



## A Study of Indians' Buying Behaviour as Influenced by their use of Social Media

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** Social media has become a part of practically everyone's life in India. Customers' purchasing behaviour is influenced because they prefer to use social media to get information about products before making a purchase. Therefore, the goal of this study was to investigate the effect of social media influence on purchasing behaviour through cognition.

**Design/methodology/approach:** The total sample size for this study was 400 Indians. This quantitative study used an online Google form to collect data from a questionnaire. Indians between the ages of 20 and 40 were the target population. The descriptive analysis was utilized to describe the demographic and social media activity features of the respondents. Finally, the link between the independent and dependent variables was determined using Structural Equation Model (SEM).

**Findings:** The study's findings revealed that social media has a significant impact on purchasing decisions. Social media is extremely important for customer buying behaviour through cognition. The study also highlighted that control variables such as gender and monthly income had an insignificant impact on buying behaviour.

**Practical Implications:** This study will assist marketers in focusing more on social media as a venue for exhibiting their products, which will eventually alter buyer cognition. Furthermore, client buying behaviour will be influenced by cognition. As a result, marketers will be able to better understand customer desires or requirements and develop the appropriate strategy to attract and retain more customers.

**Keywords:** Buying Behavior, Cognition, Gender, Monthly Income, Social Media. (IAM)

### I. Introduction

Social media has spread all over the world and has an impact on people's behaviour. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and other social media platforms make it simple for people to communicate with one another. For billions of people throughout the world, the internet, social media, smartphone apps, and other digital communications technology have become part of their daily lives. As a result, social media has emerged as a powerful channel for businesses to connect with their target audience. More than 50 million businesses have Facebook pages, and over 88 percent use Twitter for marketing (Lister,

2017). Companies can achieve their marketing goals at a low cost by using digital and social media marketing (Ajina, 2019). People are spending a growing amount of time online looking for information, discussing products and services with other customers, and engaging with businesses.

According to January 2020 data, 4.54 billion people, or 59% of the global population, use the internet (Statista, 2020). As a result of this shift in customer behaviour, businesses have made digital and social media an important part of their marketing strategies (Stephen, 2016). Companies generally use social media

to engage with their customers, raise brand awareness, influence consumer attitudes, gather feedback, improve current products and services, and boost sales (Algharabat et al., 2018; Kapoor et al., 2018; Kaur et al., 2018; Lal et al., 2020).

Users' demands, as well as their opinions and attitudes toward various forms of messaging and communications, must be identified, much as in traditional marketing. To boost the satisfaction levels of online communities, Kang (2018) advised that organizations aim to discover the needs of members of online communities, make particular services to meet those needs, and effectively interact with members.

Consumer behaviour has shifted dramatically as a result of technological advancements and the widespread adoption of mobile devices, which has had a direct impact on how we connect and use social commerce to make decisions and shop online. Consumer views regarding online shopping have improved as a result of increased usage of digital marketing and social media (Abou-Elgheit, 2018; Alam et al., 2019; Komodromos et al., 2018). Marketers who design their digital and social media strategies in tandem with a deeper examination of human behavioural insight and communicate connections via social networks have a better chance of succeeding (Lappeman et al., 2018; Dwivedi et al., 2021).

The digital agencies 'We Are Social' and 'Hootsuite,' which provide and manage social media and marketing solutions, give information on the movement of online business and consumer behaviour in each country around the world. People in India between the ages of 18 and 45 use social media extensively, and they choose to use it for searching, sharing, and purchasing products since it allows them to receive information quickly and at a low cost. People can receive more information about products through social media communication, which influences client buying behaviour.

Facebook has a response rate of 93 percent, YouTube has a response rate of 91 percent, Instagram has a response rate of 65 percent, and Twitter has a response rate of 52 percent. Customers seeking information about different products were the subject of this

study's buying behaviour. This research will concentrate on the steps taken before a client purchases a product. Because social media has more information, both positive and negative, concerning any product, it has a greater influence on purchasing behaviour, and there are many distinct types of social media that influence diverse client buying behaviour. As a result, Indian marketers should consider this topic when engaging in social media activities, as these have a direct impact on the product.

