

IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS (INSTAGRAM, YOUTUBE, FACEBOOK AND PINTEREST) ON PRODUCT DISCOVERY

Dissertation submitted to St. Teresa's College (Autonomous)
Ernakulam, Affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University in partial
completion of **PGDM – BUSINESS ANALYTICS**

Submitted by

ALVINAH KATHRYN PEREIRA

Reg no: SM22PGDM001

Under the Supervision and Guidance of

Ms. PARVATHY P S



ST. TERESA'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), ERNAKULAM
COLLEGE WITH POTENTIAL FOR EXCELLENCE
Nationally Re-Accredited At 'A++' Level (Fourth Cycle)
Affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University Kottayam-686560

December 2023



**ST. TERESA'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS),
ERNAKULAM**



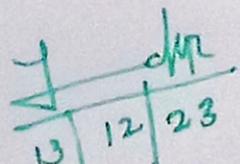
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled “**IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS (INSTAGRAM, YOUTUBE, FACEBOOK AND PINTEREST) ON PRODUCT DISCOVERY**” is a bonafide record of the project work carried out by Ms. **ALVINAH KATHRYN PEREIRA (Reg No: SM22PGDM001)** final year student of **PGDM – Business Analytics** under my supervision and guidance during 2022-2024. The project report represents the work of the candidate and is hereby approved for submission.


13/12/23
Ms Parvathy P.S
Assistant professor

Department of Management Studies

Countersigned
Principal


13/12/23
Dr. G. Sreedhar M.R.



DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the project entitled “ **IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS (INSTAGRAM, YOUTUBE, FACEBOOK AND PINTEREST) ON PRODUCT DISCOVERY**” submitted to St. Teresa’s College (Autonomous), Ernakulam, is a record of an original work done by me under the guidance of Ms Parvathy P S, St. Teresa’s College, Ernakulam, and this project work is submitted in the partial fulfilment of the requirement of the award of the Degree of PGDM-Business Analytics. The result embodied in this project report has not been submitted to any other University or Institute for the award of any Degree or Diploma.

ALVINAH KATHRYN PEREIRA

Place: Ernakulam

Date: 13/12/2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

An undertaking of work life - this is never an outcome of a single person; rather it bears the imprints of some people who directly or indirectly helped me in completing the present study. I would be failing in my duties if I don't say a word of thanks to all those who made my training period educational and pleasurable.

First of all, I thank almighty God for his mercy and love which kept me in good health and sound mind and helped me to complete the project work successfully and gave me strength and inspiration for making this project work a great success.

I express my sincere gratitude to our Director *Rev. Sr. Emeline CSST*.

I thank *Dr. Alphonsa Vijaya Joseph*, Principal, St. Teresa's College (Autonomous), Ernakulam for her valuable support and encouragement.

I am grateful to *Dr. Anu Raj*, Head of the Department of Management Studies, and all other members of the faculty of the Department for all the support and help given to me in the preparation of this project. I must also thank my faculty guide *Ms Parvathy P S*, St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam, for her continuous support, mellow criticism, and able directional guidance during the project.

Finally, I would like to thank all lecturers, friends, and my family for their kind support and all who have directly or indirectly helped me in preparing this project report. And at last, I am thankful to all divine light and my parents, who kept my motivation and zest for knowledge always high through the tides of time.

ALVINAH KATHRYN PEREIRA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview.....	2
1.2 Statement of Problem.....	3
1.3 Literature Review.....	3
1.4 Significance of Study.....	5
1.5 Scope of Study.....	5
1.6 Objective of Study.....	6
1.7 Research Methodology.....	6
1.8 Statistical Packages.....	6
1.9 Limitations.....	7

2. INDUSTRY AND COMPANY PROFILE

2.1 Industry Profile.....	9
2.2 Company Profile.....	10

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

3.1 Descriptive Analysis.....	14
3.2 Hypothesis testing.....	26

4. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

4.1 Findings.....	34
4.2 Conclusion	35

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	37
--------------------------	-----------

APPENDIX.....	38
----------------------	-----------

LIST OF TABLES

3.1 Gender wise classification.....	14
3.2 Age wise classification.....	15
3.3 Regularly used Social media.....	16
3.4 Primarily used Social media for product discovery.....	17
3.5 Products discovered from social media.....	18
3.6 Factors influencing product discovery.....	19
3.7 Frequency of coming across product related contents.....	20
3.8 Factors influencing Purchase decision.....	21
3.9 Purchase based on influencer recommendations.....	22
3.10 Influence of sponsored contents for purchase decision.....	23
3.11 Satisfaction of Product discovery experience.....	24
3.12 Importance of visual appeal.....	25
3.13 Offline or cross platform purchase frequency of social media products.....	26
3.2.1 Factor Analysis 1: Total variance explained.....	27
3.2.2 Factor Analysis 1: Component Matrix.....	29
3.2.3 Factor Analysis 2: Total variance explained.....	30
3.2.4 Factor Analysis 2: Component Matrix.....	32

LIST OF FIGURES

3.1 Gender wise classification.....	14
3.2 Age wise classification.....	15
3.3 Regularly used Social media.....	16
3.4 Primarily used Social media for product discovery.....	17
3.5 Products discovered from social media.....	18
3.6 Factors influencing product discovery.....	19
3.7 Frequency of coming across product related contents.....	20
3.8 Factors influencing Purchase decision.....	21
3.9 Purchase based on influencer recommendations.....	22
3.10 Influence of sponsored contents for purchase decision.....	23
3.11 Satisfaction of Product discovery experience.....	24
3.12 Importance of visual appeal.....	25
3.13 Offline or cross platform purchase frequency of social media products.....	26
3.2.1 Factor Analysis 1: Scree Plot.....	28
3.2.2 Factor Analysis 2: Scree Plot.....	31

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

Social media is a virtual landscape of online platforms and websites designed for social interaction, content sharing, and networking. It enables individuals and businesses to connect, communicate, and engage with a global audience through text, images, videos, and other multimedia content. Social media has completely transformed the way we discover products in today's world. Platforms, like Instagram, YouTube, Facebook and Pinterest have turned into marketplaces where consumers can easily find, explore and connect with products like never before. Instagram and Pinterest captivate users with visuals while YouTube offers product reviews and helpful tutorials. On Facebook personalised recommendations use our data to show us products that align with our interests. Influencer marketing is also a factor here as content creators shape our opinions and preferences as consumers. The communities within these platforms provide a space for discussions and word of mouth recommendations. User generated content, trending topics and convenient shopping features further enhance the experience of discovering products on social media. It's clear that social media has had an impact on product discovery by empowering both businesses and consumers in this age.

As we all know, social media has become the best tool for discovering new products and it's impossible to deny that. When a person finds a product on social media, they don't just stumble across it randomly. Instead, they are usually exposed to it through an organic post from a company, influencer, or someone they follow. This post may include a review or an advertisement about the product, recommending it to their followers. When a person sees a product that interests them, they can then click on the link to learn more about it. This link may take them to a company website or to a product page on a shopping website. From there, they can read more about the product and decide if it's something they're interested in buying. This product discovery process is much different than searching on Google. When someone searches on Google, they're presented with a variety of different products and websites. This can be overwhelming and make it difficult to find the right product. On the other hand, when someone discovers a product on social media, they're more likely to be interested in it because it's been recommended to them. This makes them more likely to research the product further and eventually make a purchase. Companies and marketers should take advantage of this by using social media to promote their products. By creating engaging posts that showcase their products and capture people's attention, companies can

increase their visibility and drive more sales. Additionally, influencers can be a great way to get the word out about a product, as their followers will be more likely to trust their opinion.

A social media presence is an invaluable tool for the discovery of products and should not be overlooked. It is important for companies and marketers to utilise this powerful platform to promote their products and reach new markets.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The aim of this research is to understand the impact of social media platforms, like Instagram, YouTube, Facebook and Pinterest on peoples product discovery and purchasing behaviors. The study focuses on understanding how these platforms influence our preferences and choices during the shopping process. It aims to investigate how frequently individuals use these platforms to explore products, which platform features facilitate this exploration and how influencers and user engagement (likes, comments, shares) contribute to our decision making when shopping. This research seeks to provide an insight into how social media's transforming our shopping habits and decision making processes.

1.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

How does Social Media Product Discovery work more in detail (Referanza.com)

Social media product discovery operates through a two-fold process. At the top of the funnel, it begins with creating brand awareness and recognition. When potential customers seek a product like a pre-workout shake, they often turn to influencers they follow on platforms like Instagram. These influencers, through their endorsements and mentions, imprint the product and brand in the customer's mind. Even if the customer doesn't make an immediate purchase, they'll remember the brand when they're ready. Moving down the funnel to the bottom, the conversion stage, consumers rely on third-party validation and influencer testimonials. The trust and admiration they have for these influencers extend to your product. So, when they are ready to make a purchase, the influencers endorsement will significantly influence their decision, making them more inclined to choose and buy from your brand.

Impacts of social media on consumer behaviour : decision making process, Lee, Ethel (2013)

In the digital age, a remarkable daily on-line activity unfolds: a hundred,000 tweets, 684,478 Facebook content material stocks, 2 million Google seek queries, forty eight hours of YouTube video uploads, 3,six hundred Instagram image shares, and the advent of 571 websites (James 2012). The rise of social media has redrawn the panorama of personal connections, presenting companies substantial opportunities to faucet into this trend. Social media has repositioned customers in the centre of the commercial enterprise internationally. While there is a multitude of research explaining why companies ought to embrace social media, there's a lack of studies from the client's perspective, specifically in locations like Finland. The study examines the ways in which people interact with social media before making a purchase and what information they select from it. It uncovers that consumers take an active position in searching for information on social media, which differs from passive mass media intake. Their publicity to facts is selective and subjective. This takes a look at ambitions to provide precious insights for agencies navigating the dynamic landscape of the new marketing fashion.

