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The Study on Understanding the Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Buying Behavior in Rural Area

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Abstract: Social networking platform have become an important part of everyday life is slowly modifying the way people in remote areas make buying decisions. With better internet access an increased use of smartphones, many rural people now use platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and other to learn about products and services. Earlier most people depended on family members, friends and local shops for information, but today social media also help in creating awareness and influencing choices. This change has new opportunities for businesses to reach and interact with rural customers.

This study explores the success of internet-based channels is in influencing consumer buying behavior in village areas. It focuses on identifying the online communication interface commonly used by rural consumers and examining how online content affect product awareness, opinions and purchase decisions. The study also explores whether web-based systems is changing traditional buying habits and helping businesses understand the interest and needs of rural consumers effectively.

Keywords: consumer buying behavior, Rural consumers, online advertising, Purchase decisions, Rural development, digital literacy, Rural awareness.

I. INTRODUCTION

In years technology has redefined business talk to consumers. The interface like online chatting tools and YouTube have become powerful marketing tools support businesses in increasing visibility of their goods and operations in more interactive, affordable and effective manner. Earlier Electronic media was mostly focused on urban consumers, but along with the growth of use of smartphones, better internet connectivity and government activities promoting digital access, its reach has gradually expanded into rural areas as well. Rural consumers are now able to access online platforms easily and are becoming more familiar with different brand, products and market trends through digital media.

Traditionally, people living in rural areas mostly relied on local markets, family members, friends and personal recommendations to learn about commercial offerings. However, the popularity of digital communication channels has altered people's awareness, preferences buying decisions by giving them easy access to online advertisements, product reviews and promotional content. while marketing through social platforms is expanding quickly in rural areas, its ability to influence buying behavior is not yet fully clear. The rural consumer respond to social media promotions often depends on variables including their digital knowledge trust and access to technology.

II. PROBLEM OF THE STATEMENT

The fast growth in digital customer communication has brought about a new opportunity for business to Marketing their goods to a wider audience, including consumer living in rural areas. Many firms are making use of Channels such as online chatting platform and You Tube to influence customer buying behavior and build brand awareness. Despite this the value of such marketing practices in countryside markets is still uncertain. People living in villages may not have equal access to digital knowledge, internet access or trust in online content as urban consumers.

In addition, rural consumers contain to depend heavily on traditional way of obtaining information such as family members, friends, local shopkeepers and personal experiences while making buying decisions. Although social media help create awareness about products and brands it may not always lead to actual purchases. Due to limited research on this topic, businesses often face

challenges in recognizing the real contribution of digital media marketing on rural consumer behavior. Therefore, it becomes studying the contribution of social interaction interface on consumer awareness, preferences, and buying decisions of rural consumers so that companies can develop more meaningful marketing strategies for rural markets.

III. OBJECTIVE

- 1) To identify the online social platforms used by consumers in rural areas for product information.
- 2) To understand the role of online social platforms on product awareness and consumer perception among rural consumers.
- 3) To examine the contribution of virtual marketing customer purchase behavior in rural areas.
- 4) To evaluate the outcome of digital interaction marketing on strategies in influencing in purchase decisions of rural consumers.

