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The influence of social media (YouTube & Facebook) on consumer behavior in Lakshadweep: A comparative study of Millennials and Gen Z

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Abstract

This paper examines how social media use (focusing on YouTube and Facebook) influences marketing engagement and consumer behavior among Millennials and Gen Z in Lakshadweep. A cross-sectional survey (N = 405) measured social media usage, marketing engagements, platform usage (YouTube, Facebook) and purchase behavior. Descriptive statistics show that Gen Z reports higher engagement across most indicators. Correlation analysis finds strong, positive associations among social media usage, marketing engagements and purchase behavior (all $p < .001$). Regression indicates social media usage significantly predicts consumer behavior ($B = 0.822$, $\beta = 0.785$, $t = 25.47$, $p < .001$; $R = .785$, $R^2 = .616$). CFA/SEM show good measurement properties and an excellent model fit (CMIN/df = 1.062; GFI = .954; CFI = .975; RMSEA = .042). SEM path estimates indicate social media usage strongly predicts YouTube ($\beta = 0.699$) and Facebook use ($\beta = 0.719$); platform use and direct social media usage predict marketing engagement, which in turn strongly predicts purchase behavior ($\beta = 0.753$). Practical implications for marketers and platform strategists are discussed.

Keywords: Marketing engagement, consumer behavior, Millennials, Gen Z, Lakshadweep

Introduction

In the digital era, social media has become a transformative force, reshaping consumer habits and marketing strategies across the globe. Platforms such as YouTube and Facebook play a central role in influencing how consumers discover, evaluate, and purchase products. With the rising penetration of internet services and smartphones, social media has become deeply integrated into the everyday lives of young consumers (Smith, 2020) ^[19]. This shift underscores the importance of understanding how these platforms drive consumer decision-making processes, especially in emerging markets such as Lakshadweep.

YouTube, as the world's largest video-sharing platform, offers users an immersive environment for entertainment, information, and product discovery. Its long-form content format allows detailed storytelling, enabling brands and influencers to deliver product reviews, tutorials, and unboxing's that are often perceived as more authentic than traditional advertising (Burgess & Green, 2018) ^[5]. Prior studies indicate that YouTube significantly impacts purchasing decisions, particularly among younger audiences who value in-depth and relatable content (Hwang, 2019) ^[10]. This positions YouTube as a highly influential platform in shaping consumer behavior.

In contrast, Facebook, despite being older, continues to dominate as one of the most widely used social networking platforms in India. With features such as posts, Stories, groups, and brand pages, Facebook provides a highly interactive space where users engage both socially and commercially (Jin & Phua, 2014) ^[11]. Its algorithm-driven personalized feeds expose users to relevant brand messages and influencer endorsements, strengthening consumer trust and loyalty (Yang & Lee, 2019) ^[23]. For marketers, Facebook serves as a versatile tool for fostering community engagement and driving targeted advertising campaigns. Generational differences add another dimension to this dynamic. Millennials (born 1981-1996) experienced the evolution from traditional to digital media,

making them adaptive yet selective in their social media engagement (Lee & Kim, 2020) ^[13]. Gen Z (born 1997-2012), however, are digital natives who have grown up entirely in the online ecosystem, making them more responsive to emerging formats and trends (Marwick, 2015) ^[14]. Research shows that Gen Z consumers demonstrate higher levels of engagement and responsiveness to influencer endorsements compared to Millennials, highlighting the need for comparative analysis between these two cohorts (Abidin, 2016) ^[11].

In this context, the present study examines the influence of YouTube and Facebook on consumer behavior among Millennials and Gen Z in Lakshadweep. By analyzing patterns of social media usage, marketing engagement, and purchasing behavior, the research provides empirical insights into how these platforms impact consumer practices. Given Lakshadweep's unique demographic and cultural setting, the study contributes to the broader literature on social media marketing while also offering region-specific implications. These findings can help marketers design culturally relevant and generation-specific strategies to effectively engage young consumers in the region (Audrezet *et al.*, 2020) ^[12].

Review of Literature

The growing influence of social media on consumer behavior has been extensively documented, particularly with regard to younger generations who dominate online engagement. Studies consistently highlight that platforms such as YouTube and Facebook not only shape how individuals access information but also how they make purchase decisions. Social media acts as both an information source and a marketing channel, offering interactive and personalized content that traditional media cannot replicate (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) ^[24]. This makes it a powerful tool for businesses aiming to connect with Millennials and Gen Z consumers.