How consumers discover products on social media, October 4, 2022, FCNews Staff

Marketing is all about meeting people where they are—and often, they're on social media. For this reason, it's the perfect vehicle for product discovery. Of course, not all social media platforms are created equal, especially when it comes to product discovery.

From this article it shows the important \role of social media as a primary platform for product discovery, with a specific focus on understanding the diverse consumer journeys in the digital age. Shopper research is highlighted as a crucial tool to decipher how, when, and where customers interact with brands. In an era of digital and mobile-first interactions, this research becomes even more critical in unravelling the complex pathways consumers take from initial awareness to final conversion. The literature also sheds light on the varying preferences of different age groups, ranging from Gen Z's affinity for Instagram Stories to Millennials' interest in feed and story posts. Understanding these generational differences is paramount for businesses seeking to create tailored and effective marketing strategies in the social media landscape. Furthermore, the article emphasises the importance of creating engaging and memorable content on social media. It reveals that humour and relatability are highly effective in capturing consumers' attention, and showcasing product-related content,

such as demos and reviews, is also impactful. This insight underscores the need for businesses to craft content that resonates with their target audience, aligns with the platform's unique characteristics, and ultimately contributes to successful product marketing. In summary, the literature provides a comprehensive view of how businesses can leverage social media platforms and shopper research to enhance their understanding of consumer behaviour and create effective marketing strategies that cater to the diverse preferences of different generations.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study lies in understanding how social media, such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and Pinterest, affect purchase decisions. These platforms are playing an increasingly important role in shaping consumer behaviour today. As a result of exploring their influence, businesses can better tailor their marketing strategies, improve their consumer engagement, and make more informed decisions about where to invest their resources. In addition, it can shed light on how the content people encounter on these platforms influences their daily lives and decisions, which is vital in today's increasingly digital age. In summary, this study on how social media impacts on product discovery is important as it shows how people shop and how businesses market products today.

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study mainly aims to know the impact on the consumer behaviour regarding the product discovery and purchase decision from social media platforms . The study was done by collecting data from 170 respondents from every age category ranging from below 18 and above 46 which was collected from Kerala with a main focus on Ernakulam district. This questionnaire consists of 26 sets of questions which were aimed to get inputs such as demographic information of respondents and the factors influencing the consumer in their product discovery and its purchase decision from social media platforms. The study was conducted during the period from August to November.

1.6 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To investigate the impact of social media platforms, including Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and Pinterest, on product discovery
- Investigate the usage patterns and popularity of Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and Pinterest as platforms for product discovery.
- Explore the features and functionalities of each platform that facilitate product discovery, such as visual content, user-generated reviews, recommendations, and sponsored content.
- Examine the impact of social media influencers and content creators on product discovery and consumer behaviour.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study made use of the primary data collection method for collecting data from online surveys. Questionnaires were designed and sent to respondents through social media so as to be filled in by them. The source of secondary data is journals, articles, research papers and educational websites. The sample size for this research is one hundred and seventy respondents who were selected purely based on convenience and support the purpose of the study. The sample area is selected as Kochi city and data is collected through the close-ended questionnaire through the mail. For the analysis of data, factor analysis was done to identify which factors majorly affect consumers in product discovery and their purchase decision from social media, to achieve the objectives of the study. SPSS and Excel research tools have been used to analyse the data where SPSS was used to do the factor analysis and Excel was used to create charts and tables.

1.8 STATISTICAL PACKAGES

SPSS Software

SPSS is a widely used program for statistical analysis in social science. It is also used by market researchers, health researchers, survey companies, government, education researchers, marketing organizations, data miners, and others. In addition to statistical analysis, data management (case selection, file reshaping, creating derived data) and data documentation (a metadata dictionary is stored in the datafile) are features of the base software. SPSS datasets have a two-dimensional table structure, where the rows typically represent cases (such as

individuals or households) and the columns represent measurements (such as age, sex, or household income). The graphical user interface has two views which can be toggled by clicking on one of the two tabs in the bottom left of the SPSS Statistics window. The 'Data View' shows a spreadsheet view of the cases (rows) and variables (columns). The 'Variable View' displays the metadata dictionary where each row represents a variable and shows the variable name, variable label, value label(s), print width, measurement type, and a variety of other characteristics. Cells in both views can be manually edited, defining the file structure and allowing data entry without using command syntax. This may be sufficient for small datasets. Larger datasets such as statistical surveys are more often created in data entry software, or entered during computer-assisted personal interviewing, by scanning and using optical character recognition and optical mark recognition software, or by direct capture from online questionnaires. These datasets are then read into SPSS.

MS Excel

In Excel, charts are used to make a graphical representation of any set of data. A chart is a visual representation of the data, in which the data is represented by symbols such as bars in a bar chart or lines in a line chart. Excel provides you with many chart types and you can choose one that suits your data or you can use the excel recommended charts option to view charts customised to your data and select one of those. However, if your data analysis results can be visualised as charts that highlight the notable points in the data, the audience can quickly grasp. It also leaves a good impact on your presentation style.

1.9 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study is subjected to some limitations. The study has been mainly focused only in Ernakulam District, Kerala. Findings of the survey are based on the assumption that the respondents have given correct information. Some of the respondents were reluctant to answer. Time was another constraint. Attitude of the respondents was also another constraint: some may not have knowledge related to the study and might have given a wrong answer to the question or some may have given a biased answer. Another main constraint of the study will be that it is mainly done based on primary sources of data and secondary source of data so all the limitations of using the primary data and secondary data are also applicable here.

CHAPTER - 2
INDUSTRY AND COMPANY PROFILE

2.1 INDUSTRY PROFILE

Social media platforms are the online communication tools that enable users to share, create, and interact with content. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Pinterest, and TikTok are some of the most popular in social media. These platforms allow individuals and businesses to engage in discussions and build communities, share content, and connect with large audiences. Today, social media provides information, entertainment, and social interaction for individuals, becoming a vital part of their everyday lives.

Social media platforms also play an important role in product discovery. They offer a visually engaging environment where users can come across new products and services in various ways. Platforms like Instagram and Pinterest excel in visual content. Users can discover new products through captivating images, videos, and infographics. Users are often encouraged to explore further due to this visual engagement. Users can also share their experiences and recommendations through means like reviews, testimonials and recommendations on these social media platforms which can significantly influence product discovery by providing authentic insights into a product's quality and value. Other factors in social media platforms like sponsored contents, engagements and communities, advertisements, influencer marketing etc can also make consumers interested in discovering new product related contents and exploring them.

Product discovery and purchase decisions relating to the discovered products are closely related to social media marketing. Social media marketing is the practice of using social media platforms to promote and sell products or services. Product discovery is the initial stage where users become aware of a product's existence and features. Social media plays an important role in creating this awareness through the mechanisms which may include the previously mentioned visual engagement, user generated experiences, advertisements, sponsored contents and so on. When a person discovers and becomes interested in a product on social media, they frequently take additional actions, such as clicking on the product link, visiting the product's website, or adding it to their shopping cart. This transition from discovery to consideration is an important part of the purchase process. This process of discovering products and the subsequent purchase of these products are indeed interconnected in terms of social media marketing. This marketing content is designed in a manner to capture the interest of users who discover the product. Engaging visuals,

informative posts, and compelling storytelling are used to stir curiosity. As users discover a product and express interest, they enter the consideration phase where they may consider buying that product and it doesn't end there ultimate goal of social media marketing is to convert potential customers into buyers. This is achieved through direct links to e-commerce sites, promotions, limited-time offers, and retargeting campaigns, which can re-engage users who have shown interest but haven't yet made a purchase.

In conclusion, social media platforms serve as the medium through which product discovery and purchase-related marketing activities take place. It makes an essential part of social media marketing. Through effective marketing strategies, brands can leverage these platforms to showcase their products, attract the attention of potential customers, and facilitate the purchase process, all within the social media environment. As social media continues to evolve, its role in both product discovery and marketing remains integral in today's digital age.

2.2 COMPANY PROFILE

Major Social Media Platforms

INSTAGRAM: Instagram was founded in 2010 by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger. It is a popular photo and video-sharing social media platform that allows users to share their moments through images and short video clips. It's known for its visually appealing content and features like filters and stories. Instagram is a hub for influencers, brands, and businesses to showcase products, share experiences, and connect with their target audience. It has evolved into a key platform for product discovery, with users often finding and exploring new products through posts, sponsored content, and shoppable features.

YOUTUBE: YouTube was founded in 2005 by three former PayPal employees, Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim and later acquired by Google in 2006. It is a video-sharing platform where users can upload, view, and share videos on a wide range of topics. It's the second-largest search engine in the world, making it a significant hub for educational content, entertainment, and product reviews. Many users turn to YouTube to discover products through video demonstrations, reviews, and tutorials. Influencers and content creators play a vital role in presenting and endorsing products to their substantial subscriber base.

FACEBOOK: Facebook was founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg along with his 4 college roommates. It is one of the largest and most established social media platforms, connecting users with friends, family, and a diverse range of content. While it's primarily used for social networking, Facebook has also become a marketplace where businesses and brands can promote their products and services. Users may discover products through their newsfeeds, sponsored posts, and Facebook Marketplace, which facilitates buying and selling within the platform.

TWITTER (X): Jack Dorsey, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams launched Twitter in 2006. Twitter introduced the concept of "tweets" or short, 140-character messages, which rapidly gained popularity for their real-time, concise communication. Users share their thoughts, opinions, and news in now upto 280-character tweets. Product discovery on Twitter often occurs through trending topics, hashtags, and influencers. Companies and brands use Twitter to promote new products, share updates, and engage with their audience. Users can discover products by following discussions and recommendations related to the products they're interested in.

