

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON CUSTOMER PERCEPTION: TRENDS AND INSIGHTS WITH REFERENCE TO HYUNDAI

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ABSTRACT

Social media has transformed the way businesses communicate with customers and has become a powerful tool in shaping customer perception. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, X (Twitter), YouTube, LinkedIn, and TikTok enable organizations to interact directly with consumers, share information, promote products, and build brand awareness. Customer perceptions are increasingly influenced by online reviews, influencer recommendations, user-generated content, and real-time brand interactions. Positive social media engagement can enhance brand image, customer trust, and purchase intentions, while negative feedback can quickly impact a company's reputation.

This study examines the influence of social media on customer perception by analyzing current trends, consumer behavior patterns, and the effectiveness of various social media marketing strategies. The research explores how factors such as content quality, customer engagement, online reviews, influencer marketing, and brand responsiveness affect customer attitudes and decision-making processes. The study also highlights the growing importance of personalized content, visual storytelling, and social commerce in shaping consumer perceptions.

The findings indicate that social media significantly impacts customer awareness, trust, satisfaction, and loyalty. Consumers increasingly rely on social media platforms for product information, recommendations, and feedback before making purchasing decisions. Businesses that maintain an active and customer-centric social media presence are more likely to develop stronger relationships with their target audience and

achieve competitive advantages. The study concludes that effective social media strategies are essential for enhancing customer perception, strengthening brand reputation, and fostering long-term customer engagement in the digital marketplace.

I. INTRODUCTION

Customer Perception

Customer perception refers to the opinions, beliefs, impressions, and feelings that customers develop about a product, service, brand, or organization based on their experiences, interactions, and information received from various sources. It plays a crucial role in influencing purchasing decisions, customer satisfaction, and brand loyalty.

Customer perception is formed through several factors, including product quality, pricing, customer service, advertising, social media presence, brand reputation, and word-of-mouth communication. Positive customer perceptions can lead to increased trust, repeat purchases, and long-term relationships, while negative perceptions may result in customer dissatisfaction and loss of business.

In today's digital environment, social media has become a major influence on customer perception. Online reviews, customer feedback, influencer recommendations, and brand interactions on social networking platforms significantly shape how consumers view a company and its offerings. Organizations that consistently deliver value and maintain positive customer engagement are more likely to create favorable perceptions and strengthen their market position.

Therefore, understanding and managing customer perception is essential for businesses seeking to improve customer satisfaction, enhance brand

image, and achieve sustainable growth in a competitive marketplace.

Changing Product Strategies

Changing product strategies refer to the modifications and improvements made by organizations to their products in response to changing customer needs, market trends, technological advancements, and competitive pressures. Businesses continuously adapt their product offerings to remain relevant, attract new customers, and maintain customer satisfaction.

Product strategy changes may include introducing new features, improving product quality, redesigning packaging, adjusting pricing, expanding product lines, or incorporating innovative technologies. Companies also analyze customer feedback, market research, and social media trends to identify opportunities for product enhancement and differentiation.

In today's dynamic business environment, customer preferences evolve rapidly, requiring organizations to be flexible and responsive. The rise of digital platforms and social media has made it easier for businesses to understand consumer expectations and implement changes that align with market demands. Successful product strategy changes help organizations increase customer value, strengthen brand image, improve competitiveness, and achieve long-term growth.

Therefore, changing product strategies are essential for sustaining business success, meeting customer expectations, and adapting to the continuously evolving marketplace.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of this study is to examine the influence of social media on customer perception and to understand how various social media platforms affect consumer attitudes, preferences, and purchasing decisions. The study focuses on analyzing customer interactions with brands through social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter (X), YouTube, LinkedIn

The research covers key factors influencing customer perception, including online reviews, social media advertisements, influencer marketing, user-generated content, brand communication, and

customer engagement. It also investigates how social media contributes to brand awareness, customer trust, satisfaction, and loyalty.