The goal of this study is to investigate the factors that influence buying behaviour. The independent variable in this study focused on the impact of social media on buying behaviour, while the dependent variable, though an intervening variable, was cognition. The following is a list of research objectives:

1. To investigate the impact of social media on cognition and buying behaviour.
2. To investigate whether control variables such as gender and monthly income have any significant impact on buying behaviour.

With the rapid growth of e-commerce and online shopping in India, understanding the factors that influence consumers' buying decisions is crucial for businesses to succeed in this competitive market. Social media, with its ability to disseminate information, influence opinions, and facilitate peer recommendations, has the potential to significantly impact consumers' purchasing behavior. Indian consumers exhibit diverse cultural, social, and demographic characteristics. Studying their buying behavior and the influence of social media within this context can provide valuable insights into the unique challenges and opportunities faced by businesses operating in the Indian market. It can help identify specific patterns, preferences, and trends that are relevant to effectively targeting and engaging Indian consumers through social media platforms. The study of Indians' buying behavior as influenced by their use of social media is therefore, an attempt to apprise businesses, marketers, and researchers about the changing landscape of consumer behavior and to develop effective strategies for engaging with Indian consumers in the digital era.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT)*

This theory is a method for studying mass communication and attempting to comprehend people's behaviour in selecting and utilizing media to meet their needs (Blumber and Kats, 1974). This approach, according to Kartz (1959), focuses on "what people do with media" rather than "what media does to people." According to this hypothesis, people utilize social media for a variety of reasons. Social engagement, information seeking, passing time, amusement, relaxation, communicatory utility, and convenience utility are the seven themes identified by Whiting and Williams (2013, p. 364) as reasons why individuals use social media.

### *Stimulus-Organism-Response Theory (S-O-R)*

The idea was created from Mehrabian and Russell's (1974) Stimulus-Reaction Theory (S-R), which clarified consumer buying behaviour by explaining how external environmental stimuli (S) can alter an individual's internal organism (O) before individual behaviour response (R). Jacoby (2002) added that the stimulation sector also includes perception, motivation, media, and other things that people get from their surroundings. The input choice process for the organism sector includes emotions, cognition, feeling, experience, and other factors. The final sector is response, which is the outcome of people's decision-making process.

### *Social Media*

Social media is a collection of applications that combine basic human needs with Web 2.0 technology to allow User Generated Content to create and share information (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Murugesan (2007) defines social media as a variety of online information sources that customers develop or share with others. People use social media for a variety of reasons, but the basic premise remains the same: to communicate with others, to strengthen relationships, to improve campaigns, and to provide new experiences to users (Williamson, 2013). The following are some of the benefits of social media: For starters, you can build a public location where you can speak with others. Second, a corporation can get closer to its customers. Third, it has the ability to establish credibility and trust. Fourth, advocate for increased

transparency. Create opportunities for third-party syndication and assistance in the fifth step. The sixth point is viral distribution. Seventh, it is less expensive. Eighth, it is preferable to have a deeper understanding of people's lifestyles. Ninth, it is possible to follow up in real time. Tenth, shorten the time it takes to obtain information. Finally, it can be used as part of a community strategy and information distribution centre. Customers use social media to search for or explore information, such as product qualification, when they have a demand for or are interested in something (Voramontri & Klieb, 2018). Customers can use social media to quickly find information and direct their attention to the point that they want (Kyriakopoulou and Kitsios, 2013). Social media significantly influences travel motivation and destination image (Nag & Gilitwala, 2019).

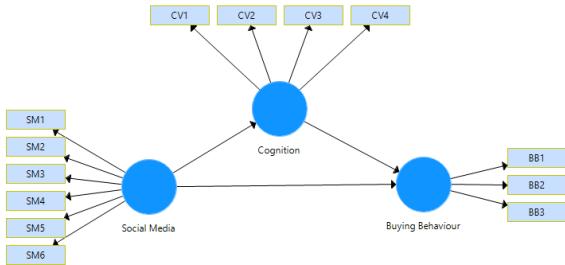
### *Customer Buying Behavior*

When a consumer wants to buy a product to meet a need, this is the process. The procedure entails finding, purchasing, using, evaluating, and providing services (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1994). According to Kotler and Armstrong (2013), consumers go through three processes before buying a product: need recognition, information search, and considering alternatives. Almost everyone uses social media to look for information, such as sales, deals, or items, according to Whiting and Williams (2013).

