

GOING GREEN ONLINE: SOCIAL MEDIA'S IMPACT ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS ORGANIC PRODUCTS

P.SWAPNA

Assistant Professor School Of Business
SR University Warangal Telangana
2402C70046@sr.u.edu.in

Dr D. Srinivas.

Associate professor
School of Business SR University Warangal Telangana
sridharmula@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Social media has emerged as a powerful tool to market products & services, thus significantly shaping consumer buying behaviour. While several studies have explored the impact of social media marketing on general consumer products, limited attention was driven towards organic products, such as organic fruits, vegetables, cosmetics, and personal care items. This research aims to fill this gap by examining how social media marketing strategies affect consumer attitudes, values and purchase decisions, specifically towards organic products. The study uses a mixed-method approach to collect data from consumers who actively follow organic brands on social media. Findings reveal that factors such as influencer endorsements, user-generated content, and perceived product authenticity play a significant role in shaping consumer preferences in the organic segment. This research contributes to the existing literature by offering insights into the niche area of organic product marketing and highlighting the unique dynamics of consumer engagement in this domain

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I. INTRODUCTION

Social media entry into marketing have revolutionised the consumer markets. The fast growing of social media has become crucial part in the marketing landscape, thus, making it an important tool for new products to reach with consumers. Specifically, organic products market—characterized by natural, eco-friendly, and health-conscious offerings—has observed large hike in consumer interest pulled up largely by social media campaigns. Though there is an increased sales of organic products, the important role is played by the social media platforms in shaping consumer behaviour as this segment remains unexplored fully. This paper investigates how social media can affect consumer attitudes, values, beliefs and buying decisions towards organic products.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Green consumption, a 21st century global trend, which forced cosmetic brands to be more environmental-friendly and to build a green product portfolio to satisfy their consumers' needs. Social media platforms have contributed to this new trend, redefining consumers' attitudes into more environmentally conscious behavior. The study represents the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to explain the impact of Social Media influence on consumers' purchase intentions and motivation factors (altruism and egoism). (Pandey, N., Vaishnava, A., & Gupta, P. (2024)).

Creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers in a way that acknowledges and addresses the long-term effects of these practices on economic, environment, and societal well-being are all part of what are known as sustainable marketing practices. sustainable marketing merges elements of green, social, and environmental marketing. Additionally, it is a strategy that benefits both the environment and businesses by creating goods and services that are both socially responsible and environmentally friendly, as they have eco-friendly attributes. (Qalati, S. A., Barbosa, B., & Deshwal, P. (2024))

Promoting green consumption is one of the most important ways to realize energy savings and emission reductions. Based on the perspective of green communication, this study focused on the influence mechanisms of green thinking (perception of green communication), social media marketing (way of green communication), and receptivity to green communication (emotional attitude towards green communication) on social media users' green consumption intentions. Structural equation modeling-artificial neural network modeling and bootstrapping were used to analyze the relationship between variables and the importance of variables. The results showed that green thinking, social media marketing, and receptivity to green communication had significant effects on green consumption intention, among which receptivity to green communication was the most important factor affecting green attitudes and green consumption intention. (Hasan, M. M., Al Amin, M., Arefin, M. S., & Mostafa, T. (2024)).

Social media provides brands to interact directly with consumers, influencing their perceptions, awareness, attitudes, beliefs, and decisions. Recent Studies had found that consumers are likely to purchase those products which are actively promoted on social media, using interactive and visual content (Ashley & Tuten, 2015).

Influencers are playing a crucial role in promoting organic products by serving as trusted sources of information. User-generated content (UGC), such as reviews, positive word of mouth, or testimonials, reinforces brand's credibility and develops consumer trust (Kapitan & Silvera, 2016).

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design for this research paper adopts a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews.

Sampling

A purposive and convenient sample of **105 respondents** were selected. Sample selection Criteria included following parameters:

- Active social media users
- Being Consumer for least one organic brand
- Aged between 18–45 years

Data Collection methods:

- **Online Survey:** Structured questionnaire with Likert-scale items on influencer impact, perceived authenticity, USP, and purchase behaviour.
- **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews with 10 participants.

Data Analysis Tools

- Descriptive statistics (SPSS)
- Correlation and regression analysis

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Demographic Profile of respondents:

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	47	44.8%
Female	58	55.2%
Total	105	100%

The above table clearly depicts that, online purchases of organic products are done my female customers compared to male.

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18–25	35	33.3%
26–35	42	40.0%
36–45	28	26.7%
Total	105	100%

Above data clearly identifies that, customers preferring organic products are primarily aged between 26 to 35 years of age.

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Undergraduate	30	28.6%
Graduate	45	42.9%
Postgraduate	30	28.6%
Total	105	100%

The data shows graduates are more interested in purchase of organic products compared to others.

Key Variables - Mean Scores

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.
Influence of Social Media Ads	4.1	0.7
Perceived Authenticity	4.3	0.6
Influence of User-Generated Content	4.2	0.5
Influence of Influencers	4.4	0.6
Purchase Intention	4.1	0.7

These values in the above table suggest that:

- All variables considered for the research were rated high, meaning participants generally considered that these factors positively influenced them.
- The standard deviations were found relatively low, which indicated consistency in most participants responses across participants.
- Mean value of influencers had the highest average rating (4.4), which suggested it may be the most powerful marketing tool.

Correlation Analysis

Variable 1	Variable 2	Pearson r	Sig. (2-tailed)
Influencer Endorsement	Purchase Intention	0.67	0.000
USP	Purchase Intention	0.58	0.000
Authenticity	Purchase Intention	0.62	0.000

The table values suggest that all the three variables (Influencer Endorsement, USP, and Authenticity) had significant positive correlations with Purchase Intention of consumers.

Among the three variables, Influencer Endorsement ($r = 0.67$) had been identified as the strongest correlation, thus suggesting it may be the most influential factor in driving consumer purchase decisions.

Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Independent Variables: Influencer Endorsements, UGC, Perceived Authenticity

The value $R^2 = 0.61$ of Model explains 61% of variance in purchase intention. And all variables significant at $p < 0.01$.

V. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings from this study reveals that marketing using **social media platforms has proficient influence on consumer behavior towards organic products**. Social media is playing a pivotal role to drive consumer engagement and purchasing in the organic product sector in this dynamic markets. Influencer endorsements were identified as more impactful, followed by perceived authenticity and USP. This paper contribute to a growing body of research in marketing by focusing on organic

products and provides insights for present day marketers.

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