PINTEREST: Founded in 2010 by Ben Silbermann, Paul Sciarra, and Evan Sharp, Pinterest is a visual discovery and bookmarking platform where users can discover, save, and organise ideas, images, and products on virtual boards. It's especially popular for finding and saving products, recipes, home decor, and fashion inspiration. Users can explore products by searching or browsing through pins, and businesses benefit from promoting their products on the platform to a highly engaged and intent-driven audience. Pinterest's emphasis on visuals makes it a unique platform for product discovery and inspiration.

Some of the other social media platforms which can also be used for the product discovery are:

TIKTOK: TikTok is a short-form video platform known for its engaging and creative content. Users often share product recommendations and reviews in fun and entertaining ways, making it a growing space for product discovery. Brands and influencers frequently promote products on TikTok, and users can easily shop through links in videos. It is particularly used by Gen Z and younger audiences.

SNAPCHAT: Snapchat offers a multimedia messaging platform where users share photos and videos with added filters and text. Businesses and brands utilise Snapchat for sponsored

content and augmented reality (AR) features to engage users and introduce products. It's particularly popular among younger audiences.

LINKEDIN: LinkedIn is a professional networking platform where B2B (business-to-business) product discovery and marketing thrive. Companies can showcase their products and services, and users can explore industry-specific solutions.

These social media platforms have had a very intense impact on how people connect, share content, discover products, and engage with each other, each with its unique features and purpose. Each of these platforms serves as a unique space for product discovery, allowing businesses to tailor their marketing strategies to reach specific target audiences and engage with potential customers in diverse ways.

CHAPTER 3

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

3.1 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

3.1.1 GENDER WISE CLASSIFICATION

Gender	Number of respondents	Percentage
Male	61	35.90%
Female	109	64.10%

Table 3.1

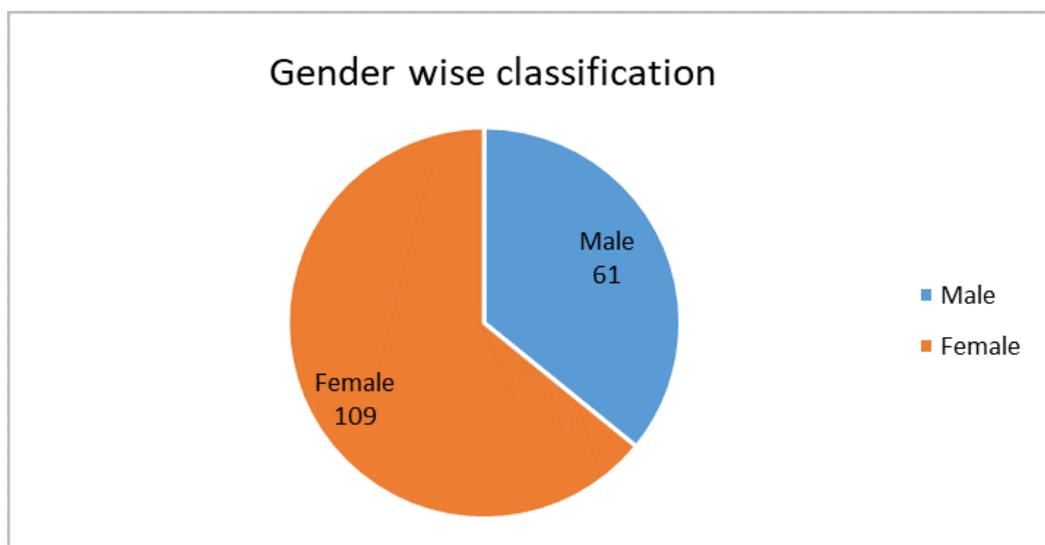


Figure 3.1

Interpretation

Majority of the respondents in the survey are Female with 109 respondents and 61 male respondents.

3.1.2 AGE WISE CLASSIFICATIONS

Age	Number of respondents	Percentage
Under 18	20	11.80%
18-25	69	40.60%
26-35	35	20.60%
36-45	28	16.50%
46 and above	18	10.60%

Table 3.2

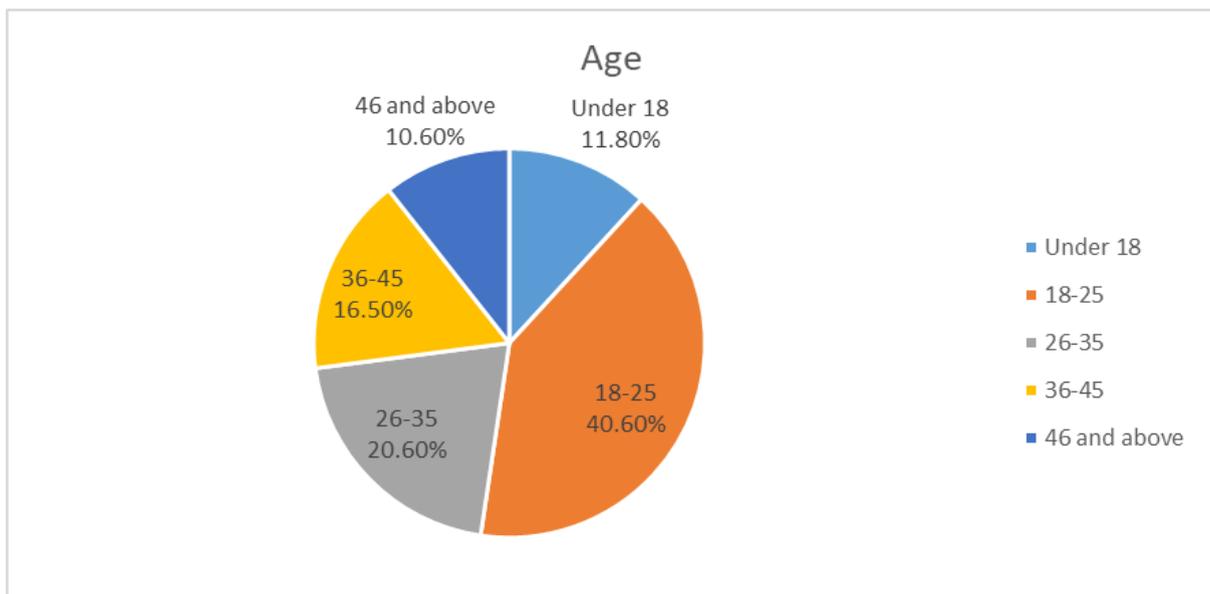


Figure 3.2

Interpretation

From the table and figure we can understand the major respondents in the survey are from the age category of 18-25 and the least responses from the category under 46 and above

3.1.3 REGULARLY USED SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media	Number of respondents	Percentage
Instagram	126	74.10%
YouTube	131	77.10%
Facebook	64	37.60%
Pinterest	27	15.90%
Others	20	11.80%

Table 3.3

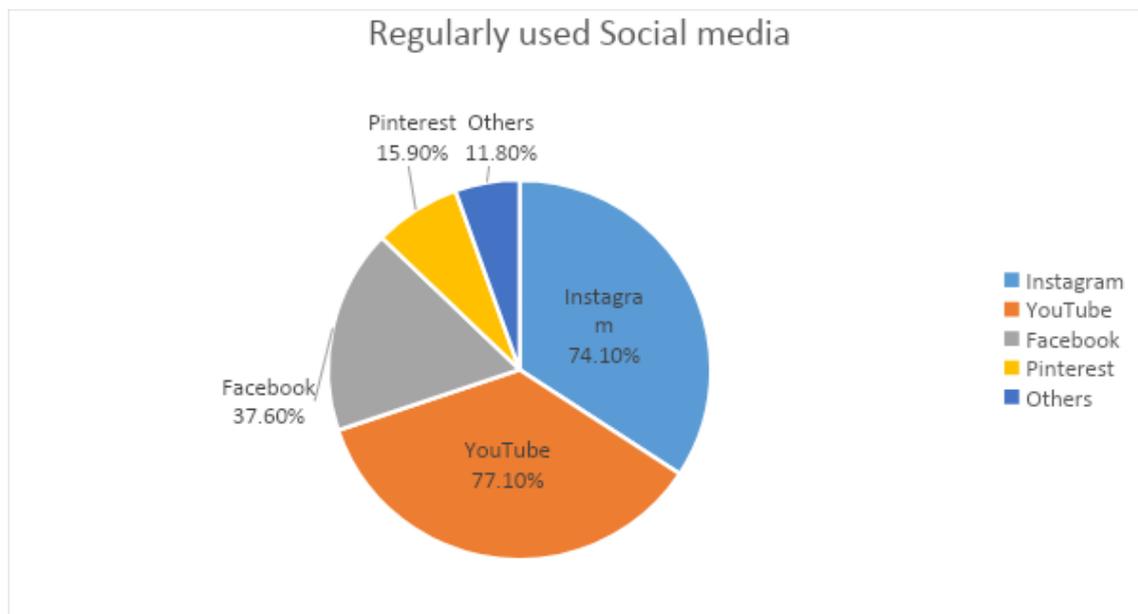


Figure 3.3

Interpretation

From the table and figure we can understand the majorly used social media platform is the YouTube with a percentage of 77.1% followed by Instagram 74.10%

3.1.4 PRIMARILY USED SOCIAL MEDIA FOR PRODUCT DISCOVERY

Social Media For Product Discovery	Number of respondents	Percentage
Instagram	111	65.30%
Facebook	60	35.30%
YouTube	132	77.60%
Pinterest	39	22.90%
Twitter	10	5.90%
Snapchat	19	11.90%
Others	8	4.80%