Conducting study on "Indians' buying behavior as influenced by their use of social media" can contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the field of consumer behavior, particularly in the context of social media's influence on buying decisions. The findings can help validate or challenge existing theories and models and provide a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics between social media usage and consumer behaviour in an Indian context.

## III. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The relationship between independent factors includes social media influence on cognition, which is an internal individual process about attitude and emotions before they search for information about a product, as shown in the conceptual framework below. The study will also attempt to investigate its impact on purchasing behaviour.



**Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework**

#### IV. HYPOTHESIS

Quinn, K. (2018) investigated the cognitive benefits of social media use among older adults. Through a randomized controlled trial, the study examined the impact of engaging with social media platforms on cognitive functioning in later life. The results of the study shed light on the potential positive effects of social media use on cognitive abilities among older adults, highlighting the importance of further research in this area. Stieger and Wunderl (2022) also conducted an investigation establishing a relationship between the frequency and duration of social media usage and diverse cognitive abilities. The results of the study offer valuable insights into the potential influence of social media usage on cognitive capabilities among adolescents, thereby elucidating the correlation between online activities and cognitive performance. Sinclair, T. J., and Grieve, R. (2017), in their research paper, examined the role of Facebook in providing social connectedness for older adults. They investigated how older adults utilize Facebook as a platform for maintaining social connections and fostering a sense of connectedness. The study highlights the potential of Facebook as a valuable resource for enhancing social interaction and combating social isolation among older adults.

#### H1: There is no significant impact of social media on cognition.

Consumers' purchase decisions, brand preferences, and shopping patterns were studied by Varghese and Agrawal (2021). The results of the research provide insight into how social media affects customers' opinions, tastes, and decisions. Psychological distance and consumer involvement also have a significant influence on purchasing behavior in the context of an online promotional event. Liu, Q., et al. (2020) and Voramontri & Klieb (2019) examined the influence of social media

on consumer behavior. They explored how social media platforms shaped consumer decision-making processes, attitudes, and buying behaviors. The study also highlighted the significant impact of social media on consumers' perceptions, brand preferences, and information-seeking behavior. Makudza et al. (2020) developed the concept that word-of-mouth marketing on social media platforms primarily influences consumer purchasing behavior. On the other hand, research has shown that company-generated content negatively affects purchase intention. The relationship between purchase behavior and user-generated social media communication was found to be moderately weak, whereas the association between social media platforms and consumer purchase intention was deemed insignificant. The findings suggest that social media can be an effective instrument, though with the caution that it must be adapted to reduce the generation of content that distorts good customer behavior. By investigating the relationship between social media and consumer buying behavior, the paper contributes to our understanding of the evolving dynamics between technology and consumer decision-making in the digital age.

#### H2: There is no significant impact of social media on Buying Behaviour.

Sofi, S. A., et al. (2020) highlighted that impulsiveness and buying tendencies for specific products change across different consumer groups. According to Trandafilović et al. (2013), there exists a gender difference in consumer behavior, where women tend to exhibit more affective (impulsive) behavior while shopping, leading to a greater tendency to make purchases, whereas men tend to consider a wider range of options before making a purchase. Respondents with higher levels of education exhibit a greater tendency towards cognitive behavior in the context of shopping, as compared to those with lower levels of education. As individuals age, there is an increase in the manifestation of cognitive behavior. In the context of purchasing high-value and consequential commodities, cognitive factors tend to exert a greater influence than affective considerations. In Sharma's (2014) study, the focus was on examining the factors that contribute to cognitive dissonance in the decision-making process of consumers who purchase consumer

goods in urban areas. The study highlighted factors like family status, religious values, customs, and beliefs that can influence an individual's behavior and decision-making.

