, 2014).

As Web 2.0 and the number of people using social media increased, thus developed social media marketing. Weinberg (2009) emphasized because of the way social media engages users, businesses might use it to promote their products and reach a larger audience than would otherwise be unable to be achieved through traditional promotion methods. The goal of social media marketing is to share valuable information with a company's clients and prospects (Muhammad, 2021,). A message that the consumer values would be more likely to be shared with others in their network. As a result, social media marketing might well be compared to a massive word-of-mouth campaign.

4.2   Impacts of social media on consumer decision

The development of technologies has led to the release of new social media platforms which attracting more and more users. Consumer buying journeys are multi-channel, multi-step paths that reflect the unique motives and dynamics of a particular purchase. Social media is now part of the awareness, consideration, and purchase stages of the customer journey. Consumers use social media because of its benefit brought to them. They easily approach to a huge source of information on the Internet which assisting them to have a decision for purchasing. There are many studies showed that people agree their purchasing ability will be increased if they meet positive feedbacks about products. In addition to source of information, social media helps users to update the latest trends and new products or services. Through social

media, they have learned more brands, products, and possible purchases. Moreover, they can share their favorite products and brand experiences by using social media. Social media allows users start and finish their purchase journey on it with its convenience and timesaving. Social media is also seen as a bridge between consumers and brands which plays as a tool that helps to increase customer awareness of the brand.

5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

This study mainly identified how social media platform influenced on consumer's behavior, especially consumer purchasing decision process.

Secondary data is supported by a theoretical framework that responds to research questions and provides evidence to back up the findings. Theoretical framework, the foundation of this research, has been provided the basis of explanation, permit the anticipation of phenomena, predict their occurrence and therefore allow them to be controlled. (ERTESCHIK-SHIR & LAPPIN, 1979). The theoretical part regarding to the revolution of social media and components of consumer purchasing decision process have provided a deep understanding of stages of buying decision process which individuals would engage, moreover, the theory has proven a systematic method in purchasing stages where consumers participate in a possible market transaction before, during, and after purchase, including phases and components that make up the consumer decision-making process. The flip side of the coin is that it has pinpointed the essence of social media marketing and how it has changed today's marketing techniques and purchase decisions. Along with theoretical part, the empirical part has focused on how people collect and process information before their purchasing as well as the impact of social media on different demographics (gender, age).

5.2 Research design

Quantitative methodology has been used in collecting data. Quantitative research is a method that expresses the result in graphs and numbers which used to confirm the theories and assumptions based on collected data (Babbie, 2010). The purpose of using this method is not the pursuit of accurate conclusions, but simply to understand where the problem located and to find out the situation, drawing the perceptions finally, and importantly the information in this research method are shown in some kind figures. (Wu, Deng and Huang, 2011)

The research was conducted by electric survey and sent to people in Finland via social media platform; a form of questionnaires in English carried out the survey. The questionnaire's questions were developed using the theoretical framework – decision-making process, information processing theory, and social media marketing – discussed extensively in previous sections of the study. Then, focused on questions about experiences of consumers by using social media for their purchase.

5.3 Limitation

Due to time, area, sources, and personal knowledge and skill theoretically, the research and analysis have some weaknesses and wallflower.

Social media marketing is not a new phenomenon, and it is constantly growing or even evolving. There are several publications and essays on the subject, but relatively few relate social media to changes in consumer behavior. The research is presented in broad strokes.

The study's data sample was comparatively insignificant, indicating that it had limited generalizability. The sample size should be expanded in order to cover more people in society and produce a more accurate set of results.

Data was gathered from individuals of the public who were available and willing to participate in the study, furthermore, the number of data are not high. This may result in a prejudice mistake as well as an inaccurate depiction of the population.

Considering the restricted time and scope of this research, numerous ideas linked to social media and consumer purchasing behavior were explored, however, in a broad sense to present readers with a comprehensive image.

