



Research Article

AN INVESTIGATION ON THE ROLES OF INFORMATION MEDIA SOURCES ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR AND DECISIONS

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RETRACTION NOTE

Abstract: The present investigation and study is a vivid examination of the roles of information sources, data and available data fields available to consumer's information search from various sources on their buying decisions. Questionnaires and interviews poll conducted played huge role to capture a vivid and lucid picture on this subject based on the survey done in Italy, neighborhoods and Roma. Initial assumptions and hypothesis were drafted and subsequently verified based on statistical testing as vividly illustrated in this paper presentation while also presenting a draft novel model of buying decisions. The results of the hypothesis testing indicate and show that information, sources and available data play a huge and significant role in consumer behavior as evident and revealed by the statistical testing the p value exceeds 0.05. It was observed the social media platforms play dominant and crucial roles in available information, data and facts dissemination to consumers and thus play a crucial role in consumer brand engagement. Furthermore consumer buying decisions can thus be enhanced through a strong brand promotion based on social media influences from interactions and information sources available for access following the results of the SEM and hypothesis testing as revealed and unveiled based on the p values, which show statistical significances as ($p < 0.00001$) lies below the set limit criterion of 5% significant level. Finally, major deductions and recommendations were made based on findings and subject to statistical verification of salient assumptions and hypothesis frames as this study clearly revealed and established the fact that information source plays a significant role in buying decisions and could shape it.

Key words: Information source, Buying decisions, Social media, Consumer behavior, Advertising and promotion

campaign mix(s)

INTRODUCTION

Buying decision is being influenced by a number of factors the source of information and available data for consumers on the

information search towards buying decisions is important and this field has been fully captured in the present study and investigation. Social media interaction, web, organization and internet of a thing play some crucial and dominant role especially in recent times of vast metamorphosis and vast transformations induced and brought by the digital revolutions and present dynamics seen and observed. A connection and link could be sought between information sources, social media interactions and advertisements. Solomon put and defined consumer behaviour as the study of the processes undergone or involved whereby individual or groups use or

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select and dispose of a product based on experiences or ideas towards needs satisfaction and meeting desires or expectations [1]. Presenting pre-purchase activity often does take place, which might involve and consist of the steps and efforts put in growing awareness of a need or want, and a search for and evaluation of existing and key information available about the products, goods or services, product lines and brands that might satisfy and meet

Post-purchase activities entail and consist of the evaluation of the purchased item in use and the reduction of any anxiety which accompanies the purchase of expensive and infrequently bought items. Each of these has some bearings and implications for purchase and repurchase or repeat buying; they are amenable and can be modified in differing degrees or extents to the marketer's influence. [2-9].

Engel define consumer behaviour as "Those acts or set of activities of various individuals directly involved in the acquisition, use or utilization, and disposing of economic goods and services, encompassing and consisting of the decision processes that precede and determine these acts" [10].

The complex nature of consumer choice goes beyond simple observation, thus researchers have increasingly sought for more sophisticated concepts and methods of investigation provided by behavioural sciences in order to comprehend and better understand, predict, potentially and possibly control consumer behaviour more effectively [11].

The complexities and intricacies surrounding consumer behaviour, buying decisions and the factors that shapes or influence such drives and points to the bass for this research. As a result, in fling extant or existing literature gaps, this study has led to a vivid delineation of the bass, factors and influences of consumer buying behaviour, while examining the roles of brand influences, and brand image and essentially the roles and influences of media and information sources as presented and analysed explicitly from acquired data and facts.

Research questions

- **RQ1:** What is the influence of information, data and social media sources on buying decisions?
- **RQ2:** How do you obtain information for your buying and purchases decisions?

Literature Review: Models, working frames or concepts, presentation and literature facts

Advertisement and consumer behavior on sales spending, promotions and brand image. Advertisement is an extremely significant and crucial communication, promotional and communication wide gap strategy as well as a salient component in the marketing mix and sales efforts or strategies an organization uses or adopts in pulling traffic, gaining attention and getting meaningful focus on its brands.

Historically in origin, advertisement itself is as old as the existence of mankind, origin and creation, though we can say it is obsolete despite not just a new creation, but interestingly advertising concept has vastly evolved over time, becoming

extremely dynamic and vastly revolving and evolving with new trends strongly associated with the vast digitized world. The mine workers in the pre-historic times created and devised a means of communication or message propagation, transmission and transfer also various communities in the olden days have created their peculiar ways and means of communication and information dissemination platforms, each adopted its own mechanism, style and device, such as an instance some used the town crier [12].

It is no doubt and obvious from insights down over trends in time and evolution that the strong brand awareness and a well global perception is highly attributable to Italians from renaissance historically and present and the present day era of vast transformations seen in the digital tech, ICT and web have drastically and immensely transformed and brought revolution trends to things.

Consumer behaviour study or investigation encompasses investigation of individual characteristics such as demographics, personality, lifestyles, brand loyalty and advocacy, and engagement and gaining insights and foray into consumer and individual wants, while it also encompasses, entailing and includes investigation of family, aspiration groups, sports, opinion leader or reference groups and society influence [13].

Kotler and Keller classified the buyer's mental processes shaped around the black box into the subsequent categories recognizing [14-16].

- Buyer's psychology that includes motivation, learning and perception
- Buyer characteristics including social, personal and psychological factors or mix(s)
- A decision making process modelled through 5 steps encompassing need recognition, information search, selection of alternatives, choice purchase and post purchase evaluation.