**H3: There is no significant impact of cognition on Buying Behaviour.**

**H4: Cognition acts as a mediator between Social Media and Buying Behaviour.**

## V. METHODOLOGY

The study employed quantitative methods to analyze the data and chose non-probabilistic sampling with a snowball sample to collect information via Google Forms. Cronbach's alpha was used in this study to examine questionnaire reliability with 30 samples for the pilot test. The minimal sample size for collected data is 385, as calculated by Berenson and Levine's formula (1999). However, the researcher intends to collect data from 400 respondents in order to confirm the accuracy of the data and prevent doing a survey that will not be completed. The target demographic was Indians between the ages of 20 and 40. The descriptive analysis was used to explain the characteristics of respondents in terms of demographic data and social media activity. The data was collected using a Likert scale consisting of five points, ranging from "strongly disagreed" to "strongly agreed". In September 2022, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to a group of individuals consisting of friends and acquaintances. Subsequently, the participants were requested to disseminate the survey to their companions and associates within their respective cities, and the process was repeated.

Finally, this study used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to determine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling was analyzed using SmartPLS3 software. PLS-SEM permits simultaneous estimation of measurement and structural models, making it appropriate for exploratory research or when theory development is the primary objective. It enables researchers to examine the relationships between latent variables and observed indicators in order to test and refine theoretical constructs. PLS SEM offers flexibility, robustness, and simplicity, making it a suitable alternative when CB SEM is not applicable or feasible.

## VI. RESULTS

Pre-testing is a technique for determining the reliability of a questionnaire using a small sample size before releasing the final questions to the entire sample. This strategy aids the researcher in avoiding misunderstandings or misconceptions about the research since it displays the questionnaire problem, which aids the researcher in understanding the problem and developing questions for efficient research (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, and Griffin, 2013). Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient is an instrument used by the researcher to assess the research's dependability. The acceptable Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient value was set at 0.6 or above, indicating that the questions in the questionnaire are acceptable. If the value is less than 0.6, the questionnaire must be pre-tested until it is equal to or greater than 0.6.

**Table 1 – The Result of Reliability of Measurement (n=30)**

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
Social Media	0.906
Cognition	0.903
Buying Behavior	0.877

The Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient value, which the researcher pre-tested in this study using 30 respondents as a sample size to determine the reliability of each variable, is shown in Table 1. The present value of three variables is greater than 0.6, indicating that they are dependable and acceptable for use in a questionnaire survey (Morgan, Leech, Gloeckner, and Barret, 2004).

**Table 2 – The summary of Frequency and Percentage of Demographic Factors**

Demographic Factors	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	117	29.250
Female	283	70.750
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.000</b>
<b>Age</b>		
Less than 20	11	2.750
20-25	85	21.250
26-30	172	43.000
31-35	93	23.250
36-40	33	8.250
More than 40	6	1.500
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.000</b>
<b>Education</b>		
Below Bachelor's degree	14	3.500
Bachelor's Degree	294	73.500
Master's Degree	92	23.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.000</b>

<b>Demographic Factors</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Occupation</b>		
Student / College student	54	13.500
Company employee	243	60.750
Government employee / State enterprises	32	8.000
Business owner	54	13.500
Others	17	4.250
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.000</b>
<b>Monthly Income</b>		
Less than 15,000 INR	38	9.500
15,001-20,000 INR	57	14.250
20,001-30,000 INR	122	30.500
30,001-45,000 INR	83	20.750
45,001 – 50,000 INR	45	11.250
More than 50,000	55	13.750
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.000</b>

Source: Author's own calculations.

Table 2 illustrates the results of each demographic element. For example, the gender of most respondents in this questionnaire is female (70.750%) (283 respondents), while the remaining respondents are male (29.250%). (117 respondents).

The second factor is age; most respondents are between the ages of 26 and 30, with 43.00 percent (172 respondents), 31 to 35 years old with 23.250 percent (93 respondents), 20 to 25 years old with 21.250 percent (85 respondents), 36 to 40 years old with 8.250 percent (33 respondents), less than 20 years old with 2.750 percent (11 respondents), and more than 40 years old with 1.500 percent (6 respondents).

The third factor is education, with 73.500 percent (294 respondents) saying they have a bachelor's degree, 23.000 percent (92 respondents) saying they have a master's degree, and 3.500 percent saying they don't have a bachelor's degree (14 respondents). No one who responded to the survey has a doctorate degree.