6   DATA ANALYSIS

The following section would present all the data collected from the online survey. The questionnaire was sent out to approximately 150 people through primary email and Facebook messenger; forty - one responses showed a rate of 27,33%. By asking these two fundamental questions, it may be possible to estimate if social media has influenced decision-making processes differently based on these two segments. According to the figure, 53.7% of the respondents were female, and 41,5% were male; the remaining (4,9%) respondents preferred not to say their gender.
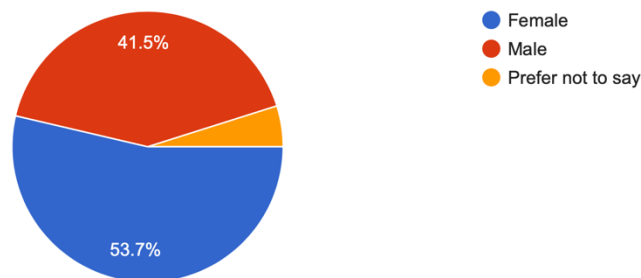

Figure 4: Gender distribution

From the received 41 responses, 21 – 25 years old represented the large percentage (61%) while the group of people who at the age of 18 – 20 years old showed the lowest rate (12,2%), 25 – 30 years old is relative. People who from 21 to 25 years old, called GenZ, are those who have access to technology from a very early age. They are called digital natives since they were influenced by technology as children, and the internet is now an essential part of their everyday lives (Emily, 2019). They are early mobile users who are accustomed to texting, expect constant connectivity, seek on-demand

entertainment, and place a premium on games. Therefore, the number of users at this age is higher than the other.

2. Age
41 responses
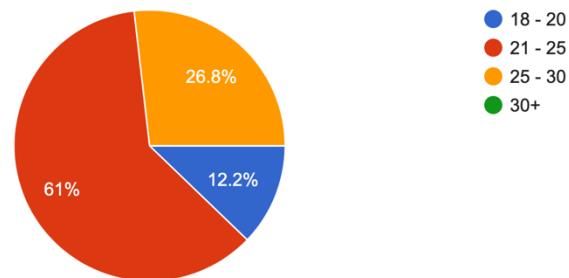
Figure 5: Age group

As the responses and explanation for gender question, it is simple to grasp which type of social media sites are usually used. Social networking sites like Facebook are used the most with 95,1%, then photo/video sharing sites with 58,5%; social news is 39% and bookmarking sites is 14,6%. By the evolution of society, Blogs are being used by less and fewer individuals.

Understand the popularity of social networking sites; marketers often use social networking sites for their strategies. When using social media, consumers will be more responsive to messaging that companies want to convey, marketing through

popular social media could help increase brand recognition.

3. What types of social media sites do you usually use on daily basis?
41 responses
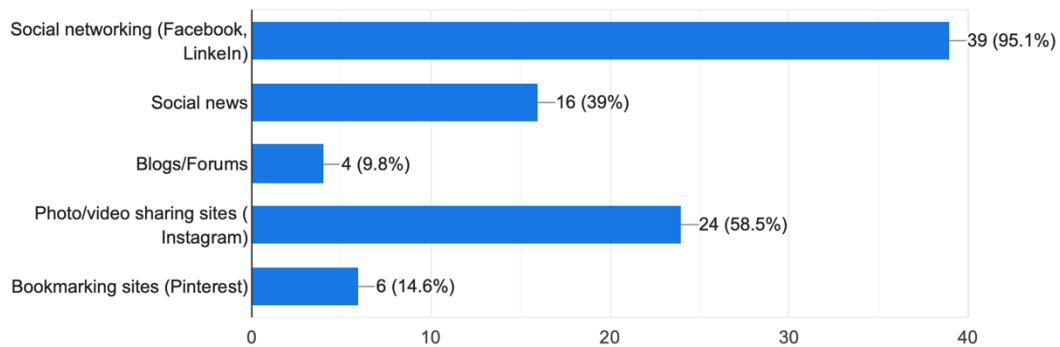
Figure 6: Types of social media used in daily lives