Table 3.4

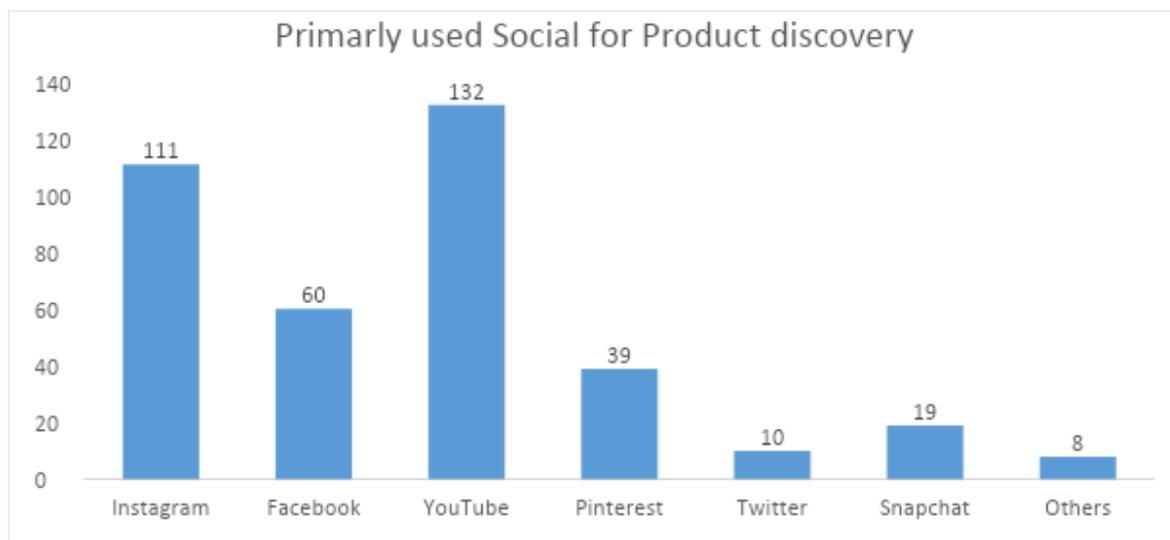


Figure 3.4

Interpretation

The mostly used social media for product discovery according to the tables and figures is the YouTube with 132 respondents followed by Instagram with 111 respondents

3.1.5 PRODUCTS DISCOVERED FROM SOCIAL MEDIA

Products	Number of respondents	Percentage
Fashion and accessories	123	72.40%
Beauty and skincare	71	41.80%
Home décor	67	39.40%
Electronics and gadgets	76	44.70%
Health and wellness	32	18.80%
Food and beverages	34	20%
Others	2	1.20%

Table 3.5

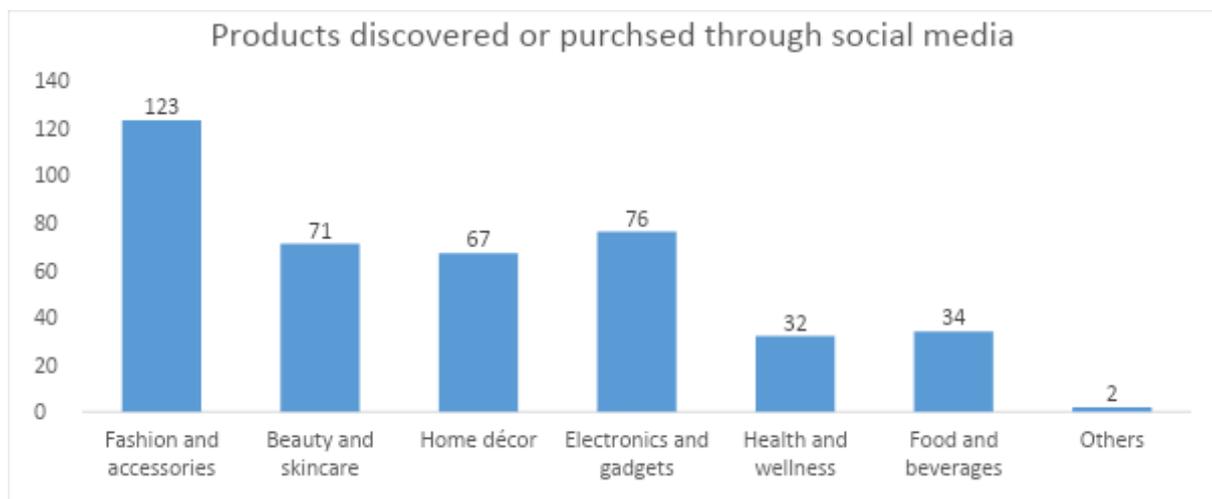


Figure 3.5

Interpretation

From the table and figure it is understood that the most discovered product or purchased product from social media is the fashion and accessories with 123 responses and it is followed by Electronics and gadgets with 76 responses

3.1.6 FACTORS INFLUENCING PRODUCT DISCOVERY

Factors influencing product discovery from social media				
	Visual content (e.g., images, videos)	User-generated reviews and ratings	Recommendations from friends or followers	Sponsored content or ads
Very Important	99	90	23	12
Important	39	58	53	33
Somewhat important	22	18	78	63
Not at all important	10	4	16	62

Table 3.6

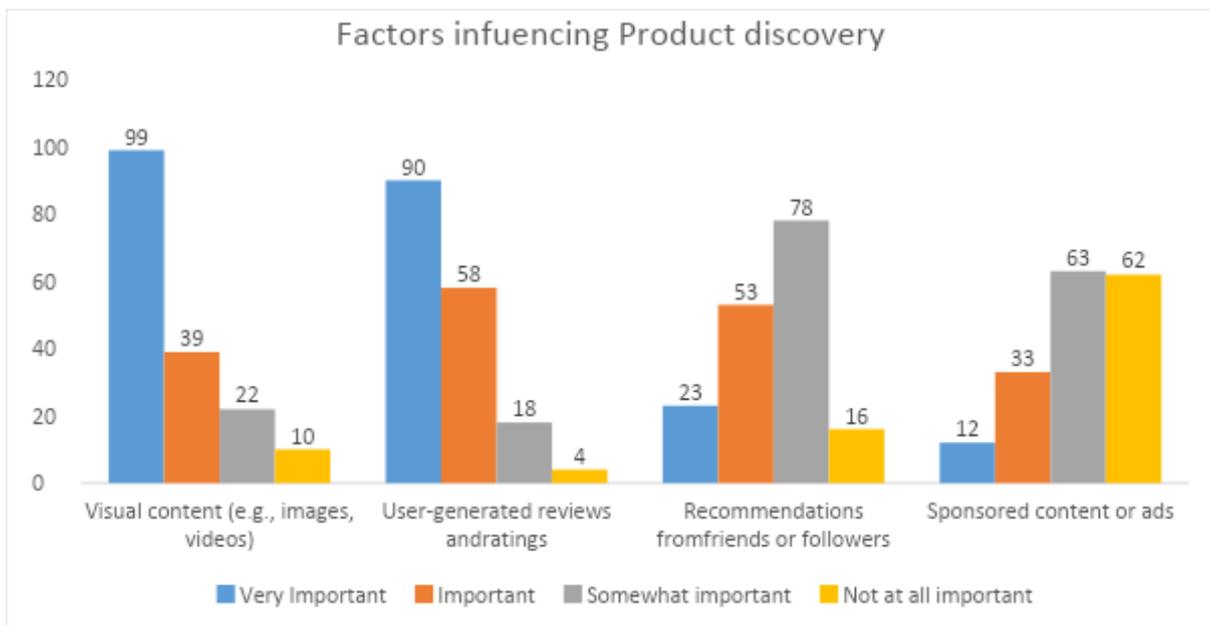


Figure 3.6

Interpretation

From the table and figure it is clear that for the majority respondents (99 responses) the important factor that influences the product discovery from social media is the visual contents like images or videos which is followed by the influence of user generated reviews and ratings from 90 respondents and the least influenced is the sponsored contents or Ads

3.1.7 FREQUENCY OF COMING ACROSS PRODUCT RELATED CONTENTS

Frequency	Number of respondents	Percentage
Very often	29	17.10%
Often	87	51.20%
Occasionally	42	24.70%
Rarely	10	5.90%
Never	2	1.20%

Table 3.7

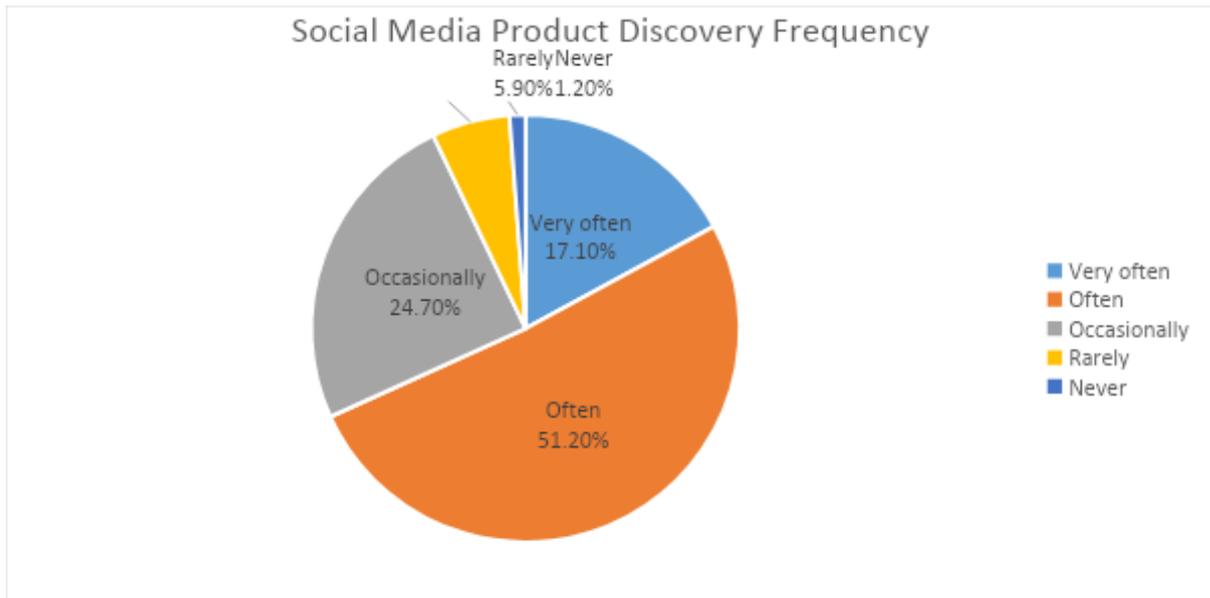


Figure 3.7

Interpretation

According to the table and figure majority of response with 51.20% respondents often come across product related contents on social media and only 1.20% respondents do not come across product related contents on social media