Consumer behaviour complexity is far stretching or deep and within the context of information source as sought and investigated in the present study [17].

Perceived fit as another crucial factor or key and parameter is an attitudinal measure of how appropriate a certain channel or means of distribution is placed and set for a specific product. Morrison and Roberts found that a consumer's perception of the fit between a service/product and a channel is very influential factor and essential consideration in determining whether they will go through that channel for a specific service [18, 19]. The factor perceived fit was found and identified to be more important than consumer's preferences for the distribution method, style or service.

Finally elaborating further in this paragraph when consumers exhibit or show brand awareness, the value of the brand makes consumers remain loyal to the products, thereby positively influencing the brand identity and increasing brand equity [20, 21]. Studies reported on automobile brands by Mabkhot found that there was a significant relationship existing between brand image and brand loyalty [22].

According to the above analysis or description, there is a meaningful relationship between brand loyalty and brand image. Extrapolating from this buying decisions can be seen or described reflective of the roles and influences played by information sources and social media which can in turn manifest in building a high brand consciousness or awareness and enhancing a strong brand loyalty and image [23].

This description and elaboration or analysis is the basis for hypothesis. H3 subsequently presented as proposed.

Basis for consumer decision making and models: Nicosia, Engel, Howard and Sheth proposed the three main comprehensive models for elucidating and comprehending consumer decision making which attempt to trace the psychological state or status of individual consumers from the point at which they become aware or conscious of the possibility of satisfying a material need or want by purchasing and consuming a product to their final evaluation of the consequences and results or products of having done so [24, 25].

Engel suggest that high involvement with a product results in an extended problem solving process and complexity which starts or begins with problem recognition, and subsequently followed by an information search, alternative evaluation, purchase, and post purchase activities [26].

This process is aided and enhanced by an active information processing sequence involving exposure, attention, comprehension, yielding/acceptance, and retention.

The choice determined by the outcome of the information process aided decision sequence or event flow may have satisfying or dissonant outcomes as pointed out and identified by Festinger, who first introduced the theory of cognitive dissonance for the consumer, which influences and have a considerable and significant bearing on future purchasing or patronage.

Engel and Blackwell also point out, enumerating and enunciate that environmental influences may affect the decision sequence acting on the consumer's motivation and intention, and that unpredictable factors (such as non-availability of the desired brand or insufficient funds) may result in modification and adaptation or improvisation of the actual choice made by a consumer [27].

This model assumes that observed consumer behaviour is preceded by intrapersonal psychological states and events linked and described or listed as attitude intention-purchase sequence. Moreover, the model depicts these psychological events as outputs or outcomes of the processing and treatment of information, taking for granted or negligent nor conscious that consumers seek and use information as part of their rational problem solving tools or devices and decision making processes [28].

Model(s) of consumer behaviour as mentioned earlier, consumer behaviour could be extremely complex, intricate and difficult to discern or completely unravel, thus would require in depth, thorough delineation and deeper understanding to gain useful insights and acquire salient information that would be useful in real practical terms to the sales force, marketing teams and firms.

Consumers are becoming complex and diverse in modes, actions

or behaviours, obviously in real sense new consumer groups creating new challenges are emerging in a quotidian fashion. New consumer groups and diversity might have to include lifestyles, sexual orientation, and geographical dispersion.

The consumer behaviour reflects intrinsically and driven from within based on the buying decisions which is built around relevant models and in realistic terms can be described or depicted as a black box, like secrete or hidden cat in a black closed box in similar description or analogy it's been referred to as a black box, which could be a mix and complex mix of rationality and emotionality in some absurd terms or manner.

A hypothetical or illustrative 3 step model of consumer behaviour consists of need recognition, decision making and post purchase behaviour depicting a black box in which the decision making process or step could be quite intrinsically hidden and indeed the black box (Figure 1).

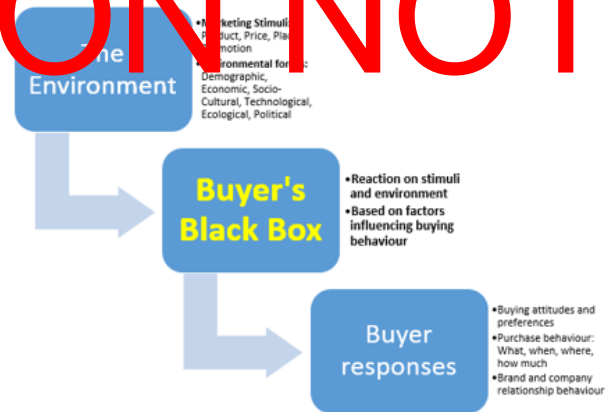


Fig. 1 Step black model of consumer behaviour.

Discussing further in contrast to the economic view or perspective which underscores the importance of internal mental processes in consumer decision making, The behavioural perspective emphasizes and concentrates on the role of external environmental factors in the process of learning, which arguably and contestably causes or results to behaviour [29].

In this note the behaviourists approach as conceived and formed consider the consumer as a black box, thus assume that consumer behaviour is a conditioned response to external events or what is seen and observed. The behavioural perspective therefore focuses centering on external environmental cues such as advertising that stimulates, incites or triggers consumer's responses through learning processes, modification and adaptations.