Common Sense Media, a San Francisco nonprofit organization, has conducted social media use intensive research. The research has shown that women tend to use social media more than men. The report found that 81 percent of female teenagers use social media daily, compared to 66 percent of teenage males. (Olivas, A., 2021). Why is there such a difference? Results from surveys and research have clarified the differences: genders have different purpose for using social media. Females tend to use social media sites for connecting, communicating, and sharing such as Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook, while males usually utilize it for mainly networking as LindkeIn. Women spend more times than men each day for making purchasing decision not only for them also for their families. They are likely to making purchase more than men, especially online shopping. Furthermore, digital marketing is currently developing, and social media sites are perfect channels for marketers to promote the brands as well as access to customer efficiently. As a results, women would utilize their time to active online for their personal purposes.
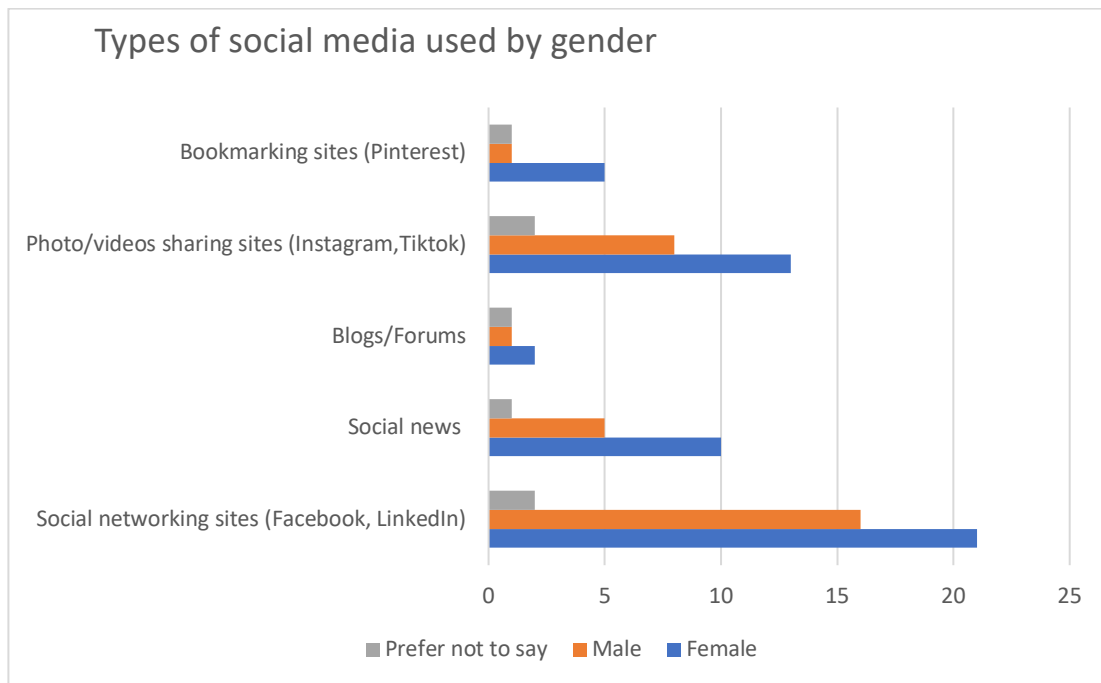
Types of social media used by gender