3.1.8 FACTORS INFLUENCING PURCHASE DECISION FROM SOCIAL MEDIA

Factors influencing Purchase decision after social media product discovery							
	Price	Product Review	Brand reputation	Social Media Influencer recommendation	Product images and videos	Customer testimonials	Promotions and discounts
Very important	74	118	96	9	85	23	53
Important	59	30	47	51	64	66	77
Somewhat important	29	18	19	80	16	75	31
Not at all important	8	4	8	30	5	6	9

Table 3.8

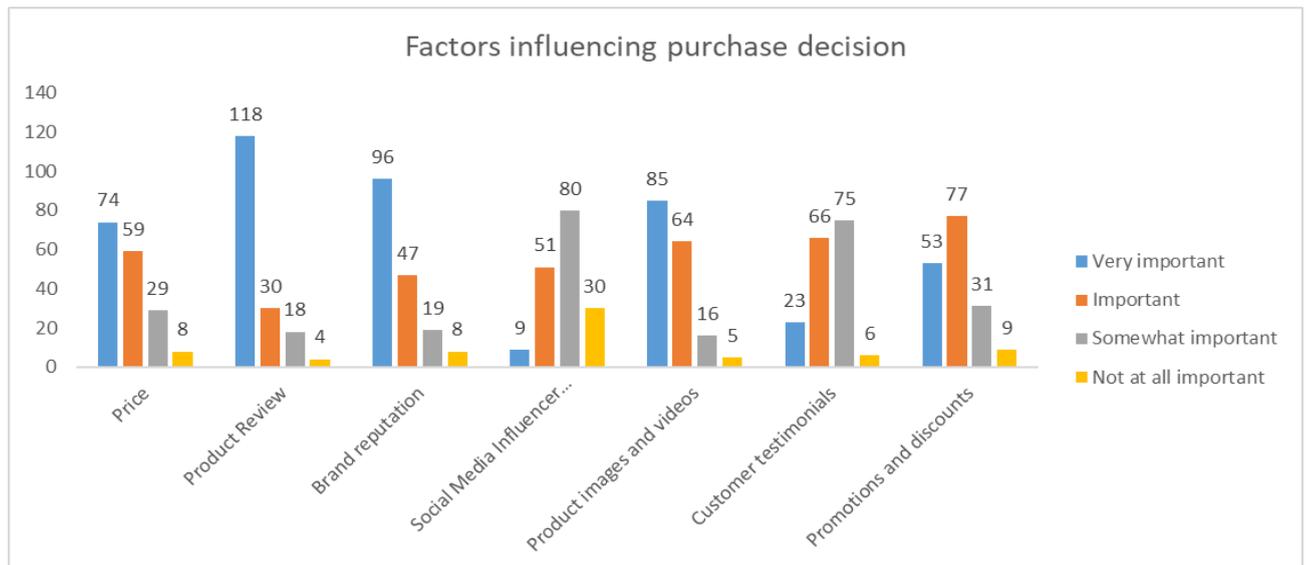


Figure 3.8

Interpretation

From the Table and figure we can understand that majority of response with 118 respondents, the product review is an important factor in influencing the purchase decision from social media and 96 respondents thinks brand reputation of product is very important factor and 85 respondents think the important factor that influence the purchase decision is Product image and videos

3.1.9 PURCHASE BASED ON INFLUENCER RECOMMENDATIONS

Purchase based recommendation of social media influencers	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	62	36.50%
No	57	33.50%
Not sure	51	30%

Table 3.9

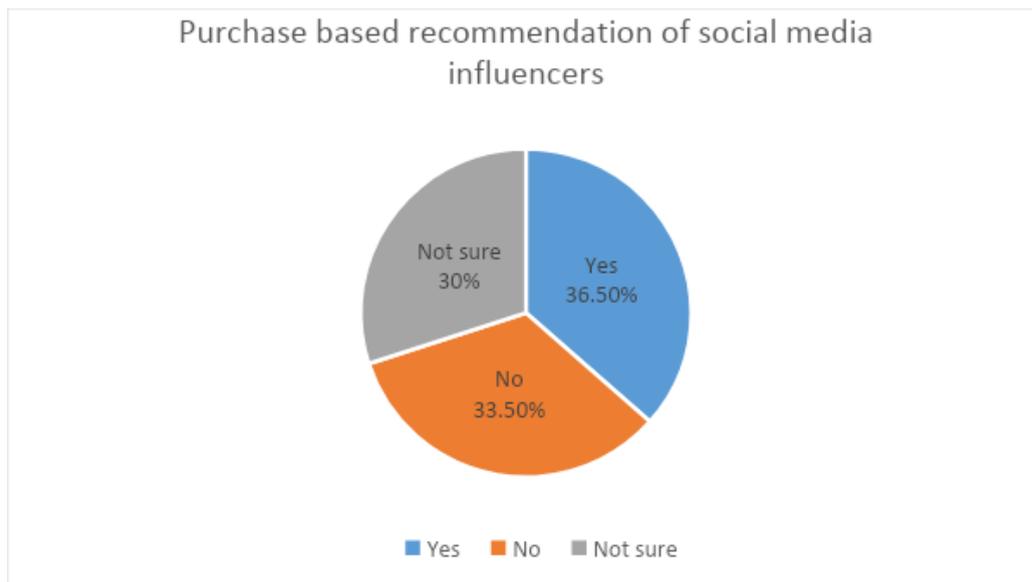


Figure 3.9

Interpretations

According to the table and figure 36.50% respondents purchase products based on the social media influencer recommendations while 33.50% respondents will not purchase product based on social media influencer recommendations

3.1.10 INFLUENCE OF SPONSORED CONTENTS FOR PURCHASE DECISION

Influence of sponsored content in purchase decision	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	37	21.80%
No	43	25.30%
Neutral	90	52.90%

Table 3.10

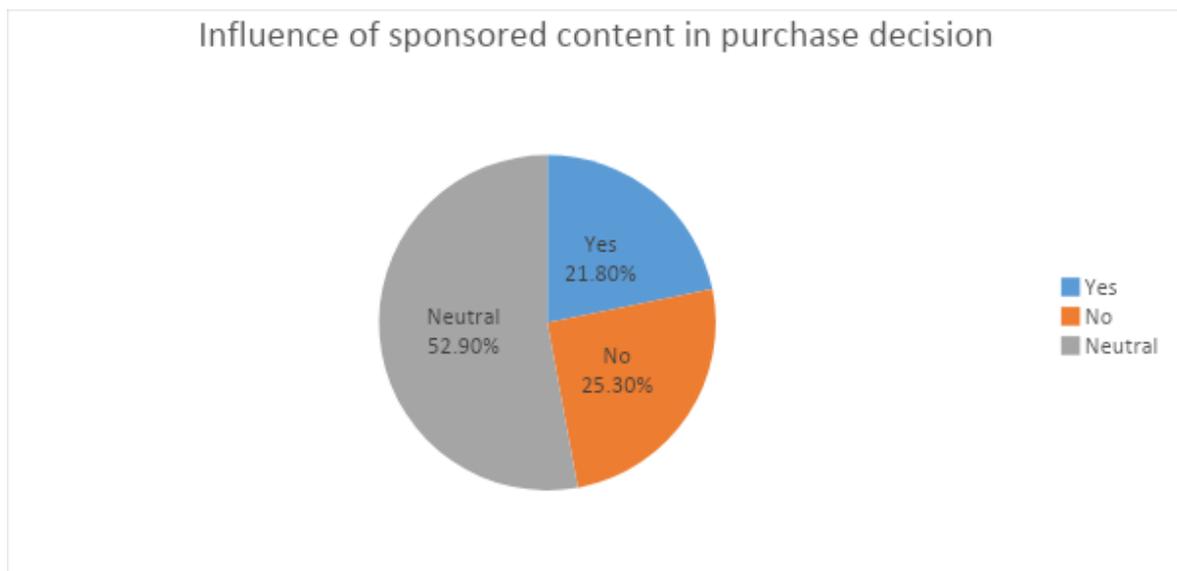


Figure 3.10

Interpretation:

From the Table and figure it is understood that a majority of respondents (52.90% -90 responses) have a neutral opinion on the purchase decision of products from social media based on sponsored contents

3.1.11 SATISFACTION OF PRODUCT DISCOVERY EXPERIENCE

Satisfaction level	Number of respondents	Percentage
Very Satisfied	4	2.4%
Satisfied	79	46.5%
Neutral	86	50.6%
Dissatisfied	1	0.6%
Very Dissatisfied	0	0