Advertising in this sense can be seen as a reflector of information on outside coating of what is designed and made from within and has to be expressed outwardly. What the consumers or observers see from the advertisements significantly goes a long way to play key influences on decision making and the entire process, even impacting on the company's image, brand equity or future [30, 31].

The strategic emphasis of the behavioural modification theories, for example are to devise and constitute a set of expanded

behaviour modification or modelling techniques for instance, respondent conditioning, operant conditioning, vicarious learning, etc., that can be used to influence, modify, and control consumer behaviour [33].

While a number of researchers have proposed models to study learning principles among, Thorndike, Watson and Rayner, this view is represented by two major approaches to learning tagged identified as classical conditioning and instrumental learning [32-34].

Classical conditioning occurs when a stimulus that elicits a response is paired with another stimulus that initially does not elicit a response on its own. Over time, this second stimulus causes a similar response based on its association, connection and link with the first stimulus.

The theory of classical conditioning is rooted and grounded in Pavlov's research on digestion in animals. Pavlov induced classically conditioned learning by pairing a neutral stimulus (a bell) with a stimulus known to cause a salivation response in dogs (dried meat powder). The powder was an Unconditioned Stimulus (UCS) because it was naturally capable of causing or inducing and raising the response.

Over time, the bell became a Conditioned Stimulus (CS) resulting in a Conditioned Response (CR). Thus, conditioned effects are more likely to occur after the conditioned and unconditioned stimuli have been paired a number of times.

The basic form of classical conditioning demonstrated by Pavlov primarily applies to responses controlled by the autonomic (e.g., salivation) and nervous (e.g., eye blink) systems. That is, it focuses on visual and olfactory cues that induce or stimulate hunger or thirst. When these cues are consistently paired and linked with conditioned stimuli, such as brand names, consumers may learn to be hungry or thirsty, when later and afterwards exposed to brand cues.

Classical conditioning can have similar effects for more complex reactions and complexes. Even a credit card becomes a conditioned cue that triggers greater spending, especially since it is a stimulus that is presented only in situations where consumers are spending money. People learn that they can make larger purchases when using credit cards, and they also have been found to leave larger tips than they do when using cash [35].

In contrast to behavioural theories of learning, the cognitive perspective stresses the role of information processing in consumer decision making. This perspective views people as problem solvers who actively use and utilize information from the world around them gathered and acquired to master their environment. Intricately and precisely unknown, much debate and discussion exists whether or when people are fully conscious and aware of their learning processes.

From another angle, there is some evidence for the existence of non-conscious procedural knowledge. Exclusively people apparently engage and process at least some information in an automatic, passive way or path, which is a condition that has been tagged and termed mindlessness [36].

Regardless and non-minding, many modern theorists are

beginning to regard and recognize some instances of conditioning as cognitive processes, especially where expectations are carved or mould around the linkages connecting and exiting between stimuli and responses. Studies and investigations using masking effects as pointed out, wherein it is difficult for subjects to learn or inundate CS/UCS associations reveal showing substantial reductions in conditioning [37].

The information processing theory in line and connection with the cognitive theory is central, key and essential to the variety of research of effect models according to those existing literature among Barry and Howlett who explain, posit that consumers pass through a variety or series of stages identified and enumerated as cognitive, affective, and conative, in responding to advertising, and other marketing messages [38].

Invariably, the dominant and most prominent trend or pattern of relationship between the three stages is that cognition (thought) precedes both affect (feeling) and conation (behaviour) [39]. The most widely accepted position that opposes behaviourism is that thought and feeling can induce, trigger and produce change in action directly. Vividly recognizing in a cognitive perspective; present or showing and appearing in its strongest form it suggests that attitudes control behaviour while reinforcement only acts by non-static or changing attitudes, patterns and attitudinal variations or fluctuations which might be unpredictably known and ascertained.

In a nutshell, the implication for marketing strategy implies and indicates that consumers must be kept abreast and exposed to information such as emanating or resulting from advertising if it is to influence their behaviour [40]. Furthermore, the cognitive theories have been criticized and harshly dressed down for assuming that individuals are complex information processing entities or units.

Essentially and despite noting, the problem solving perspective has tended to more rampantly shown up and widely pervaded and dominate the most field of consumer research.

It is essential and crucial to recognize and know the fact that decision making models that have governed consumer theory as discussed and enumerated in this text are fully and in fact based on the fundamental precepts and underlying frames of the cognitive principle.

Hypothesis development and basis

The existing literature facts, theories and conceptions point to the basis, organonin and derivation of the presented hypotheses.

Kotler and Keller classified the buyer's mental processes shaped around the black box into the subsequent categories recognizing

buyer psychology that includes motivation, learning and perception.

- Buyer characteristics including social, personal and psychological factors or mix(s).

- A decision making process modelled through 5 steps encompassing need recognition, information search, selection of alternatives, choice purchase and post purchase evaluation.

Consumer behaviour complexity is far stretching or deep and within the context of information source as sought and investigated in the present study.

Perceived fit as another crucial factor or key and parameter is an attitudinal measure of how appropriate a certain channel or means of distribution is placed and set for a specific product. Morris and Robert found that consumer's perception of the fit between a service/product and a channel is very influential factor or an initial consideration in determining whether they will go through that channel for a specific service. In fact, perceived fit was found and identified to be more important than consumers' preferences for the distribution method, style or service.