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- 1) Ali, S. M. S., & Akhtar, M. W. (n.d.) The study explains how digital media is slowly changing the way people in rural areas think and make purchase decisions. With the increasing use of smartphones and internet services, many rural consumers have started exploring online platforms before buying products. There is still confusion about how much digital media actually influences rural consumers compared to traditional buying methods. The study examined on rural consumers who are gradually adopting digital platforms for gathering information. It is found that digital media is becoming an important source of information, but old methods like word-of-mouth are still widely trusted. Using digital and traditional communication together can be more effective in influencing rural consumers.
- 2) Ravi, S., & Rajasekaran, S. R. C. (2023) The research looks at how digital marketing is growing across rural areas and changing consumer behavior. The evidence indicate that more users are slowly moving from traditional ways of buying to using online platforms, mainly because of better internet access and smartphone usage. Even though digital marketing is expanding, problems like limited awareness, trust issues, and lake internet connectivity still limit its full impact. the research process was conducted among rural consumers who are exposed to digital marketing activities. Components such as trust, ease of use, and usefulness of information serves of buying decisions. online platform marketing has great capacity in rural areas, but it needs to overcome certain barriers to be fully effective.
- 3) Singh, S. (2020) The study focuses on how virtual marketing leads to customer satisfaction in rural India. It explains that online platforms improve convenience for customers to compare products, check details, and make better decisions. The need is to understand whether digital marketing actually improves satisfaction among rural consumers. the individuals surveyed were rural users who rely on online sources. Social networking sites like websites before making purchase decisions. While digital tools improve convenience and access to information, issues like poor connectivity and lack of digital skills can create difficulties. Digital marketing can improve satisfaction, but only when supported by proper infrastructure and awareness.
- 4) C. S. V. Murthy (2012) The study explains that residents in rural areas usually prefer simple and familiar ways of making purchase decisions, especially relying on word-of-mouth communication. Unlike urban consumers, they tend to trust the opinions of family members, friends, and local communities more than advertisements or online promotions. Their buying behavior is guided by personal relationships and past experiences. study focuses on rural markets and covers individuals who follow traditional buying practices in their daily lives. It was observed that personal communication has a stronger effect on buying decisions than digital or promotional content, as trust is important in rural markets. Businesses can be more successful in rural areas if they combine traditional methods like word-of-mouth with modern promotional methods aimed to create awareness.
- 5) Ali, S. M. S., & Akhtar, M. W. (2023) This research portrays how digital media is reshaping rural markets by providing easier access to product information. Many consumers are slowly shifting from depending only on word-of-mouth to using online platforms. Rural consumers are gradually moving towards adapting to digital tools but still rely on traditional sources. It was conducted among rural consumers experiencing digital changes. Increased smartphone usage has made it simple for consumers to search for information and compare products. Digital media is becoming an important influence on rural consumer behavior.
- 6) Sharma, V., Bhardwaj, S., & Agarwal, P. K. (2023) The study observes how media affects buying behavior in rural areas, especially in developing economies. It points out the significance of trust, community interaction, and culturally relevant content in influencing consumers. There is limited clarity on how business adopt social media strategies to impact rural consumers. The research focused on rural populations in developing regions. social media has a strong impact in increasing awareness and influencing decisions through engaging and relatable content. Businesses can connect better with rural consumers by using localized and trust-based digital strategies.

V. RESEARCH GAP

Available studies have shown that social media and digital platforms are helping rural consumers become aware of different products and services. However, most of these studies do not fully explain whether the awareness actually leads to purchasing decisions. Even today many rural consumers continue to trust traditional sources such as family, friends, neighbors, and local shopkeepers more than online advertisements or digital content. Because of few research have focused on clear understanding about the real contribution of online platform marketing rural consumers buying decisions.

Another important gap is that many studies discuss rural consumer only in a broader manner without focusing deeply on the actual challenges faced in rural areas. Problems such as poor internet connectivity, limited digital knowledge, low trust in online information and cultural influences are often recognized, but their direct effort on purchasing decisions is not properly examined. Only few research made in specific region or product categories, making it difficult to understand in real life consumer behavior in rural markets. Therefore, there is need for more in-depth research to measure the impact of social media marketing influences the buying decisions among village consumers and how businesses can build string relationships with them through digital platforms.

VI. HYPOTHESES

A. Hypotheses 1

H_0 (Null Hypotheses): There is no notable relationship between the use of interactive media platforms on how rural consumers gather product related information.

H_1 (Alternative Hypotheses): There is a notable relationship between the use of interactive media platforms on how rural consumers gather product related information.

B. Hypotheses 2

H_0 (Null Hypotheses): There is no prominent relationship between internet-based platforms influencing product awareness and consumer perception among rural buyers.

H_1 (Alternative Hypotheses): There is a prominent relationship between internet-based platforms influencing product awareness and consumer perception among rural buyers.