Figure 7: Types of social media used by gender

The following chart showed the data of social media platforms used the most by age groups. People who at 21 – 25 years old group are those who consume their time on social media platforms more than the other groups.
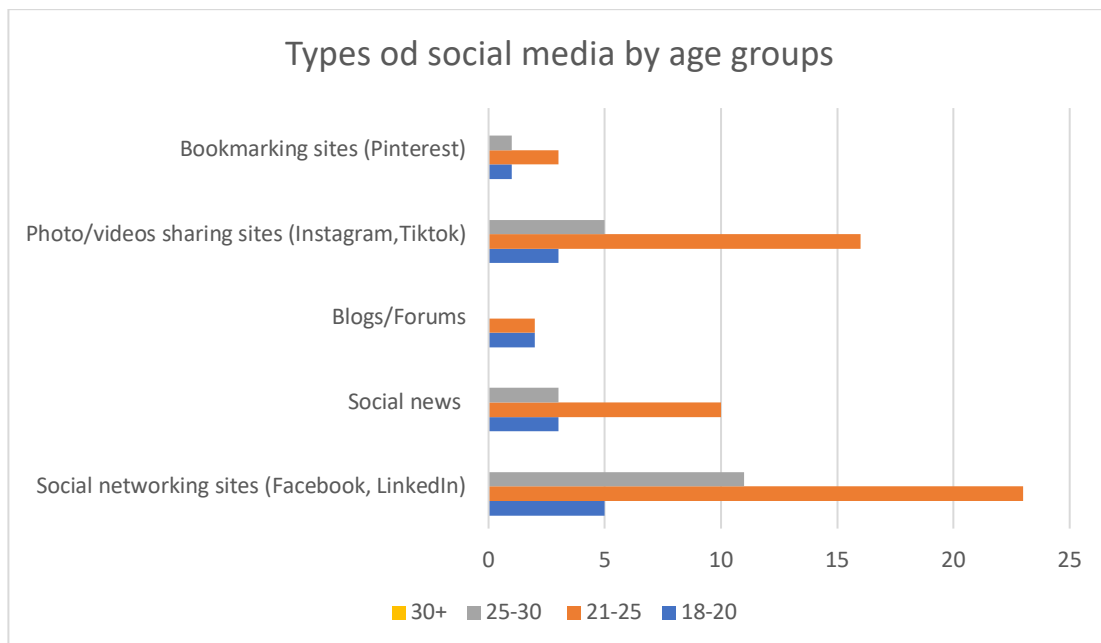
Types od social media by age groups

Figure 8: The most social media used by age groups

The response to the question "Do you usually seek out information about products/services before purchasing?" showed the fact that people have a tendency to search everything related to their purchasing on social media before they give a final decision with 90,2%.

4. Do you usually seek out information about products/services before purchasing?
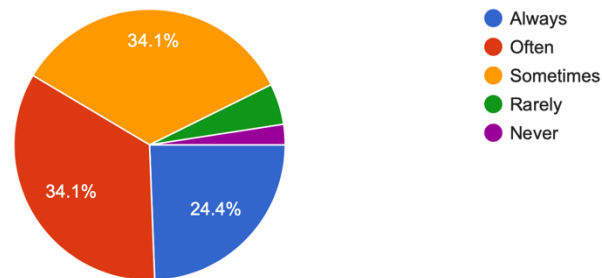41 responses
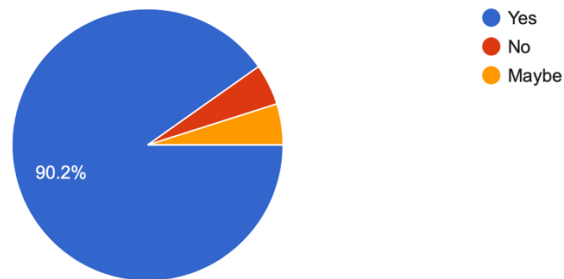
Figure 9: The degree of finding information before purchasing

Moreover, responses for question 6 affirmed the relationship between consumers and social media with about 68,2% people tend to rely on the information on social media when they have uncertainties regarding their purchases. Information about different companies, promotions, discounts, and deals are posted on social media sites. Social media and websites are a perfect method to obtain information about everything without putting in a lot of work.

6. How often do you rely on information available on social media if you have uncertainties regarding your purchase?
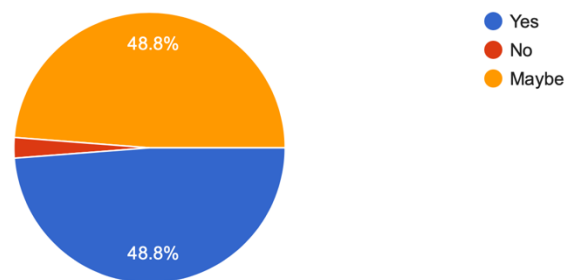
41 responses

Figure 10: The degree of the dependence on social media of consumer

Responses for following question indicated how social media partly affected to consumer 's decisions with 48,8% chose "yes" for "Do you change your initial purchase preference after searching after searching relevant information via social media?". There were some participants chose "maybe" (48,8%) which they would consider whether to change but in general social media would have an impact on consumer in some ways.