Finally elaborating further in this paragraph, when consumers exhibit or show brand awareness, the value of the brand makes consumers remain loyal to the products, thereby positively influencing the brand identity and increasing brand equity [35]. Studies reported on automobile brands by Mabkhot found that there was a significant relationship existing between brand image and brand loyalty.

The following hypothesis formulations have been derived

Hypothesis: This is presented and further expanded on, tested and verified in subsequent chapters.

- Buying decision or purchase behaviour and decision could be highly and extremely complex influenced and shaped by a number of factors comprising price, family, friends, peers and social or sociological factors, brand, culture, personal or internal and external factors.
- Buying decision is often and sometimes usually in real life practical sense subjected to data and information gathered from personal search, internet, catalogues, prior information from similar uses, news and sales reports. These data and information sources could influence drastically and have significant or considerate bearing on buying decisions in the fashion/clothing and textile industries. According to observation, there is a meaningful relationship between brand loyalty and brand image information source and the social media. Thus, the following hypothesis was proposed.
- Information source and social media can shape and influence brand loyalty which positively affects brand image reflective on buying decisions.

METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

The experimentation was based on a field survey in acquiring primary data on the roles and influences of information sources on consumer behaviour and buying decisions based on interview and questionnaire administration carried out and done in Italy, neighbourhoods and Roma.

The acquired data has been treated and analysed based on quantitative methods from inferential and descriptive statistics as fully presented.

Finally, the assumptions and initial questions were verified within the assumptions of the test statistics and hypotheses following test statistics, t-test and SEM (Structural Equation Modelling). The

results affirmed and strongly revealed the strong consciousness, global perception and awareness of the Italians supporting renaissance history till present and how they relate with the social media, information sources and how it influences or shape their buying decisions.

Analysis, testing and instruments

The subsequent analysis is based on statistical hypothesis and verification of our initial assumptions or research questions posed.

Statistical hypothesis testing is based on assumptions and claims under two hypotheses comprising the null and alternative within a statistical level of significance. The null hypothesis is the condition which assumes a specified mean for a 1 sample t-test, and the alternative hypothesis indicates a different mean.

Accepting the null hypothesis implies rejecting, or not accepting the alternative hypothesis, and vice versa.

In a two sample t-test, the null hypothesis assumes equal means, and the alternative hypothesis holds for two different means.

A t-test is applicable when the test statistics follows a normal distribution this wise, we do not also know the standard deviation, that is unknown sigma σ , and extremely useful in determining if two data sets are significantly different from each other, or not.

Assumptions: Basically, the t-test statistics follows the assumption of a normal distribution as shown in details and presented in the appendix section.

- **Setting 3 hypotheses:** null & alternatives are to statistically test and verify our salient assumptions and initially set hypotheses with some extensions that subsequently emanated in the study.
- The hypothesis is to be tested based on the t-statistics according to the equation written above.

RESULTS AND DICUSSION

Sample Test Extraction and Models

Testing of assumptions, Research questions and Model Verification: The crucial question and assumptions emanating from this research poll in conjunction with information sources, data and roles are strongly anticipated, expected to be tested in the course of this study. It is also to be verified qualitatively and quantitatively based on opinion polls, responses, examinations and statistical sampling/analysis (Table 1) (Figure 2).

Table 1: Results presenting findings for various information sources/media platforms.

Information Source	Percentage (%)
Personal search	34
Internet	54
Previous data	9
Catalogue	3

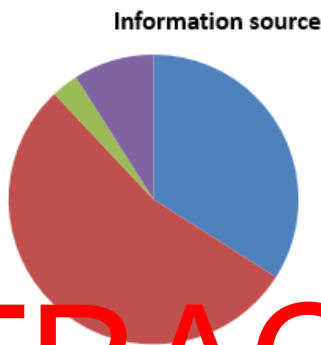


Fig. 2 Sources of information for buying decision

Note: Information source (■)(personal search); (■)(internet); (■)(catalogue); (■)(previous data).

The hypotheses were tested and verified based on two assumptions; ‘null and alternative as earlier mentioned at the 5% level of significance based on the statistical/mathematical formula following the assumptions of the normal distribution and the results are summarized in the list of tables as elaborated and subsequently shown again in the appendix section.

These models were affirmed and verified both qualitatively and analytically in the present study that consumer behaviour in connection to information and data acquisition sources is crucial factor in buying decisions.

Significant findings are drawn as presented Table 2 showing the statistics

Table 2: Testing was done at the 5% level of significance.

N	‘df	Mean	S.D
275	274	3.2	1.9

Significant finding $p>0.05$. The testing was done at the 5% level of significance and as stated above and presented subsequently again in the list of tables from table 2 with a p-value exceeding or greater than 0.5.

Null hypothesis: $H_0; \mu \geq 3.2$

The null hypothesis is the working assumption that the mean cannot be less than 3.2 based on the 2nd interview and poll conducted during the investigation and supporting with close findings to the previous investigation and test in which a prior and assumed least-minimum 50% respondents agree with this position.

Alternative hypothesis: $H_a; \mu < 3.2$ At the; 5% level of significance

Test or verifying assumption

1. Indicating to what degree or extent the information you gather from the various sources influence your purchase or buying decisions.
2. Is there an influence the information you gathered from the identified and various information sources play on your buying or purchase decisions?