The fourth question is about occupation, and the most common responses are: Company employee (60.750%) (243 respondents), Student / College student (13.500%) (54 respondents), Business owner (13.500%) (54 respondents), Government employee / State enterprises (8.000%) (32 respondents), and other (4.250%). (17 respondents).

When it comes to monthly income, the majority of respondents say they earn between

20,001 and 30,000 INR (30.500%) (122 respondents), between 30,001-45,000 INR (20.750%) (83 respondents), between 15,001 and 20,000 INR (14.250%) (57 respondents), between more than 50,000 INR (13.750%) (55 respondents), and between 45,001 – 50,000 INR (11.250%) (45 respondents) (38 respondents).

**Table 3 – The summary of Frequency and Percentage of Using Social Media**

<b>Using Social Media Factors</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Social Media</b>		
Facebook	207	51.750
Instagram	97	24.250
Twitter	41	10.250
YouTube	55	13.750
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.000</b>
<b>Frequency in using</b>		
1-5 times / day	100	25.000
6-10 times / day	184	46.000
More than 10 times/day	116	29.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.000</b>
<b>Period to accessing</b>		
Less than 30 mins	25	6.250
1-2 hours	175	43.750
3-4 hours	121	30.250
More than 4 hours	79	19.750
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.000</b>
<b>Duration of time to use social media</b>		
06.01 – 11.59 am.	26	6.500
12.00 – 18.00 pm.	59	14.750
18.01 – 23.59 pm.	315	78.750
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.000</b>

Source: Author's own calculations.

The summary of the use of social media can be seen in Table 3. With 51.750 percent (207 respondents) in this survey, Facebook is the most popular social media channel, followed by Instagram (24.250 percent) (97 respondents), YouTube (13.750 percent) (55 respondents), and Twitter (10.250%). (41 respondents).

The second factor is frequency of use, with 46.000 percent (184 respondents) claiming to use it 6-10 times per day, 29.000 percent (116 respondents) claiming to use it more than 10 times per day, and 25.000 percent (100 respondents) claiming to use it 1-5 times per day.

The third factor is access time, with 43.750 percent (175 respondents) preferring 1-2

hours, 30.250 percent (121 respondents) preferring 3-4 hours, 19.750 percent (79 respondents) preferring more than 4 hours, and 6.250 percent preferring less than 30 minutes (25 respondents). Last but not least, when it comes to the length of time spent on social media, the majority of respondents choose the hours between 18.01 and 23.59 pm (78.750% of 315 respondents), 12.00–18.00 pm (14.750 percent of 59 respondents), and 06.01–11.59 am (6.500 percent of respondents) (26 respondents). No one used social media between the hours of 00.00 and 06.00 am, according to the survey.

## ASSESSMENT OF MEASUREMENT MODEL

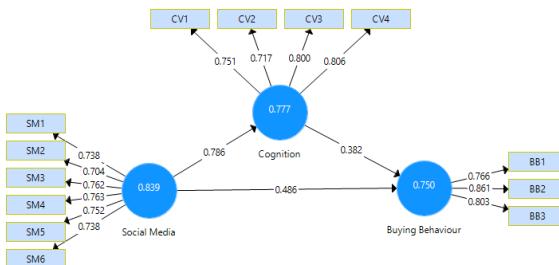
**Table 4 – Confirmatory Composite Analysis Results, Extracted Average Variance, and Construct Reliability**

	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Social Media					
SM1	0.738				
SM2	0.704				
SM3	0.762				
SM4	0.763				
SM5	0.752				
SM6	0.738				
Cognition					
CV1	0.751				
CV2	0.717	0.771	0.777	0.853	0.592
CV3	0.800				
CV4	0.806				
Buying Behaviour					
BB1	0.766				
BB2	0.861	0.74	0.75	0.852	0.657
BB3	0.803				

Source: Author's own calculations.