YouTube's impact lies in its video-centric model, which allows for detailed product storytelling. Burgess and Green (2018) ^[5] describe YouTube as a participatory culture where users actively seek out product reviews, tutorials, and influencer recommendations. Research shows that long-form video content provides consumers with a sense of authenticity and depth, fostering trust and increasing the likelihood of purchase (Hwang & Zhang, 2018) ^[10]. Furthermore, YouTube's recommendation algorithm enhances user engagement by personalizing content, leading to higher watch time and stronger brand recall (Covington, Adams, & Sargin, 2016) ^[8].

Facebook, meanwhile, continues to maintain its relevance despite the emergence of newer platforms. Its strength lies in building communities and creating interactive brand-consumer relationships. According to Jin and Phua (2014) ^[10], Facebook encourages electronic word-of-mouth through likes, shares, and comments, which in turn strengthens consumer trust. The platform's targeted advertising tools have also been found effective in shaping consumer attitudes and influencing purchase decisions (Duffett, 2017) ^[25]. By combining social interaction with commercial promotion, Facebook remains a central platform for digital marketing strategies.

A major factor in the success of social media marketing is influencer endorsement. Abidin (2016) ^[11] emphasizes that influencers are perceived as authentic and relatable, making

their product recommendations highly persuasive. This aligns with Audrezet, De Kerviler, and Moulard's (2020) ^[2] findings that authenticity and transparency are critical in fostering consumer trust in influencer marketing. On YouTube, influencers often present in-depth product reviews, while on Facebook, they build communities through regular engagement. Both formats significantly shape consumer perceptions and purchase intentions.

Generational differences are equally significant in understanding consumer behavior online. Smith (2020) ^[19] notes that Millennials and Gen Z differ in how they engage with content, with Gen Z demonstrating higher levels of interaction and responsiveness. While Millennials are more likely to seek informational value in online content, Gen Z prefers entertaining and trend-driven material (Priporas, Stylos, & Fotiadis, 2017) ^[26]. These differences underscore the importance of platform-specific and generation-targeted marketing strategies.

Another important dimension is the psychological effect of social media use. Research by Tuten and Solomon (2017) ^[21] shows that the interactive nature of social media creates a sense of community and belonging, which strengthens brand-consumer relationships. Wang (2015) ^[22] found that online reviews and user-generated content significantly enhance purchase intentions, particularly when consumers perceive the source as trustworthy. These insights suggest that consumer behavior on social media is not only shaped by marketing strategies but also by peer influence and community dynamics.

Finally, comparative studies of platforms demonstrate that the type of content determines consumer response. Sheldon and Bryant (2016) ^[17] found that short, visually appealing posts on platforms like Instagram and Facebook are more effective in driving impulse purchases, whereas YouTube's long-form videos encourage deliberate decision-making through detailed reviews and tutorials. This suggests that YouTube and Facebook may complement each other: YouTube building trust through detailed content, and Facebook driving engagement and immediacy. Together, they provide a holistic ecosystem for influencing consumer behavior across both Millennials and Gen Z.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to analyze the influence of social media usage, with a focus on YouTube and Facebook, on consumer behavior among Millennials and Gen Z in Lakshadweep. It aims to compare generational differences in social media engagement, marketing interactions, and purchasing behavior, while also examining how platform usage predicts consumer decisions. The study further seeks to provide insights that can help marketers and businesses develop more effective and targeted digital strategies suited to the local context.

Methodology

Study Design: The study follows a quantitative cross-sectional design using a structured questionnaire to analyze how YouTube and Facebook influence consumer behavior among Millennials and Gen Z in Lakshadweep. Statistical methods such as descriptive analysis, correlation, regression, and SEM were applied to test relationships between social media usage, marketing engagement, and purchase behavior.

Population and Sample: The population of the study consists of Millennials and Gen Z social media users in Lakshadweep. A total of 405 respondents participated, including 175 Millennials and 230 Gen Z users, selected through stratified random sampling to ensure balanced representation across both generations.