The study is limited to customers who actively use social media for obtaining product information, sharing experiences, and making purchase-related decisions. It explores current trends and insights in social media marketing and evaluates the effectiveness of different social media strategies in shaping customer perceptions.

Furthermore, the study provides valuable insights for businesses and marketers to develop effective social media campaigns, enhance customer relationships, improve brand image, and gain a competitive advantage in the digital marketplace. The findings may serve as a reference for future research in the fields of digital marketing, consumer behavior, and social media management.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The rapid growth of social media has significantly changed the way customers gather information, interact with brands, and make purchasing decisions. Social media platforms have become powerful communication channels that influence customer perceptions, attitudes, and buying behavior. Therefore, it is important to study how social media affects customer perception and its impact on business performance.

This study is needed to understand the role of social media in shaping customer opinions about products, services, and brands. Customers increasingly rely on online reviews, recommendations, influencer endorsements, and social media content before making purchase decisions. Understanding these factors helps organizations develop effective marketing strategies and improve customer engagement.

The study also helps businesses identify the social media practices that positively influence customer trust, satisfaction, and loyalty. It provides insights into current consumer trends and highlights the importance of maintaining an active and responsive online presence. Additionally, the research assists marketers in designing targeted

campaigns that meet customer expectations and strengthen brand reputation.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the influence of social media on customer perception of products, services, and brands.
2. To identify the major social media platforms that affect customer awareness and purchasing decisions.
3. To analyze the impact of online reviews and customer feedback on consumer attitudes and brand perception.
4. To evaluate the role of influencer **marketing** in shaping customer opinions and buying behavior.
5. To study the relationship between social media engagement and customer trust toward a brand.
6. To assess the effectiveness of social media advertising in creating brand awareness and attracting customers.
7. To understand how social media content influences customer satisfaction and loyalty.
8. To examine the impact of user-generated content on customer decision-making processes.
9. To identify current social media trends that influence consumer behavior and market dynamics.
10. To provide suggestions for businesses and marketers to improve customer perception through effective social media strategies.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

One of the important tools for conducting marketing researching is the availability of necessary and useful data. Data collection is more of an than science the methods of marketing research are in a way the methods of data collection. The sources of information fall under two categories.

Internal sources:

Every company has to keep certain records such as accounts, records, reports, etc., these records provide sample information which

can organizations usually keeps collecting in its working.

External sources:

When internal records are insufficient and required information is not available, the organizations will have to depend on external sources. The external sources of data are:

Primary data:

Primary data are data gathered for a specific purpose or for a specific research report.

For systematically collecting the data the closed end questionnaire is used. The questionnaire consists of questions relating to various aspects of the study for proper data collection the questionnaire is divided into 2 sections. Both the sections are meant for the respondent only.

Secondary data:

Secondary data are data that are collected for another purpose and already exist somewhere. Data pertaining to company is collected from company web site company catalogues and magazines. The company profile gives a detailed report of history various products manufacture by its etc.

METHOD OF RESEARCH

SURVEY METHOD:

A survey is a complete operation, which requires some technical knowledge survey methods are mostly personal in character. Surveys are best suited forgetting primary data. The researcher obtains information from the respondents by interviewing them.

SAMPLING:

It is not always necessary to collect data from whole universe. A small representative sample may serve the purpose. A sample means a small group should be emanative cross section and really “representative” in character. This selection process is called sampling.

SAMPLE SIZE:

Samples are devices for learning about large masses by observing a few individuals. The selected sample is 100. In that sample 58 is males and 42 are females.