By the underlying assumption prior to the survey and previous experiences a minimum of 50% respondents are set to believe or agree on this position that the information gathered from the

various information sources to some extent or degree influence their purchase decisions or selected choices or show some connection, this is set to the null hypothesis while the contrary is the alternative hypothesis that this claim is not true or should be rejected.

The null hypothesis is the working assumption that a minimum 50% respondents agree with this position while the alternative is the contrary as presented in full details in the table and appendix sections subsequently.

At the 10% level of significance CV:1,383 Where; $\chi^2=0.624$

Since the statistic z_{cal} from formula is greater than z_{tab} of tabulated value, we accept the null hypothesis that a minimum of 50% respondents agree that some relationship exists between information sources and purchase decisions and they are influenced to some extent or degree based on the findings and responses of this present study.

Further verification and testing: This hypothesis is subject to further test verification, based on t-test and adopting the scaling and applying scale (1-4)

1. Less agree, disagree or not sure
2. Mildly agree or quite agree
3. Strongly agree,
4. Very strongly

While findings and investigation from the polls showed and agree by minimum scaling up to 50% within prior assumption agree to varying extent or degree and 50% strongly agreeing with this claim and hypothesis, another virtually 12.4% though agreeing but not so strongly (62.4%) in all by proportion as shown earlier above by; $\chi^2=0.624$

while another 37.6% bracket range are skeptical on the contrary or not too clear with a perception nor a ‘sharp bearing, some less agree or not sure based on responses garnered and acquired from another section of the structured questionnaire and interview poll administered in the first stage during the course of this investigation.

Findings: Table showing the statistics in Table 3 subsequently significant finding $p>0.05$

Table 3: Applying statistical tools and testing based on software application.

N	‘df	Mean	S.D
125	124	2.21	0.8

Null hypothesis: $H_0; \mu \geq 2.1$

The null hypothesis is the working assumption that the mean cannot be less than 2.1 based on previous interview and poll conducted during the investigation and supporting or close to the previous test a minimum 50% respondents agree with this position.

Alternative hypothesis: $H_a; \mu < 2.1$

At the 5% level of significance the hypothesis was tested and verified. Applying statistical tools and testing based on software application the following table as subsequently shown in the list

of tables 3 is obtained as presented with detailed results.

Elaboration and conclusions are drawn: Table showing the statistics from Table 4.

Table 4: Significant findings from the first poll captured based on 125 respondents.

N	'd'	Mean	SD	$t_c = -1.657$	t-cal.	p-value
125	124	2.2	1.8	-1.657	1.657	0.9533

Comments: The comments and conclusions follow from the table and further elaboration presented subsequently in the list of tables from 3 and 4 with the hypothesis verification and testing as lucidly presented subsequently and based on the mathematical and statistical assumptions presented in the appendix.

The critical value for a left tail test is $t_c = -1.657$. The p-value is $p = 0.9533$, and since p-value is greater than or equal 0.05, the null hypothesis is not rejected. Hence information, sources and data base from which the information are drawn and found play a significant and huge role in influencing and determining purchase decisions as deduced from this statistical testing result as p value of 0.9533 was found exceeding 0.5 set at the statistical level of significance of 5%. The 95% confidence interval is $2.079 < \mu < 2.363$

Role of information source, significance on buying or purchase decisions

- Yes: 90.3%
- None or not at all: 9.7%

This is found from the available information gathered from the survey and presented in the Table 5 shown from, the chart seen in Figure 3 below and elaborated further and more explicitly in subsequent section as well.

Table 5: Consumer buying decisions/behaviour, and brand promotion, social media influences from interactions and information sources available.

'Parameters:	' β	R	't	'p-value	'SER β :
Consumer buying decisions-social media influences and information sources	0.9977	0.9753	2.2538	<.00001	0.4427

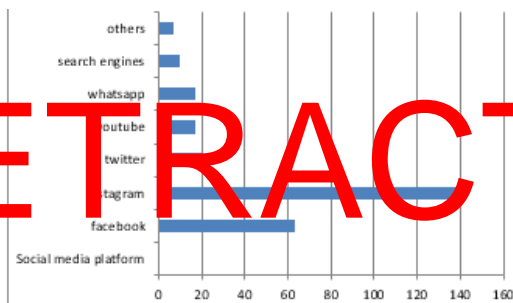


Fig. 3 Social media sources based on internet search by chart.

Observation(s): Information sources and available information; even though to varying extents or degrees to consumers and the potential buyers, fans or brand loyalists could play a huge and dominant role in influencing the consumer behaviour and shaping the offer to final purchases and sealing the offer especially in this present era of vast and drastic transformations in the revolutions brought around tech and digitalized era.

The roles and influences of the online and social media platforms play in shaping the consumer buying and responses or behaviour have become significant and crucial to the market.

Further discussion and elaboration

To deepen further and elaborate the role of information sources; opinion was captured on various sources of information and means by which consumers gather and obtain information towards their purchase decisions or buying and summarized as presented as follows among some sources enumerated personal search, internet or social media and catalogue.

As further enumerated below none or not at all had indicated up to 9.7% that information source does play no role in their purchase decision or buying processes.

Role of information source on buying or purchase decisions

- Yes: 90.3%
- None or not at all: 9.7%

Information source(s)

- Personal search: 34%
- Internet or social media: 54%
- Catalogue: 3%
- Previous data: 9%

Comment(s): Previous data comprises and could include prior knowledge or information about the products, goods or services, previous sales information or data from sales forces, past experiences and story tellers or evangelists of the products. This took 9% in the present survey as reported.