The results showed that the base model is acceptable because the results in all situations exceeded the minimum threshold, with Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978), Composite Reliability (Construct Reliability) values exceeding the 0.70 threshold value (Hair et al., 1998). Each construct's Average Variance Extracted (AVE) likewise exceeded the 0.50 requirement (Fornell and Larker, 1981) (Hair et.al., 2022) (Hair et.al., 2019). Furthermore, all indicator

item factor loadings are greater than 0.70 (Yoo and Alavi, 2001), indicating that the test has good convergent validity.



**Figure 2: Confirmatory Composite Analysis Results**

**Table 5 – Discriminant Validity**

	Social Media	Cognition	Buying Behaviour
Social Media	0.743		
Cognition	0.786	0.770	
Buying Behaviour	0.785	0.764	0.811

Source: Author's own calculations.

The study's discriminant validity was investigated to see if the constructs under investigation were distinct from one another and, if so, whether further statistical analysis could be conducted. The Fornell and Larker criterion (1981) was used to conduct discriminant validity analysis, the results of which are reported in Table 5. The figures revealed that the constructs under investigation are distinct from one another and do not overlap.

**Table 6 -R Square Results**

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Cognition	0.618	0.617
Buying Behaviour	0.673	0.672

Source: Author's own calculations.

For linear regression models, R-squared is a goodness-of-fit criterion. This figure shows the percentage of variance in the dependent variable that the independent factors account for when taken all together. Higher R-squared values indicate that there are fewer disparities between the observed data and the fitted values, implying a better model fit. The R-squared value of 0.618 indicates that variation in cognition explains 61.8 percent of the variance in purchasing behaviour. The model fit criteria are summarized in the following table:

**Table 7 – Model Fit**

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
<b>SRMR</b>	0.102	0.102
<b>d_ULS</b>	0.951	0.951
<b>d_G</b>	0.284	0.284
<b>Chi-Square</b>	764.198	764.198
<b>NFI (<math>\geq 0.90</math>, Hair et al., 1998)</b>	0.724	0.724

Source: Author's own calculations.

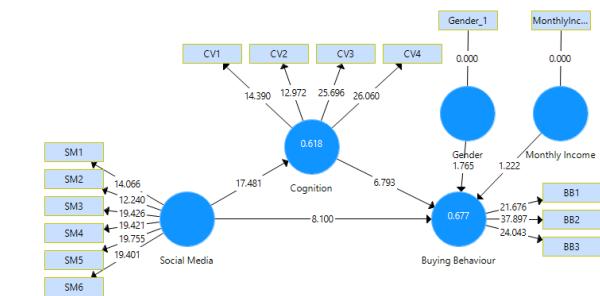
The SRMR value should be below 0.10 (Kline, 2016) (Hair et. Al., 2017) to generalize the data findings. The statistical value obtained exceeds the given cautious limitations by a small margin.

#### ASSESSMENT OF STRUCTURAL MODEL

To establish a link between the constructs and their prognostic importance, the Structural Equation Model was used. Without modifying the sign, the bootstrapping technique was used with 500 bootstraps. This procedure aided in the determination of p-values for the study's defined hypotheses.

**Table 8 – Results of the Structural Model Hypotheses Testing: Taking Gender and Monthly Income as Control Variables**

Hypotheses	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values	Supported
There is no significant impact of social media on cognition.	0.044	17.677	0.000	No
There is no significant impact of social media on Buying Behaviour.	0.058	8.458	0.000	No
There is no significant impact of cognition on Buying Behaviour.	0.054	7.113	0.000	No
There is no significant impact of gender on Buying Behaviour.	0.029	1.791	0.074	Yes
There is no significant impact of monthly income on Buying Behaviour.	0.032	1.214	0.225	Yes



**Figure 3: Structural Equation Model**

**Table 9 – MEDIATION EFFECT OF COGNITION BETWEEN SOCIAL MEDIA AND BUYING BEHAVIOUR**

Dependent Variables ↓		Independent Variables↓			
		Social Media	Cognition	Gender	Monthly Income
Cognition	DE	0.786			
	IE	-			
	TE	0.786			
Buying Behaviour	DE	0.490	0.386	0.053	-0.039
	IE	0.303	-	-	-
	TE	0.793	0.386	0.053	-0.039

Source: Author's own calculations.