Data Collection: Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to YouTube and Facebook users in Lakshadweep. The survey included Likert-scale items to measure social media usage, marketing engagement, and consumer behavior. Responses were gathered from 405 participants, ensuring reliable input for statistical analysis.

Analysis and Interpretation: The demographic analysis of the respondents establishes the foundation for the study. Out of the 405 participants, 218 (53.8%) were female and 187 (46.2%) were male. Generationally, 175 (43.2%)

respondents were Millennials while 230 (56.8%) belonged to Gen Z. This near-balanced representation provides a reliable basis for comparison between the two cohorts. Such demographic diversity is essential to ensure that the results capture the perspectives of both generations, as gender and age often shape attitudes towards social media and consumer behavior.

The generational distribution reveals that Gen Z outnumbers Millennials in the Lakshadweep sample, which is consistent with national trends where Gen Z represents a significant proportion of social media users. Their larger presence in this study enhances the ability to understand the specific ways in which Gen Z integrates YouTube and Facebook into their daily lives and purchasing decisions. Millennials, on the other hand, bring the perspective of users who witnessed the transition from traditional media to digital platforms, providing a contrast between digital adopters and digital natives.

Table 1: Percentage Analysis Demographic Profile

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	218	53.8
	Male	187	46.2
	Total	405	100.0
Millennials / Gen Z	Millennials	175	43.2
	Gen Z	230	56.8
	Total	405	100.0

Source: (Primary data)

An analysis of social media usage shows that both generations demonstrate high levels of engagement, with Gen Z consistently reporting slightly higher averages. For instance, when asked about checking social media multiple times per day, Millennials recorded a mean of 3.98 while Gen Z averaged 4.22. This indicates that Gen Z not only spends more time online but also integrates social media more deeply into their daily habits compared to Millennials. Such habitual use increases their likelihood of being exposed to and influenced by digital marketing. Similarly, the results for time spent on social media confirm the intensity of usage across both cohorts. Millennials reported a mean score of 4.05 for spending more than two hours daily on social media, while Gen Z scored 4.25. These findings highlight the central role of social media in the

everyday lives of young people in Lakshadweep. Extended exposure also increases the potential for interactions with marketing content, further reinforcing the platforms' influence on consumer behavior.

Entertainment emerges as another strong motivator for social media usage. Millennials reported a mean score of 4.02 for using social media as a primary source of entertainment, while Gen Z averaged 4.22. This reflects the fact that social media platforms are not only channels for communication but also substitutes for traditional entertainment media. The stronger reliance of Gen Z on platforms like YouTube and Facebook for entertainment suggests that digital marketers can effectively integrate promotional content within entertaining formats to maximize reach.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics - Social media usage and Consumer Behavior

Millennials / Gen Z	Millennials		Gen Z	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social Media Usage				
Checking social media accounts multiple times a day.	3.9821	1.08211	4.2157	0.89642
Spending more than two hours per day on social media platforms.	4.0512	0.99287	4.2451	0.82107
Social media as the primary source of entertainment.	4.1105	1.02754	4.1961	0.87942
Reliance on social media for staying updated with current events.	3.9910	1.01432	4.1373	0.90236
Using social media to connect with friends and family.	4.0725	0.96544	4.1863	0.88510
Following brands and influencers on social media platforms.	4.2050	0.94121	4.2304	0.80659
Preferring social media over traditional media for news and updates.	4.0187	1.04219	4.1471	0.89205
Engaging with social media content during leisure time.	4.0663	1.01844	4.1863	0.81774
Posting or sharing content on social media regularly.	4.0956	0.97331	4.2559	0.79144
Marketing Engagements				
Trusting product recommendations from social media influencers.	4.0120	0.90412	4.1667	0.91840
Being influenced by social media ads to consider new products.	4.0321	1.05563	4.1765	0.93619
Finding social media ads relevant and interesting.	4.0841	1.02788	4.1765	0.89552
Following brands on social media for exclusive offers and updates.	4.1181	0.94452	4.2255	0.86217
Engaging with brand posts by liking, sharing, or commenting.	4.0612	1.01319	4.1186	0.88464
Watching product reviews and tutorials on social media before making a purchase.	4.0950	1.02211	4.1863	0.87911