Anticipated and perceived or expected internet search play a significant role as information source in making purchase decisions as revealed by the present statistics and summary took the largest percentage up to 54% based on survey and interview.

This is followed next by personal or individual searches up to 34% and catalogue search which is the traditional tool and a long time means known for searching took the least up to just 3%; this might not be much surprising due to the obvious fact of the present revolutionary trends in a widely digitalized era and the way and magnitude the internet and web of seeking information is shaping and impacting diverse facets of the business environment today.

Social media influence on purchase decisions capturing further the place of social media and some various or prominent media platforms

- Face book: 22.5%
- Instagram: 51.25%

- Twitter: 7.5%
- WhatsApp: 6.25%
- YouTube: 6.25%
- Search engines: 3.75%
- Others: 2.5%

Comment(s) As revealed by the presented statistic and summary given and consulted Instagram plays the largest role and influence of the social media platform, search engines of others up to 51.25% followed next in the rank by, Face book up to 22.5%, 'Twitter up to 7.5% while WhatsApp and YouTube both share 6.25% and next followed by Search engines up to 3.75% and other platforms on the social media least took up to 2.5%.

Instagram would play a significant role in shaping and influencing consumer behaviour, buying decisions and pattern in the fashion industry; hence marketers, sales force and marketing managers as well as management in organizations especially the fashion industry should take strong cognizance of this and perhaps take into consideration while deciding and choosing their advertising and media platforms for promotion purposes and uses.

Further extrapolations: An interview and opinion poll was captured twice, significant findings from the first poll captured based on 125 respondents.

Significant finding: $p > 0.05^*$

The null hypothesis is the working assumption that the mean cannot be less than 2.1 based on previous interview and poll conducted during the investigation and supporting or close to the previous test a minimum 50% respondents agree with this position.

At the; 5% level of significance; the hypothesis and assumptions of the roles and influence of information available and sources or data base existing from which the information pool is drawn was tested and subject to verification.

Applying statistical tools and testing based on software application the following table is obtained as presented with detailed results.

Comment(s): From Table 4 subsequently presented showing the statistics; the following conclusions and comments were drawn and arrived.

Comments: The following conclusions are observed and drawn from the preceding or first poll and survey of 125 respondents prior to the 2nd field experimental poll and survey adding more question and data fields subsequently subject to the results of the statistical testing using the statistical software and hypothesis verification and testing;

The critical value for a left tail test is $t_c = -1.657$

The p value is 0.953, and since p value is greater than or equal to 0.05, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This was earlier given and presented as the statistical result obtained based on the hypothesis testing and verification following the null and alternative hypothesis at the 5% level of significance as result of the first poll prior to the 2nd field experimental pool or opinion capture and findings on the role and influence of information

sources, data sources and data acquired on consumer decision making and influences played.

The 95% confidence interval is $2.079 < \mu < 2.363$

Further discussion of verification results, revelations and testing

As revealed again by the statistical summary subsequently in tables and appendix as revealed in this investigation it is obvious information sources do play some role in influencing purchasing behaviour of buying decisions but would be to varying extent and degree according to different consumer or individual as indicated 90.3% respondents agree on its influence even though might be to varying extent or degrees while only a minority relatively lower 9.7% said no.

This ground informed my decision and efforts to take a 2nd field test and experiment on this particular subject and consideration and with a different and larger sample size as expanding only the previous sample size of 125 to 275 as seen in the tables shown above and summarized statistics presented is to consolidate on previous experiment and result findings on this subject earlier reported in this research investigation and findings.

This hypothesis is subject to further test verification, based on t test and adopting the scaling and applying scale 1-4

1. Less agree, disagree or not sure
2. Mildly agree, & quite agree
3. Strongly agree
4. Very strongly

While findings and investigation as presented from the previous polls showed 62.4% agree to varying extent or degree with this claim and hypothesis, another 37.6% bracket range are skeptical, less agree or not sure based on responses garnered and acquired from another section of the structured questionnaire and interview poll administered in the course of this investigation I still went ahead to conduct a 2nd field experiment expanding the sample size.

From Table 2 showing the statistics the significant finding is $p > 0.05$. The null hypothesis is the working assumption that the mean cannot be less than 3.2 based on the 2nd interview and poll conducted during the investigation and supporting with close findings to the previous investigation and test in which a minimum 50% respondents agree with this position. At them 5% level of significance; as shown in details subsequently the hypothesis verification was done.

Applying statistical tools and testing based on software application the following tables shown in Table 2 and Table 6 were obtained as presented with detailed results.

Table 6: 2nd field experiment: Data analysis from 2nd field

N	df	Mean	S.D	$T_c = -1.65$	Cal	p value
275	274	3.2	1.9	-1.65	0	0.5

Comments: From Table 6 subsequently presented and showing the statistics

The critical value for a left tail test is $t_c = -1.65$. The p-value is $p = 0.5$, and since p value is greater than or equal 0.05, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

The 95% confidence interval is $-2.9745 < -3.43$. These crucial questions emanating from this research position in connection with pricing are strongly anticipated expected to be tested in the course of this study

It is also to be verified qualitatively and quantitatively based on opinion polls, responses, examinations and statistical sampling/analysis.