VII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research followed a descriptive research design to assess the effectiveness of internet-based channels affects the buyers of consumers in rural areas. The study relied on primary data is gained instantly from respondents through structured questionnaires. A total of 50 respondents including consumers of both genders took part in the survey the convenience sampling was used to select the respondents from rural communities. After data collection the responses were carefully organized and examined using statistical method including percentage and chi-square test. This approach helped in gaining improved understanding of the manner E-marketing affects consumer awareness perceptions and buying behavior in rural areas

VIII. LIMITATIONS

- 1) The research took place in Doddaballapura rural area only. Therefore, the outcome may not be relevant to rural consumes in other regions with different socio economic and cultural backgrounds.
- 2) The study took place with only 50 respondents. The study outcomes may not provide a full picture of the opinions and buying behavior of the whole rural population.
- 3) Due to time constraints the study could not including large sample of respondents.
- 4) The study is built on the responses provided by the participants through a questionnaire. The accuracy is affected by the honesty, understanding and willingness of the extract population to provide genuine answers.

IX. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table1: Demographic analysis of respondents.

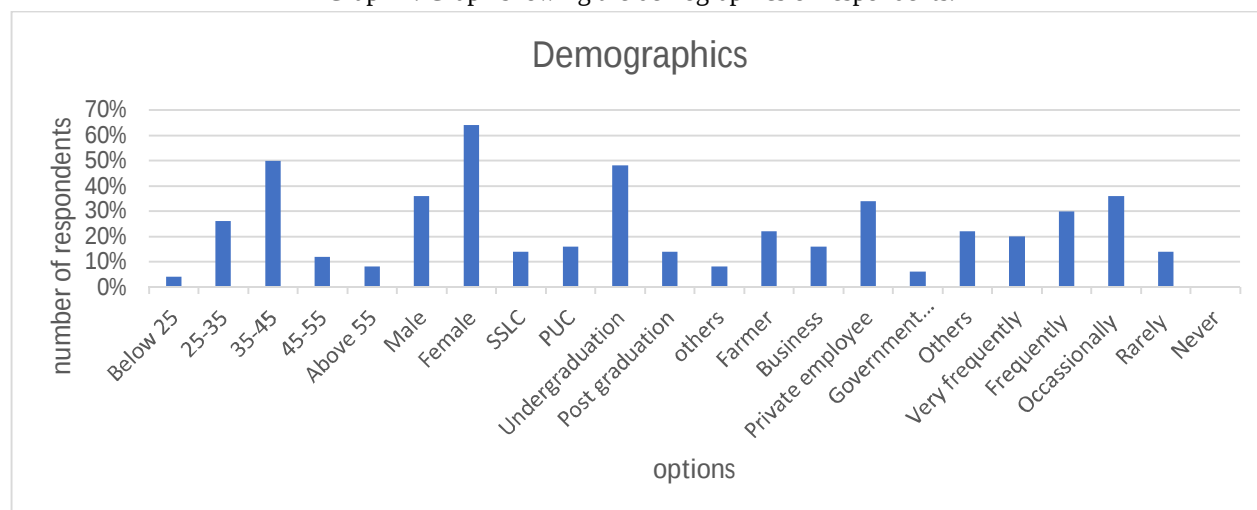
Questions	Options	No. of responses	Percentage %
Age	Below 25	2	4%
	25-35	13	26%

	35-45	25	50%
	45-55	6	12%
	Above 55	4	8%
Gender	Male	18	36%
	Female	32	64%
Educational Qualification	SSLC	7	14%
	PUC	8	16%
	Undergraduate	24	48%
	postgraduate	7	14%
	others	4	8%
Occupation	Farmer	11	22%
	Business	8	16%
	Private employee	17	34%
	Government employee	3	6%
	Others	11	22%
To what extent do virtual communities influence your buying decisions?	Very Frequently	10	20%
	Frequently	15	30%
	Occasionally	18	36%
	Rarely	7	14%
	Never	0	0

Analysis

The demographic of the participants show that the large respondents belong to the 35-45 years. The age group, followed by the 26% in the 25-35 years category. Female respondents consist of 64% of the specimen while males are for 36%. pertaining to educational qualification 48% of people are undergraduate, suggesting a relatively educated rural population. Regarding occupation, private employees from the large group 34% followed by farmers and others at 22% each. The analysis of purchasing frequency reveals that 36% of respondents occasionally buy products after viewing them on social media platforms, 30% purchase frequently and 20% purchase very frequently. Only 14% reported purchasing rarely while none of the respondents selected the option “Never”. This distribution indicated a considerable level of involvement linked with E-marketing among rural consumers.

Graph 1: Graph showing the demographics of respondents.