Feeling more connected to brands that actively engage on social media.	3.9874	0.99248	4.0980	0.90912
Relying on social media for discovering new brands and products.	4.1264	1.03620	4.2304	0.84297
Participating in social media contests and giveaways hosted by brands.	4.0615	0.98112	4.1863	0.90384
Consumer Behaviour				
Purchasing products after seeing them advertised on social media.	3.9910	1.02412	4.2255	0.85673
Trusting product reviews from social media users more than traditional ads.	4.0148	1.05101	4.2059	0.82045
Being influenced by social media trends when making purchasing decisions.	4.0822	1.03147	4.1667	0.90548
Preferring to shop from brands that have a strong social media presence.	4.0530	0.96741	4.1961	0.87312
Feeling confident in purchasing decisions based on social media endorsements.	4.1021	1.04425	4.2353	0.80115
Spending more on products seen on social media compared to other sources.	3.9845	1.00914	4.1422	0.87098
Seeking out products and brands featured by favourite influencers.	4.0220	0.98117	4.1961	0.94587
Making impulse purchases due to social media promotions.	3.9720	1.04124	4.1618	0.83255
Recommending products seen on social media to friends and family.	4.0751	1.06312	4.1961	0.91827
Usage of YouTube				
Watching YouTube videos daily.	4.1230	0.98142	4.1324	0.87251
Spending more than one hour per day on YouTube.	4.0204	1.03811	4.1765	0.84492
Using YouTube for entertainment purposes.	4.0612	0.99410	4.1186	0.89512
Watching product reviews and unboxings on YouTube.	4.0922	1.04755	4.1863	0.80211
Following YouTube channels of favorite influencers or brands.	4.1320	0.89012	4.2010	0.84761
Preferring YouTube for learning new skills or hobbies.	4.0211	1.10123	4.1716	0.87052
Trusting product recommendations from YouTube influencers.	4.0678	1.09741	4.1569	0.94128
Using YouTube for discovering new products and brands.	3.9914	0.95102	4.1716	0.92540
Commenting and interacting with YouTube videos.	4.0725	1.01986	4.0941	0.82473
Usage of Facebook				
Checking Facebook multiple times a day.	4.0812	1.01214	4.1863	0.78216
Spending more than one hour per day on Facebook.	4.0975	0.98721	4.2206	0.76518
Using Facebook for entertainment purposes.	4.1163	0.94118	4.1863	0.84622
Following favorite influencers and brands on Facebook.	3.9812	1.06212	4.1863	0.88975
Engaging with Facebook Stories regularly.	4.0471	1.05419	4.2794	0.80146
Using Facebook to discover new products and brands.	4.0350	0.98327	4.2059	0.76382
Trusting product recommendations from Facebook influencers.	4.1621	0.93117	4.2206	0.88712
Watching videos or Reels frequently.	4.1234	0.99214	4.1863	0.79631
Interacting with posts by liking, commenting, or sharing.	4.1556	0.89218	4.1863	0.79118

Source: (Primary data)

Social media is also widely used as a source of information and updates. Reliance on these platforms for staying informed with current events and connecting with peers was found to be high for both cohorts, with Gen Z once again showing slightly higher mean values across most indicators. This demonstrates that social media has overtaken traditional media as the primary source of news and interaction for younger generations. The trust placed in these platforms also enhances their potential as effective marketing channels.

The descriptive analysis of marketing engagement shows that social media advertisements and influencer endorsements significantly impact both Millennials and Gen Z. Trust in product recommendations from influencers recorded means of 4.16 for Millennials and 4.22 for Gen Z, showing only a marginal difference but still indicating strong overall influence. Similarly, being influenced by social media advertisements to consider new products scored higher among Gen Z ($M = 4.19$) compared to Millennials ($M = 4.00$). These results suggest that while both cohorts engage with marketing content, Gen Z exhibits greater responsiveness to digital advertising efforts.

Consumer behavior measures provide further insight into the generational contrast. For example, purchasing products after seeing them advertised on social media yielded a mean of 3.99 for Millennials and 4.22 for Gen Z. Likewise, trust in product reviews from social media users over traditional ads recorded 4.00 for Millennials and 4.23 for Gen Z. These differences highlight that Gen Z not only engages more but

also translates engagement into tangible purchase behavior more readily than Millennials.