Table 3.11

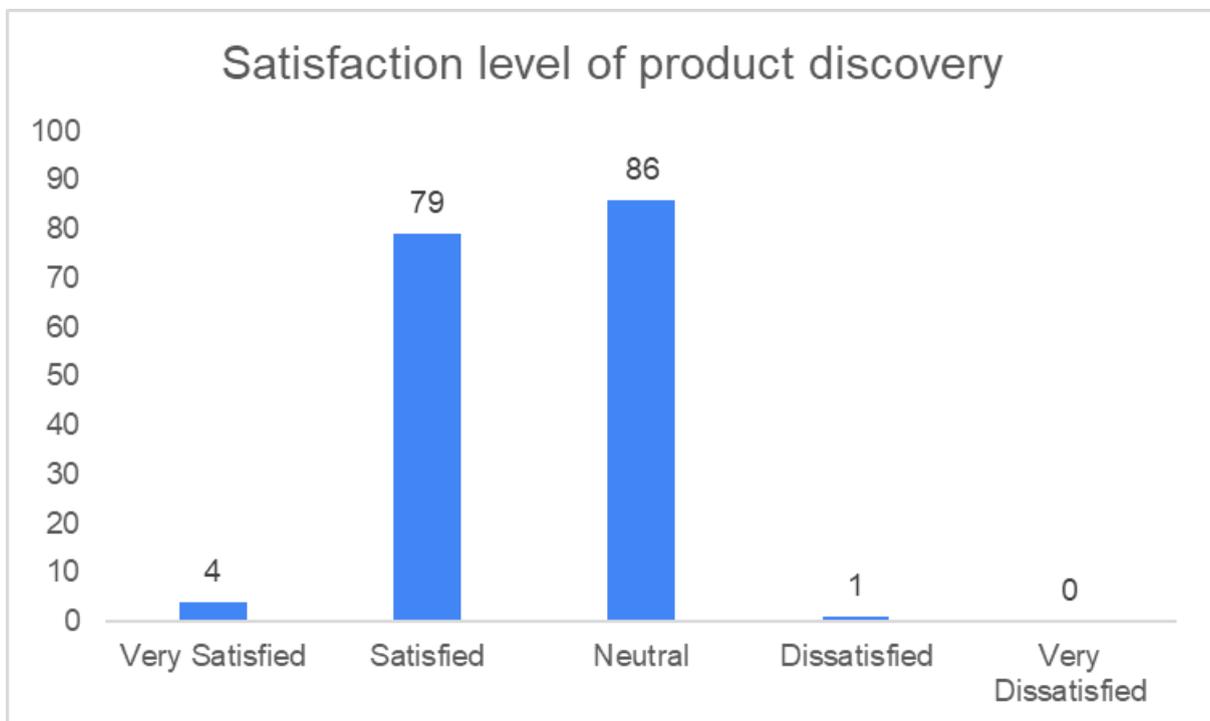


Figure 3.11

Interpretation

According to the table and figure it can be understood a majority of the respondents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the product discovery experience from social media platforms.

3.1.12 IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL APPEAL OF PRODUCTS

Importance of visual appeal	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	67	39.40%
2	67	39.40%
3	25	14.70%
4	8	4.70%
5	3	1.80%

Table 3.12

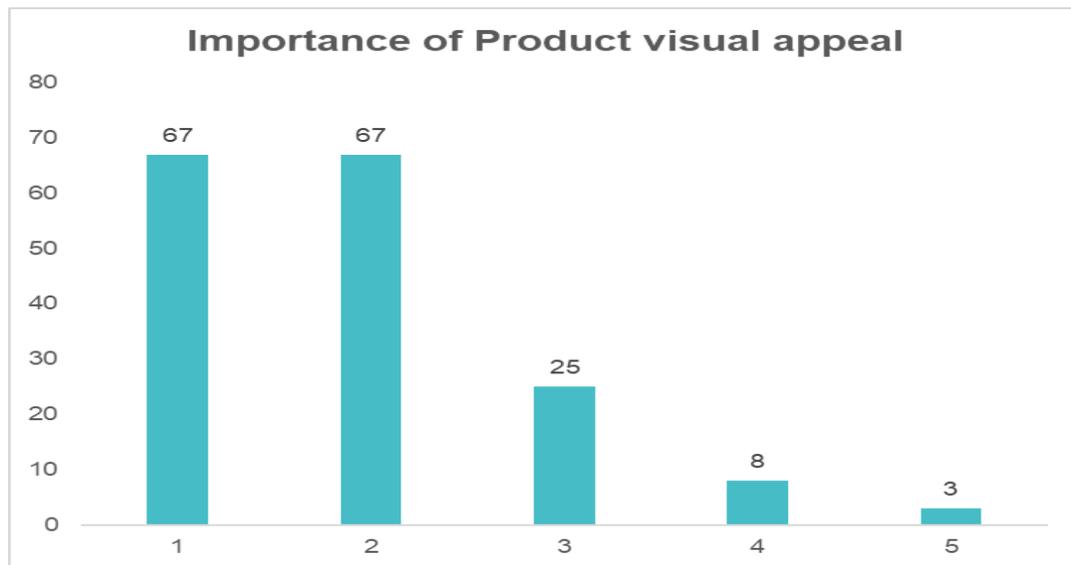


Figure 3.12

Interpretation

According to the table and figure it is clear that visual appeal of a product plays an important role in the product discovery and purchase decision from social media as there are equal numbers of responses for the 1 and 2 scales visual appeal of the product with 67 respondents each.

3.1.13 FREQUENCY OF PURCHASE OF SOCIAL MEDIA DISCOVERED PRODUCTS IN PHYSICAL OR CROSS PLATFORMS

Offline or cross-platform purchase frequency from social media	Number of respondents	Percentage
Multiple time	38	22.40%
Once or twice	108	63.50%
No	14	8.20%
Not sure	10	5.90%

Table 3.13

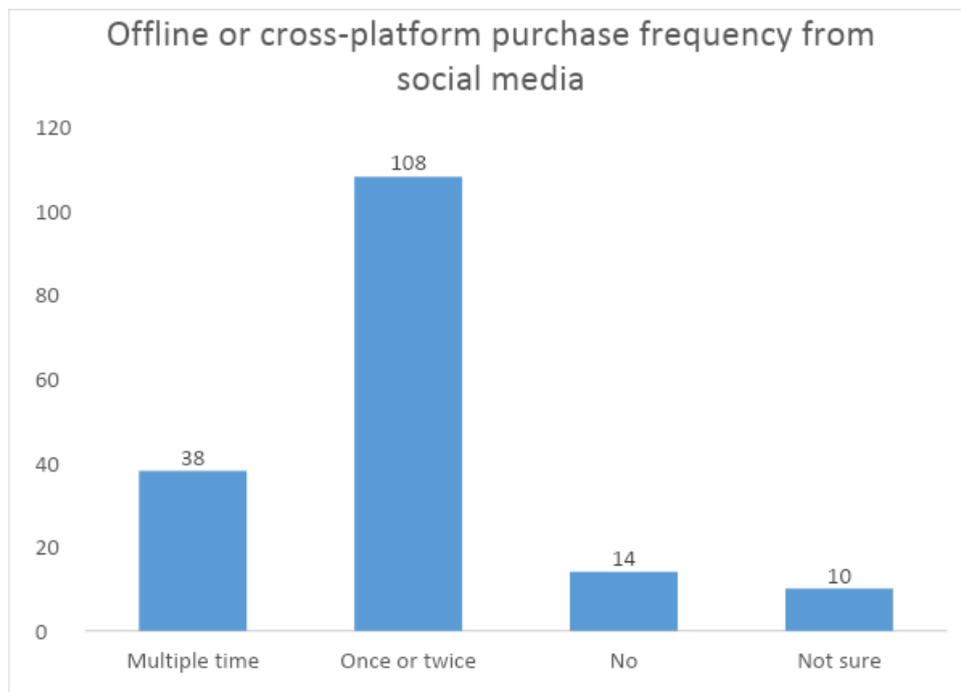


Figure 3.13

Interpretation

According to the table and figure it can be understood that a majority of respondents (with 108 responses) have bought products which are discovered from social media platforms have once or twice bought from physical or other platforms and 38 respondents have bought it for multiple times

3.2 HYPOTHESIS TESTING

FACTOR ANALYSIS 1

Factor analysis is a statistical method used to describe variability among observed, correlated variables in terms of a potentially lower number of unobserved variables called factors. A common rationale behind factor analytic methods is that the information gained about the interdependencies between observed variables can be used later to reduce the set of variables in a dataset.

Analysing the Important factors influencing product discovery on Social Media platforms

Factor Analysis was done using the given 4 variables. And as a result, we got 2 factors which are important for the product discovery from Social Media platforms

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	1.583	39.587	39.587	1.583	39.587	39.587
2	1.297	32.415	72.002	1.297	32.415	72.002
3	.650	16.257	88.259			
4	.470	11.741	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: SPSS

Table 3.2.1

Initial Eigenvalues: In this analysis, the Initial Eigenvalues section displays the eigenvalues for each component (factor) extracted from the data. We observe that there are four factors in total because there are four eigenvalues listed in the Total column. Eigenvalues greater than 1 are typically considered significant.

Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings: This section displays the results after applying the extraction criterion of eigenvalues greater than 1. In this case, only the first two factors meet this criterion and are retained for further analysis. Factor 1 retains its eigenvalue of 1.583, and Factor 2 retains its eigenvalue of 1.297.