These models were affirmed and verified both qualitatively and analytically in the present study that consumer behaviour in connection to price is crucial factor in buying decisions.

Comments: The role of information source in influencing consumer buying behaviour is extremely crucial and should be taken strong cognizance of by marketers, sales forces and management teams in organizations and corporations.

The roles and position of social media in shaping and influencing this should also be taken into strong cognizance.

The 2nd calculation and verification is based on my second experiment at the field adding more sample sizes as this subject and question on information appears quite crucial and could generating a wide pool of varying opinions among respondents and their interaction or experiences with information sources could be widely different.

Interpreting information sources by composition

As shown earlier in Figure 2, the entire information sources towards buying decision was vividly illustrated.

Comment(s): As earlier explained and demonstrated by chart representation; catalogue search which is the traditional tool and a long time means known for searching took the least up to just 3%; this might not be much surprising due to the obvious fact of the present revolutionary trends in a widely digitalized era and the way and magnitude the internet and ‘web of a thing is drastically shaping and impacting diverse facets of the business environment today.

This reveals the prominence and dominant place and role taken by the digital world in a vast digitalized era in business and the fashion industry is one key area to exploit and take advantage of the digital era as the Instagram has a huge notoriety to play in this industry and can be applied to boost sales, drive traffic and shape consumer behaviour for improved, high revenue and sales returns.

Comment(s): Interestingly the relationship between consumer buying decisions, behaviour, brands and social media influences with information sources excitingly shows a relatively high value of the R-squared values based on the parameters and regression coefficients, dependent and independent variables as shown in Table 7 in the present investigation and experimental survey, poll and analysis. The research question can lead to a

major hypothesis, and deduction as presented.

Table 7: Consumer buying decisions and social media influences/relationship.

Parameters:	‘β	R ²	‘α
Consumer buying decisions- social media influences	0.953	0.912	33862

Consumer buying decisions can thus be enhanced through a strong brand promotion based on social media influences from interactions and information sources available for access following the results of the SEM and hypothesis testing as revealed and unveiled based on the p values, which show statistical significances as ($p < 0.00001$) lies below the set limit criterion of 5% significant level.

Representation of social media sources based on internet search

This is presented vividly in the list of figures as subsequently shown (Figure 3).

Comment(s)

Analysing: Analysing and presenting the findings according to responses and survey done as shown and demonstrated in the above chart Instagram took the lead among the various platforms users and consumers explore in searching for information toward their purchases followed next by various face book and the order shown.

Marketers, sales forces team and marketing managers in the fashion industry like every other industry and business has to take this fact into cognizance and consideration in selecting the media platform to adopt and in designing their marketing strategies and promotional mixes towards enhanced profitability, income generation, revenue streams and returns.

Discussion: Models of consumer behaviour, concepts and proposed models

Model(s) of consumer behaviour: As mentioned earlier, consumer behaviour could be extremely complex, intricate and difficult to discern or completely unravel, thus would require in depth, thorough delineation and deeper understanding to gain useful insights and accurate salient information that would be useful in real practical terms to the sales force, marketing teams and firms.

Further discussion of verification, results, revelations and testing

Consumers are becoming complex and diverse in modes, actions or behaviours, obviously in real sense new consumer groups creating new challenges are emerging in a quotidian fashion. New consumer groups and diversity might have to include lifestyles, sexual orientation, and geographical dispersion.

The consumer behaviour reflects on the buying decisions which is built around relevant models and in realistic terms can be

described or depicted as a “black box”, like secret or hidden cat in a black closed box in similar description or analogy it’s been referred to as a black box, which could be a mix and complex mix of rationality and emotionality in some absurd terms or manner.

A hypothetical or illustrative 3–step model of consumer behaviour consists of “need recognition, decision making and post purchase behaviour” depicting a black box in which the decision-making process or steps could be quite intrinsically hidden and indeed the black–box.

A Nexus, Connection and Ties between Information Source, Social Media and Impact on Brand Loyalty and Brand Image: Brand loyalty, as the component of the core value of an enterprise, is mainly composed of the attitude and behaviour of consumers. A nexus, ties or connection and relationship can be identified and established between “information sources, social media, brand loyalty and image”. Furthermore, and essentially information sources, social media and technological devices can play key roles and significant position in shaping and influencing the ‘brand image from well-established brand loyalty.

Companies can employ or adopt social media to actively spread the appropriate information of the brand image to consumers in line with position to significantly influence the consumer’s perception of the brand agreement with them by conveying the consistency of brand image [41].

The similarity of brand personality and the authenticity of brand extension were presented by (Sattayawaksakul et al., 2019). It becomes clearer that with technological development in recent years, consumers do choose the products which can meet their demands and expectations in line with the brands, thus implying a good brand image for an enterprise is the key to successful marketing [31].

As pointed out consumer’s knowledge of the brand or awareness and the value of the brand make consumers remain loyal to the products and thus positively influencing the brand identity and increasing brand equity. As an illustration, studies on automobile brands by Mabkhot found that there was a significant relationship existing between brand image and brand loyalty.

Based on the above analysis and full description; it is extrapolated that there is a significant and meaningful relationship between brand loyalty and brand image, information source and social media which was the basis of hypothesis 3. H3 earlier proposed and reflective of our present findings on the role of the social media and information sources on buying decisions [43].