The analysis of platform-specific usage reveals interesting patterns. YouTube emerges as a particularly influential medium in driving consumer behavior. Correlation results show that consumer behavior is most strongly associated with YouTube usage ($r = .804$), higher than the correlation with Facebook usage ($r = .773$). This finding supports the notion that YouTube's detailed and review-based content fosters stronger consumer trust and purchase decisions. In contrast, Facebook plays a more prominent role in stimulating marketing engagements such as following brands, interacting with posts, and participating in promotions.

Correlation analysis confirms robust positive relationships among all the variables studied. Social media usage was strongly correlated with marketing engagements ($r = .801$) and consumer behavior ($r = .785$), both significant at the 0.01 level. These results suggest that higher levels of social media activity are directly associated with greater responsiveness to marketing and stronger consumer actions. The correlations also underline the interconnected nature of usage, engagement, and purchase behavior, with YouTube and Facebook both serving as critical intermediaries.

Table 3 presents the correlation analysis examining the relationships between social media usage, marketing engagements, consumer behavior, and the usage of specific platforms such as YouTube and Facebook.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis - Relationship between social media and Consumer Behavior

Correlations						
		Social Media Usage	Marketing Engagements	Consumer Behaviour	Usage of YouTube	Usage of Instagram
Social Media Usage	Pearson Correlation	1	.801**	.785**	.794**	.782**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	405	405	405	405	405
Marketing Engagements	Pearson Correlation	.801**	1	.799**	.790**	.774**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	405	405	405	405	405
Purchasing Behavior	Pearson Correlation	.785**	.799**	1	.804**	.779**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	405	405	405	405	405
Usage of YouTube	Pearson Correlation	.794**	.790**	.804**	1	.776**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	405	405	405	405	405
Usage of Facebook	Pearson Correlation	.782**	.774**	.779**	.776**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	405	405	405	405	405

**, Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: (Primary data)

Regression analysis further strengthens these findings. Social media usage was found to be a significant predictor of consumer behavior, with an R^2 value of .616, meaning that 61.6% of the variance in consumer behavior could be explained by social media usage. The regression coefficient ($B = .822$, $\beta = .785$, $p < .001$) indicates a strong positive effect, demonstrating that as social media usage increases, consumer behavior scores rise proportionally. This finding emphasizes the predictive power of social media activity in shaping consumer actions.

The reliability and validity of the constructs were confirmed through CFA results, which showed acceptable values for Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR). For example, social media usage recorded an AVE of .529 and a CR of .91, while consumer behavior had an AVE of .521 and CR of .907. These values surpass recommended thresholds, confirming that the constructs

used in the study are both valid and reliable for further structural modeling.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) provided deeper insights into the relationships among variables. The model fit indices indicated an excellent fit (CMIN/df = 1.062; GFI = .954; CFI = .975; RMSEA = .042). Such indices demonstrate that the hypothesized model adequately explains the observed data. This strengthens the confidence in the relationships identified between social media usage, platform engagement, marketing interactions, and consumer behavior.

The Table 4 provides the regression analysis results, highlighting the influence of social media usage on consumer behavior. This analysis helps to quantify the strength and significance of social media's impact on how consumers behave.

Table 4: Regression Analysis - Influence of social media on Consumer Behavior

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square		Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.785a	.616	.615		.37370	
a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Media Usage						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	90.504	1	90.504	648.726	.000b
	Residual	56.413	403	.140		
	Total	146.917	404			
a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Behaviour						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Social Media Usage						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.701	.136		5.151	.000
	Social Media Usage	.822	.032	.785	25.472	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Behaviour						

Source: (Primary data)

The SEM results highlight the pathways through which social media usage influences consumer behavior. Social media usage strongly predicted platform-specific usage, with standardized coefficients of .699 for YouTube and .719 for Facebook. Both YouTube and Facebook usage, in turn, positively influenced marketing engagement (.277 and .352

respectively). A direct path from social media usage to marketing engagement (.240) was also significant, indicating both direct and mediated effects.