METHOD OF SAMPLING

RANDOM SAMPLING METHOD

The method adopted here is random sampling method. A random sample is one where each item in the universe has as equal chance of known opportunity of being selected.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study is limited to a specific sample of respondents, **and the findings may not represent the opinions of all social media users.**
2. The accuracy of the study depends on the responses provided by participants, **which may be influenced by personal bias or misunderstanding.**
3. The research focuses only on selected social media platforms, **and the impact of other emerging platforms may not be considered.**
4. Customer perceptions may change over time **due to changing trends, technologies, and market conditions, making the findings time-bound.**
5. The study is confined to a particular geographical area or target group, **which may limit the generalization of the results.**
6. External factors such as price, product quality, brand reputation, and economic conditions **may also influence customer perception but are not fully covered in the study.**
7. The research is conducted within a limited time period, **restricting the scope for extensive data collection and analysis.**
8. Rapid changes in social media algorithms and digital marketing practices **may affect the relevance of the findings in the future.**
9. The study primarily relies on primary and secondary data, **which may have certain limitations in terms of accuracy and completeness.**
10. Financial and resource constraints **may limit the depth and breadth of the research.**

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Perception

In philosophy, psychology, and cognitive science, **perception** is the process of attaining awareness or understanding of sensory information. The word "perception" comes from the Latin words *perception*, and means "receiving, collecting, action of taking possession, apprehension with the mind or senses."

Perception is one of the oldest fields in psychology. The oldest quantitative law in psychology is the Weber-Fechner law, which quantifies the relationship between the intensity of physical stimuli and their perceptual effects. The study of perception gave rise to the Gestalt school of psychology, with its emphasis on holistic approach.

What one perceives is a result of interplays between past experiences, including one's culture, and the interpretation of the perceived.

Types

Two types of consciousness are considerable regarding perception: phenomenal (any occurrence that is observable and physical) and psychological. The difference every sighted person can demonstrate to him- or herself is by the simple opening and closing of his or her eyes: phenomenal consciousness is thought, on average, to be predominately absent without senses such as sight. Through the full or rich sensations present in senses such as sight, nothing by comparison is present while the senses are not engaged, such as when the eyes are closed. Using this precept, it is understood that, in the vast majority of cases, logical solutions are reached through simple human sensation. The analogy of Plato's Cave was coined to express these ideas.

Passive perception (conceived by René Descartes) can be surmised as the following sequence of events: surrounding → input (senses) → processing (brain) → output (re-action). Although still supported by mainstream philosophers, psychologists and neurologists, this theory is nowadays losing momentum. The theory of active perception has emerged from extensive research of sensory illusions, most notably the works of

Richard L. Gregory. This theory, which is increasingly gaining experimental support, can be surmised as dynamic relationship between "description" (in the brain) ↔ senses ↔ surrounding, all of which holds true to the linear concept of experience.

Perception and reality

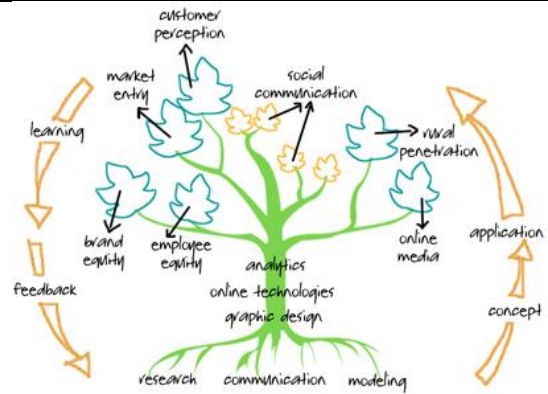
Perception is the way individuals interpret, understand, and form opinions about people, products, services, events, or situations based on their experiences, beliefs, attitudes, and available information. Perception is subjective and may differ from person to person.

Reality, on the other hand, refers to the actual facts, truth, or objective state of a situation, independent of individual opinions or interpretations. Reality remains constant, whereas perceptions can vary depending on personal experiences and external influences.

In marketing and consumer behavior, perception often plays a more significant role than reality because customers make purchasing decisions based on what they believe about a product or brand rather than its actual characteristics. For example, a customer may perceive a brand as high-quality due to positive reviews and social media influence, even if the actual product quality is similar to competing brands.

The relationship between perception and reality is important for businesses because customer perceptions directly affect brand image, customer satisfaction, loyalty, and purchasing behavior. Organizations therefore strive to align customer perceptions with reality through effective communication, quality products, transparent marketing, and positive customer experiences.