Interpretation

The result indicates that more and more number of people are relying on user generated content channel provide product information. The high proportion of respondents who purchase products occasionally, frequently or very frequently after access to social media content indicates that they have become a powerful marketing channel in rural areas. The authority of educated respondents and the active participation of the female consumers further indicate that increasing digital literacy and internet accessibility are enhancing the impact of digital platforms. The absence of participants in the Never category reveals that E-media plays some tasks in the buying decision making process of all surveyed customers. Therefore, the results support the view that social media marketing functions as effective in creating awareness, influencing perceptions and encouraging purchasing behavior among rural consumers.

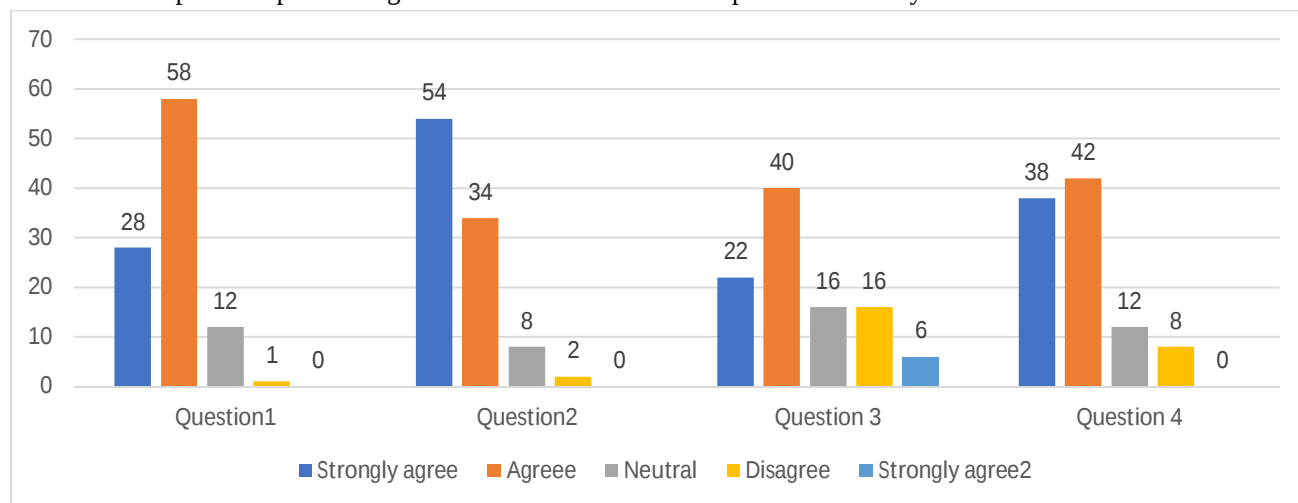
Table 2: Table 2 showing various online interactive media used by consumers in rural areas.

Sl no.	Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	I regularly use social media platforms to get product information	28%	58%	12%	2%	0
2	YouTube helps me understand products better before buying	54%	34%	8%	4%	0
3	WhatsApp is useful source for product recommendations	22%	40%	16%	16%	6%
4	Facebook & Instagram advertisements attract my attention.	38%	42%	12%	8%	0

Analysis:

Out of 50 respondents 84% either indicated agreement or strong agreement that they regularly usage of social networking sites to obtain product information while 16% remained neutral. YouTube was established as highly influential, with 92% of respondents agreeing that it allows them to understand products better before purchase. Similarly, 60% of respondents viewed WhatsApp as a useful source of product recommendations, although some respondents expressed neutral and negative opinions. Facebook and Instagram advertisements also attracted consumer attention, with 72% of the responses agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement. Overall the study demonstrates that digital media platforms are broadly used for details about products recommendations and brand familiarity among consumers.

Graph 2: Graph showing various brand communication platforms used by consumer in rural areas.



Interpretation

The result suggest that digital media marketing is very impactful in influencing rural consumers and shaping their buying behavior. Individuals depend on online social platforms not only to obtain product information but also to learn about new brands and evaluate product features purchasing. YouTube emerges as a valuable source of detailed product knowledge while Facebook and Instagram are effective in creating brand awareness. WhatsApp further strengthens information sharing through personal networks and recommendations. The overall positive perception of these platforms highlights their growing influence in rural market. Therefore, businesses can utilize social media as powerful marketing tool to improve consumer awareness, increase involvement and encourage buying decisions among rural consumers.