SCREE PLOT

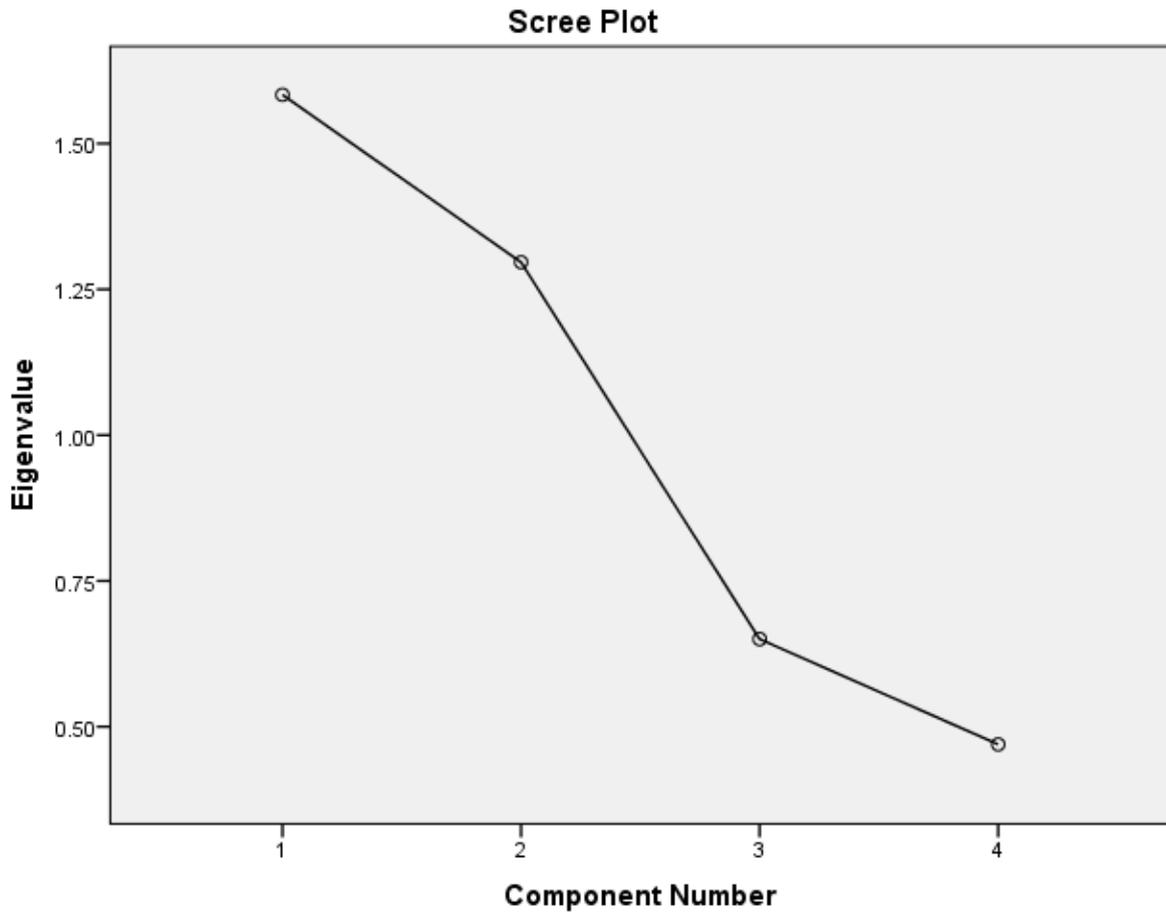


Figure 3.2.1

A scree plot is a line plot showing the eigenvalues of factors or principal components in an investigation in multivariate statistics. The number of factors to keep in exploratory factor analysis is decided using the scree plot. The 4 eigenvalues for our factors are shown on this graph. This can make it easier to see which elements to preserve. These plots frequently depict an area on the curve (or "elbow") where the eigenvalues level out and begin to decline. The eigenvalues above this point might still be significant enough to be kept, while the others might not. Here there are 2 points above the elbow point so we can consider that there are 2 significant points (factors) in this study.

Component Matrix^a

	Component	
	1	2
VisualContent	.560	-.696
User Generated ReviewRatings	.818	-.304
Recommendations	.476	.669
Sponsoredcontents or Ads	.613	.522

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 2 components extracted.

Source: SPSS

Table 3.2.2

The Component Matrix table displays the loadings (correlations) between the original product discovery factors and the extracted components.

In the above table, it is seen that the *User Generated ReviewRatings* has the highest value with **.818** and followed by *VisualContent* with a value of **.560**.

From the study we interpret that there are 2 factors as the elbow point of scree plot breaks at point 3 and User generated Review and Ratings & Visual content which are the values that is closest to one and highest variables in the communalities and component matrix can be considered as the important factor for the product discovery from Social media Platforms.

FACTOR ANALYSIS 2

Analysing the Important factors in influencing the decision to purchase from Social media platforms

Factor Analysis was done using the given 7 variables. And as a result, we got 2 factors which are important in influencing the decision to purchase from Social media platforms

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.019	43.122	43.122	3.019	43.122	43.122
2	1.124	16.059	59.181	1.124	16.059	59.181
3	.766	10.939	70.121			
4	.696	9.936	80.057			
5	.568	8.110	88.166			
6	.491	7.014	95.180			
7	.337	4.820	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: SPSS

Table 3.2.3

Initial Eigenvalues: In this analysis, the Initial Eigenvalues section displays the eigenvalues for each component (factor) extracted from the data. We observe that there are seven factors in total because there are seven eigenvalues listed in the Total column. Eigenvalues greater than 1 are typically considered significant.

Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings: This section displays the results after applying the extraction criterion of eigenvalues greater than 1. In this case, only the first two factors meet this criterion and are retained for further analysis. Factor 1 retains its eigenvalue of 3.019, and Factor 2 retains its eigenvalue of 1.124, indicating that these two factors explain a significant portion of the variance in the data.

SCREE PLOT

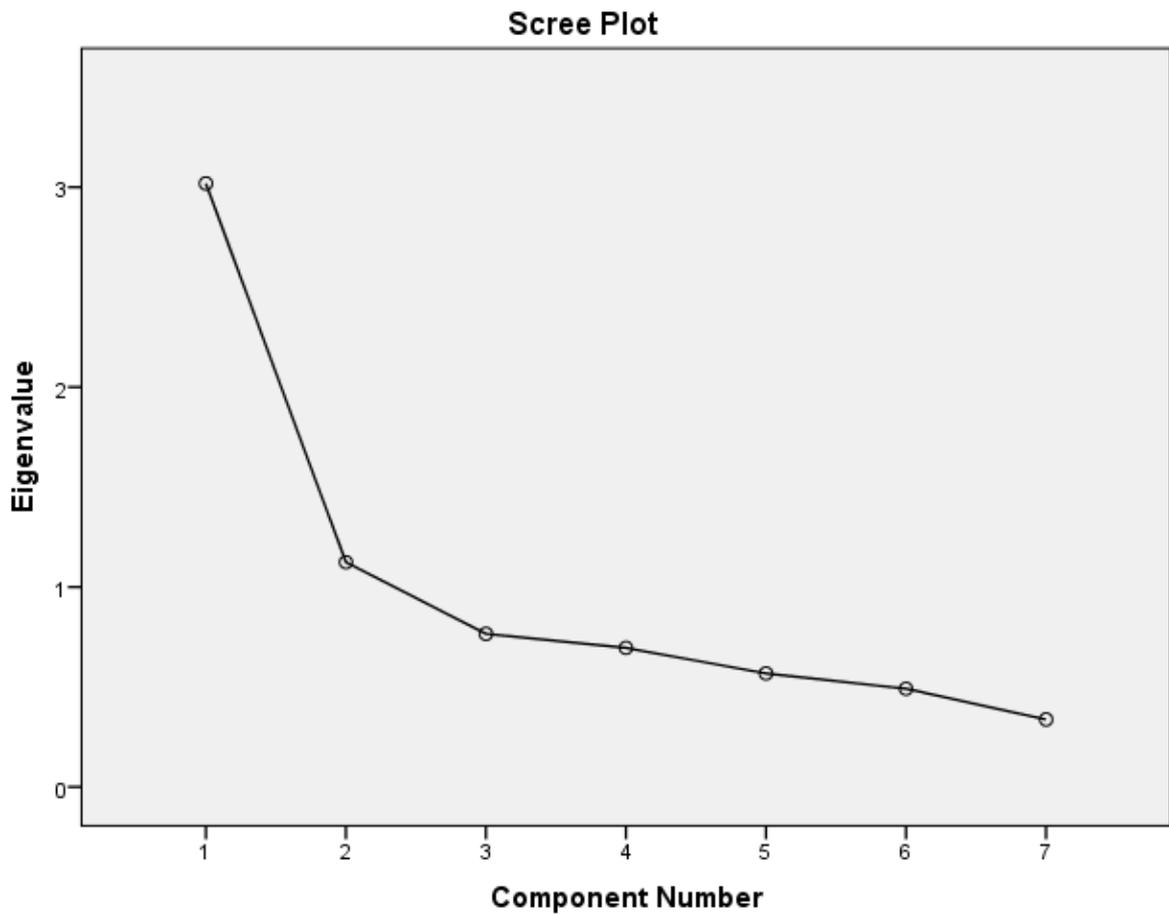


Figure 3.2.2

A scree plot is a line plot showing the eigenvalues of factors or principal components in an investigation in multivariate statistics. The number of factors to keep in exploratory factor analysis is decided using the scree plot. The 7 eigenvalues for our factors are shown on this graph. This can make it easier to see which elements to preserve. These plots frequently depict an area on the curve (or "elbow") where the eigenvalues level out and begin to decline. The eigenvalues above this point might still be significant enough to be kept, while the others might not. Here elbow point breaks at point 3 so it can be considered that there are 2 significant points (factors) in this study

Component Matrix^a

	Component	
	1	2
Price	.730	-.247
ProductReviewRating	.724	-.341
Brand Reputation	.693	-.253
SocialMediaInfluencer Recommendations	.472	.699
Product Image and Videos	.729	-.076
Customer Testimonial	.478	.622
Promotion & Discount	.707	.043

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 2 components extracted.