Marketing engagement emerged as the strongest predictor of consumer behavior, with a standardized path coefficient of .753. This demonstrates that while social media usage and

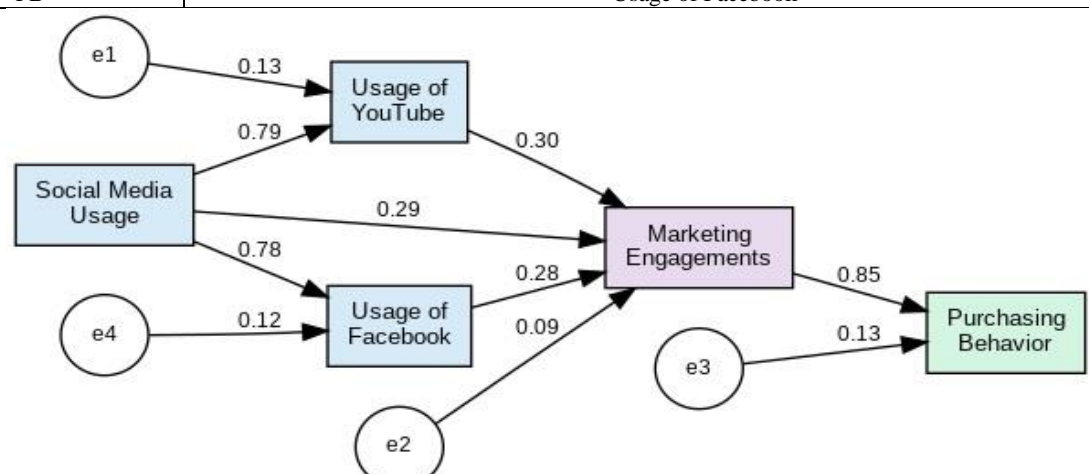
platform engagement are important, it is the extent of marketing engagement such as interacting with brand posts, trusting influencer recommendations, and responding to ads that ultimately drives purchasing behavior. In other words, marketing engagement acts as the critical mediator linking usage with purchase outcomes.

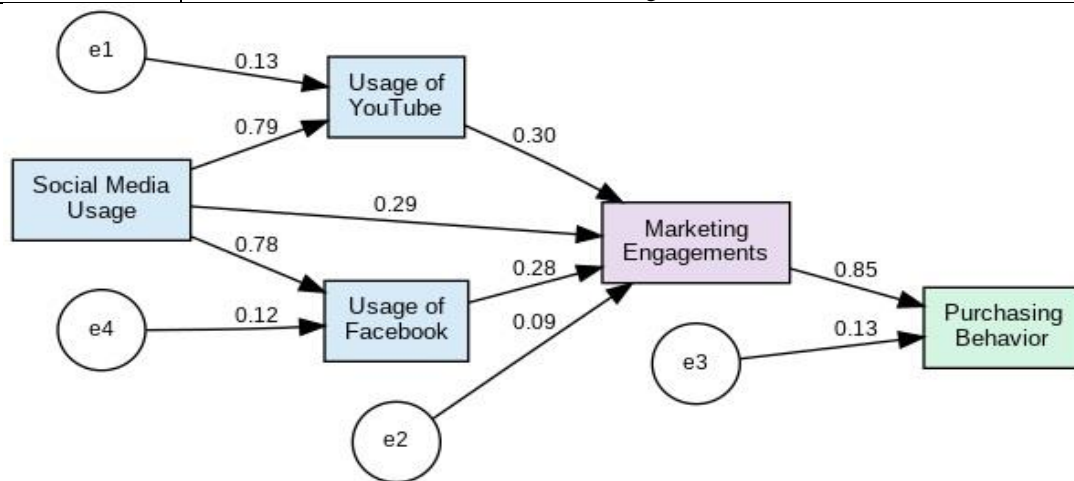
The comparison of YouTube and Facebook reveals complementary roles. YouTube is more strongly tied to purchase behavior through its capacity for detailed, information-rich content that builds trust and confidence in buying decisions. Facebook, meanwhile, drives marketing engagement more effectively through interactive features and personalized promotions. This suggests that marketers should adopt platform-specific strategies, leveraging

YouTube for awareness and trust-building while using Facebook for engagement and conversions.

Generational analysis across the results reinforces the distinction between Millennials and Gen Z. Gen Z consistently reports higher engagement levels, greater trust in influencers, and stronger tendencies to purchase based on social media exposure. Millennials also engage actively but demonstrate slightly more cautious responses. These differences underscore the importance of tailoring marketing strategies to generational preferences, with Gen Z favoring trend-driven and highly interactive content, while Millennials value credibility and detailed product information.