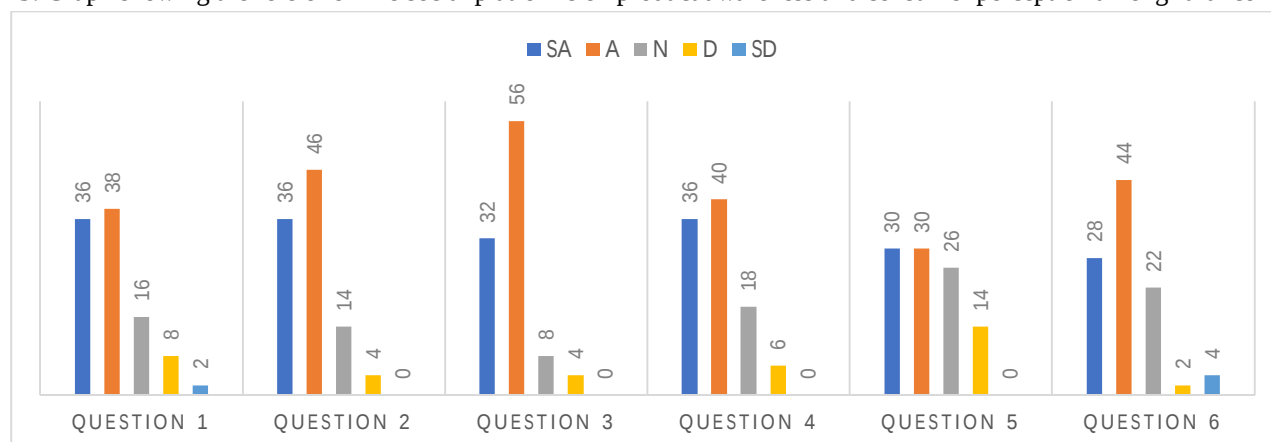
Table3: Table showing the role of online social platforms on product awareness and consumer perception among rural consumers.

Sl. no	Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	I trust product information posted on social media platforms.	36%	38%	16%	8%	2%
2	Web based social platforms helps me become aware of new products and brands.	36%	46%	14%	4%	0
3	Advertisements on social media improve my knowledge about the products.	32%	56%	8%	4%	0
4	Online reviews influence my opinion about products	36%	40%	16%	6%	0
5	Influencer's recommendations affect my perception of products	30%	30%	26%	14%	0
6	Social media contents make products appear more trust worthy.	28%	44%	22%	2%	4%

Analysis

The survey findings show that digital network media significantly influences consumer awareness and experience with products. Out of 50 respondents 68% agreed or strongly expressed that they trust product information posted through digital communication platform while only a small percentage expresses disagreement. Similarly, 84% of participant acknowledge that social media allows them to become aware of new brands. About 80% of respondents stated that advertisements on social media improve knowledge about products. Online reviews were also found to be influential with 76% agreeing that reviews affect their perception of products appear more trustworthy.

Graph 3: Graph showing the role of online social platforms on product awareness and consumer perception among rural consumers.



Interpretation

The findings reveal that interactive online platforms are effective in building customer awareness and shaping product perceptions. Consumers not only use social networking platforms to discover new products but also rely advertisements, reviews and opinions shared by influencers to evaluate them. The high level of agreement among respondents suggests that social media content enhances product knowledge and increases trust in brands. Customer feedback and influencer marketing further strengthens customer trust and influence purchase related attitudes. Therefore social media marketing operates as a useful instruments for businesses to create awareness, improves credibility and positively affect consumer selection process.