Source: SPSS

Table 3.2.4

The Component Matrix table displays the loadings (correlations) between the original product discovery factors and the extracted components.

In the above table, it is seen that the purchase decision based on *Price* has the highest value with **.730** and followed by *Product Image and Video* with a value of **.729**. We can also see that *Product Review Ratings* also have a relatively high value with **.724**.

From the study we interpret that there are 2 factors as the elbow point of scree plot breaks at point 3 and the price, product image, and videos which are the values that is closest to one and highest variables in the communalities and component matrix which is followed by Review and ratings can be considered as the important factor for the product discovery from Social media Platforms. It suggests that the product details and the customer reviews of the product are the important factors for the purchase decision of a product.

CHAPTER 4
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

4.1 FINDINGS

The major findings of this study are:

1. Out of the 170 respondents in the sample taken 109 respondents with a percentage of 64.10% were female and 61 respondents were male.
2. In the study 40.60% of respondents were under the age category of 18-25 and then next major respondents came under the age category of 26-35 with a percentage of 20.60%
3. A majority of the respondents in the study responded that the regularly used social media platform is YouTube with 77.10% and the next most used social media is Instagram with a percentage of 74.10%.
4. Again it is clear that YouTube with 77.60% and Instagram with 65.30% is the most primarily used social media platform to discover products or services
5. The most commonly discovered product on social media according to the respondents is the Fashion and Accessories with 123 respondents of 72.20% which is followed by the electronics and gadgets with 76 respondents
6. From the Factor analysis done in SPSS the respondents considers that the User generated reviews and ratings as an important factor for product discovery along with the visual contents which is shown in social media
7. According to the respondents a majority of the users with 51.40% responses, often come across product related contents in social media. Only a very small amount of respondents responded that they don't come across product related contents(1.70%)
8. According to the Factor analysis done it is considered that the price of products, product image and videos along with the product review and ratings are the important factors influencing the purchase decision on social media.
9. A majority of the respondents (36.50%) responded that they purchase products from social media based on the influencer recommendation and 33.50% respondents that they will not purchase based on the influencer recommendations.
10. The majority of the respondents' response regarding the influence of sponsored contents was that they may or may not be influenced by these contents for the purchase decision for the product that was discovered from the social media platform.
11. 86 respondents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied regarding the satisfaction of the product discovery experience on social media while 79 respondents are satisfied with the product discovery experience on social media.
12. Majority of the respondents consider that the visual appeal of the product shown on the

social media is important for the product discovery and the purchase decisions regarding products

13. A majority of respondents with respondents of 63.50% have once or twice bought or purchased products from physical stores or any cross platforms which was discovered in a social media platform.

Other than the above mentioned factors like the price, product image and videos, the user reviews and ratings, influencer recommendations and sponsored contents or ads there are other factors which can lead to product research, product discovery and purchase from social media platforms. Sometimes the recent searches we made on external sites may appear on social media as a recommendation or may appear as an ad or simply appear on newsfeed of your social media. It can also gain the attention of the consumers to those products which may lead in discovering a product or service on that social media platform. Social media can also provide recommendations based on the behaviour of the consumers' recent contents you look for or research about. For example, Facebook or Twitter might put posts from your closest friends and family front-and-centre in your feed because those are the accounts you interact with most often. This concept is known as the social media algorithm. It is a way of sorting posts in a users' feed based on relevancy instead of publish time. This leads in becoming personalised and showing potential customers more of what they're interested in which ultimately leads to offering another gateway to product discovery. Another factor can be the retargeting or remarketing strategy used mainly by Facebook and Instagram, it enables product suggestions based on recent searches on other websites or platforms and can leverage the user data to present relevant product recommendations on these platforms.

4.2 CONCLUSION

This study provides a comprehensive glimpse into how social media platforms shape our product discovery and purchase decisions. The findings reveal that YouTube and Instagram are the go-to platforms for a majority of users, both for general interaction and product exploration. Fashion and accessories take the lead as the most frequently discovered products, emphasising the pivotal role of social media in shaping fashion trends. Users place significant importance on user-generated reviews and visual content, highlighting the significance of genuine feedback and captivating visuals. The abundance of product-related content on social media is clear, with several factors influencing purchase choices, including pricing, product visuals, videos, reviews, and ratings. Influencers play a substantial role in influencing

consumers, with their recommendations often leading to purchases. Sponsored content, although it is influential, doesn't always make an impact on the consumers. The satisfaction levels regarding product discovery on social media vary among users. Additionally, the study highlights the significance of visual appeal in drawing consumers to products. Beyond the identified factors, the study also illuminates the role of external site searches, personalised algorithms, and retargeting strategies in driving product discovery on social media. In conclusion, this research highlights the dynamic interplay between various factors in shaping our product choices and reinforces the pivotal role that social media now plays in influencing our consumer behaviour.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- How does Social Media Product Discovery work more in detail Impacts of social media on consumer behaviour : decision making process, Lee, Ethel (2013)
- How consumers discover products on social media, October 4, 2022, FCNews Staff
- How Has Social Media Influenced the eCommerce Product Discovery Experience, Alisia Evci, 2023
- Everything you need to know about social media algorithms, Brent Barnhart, 2021
- 22% of consumers prefer to discover new products via social media, Majd Mansour
- How (& Where) Consumers Discover Products on Social Media, Pamela Bump(2022)
- The Impact of Social Media on Consumer Behaviour(2023)

Websites

- <https://www.referanza.com/resources/glossary/social-media-product-discovery/>
- <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/22-consumers-prefer-discover-new-products-via-social-media-mansour/>
- <https://www.outbrain.com/blog/remarketing-guide/#:~:text=Remarketing%2C%20also%20known%20as%20retargeting,not%20taken%20a%20specific%20action>
- <https://www.fortaymedia.co.uk/social-media-and-consumer-behaviour/>

APPENDIX

1. Name: _____
2. Age
 - Under 18
 - 18-25
 - 26-35
 - 36-45
 - 46 and above
3. Gender
 - Male
 - Female
 - Other
4. Which of the following social media platforms do you use regularly? (Select all that apply)
 - Instagram
 - YouTube
 - Facebook
 - Pinterest
 - Others
5. Which social media platforms do you primarily use for product discovery? (Select all that apply)
 - Instagram
 - Facebook
 - YouTube
 - Pinterest
 - Twitter
 - Snapchat
 - Other: _____

6. What types of products do you primarily discover or purchase through social media?

(Select all that apply)

- Fashion and accessories
- Beauty and skincare
- Home décor
- Electronics and gadgets
- Health and wellness
- Food and beverages
- Other: _____

7. How important are the following features in influencing your product discovery on social media platforms?

Mark only one per row.

	Not at all important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important
Visual content (e.g.:- images, videos)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
User-generated reviews and Ratings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recommendations from friends or Followers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sponsored content or advertisements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. How often do you come across product-related content on the social media Platforms you use for product discovery? *Mark only one.*

- Very often
- Often
- Occasionally
- Rarely

9. How important are the following factors in influencing your decision to make a purchase based on social media product discovery?

Mark only one per row.

	Not at all important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
Price	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Product reviews and ratings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Brand reputation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social media influencer recommendations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Product images and videos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Customer testimonials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promotions and discounts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. How influential are social media influencers and content creators in your product discovery and purchasing decisions? *Mark only one.*

- Very influential
- Influential
- Neutral
- Not influential
- I don't follow influencers

11. Have you ever made a purchase based on a recommendation or promotion from a social media influencer or content creator? *Mark only one.*

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

12. Do you think the opinions and recommendations of social media influencers and content creators are trustworthy? *Mark only one.*
- Always
 - Sometimes
 - No
 - Not sure
13. Do you follow any social media influencers or content creators who promote products or brands? *Mark only one.*
- Yes
 - No
14. What aspects of influencer content do you find most valuable when it comes to product recommendations (Select all that apply)
- Honesty
 - Clear and detailed information
 - Personal experiences and stories
 - Engaging and entertaining content
 - None of the above
15. How often do you come across sponsored content (e.g., sponsored posts, advertisements) on social media platforms? *Mark only one.*
- Very frequently
 - Frequently
 - Occasionally
 - Rarely
 - Never
16. Do you find sponsored content on social media platforms influential in your purchase decisions? *Mark only one.*
- Yes
 - No
 - Neutral

17. How likely do you explore new products or services based on targeted advertisements or recommendations on social media platforms? *Mark only one.*

- Very likely
- Likely
- Neutral
- Unlikely
- Very unlikely

18. How likely are you to trust user-generated reviews on social media platforms for product recommendation? *Mark only one.*

- Very likely
- Likely
- Neutral
- Unlikely
- Very unlikely

19. How satisfied are you with the product discovery experience on social media platforms? *Mark only one.*

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

20. How important is the visual appeal of product images or videos in catching your attention on social media? *Mark only one.*

- 1 2 3 4 5
-

21. How likely are you to follow a brand's social media account after discovering their product?

Mark only one.

- Very likely
- Likely
- Neutral
- Unlikely
- Very unlikely

22. Do you use social media platforms to research products before making a purchase? *Mark only one.*

- Yes, always
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- No, never

23. Do you think social media platforms provide a wide range of products and services for discovery?

Mark only one.

- Yes
- No
- Neutral
- I'm not sure

24. Have you ever discovered a product or service through a social media platform and later made a purchase in a physical store or on a different online platform?

Mark only one.

- Multiple times
- Once or twice
- No
- Not sure

25. How likely are you to recommend products or services discovered through social media platforms to others? *Mark only one.*

- Very likely
- Likely
- Neutral
- Unlikely
- Very unlikely

26. How would you rate the overall impact of social media platforms on your product discovery process? *Mark only one.*

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> |