7. Do you change your initial purchase preference after searching relevant information via social media sites?

41 responses

Figure 11: Change of initial decision

According to responses of question 8, people totally agreed with their purchases usually affected by feedback of previous customers; 46,3% "Agree" and 26,8%

"strongly agree". The answer showed that people are likely to be influenced by online feedbacks from previous users, positive and negative.

8. The feedback about products/services on social media affects your purchase?
41 responses
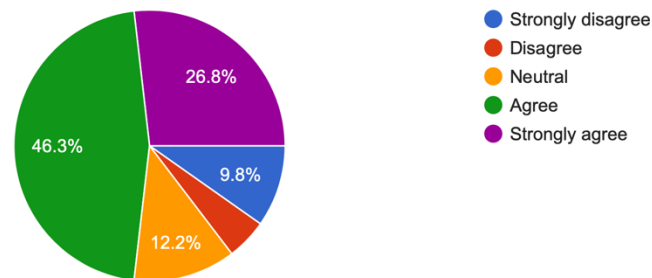
Figure 12: The influence of feedback on purchasing decision

As the answers to question 10 "social media makes your decision making easier?", most of respondents (97,6%) have chosen "Agree", only a few people, 1 person equivalent to 2,4% of the total of respondents, chose "Disagree". It means that most people have admitted social media is a useful tool as well as satisfy with purchase made by social media.

According to other research, 82 percent of respondents who had made purchases through social media were happy with the buying experience, 88 percent were satisfied with what they had purchased, and 67 percent planned to make future purchases. (Dan.B. 2021).

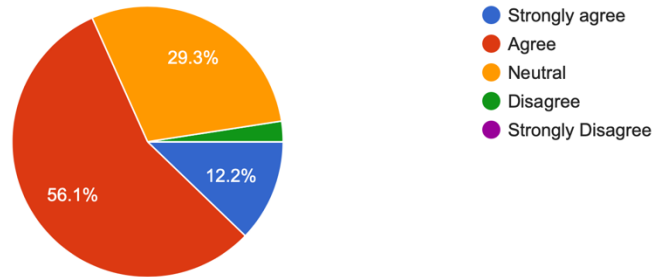10. Social media makes your decision making easier?
41 responses

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

29.3%
12.2%
56.1%

Figure 13: Social media makes decision easier

Last but not least all participants were asked how they were affected by social media, especially which stages in purchasing decision process were influenced the most. From the statistical chart, it is clearly to recognize that stage 2, stage 3, and stage 4 are influenced but stage 2 – information and alternative search – is the most affected.

11. In your opinion, which stage of buying decision has been affected mostly because of social media? 1: being least 5: being most
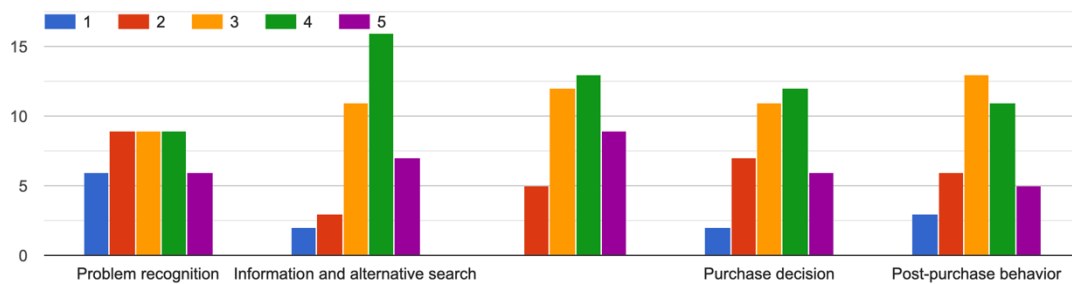

Figure 14: The affected of social media on 5 stages of consumer process

7 RESULT ANALYSIS

Through the analyzed results and statistical charts, it showed that social media plays a significant impact in buying decisions and, in particular, information seeking. Consumers are ready to utilize social media as a tool and access an infinite quantity of information in the blink of an eye. Consumers are also receptive to new ideas and pay attention to tailored ads on social media platforms, and they are not scared to buy them.