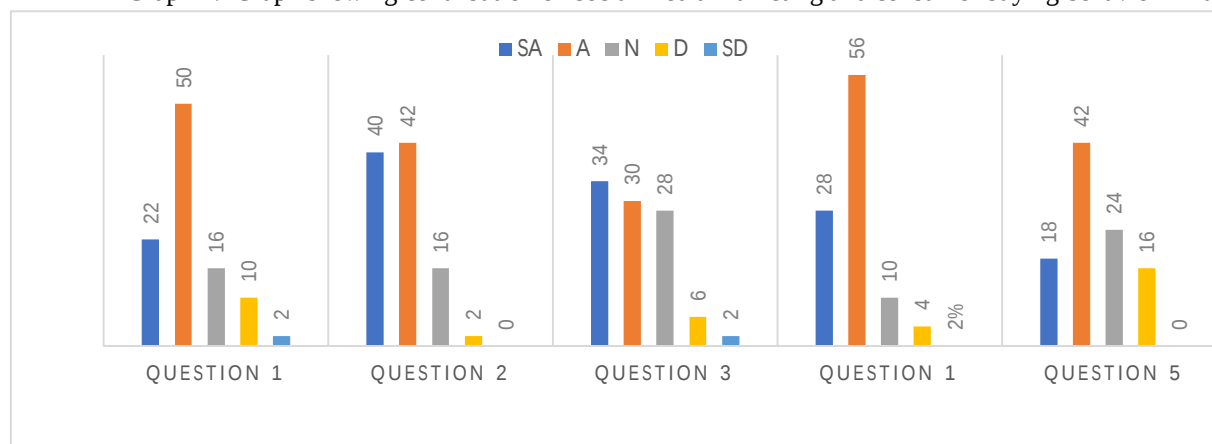
Table 4: Table showing contribution concerning E-marketing and consumer behavior in rural areas.

Sl. no	Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	Social media advertisements influence my purchase decisions.	22%	15%	16%	10%	2%
2	I compare products online before making purchase	40%	42%	16%	2%	0
3	Promotional Discounts & offers on social media platforms encourage me to buy products.	34%	30%	28%	6%	2%
4	I buy products after viewing positive reviews on social media	28%	56%	10%	4%	2%
5	Virtual media has changed my traditional buying behavior	18%	42%	24%	16%	0

Analysis

The survey analysis shows that online media platforms has a considerable contribute to consumer purchase decision behavior. Out of 50 respondents 70% agreed that digital media advertisements affect their purchase decisions, while 82% compare products online before purchasing. Around 74% stated that discount & special offers advertised on digital platform encourage them to acquire products online reviews additionally 58% believed that internet media has charged their traditional buying habits. Overall, findings denotes that online engagement spaces plays an vital contribution to shopping behavior.

Graph 4: Graph showing contribution on social media marketing and consumer buying behavior in rural areas.



Interpretation

The findings indicates that online media marketing effectively Affect purchasing decision by delivering information, reviews, comparisons and promotional offers. Consumers frequently use digital platforms to evaluate products, compare alternatives and seek feedback from others uses before making purchases. Positive customer reviews and attractive discounts further Inspire consumers to buy products while advertisements help create awareness and interest. The result also reveals that electronic media has gradually transformed traditional shopping habits by making consumers more informed and digitally engaged.

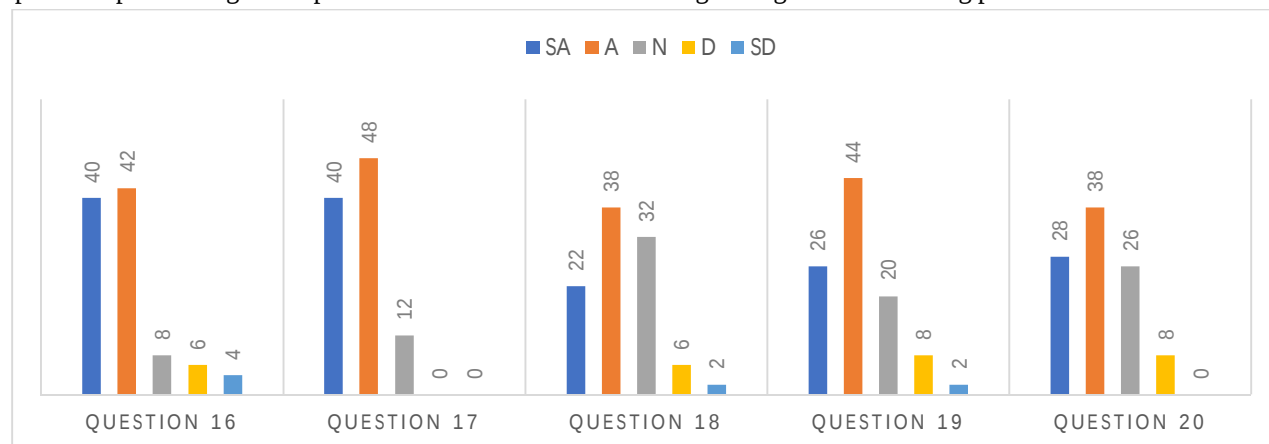
Table 5: Table showing the impact between web based marketing techniques in influencing in purchase decisions of rural consumers.