Table 5: SEM Influence of social media on Purchase Behavior

CFA Validity Test							
Factor	AVE	CR	Social Media Usage	Marketing Engagements	Consumer Behaviour	Usage of YouTube	Usage of Instagram
Social Media Usage	0.529	0.91	0.71				
Marketing Engagements	0.513	0.904	0.65	0.71			
Consumer Behaviour	0.521	0.907	0.62	0.68	0.72		
Usage of YouTube	0.504	0.901	0.60	0.66	0.64	0.71	
Usage of Facebook	0.539	0.913	0.58	0.64	0.62	0.61	0.73
SEM Model Fit Summary							
Index				Value			
CMIN/df				1.062			
P-value				0			
GFI				0.954			
AGFI				0.931			
CFI				0.975			
RMSEA				0.042			
Regression Weights							
			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	
YT	<---	SM	0.699	0.034	20.504	***	
FB	<---	SM	0.719	0.036	19.824	***	
ME	<---	YT	0.277	0.048	5.747	***	
ME	<---	I	0.352	0.045	7.784	***	
ME	<---	SM	0.24	0.048	4.978	***	
PB	<---	ME	0.753	0.035	21.478	***	
Note							
SM		Social Media Usage					
ME		Marketing Engagements					
PB		Consumer Behaviour					
YT		Usage of YouTube					
FB		Usage of Facebook					
							



Source: (Primary data)

Overall, the analysis confirms that social media usage significantly influences consumer behavior in Lakshadweep. With high correlations, strong regression results, and robust SEM pathways, the evidence suggests that YouTube and Facebook play pivotal roles in shaping both marketing engagement and purchasing activity. The findings highlight the need for businesses to strategically invest in social media marketing, with tailored approaches that reflect both generational differences and platform-specific strengths.

Findings and Conclusion

The demographic analysis revealed that the study sample consisted of 405 respondents, with a fairly balanced distribution of gender and generational cohorts. Females accounted for 53.8 percent and males 46.2 percent, while Millennials represented 43.2 percent and Gen Z 56.8 percent. This balance ensured that the study captured a wide range of perspectives, making the comparison between the two generations meaningful. The demographic structure reflects the active presence of both groups in the digital ecosystem of Lakshadweep.

Descriptive statistics demonstrated that both Millennials and Gen Z are highly active on social media, though Gen Z consistently reported higher levels of engagement. They checked social media more frequently, spent more time online, and relied more heavily on platforms for entertainment, news, and interaction. This translated into stronger responses to marketing content, as Gen Z showed greater trust in influencers, higher receptiveness to advertisements, and a stronger tendency to purchase products seen on social media. Millennials, while also active users, displayed slightly more cautious engagement patterns. The correlation and regression analyses confirmed the significant impact of social media usage on consumer behavior. Social media usage was strongly and positively correlated with marketing engagement and purchase behavior, with YouTube usage showing the highest association with consumer behavior. Regression analysis revealed that social media usage explained 61.6 percent of the variance in consumer behavior, highlighting its powerful predictive role. These findings emphasize the critical importance of digital platforms in shaping modern purchasing decisions among young consumers in Lakshadweep.

Structural Equation Modeling provided further confirmation of these relationships, showing an excellent model fit and significant path coefficients. Social media usage strongly predicted platform-specific usage of YouTube and Facebook, which in turn influenced marketing engagements. Marketing engagement emerged as the most critical mediator, exerting a strong effect on consumer behavior. The analysis also highlighted complementary roles for the two platforms: YouTube proved more effective in influencing purchasing decisions through information-rich content, while Facebook played a stronger role in driving marketing engagement through interactive features and community-based promotions.

In conclusion, the study demonstrates that social media platforms, particularly YouTube and Facebook, exert a significant influence on consumer behavior among Millennials and Gen Z in Lakshadweep. Gen Z emerges as the more responsive cohort, displaying higher engagement and greater susceptibility to influencer and advertising content. The findings underscore the need for businesses

and marketers to adopt generation-specific and platform-oriented strategies. YouTube should be leveraged for building trust and providing detailed product information, while Facebook should be used to stimulate interaction and promotional engagement. By tailoring strategies in this way, marketers can more effectively influence consumer behavior and achieve stronger outcomes in the dynamic digital marketplace.

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