Proposed and Novel Model on Consumer Behavior: 3 Step model

Three phase and stages are identified and presented vividly shown in the schematics described as initiation problem and need recognition modification decision process, re shaping, process and purchase evaluation, post reactions. The 2nd phase tagged modification can be conceived and seen as an embedment of internal (thoughts) and external (environmental) factors.

This can be conceived and conceptualized as a hybrid of internalized and externalized factors in which the individual

thought rational conception and perception blended with emotional feelings and impulse is being shaped and modified by external factors among information, media sources, data streams, and other factors or related. The drafted model of consumer behaviour is shown in Figure 4.

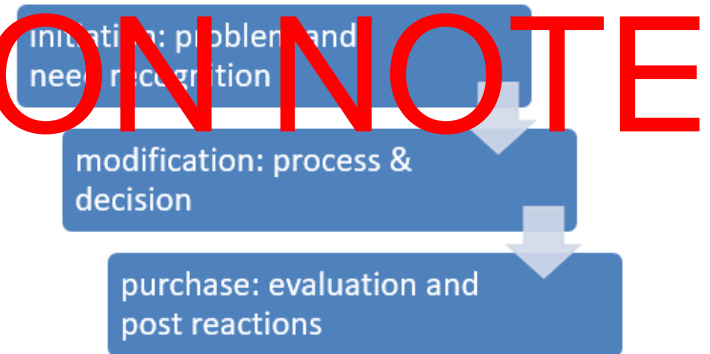


Fig. 4 Model of Consumer Behaviour.

In the proposed and novel model; the final stage which the offer is sealed or eventual purchase is crucial as it is followed by post purchase events and can significantly dictate the possibility of repeat purchases and play huge importance as feedbacks and comments following the purchase and following reactions have significant bearings and could be of huge significance in dictating the next cycle and phases in the future trends of the products or services.

The presented model reflects the black box still and obvious it is an identical but unique novel carved model as adapted and shows some identities or resemblance of the previous 3 stage black box model.

The irrationality and complexities surrounding consumer behaviour cannot be fully unravelled from simple observation as mentioned earlier but has to be theoretically unravelled in–depth with right tools of psychological and behavioural models and well conceptualized frames.

Consumers source for information in diverse ways as seen and elaborated in this study; this information source, data and disseminated facts are influenced and shaped by media sources and play significant roles in a dual directional path on influencing and shaping consumer behaviour either favouring it or being against.

Consumer irrationality is connected with information available consumers search for information towards their intended and subsequent purchases in diverse ways and these information draw on the irrational thought swirling in purchase decisions and triggered by subjective factors among external visualization around.

The subsequent effects on information sources and results are linked and tied or connected with the feedback cards and comments.

CONCLUSION

Information sources and search is crucial in shaping and

influencing consumers behaviour, buying decisions, patterns and modes, thus constituting an important area of investigation as done in this studies based on a data capture and poll done.

A novel draft model of consumer decision making presented as seen vividly shows and indicates the consumer buying decision is essentially laid on decision processing and filtering subsequent to the first primary and most basic stage of initiation and the entire stage terminated by decision making and post purchase evaluation or analysis and final decisions drawing on previous past and present experiences.

Information this wise quite vividly grasping a picture of its role and significance in influencing and potentially shaping consumer buying decision and entire process can be symbiotically seen or conceived as a key and vital trigger to communication.

As a communication loop, there is a feedback and signal transmission doubled layer sub layer can sub or underlain as an intermediary intrinsically and extrinsically interwoven and multi segmented in the consumer decision making strata or composite 3 step black model.

The impression imprinted or created by these experiences can tell a lot and impact adversely or positively on the brand image and equity associated with the company or organizations that create such products and brands or deliver such services: thus consumers are a key player in purchase and supply chains that can make or mar a company and organization.

The results of the hypothesis testing indicate and show that information, sources and available data play a huge and significant role in consumer behaviour as evident and revealed by the statistical testing the p value exceeds 0.5. It was observed the social media platforms play dominant and crucial roles in available information, data and facts dissemination to consumers and thus play a crucial role in consumer brand engagement.

Furthermore consumer buying decisions can thus be enhanced through a strong brand promotion based on social media influences from interactions and information sources available for access following the results of the SEM and hypothesis testing as revealed and unveiled based on the p values, which show statistical significances as ($p < 0.00001$) lies below the set limit criterion of 5% significant level.

As seen in the chart shown and displayed in Figure 3 as shown from the discussion section Instagram played the most influential role in consumer brand engagement and information sources and mostly visited.

The advertising, marketing mix (strategy, promotions plans, campaigns and sales forces are interwoven and thus have to be rightly designed within the right strategic frame and basis to trigger the anticipated results, expectations and bring about returns, value capture and profitability.

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AVAILABILITY OF DATA AND MATERIALS

The data applied and used in this research work were from questionnaire administration and personal interview conducted by the author in the course of this research project and investigation. The data was compiled and available with the co-ordinating author on request.

AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTIONS

The authors did the entire work encompassing; the preliminary questionnaire and interview draft, the data collection process and field work, the data compilation and refinement, analysis of data and the final reporting with the entire communication process.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors declare there is no competing interest in any form, related or such.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data used in this research is collected by the author from questionnaire administration, personal interview, polls and opinion randomly. No external data base or source was used in gathering and extracting data. The data is available with the author and can be released on reasonable request.

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