Sl.no	Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	I am more driven by interactive media videos and images than traditional advertisements.	40%	42%	8%	6%	4%
2	Regional language content on promotional media is commonly easier for me to understand	40%	48%	12%	0	0
3	Personalized advertisements boost my interest in products.	22%	38%	32%	6%	2%
4	Social media-based marketing is more attractive than traditional marketing methods	26%	44%	20%	8%	2%
5	I am more likely to purchase products promoted through E-media campaigns.	28%	38%	26%	8%	0

Analysis

The survey shows that it significantly influences consumer buying behavior. Put of 50 respondents 70% confirmed that digital advertisements shape their perception of brands purchase decisions, while 82% compare products online before purchasing. Around 74% stated that discounts and offers encourage them to buy products and 80% purchase products after seeing positive online customer feedback. Additionally, 58% considered that digital advertising has altered their traditional buying habits.

Graph 5: Graph showing the impact between social media marketing strategies in influencing purchase decision in rural areas.



Interpretation

The study confirms that interactive communication marketing is more engaging and effective than legacy marketing methods for rural consumers.

Visual content such as videos and images attract greater attention while regional language content improves understanding and communication. Personalized advertisements help create consumer interest by dealing relevant product information. The positive response towards social media campaigns indicates that these platforms successfully encourage purchase intentions and influence buying decisions.

X. HYPOTHESES TESTING

1) Hypotheses 1

Test	value	df	Asymp.Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	11.801	9	0.225
N of Valid cases	50		

Analysis

Significance level = 0.05 Calculated p-value = 0.225 Since p-value (0.225).0.05 the null hypothesis is accepted. ($\chi^2 = 11.801$, df = 9, p = 0.225).

Interpretation

The Chi-Square test indicated that there is no value tie between the use of digital media platforms and the way rural consumers collect product related data among the respondents surveyed ($\chi^2 = 11.801$, df = 9, p = 0.225).

2) Hypotheses 2

Variables	Social Media Marketing	Product Awareness & Consumer Perception
Social Media Marketing	1.000	0.648
Product Awareness & Consumer Perception	0.648	1.000

(2-tailed).

Analysis

The correlation coefficient Among virtual marketing and product awareness and consumer perception is 0.648 indicating a moderate positive connection among the variables. This indicate that increased exposure to interactive communication marketing linked with higher product awareness and more favorable consumer perceptions among rural consumers

Interpretation

The Pearson correlation coefficient involving online platform marketing and product attention and consumer perception is 0.648, indicating a moderate positive relationship. The significance value is lower than 0.05 level of contribution indicating that correlation is statistically significant.

XI. FINDINGS

The findings suggests that interactive communicative marketing has become a Major part of buying process of consumers in rural areas. Many people use channels like YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram to gather product information, learn about new brands and compare different product until making a purchase. digital media advertisements, product reviews and recommendations confirms positive impact on customer choice. The study also finds that visual content, promotional offers, and content presented in regional languages attract greater attention from consumers. Many interviewees felt that online media supports them in making better purchasing choices and has gradually influenced their shopping habits. These findings highlight the increasing significance of social media of information and a instrument for influencing consumer behavior.

XII. SUGGESTIONS

Businesses must focus on creating simple, informative and engaging content that meets the needs of rural consumers. Videos, product demonstration, consumer reviews and regional language content can help customers strong understand products and build trust in brand. Providing accurate and useful information social media can further improve customer confidence.

Companies should also effectively utilize social media advertisements, special offers, and promotional campaigns to attract potential customers. Encouraging customers to share reviews and experiences can strengthen brand credibility and influence future buyers. Regular direct engagement with customers on social media can support the development of long term relationship and improve customer satisfaction.