In the context of social media, perception can be shaped rapidly through online reviews, influencer recommendations, advertisements, and user-generated content. Consequently, managing customer perception has become a critical aspect of modern business strategy, as perception often influences consumer decisions as strongly as, or even more strongly than, reality itself.



Information evaluation

Information Evaluation is the process of examining, analyzing, and assessing information to determine its accuracy, reliability, relevance, completeness, and usefulness for decision-making. It helps individuals and organizations distinguish between credible and misleading information and make informed judgments.

In the context of consumer behavior and social media, customers evaluate information from various sources such as advertisements, online reviews, social media posts, websites, influencers, and recommendations before making purchasing decisions. Effective information evaluation enables consumers to identify trustworthy sources and avoid misinformation.

Purchase decision

A **purchase decision** is the process through which a consumer selects and buys a product or service after evaluating various alternatives. It is a critical stage in consumer behavior where customers choose a product that best satisfies their needs, preferences, and expectations.

Purchase decisions are influenced by several factors, including product quality, price, brand image, advertising, customer reviews, social media influence, recommendations from friends and family, and previous experiences. In today's digital environment, social media platforms play a significant role in shaping purchase decisions by providing information, reviews, ratings, and influencer endorsements.

Post purchase evaluation

The EKB model was further developed by Rice (1993) which suggested there should be a feedback

loop, Foxall (2005) further suggests the importance of the post purchase evaluation and that the post purchase evaluation is key due to its influences on future purchase patterns.

Internal influences

Consumer behaviour is influenced by: demographics, psychographics (lifestyle), personality, motivation, knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and feelings. Consumer behaviour concern with consumer need consumer actions in the direction of satisfying needs leads to his behaviour of every individuals depend on thinking

IV. DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

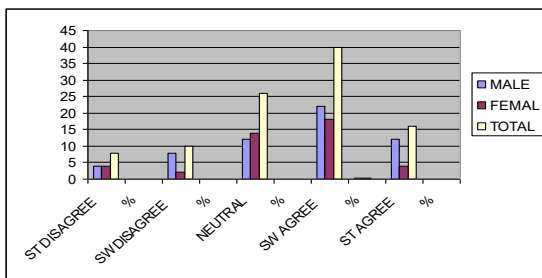
DATA ANALYSIS

1. This Show room has modern looking equipment and fixtures?

TABLE 1

Gender	Strongly disagree	%	Somewhat disagree	%	Neutral	%	Somewhat agree	%	Strongly agree	%
MALE	4	0.04	8	0.08	12	0.12	22	0.22	12	0.12
FEMALE	4	0.04	2	0.02	14	0.14	18	0.18	4	0.04
TOTAL	8		10		26		40		16	

Table 1: reveals customer’s opinion on modern looking equipment and fixtures.



Interpretation

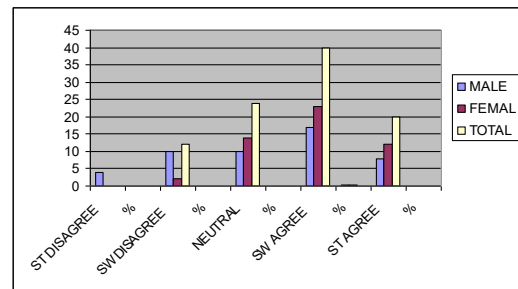
From the above data it was found that, 4 male and 4 female are strongly disagreed with modern looking neutral in their opinion respondents are somewhat agree. 12 male and 4 female are strongly agree with the modern furniture and equipment., 22 male and 18 female equipment and fixtures, 8 male and 2 female are somewhat disagree, 12 male and 14 female respondents.

2. The Physical facilities at this Show room are visually appealing?

TABLE 2.