The result pointed out social media platforms have a big impact on consumer decision, specially at information seeking. The improvement of digital marketing, the expansion of brand websites, and the evolution of social media platforms such as forums for sharing brand experiences are useful tools for people to making purchase decision. With the wide spread of the Internet, it is extremely easy to get advice or opinions from experts, not only in the country but also around the world. News and social issues are usually updated on social media, helping the government and security agencies to monitor, handle and prevent crime more effectively. By approaching to an enormous source as well as the diversity of information, people have leveraged of social media for serving their personal purpose.

Consumers explicitly desire reliable, honest, and, even, frequently flawed evaluations and rating reviews. Ratings and reviews have a significant impact on purchase behavior. The value of a review and how frequently consumers rely on it vary. People like to read reviews, and they tend to believe other consumers, it is likely to make them change their initial purchase if they read negative feedback about products/services.

The participants have admitted that social media makes their purchase easier. The current updated of social media platforms means there are more people are shopping through the brand websites. By introducing the brand on the current popular platforms as Facebook or Instagram and the ability of tagging products on these platforms have supported shopping easier for customers as soon as they see it.

Instead of moving to the brand's ecommerce store and spend the amount of time for searching items they viewed on social media, consumer could click and move straight to the product. This effectively function has reduced consumer 's time which help consumer purchasing journey shorter and more convenience, in addition, it well aligned with consumer's attention that built their belief in the next purchase.

In five stage of consumer purchasing decision making, the process of looking for information (stage 2) is a moment that matter for consumers. (Alina Stankevich, 2017). There would be a lot of conflicting information about products/services on the Internet. Marketers must catch it and give a suitable product description, promotions, and so on. Even when a consumer is attentive towards a marketing offer, it does not imply that the offer will be comprehended as intended; therefore, aside from the accumulated information, any information or message that is generally analyzed and stored in the consumers' memory in forms of certain meaning will be used to evaluate alternatives. (Ethel Lee, 2013). In this stage, consumer tend to rely on social media, or specially information on the Internet. Likewise, responses for question 11, respondents assented with "Information search" usually be affected by social media during their decision making.

8 CONCLUSION

8.1 Finding

This research aims to why people rely on social media when they make a purchase. The data collected has shown that social media have mostly affected on people when they are seeking information. It does not affect directly, however, social media plays a huge source of information about everything needed. These information, might be from other experiences or reviews about something, are the factors that influence on consumer 's decision. They easily change their mind or keep the initial thought after approaching these kinds of information.

According to the result analysis of the study, customers are actively using social media platforms to validate their purchasing decisions. Most of respondents regard social media as electronic word of mouth. Compared to individuals who used other information sources, social media users reported decision-making to be easier and more enjoyable. Those who thought the material on social media was of higher quality and quantity than expected were happier overall. Overall, the findings indicate that social media has a significant influence on consumer decision-making.

The research has shown how social media influence on consumer decision. By analyzing habits of using social network, this thesis has shown how social media directly influence on consumer buying decision. Data and the development of technology allows social media store and provide the relevant content to customers. Business understand that social media is a bridge between consumer and business that is why business is using social media as their effective tool for marketing, Facebook or Instagram are example, which is the fundamental of the development of social marketing.

8.2   Suggestion for further research

Regarding the restricted time and breadth of this research, numerous hypotheses connected to the issue were explored, although in a relatively general viewpoint in order to present the readers with a big picture. As a result, if more research is possible, an in-depth survey should be undertaken to address the study aim. Because this is an extensive topic, the other research should have collected more data from survey to have more specific results. Moreover, there should be more research about this topic but with the participants who come from in different regions. This will make variety the collected data, meanwhile, investigate how social media impact on consumer decision between people have different culture.

More qualitative research could be conducted in the future to gain more knowledges about the effect of social media.

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