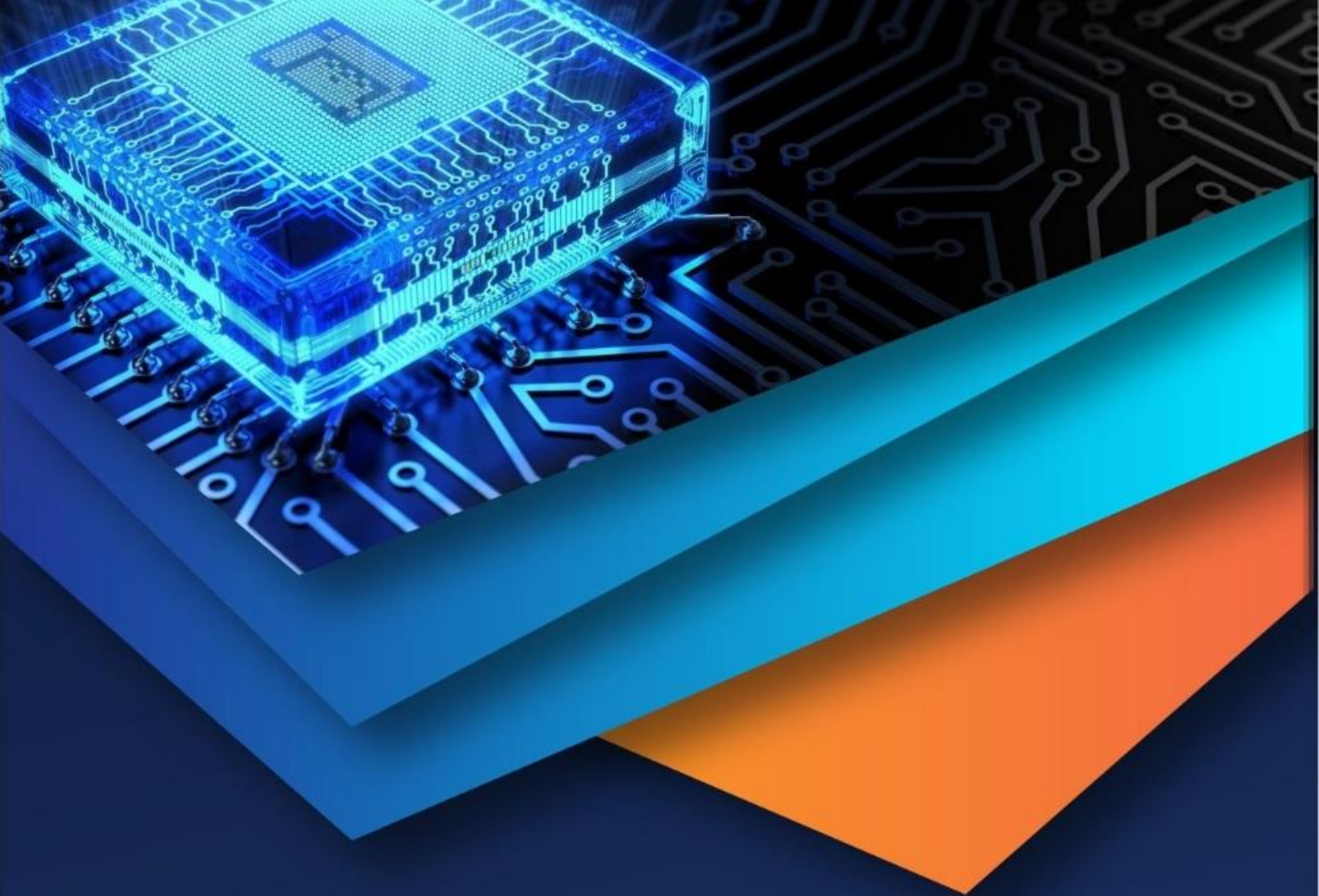
XIII. CONCLUSION

The result show that E-marketing is a key factor in influencing consumer buying behavior in rural areas. Consumers increasingly depend on social networking sites obtain product information, evaluate alternatives and make purchase decisions. Interactive media has made itself as an beneficial platform for creating awareness and shaping consumer perceptions.

The findings clearly show the strong online media marketing strategies can positively impact consumer attitudes and purchase decisions. Therefore, businesses should continue to invest in web-based marketing to enhance brand visibility, engage broad group of audience and strengthen their connection with rural consumers.

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