Note: DE: Direct Effects, IE: Indirect Effects and TE: Total Effects

Table 9 was utilized to ascertain the impact of constructs on the dependent variable, namely Buying Behaviour. Both the direct and indirect effects of all independent variables, including social media and cognition, were taken into consideration. Social media has the highest direct impact on buying behaviour ( $\beta = 0.490$ ), followed by cognition ( $\beta = 0.386$ ), gender ( $\beta = 0.053$ ), and monthly income ( $\beta = -0.039$ ). The impact of social media on cognition is also significant ( $\beta = 0.786$ ). Social media also have an indirect effect on buying behaviour ( $\beta = 0.303$ ). So, social media has the highest total impact on buying behaviour ( $\beta = 0.793$ ).

#### VII. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the first hypothesis, the impact of social media on cognition was investigated using a structural equation model. The beta was 0.786, and the significance was less than 0.05, indicating that social media had a favourable impact on cognition when used in conjunction with any product. The impact of social media on buying behaviour showed a beta of 0.490 ( $p < 0.05$ ), indicating a significant impact of social media on buying behaviour. The third hypothesis is that the impact of cognition on purchasing behaviour is the third hypothesis.

The beta was 0.386 ( $p < 0.05$ ), indicating a significant impact of cognition on purchasing behaviour. The study also highlighted that control variables such as gender and monthly income had an insignificant ( $p > 0.05$ ) impact on buying behaviour. It's possible that when customers obtain information from social media, they go through a buying decision process internally, and then make the decision to buy the goods.

Finally, customers use social media to browse information and make purchasing decisions. According to the research's goal, the findings can answer questions about social media and how it influences Indians' buying behaviour, because customer cognition occurs after they receive positive or negative information from social media. This procedure involves judging a customer's decision to buy or not buy a product.

### **VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS**

According to the findings of this study, social media is a factor that influences cognition and purchasing behaviour. The findings of this study revealed that almost all respondents utilized social media to browse products they were interested in purchasing before making a purchase. It assists companies and marketers in developing appropriate marketing strategies based on customer behaviour. For example, customers aged 26 to 30 should promote, launch a new product, or engage in activity on Facebook, as the data collected in this study indicates that this is a popular channel that most respondents use. The findings of this study can assist marketing in developing an appropriate strategy and method of communicating with target customers. For example, social media advertising can assist a company in attracting customers and providing information that can help a customer feel confident in purchasing a product, but the company must be cautious because it contains both positive and negative information about the product, which can lead to cognition.

### **IX. MANAGERIAL AND THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS**

The study of Indians' buying behavior as influenced by their use of social media has significant managerial and theoretical implications. Understanding the impact of social media on purchasing behavior can

provide significant insights for businesses and marketers from a managerial standpoint. Companies may establish focused marketing strategies, optimize their social media presence, and communicate with customers more effectively if they recognize the importance of social media in determining consumer preferences. This insight can help organizations identify possible client categories, customize product offerings, and improve customer satisfaction.

Furthermore, the research has theoretical implications for consumer behavior. It adds to existing research by throwing light on the specific influence of social media on Indian purchasing decisions. It explains how social media platforms may be effective instruments for information seeking, product evaluation, peer influence, and brand involvement. The findings of this study can be used to develop theoretical frameworks and models of consumer behavior, improving understanding of the complicated interaction between social media, individual behavior, and purchase decisions.

This study thus has major management implications for businesses looking to efficiently exploit social media, as well as theoretical implications for furthering understanding of consumer behavior in the context of Indian purchasing decisions.

### **X. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND SCOPE FOR FURTHER STUDY**

Only two independent factors were explored in this study: cognition and social media. Because the data was acquired from Indians for a limited period between September and October 2022, it can only provide a limited explanation of Indians' buying behaviour. The area and period for data collection should be expanded to accommodate a wider range of people. Additional variables and hypotheses should be included in the search for factors that influence purchasing behaviour, such as a study of the purchase decision process. As this study focused on general social media rather than a single channel, future research should focus on a specific social medium to learn more about which social media has the greatest impact on customer purchasing behaviour.

Furthermore, the researcher only employed cognition as an intervening variable; however, emotion is also very significant, so future studies should include emotion or another intervening variable to better understand purchasing behaviour.

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