Gender	Strongly disagree	%	Somewhat disagree	%	Neutral	%	somewhat agree	%	Strongly agree	%
MALE	4	0.04	10	0.10	10	0.10	17	0.17	8	0.08
FEMALE	0	0	2	0.02	14	0.14	23	0.23	12	0.12
TOTAL	4		12		24		40		20	

Table 2: reveals customers opinion on visibility of physical facilities.



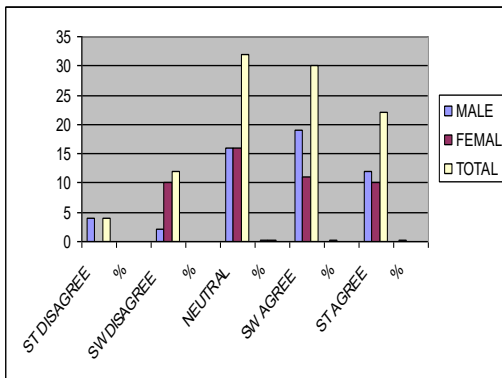
Interpretation

From the table it is evident that 40 of the respondents are of the opinion that they are somewhat satisfied with visibility, and 20 of the sample respondents said they strongly agree. However, 24 of the sample collected are neutral with the appealing of physical facilities. 12 of the sample respondents said they somewhat disagree and only 4 of the sample respondents said they strongly disagree with visibility. From the above analysis we can say that majority of the sample respondents are agreed with the visual appeal of physical facilities

3. The Show room layout at this Show room makes it easy for customers to move around Show room?

TABLE 3.

Gender	Strongly disagree	%	Somewhat disagree	%	Neutral	%	somewhat agree	%	Strongly agree	%
MALE	4	0.04	2	0.02	16	0.16	19	0.19	12	0.12
FEMALE	0	0	10	0.10	16	0.16	11	0.11	10	0.10
TOTAL	4		12		32		30		22	



Interpretation

From the table it is evident that 32 of the respondents are of the opinion that they are neutral to move around the Show room, and 22 of the sample respondents said they strongly agree. However, 30 of the sample collected are somewhat agreed. However only 12 of the people somewhat disagree and 4 of the respondents strongly disagree.

V. FINDINGS

- From data analysis, I conclude that 40% of the respondent's satisfaction level about Show room's modern looking equipment and fixtures is somewhat agree. Then, only few respondents are strongly disagree.
- Majority of the people (40%) said the Show room physical facilities are visually appealing.
- When asking about Show room convenience to move around the Show room maximum number of respondents said that it is somewhat ease to move around the Show room.
- 38% respondents said that the Show room people are somewhat knowledgeable to answer their questions.
- According to data analysis, employees in the Show room are providing without delay services to the customers.
- 24% of the respondents said that the Show rooms cannot give personal attention to the customers.

- 42% respondents have said that, the Show room management is immediately responding to customer's problem.
- After the data analysis I found that majority of the people are not pleased with the parking facilities

VI. SUGGESTIONS

- Parking facilities should be enhanced in order to satisfy customers.
- Management personnel should maintain gracious relation with the customers.
- Knowledge of the employees should be improved in order to answer the customer's troubles.
- The layout of the Show room should be enhanced in order to move customers around the Show room.

VII. CONCLUSION

The respondents are of HYUNDAI and they came know about the service from hoardings, print media, primarily and through electronic media and road shows secondarily. The respondents are using HYUNDAI since 1 year and below 1 year in most of the cases. The service provided by HYUNDAI is used by majority of the respondents and the reason for choosing it is the quality of the service, followed by brand image.

CONSUMER PERCEPTION of the respondents towards HYUNDAI is high; however a significant number of the respondents are dissatisfied with its services.

In purchasing HYUNDAI products family appear to be the prime motivators of the respondents in making their purchase decisions, due to the special offers being targeted by the company at this segment.

The respondents are paying their bills at the company show rooms, and these are also on delivery time.

The respondents are desirous of having online bill payment service for convenience as it saves their time, money and effort. The instruments being providing with billing service are being well received by the respondents.

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