



Social Media During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Shailesh Sautkar and S.K. Sarkar

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Shailesh D. Sautkar^a, and S. K. Sarkar^b

^{a,b}Department of Visual Arts, Graphic Era Hill University, Dehradun, Uttarakhand

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

During the COVID-19 epidemic, there was a lot of advancement in terms of Social Media platforms, which aids in the growth of your business. Traditional media channels such as television, radio, and all forms of flow simply cannot compete in terms of advantages with Social Media. [1] It has improved brand recognition, quality online traffic and interactions, sales leads, and the conversion of those leads into paying customers. Its advantages are felt throughout the world.

Keyword: Social Media, COVID-19, Pandemic, Brand, Advertising, Target audience

1. INTRODUCTION

There are 4.48 billion active Social Media users worldwide now. [2] When you consider that Social Media only started 15 years ago, it's a remarkable number. Today, one out of every three individuals on the planet is now on Social Media platforms. All you'll need is an internet-connected gadget to contact them. Because of its growing popularity during the COVID-19 pandemic, marketers are allocating a larger percentage of their advertising expenditures to Social Media. [3] With the huge global reach of Social Media marketing (SMM), customers that are tech-savvy want to be able to find you on a variety of channels. According to surveys, customers prefer to contact businesses via Social Media platforms rather than by calling them on the phone. When a person or organisation wants to share information with a large group of people, Social Media communication differs from more traditional forms of media like print or radio. By its very nature, Social Media is more intimate and personal. [4]

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Rachelle Gordon, a Contributing Writer, states According to her blog "11 Steps to Engaging Your Audience on Social Media," published on business.com. Updated on August 31, 2021, that,

1. Engage the public at a critical era of epidemic Covid - 19

Encourage sharing: Encourage your consumers to share their experiences on Social Media, which will help you grow your audience. During live events, Live Cube turns

Social Media sharing into a game and rewarded your consumers for discussing your event or product. [8]

2. Social Media may help you raise brand awareness during Covid - 19

Content is promoted. You may have observed your favorite companies producing content on multiple Social Media platforms. By sharing material, you make it simpler for others to read, access, and share it. That is, you have the chance to improve brand recognition by sharing your own content. [9]

3. Drive website Traffic: In Covid -19, using Social Media to drive visits to a website. To increase traffic to your website, provide snippets or teasers with a link on Social Media. This may persuade the viewer to visit your website and read more. Social Media is also a great location to publish older but still relevant information that will pique the interest of new followers. [10]

4. Establish Industry Authority: Social Media has altered how we live our lives and has had an impact on practically every sector. People use Social Media to stay informed, compare and purchase products, and interact with family and friends. Manufacturers also use Social Media to engage with their customers. [11]

5. Conversion Rates for Lifts: What Is a Conversion? When a user does what you want them to do, this is referred to as a conversion. In the context of Social Media conversions, this refers to a user who took action with your brand after discovering it on Social Media. A conversion can take numerous forms depending on your company's aims, such as making a purchase. [12]

6. Improved customer service: The reciprocal benefits of increased brand accessibility via Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and other platforms allow for quick consumer engagement and engaging social activity, as well as brand growth and broad-scale communication. [13]

7. Boost Search Engine Rankings: Even if it has no direct influence on corporate outcomes, Social Media plays a crucial role in your overall SEO (Search Engine Optimization) strategy. It primarily works by increasing the exposure of your brand and content, resulting in more website visitors.[14]

8. Collect Reviews and Customer Insights: On Social Media, how can you get customer insights? The top sources for consumer insights:

Focus groups: People gathered in groups to discuss an existing product or to offer input on the development or launch of a new product.

Surveys: A prepared set of questions and prompts are distributed to a preset group of people in order to gather information and insight about products and services. [15]

9. What are insights on Social Media?

Consumer intelligence from social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram is referred to as social insight. Observing and analyzing social interactions around a brand, product, or even an unmet need or problem provides social insights. [15]

10. **The dissemination of information:** One of the most major advantages of Social Media is the volume of information that is delivered. To prevent misconceptions during pandemics, governments have taken attempts to connect with us. If you've lately been following Boris Johnson on Instagram, you might have spotted the following message: STAY AWARENESS, CONTROL THE VIRUS AND SAVE LIVES.
11. **Raising Awareness:** People have been using Social Media to help spread the word about the dangers of contact with germs. The World Health Organization (WHO) has partnered with YouTube videos to promote awareness about the corona virus and associated safety precautions. Challenges like the Safe Hands Challenge have emerged on Social Media in an effort to encourage people to wash their hands after exposure to the virus.

3. RESEARCH PROBLEMS

Advertising on Social Media: Most people are familiar with Facebook commercials, but did you know that almost all other Social Media platforms provide advertising options as well? Marketers are increasingly depending on Social Media to sell and promote their products and services, so knowing the impact of Social Media on online purchasing is crucial. The majority of internet users utilize one or more forms of online Social Media, and it has become an important part of day-to-day operations for individuals who have selected this online platform. We will work with you to create hyper-targeted advertising that will get the attention you seek! We will work with you to create a hyper-targeted ad that grabs your attention! It is said that we monitor and manage your ads so that you can get the most out of your daily advertising budget.

4. OBJECTIVES

So, the objective of the research is to examine how Social Media acts during the COVID-19 epidemic.

- 1) To Recognize Social Media's Role in the COVID-19 Pandemic
- 2) To find out the challenges that the target audience has to face in the COVID-19 epidemic.
- 3) To examine the virtual target audience's trust relationships.

5. RESEARCH DESIGN

This research design's goal is to create an appropriate framework for the investigation. The research strategy is one of the most essential decisions in the research design process because it affects how much relevant information should be acquired for the study; nonetheless, the research design process comprises a number of connected decisions.

In this investigation, mixed methodologies were employed. The first phase of the study included well-structured questionnaires (from educational institutions, colleges, and schools) and semi-structured interviews with important Participants (from educational

institutions, colleges, and schools) from participating firms. Another design employed was to interview students to find out how they feel about educational safety and health, and field observations were conducted at selected educational institution sites. As a result, this study employs a descriptive research methodology for the chosen educational institution in order to reach an agreement on the effects of personal safety and health management system on the health, safety, and educational harm of the individuals involved. This study strategy, according to experts, correctly portrays the descriptive research person, event, or scenario. This approach gives researchers a profile of the important features of the phenomena of interest articulated from an individual, organizational, and educational-focused standpoint.

As a result, the basis of this study design enabled researchers to obtain data from respondents on the implications of safety and health on Local educational enterprises. It also aided in the analysis of how educational institutes influence safety and health. Figure 1 depicts the general structure and flow process of the research.

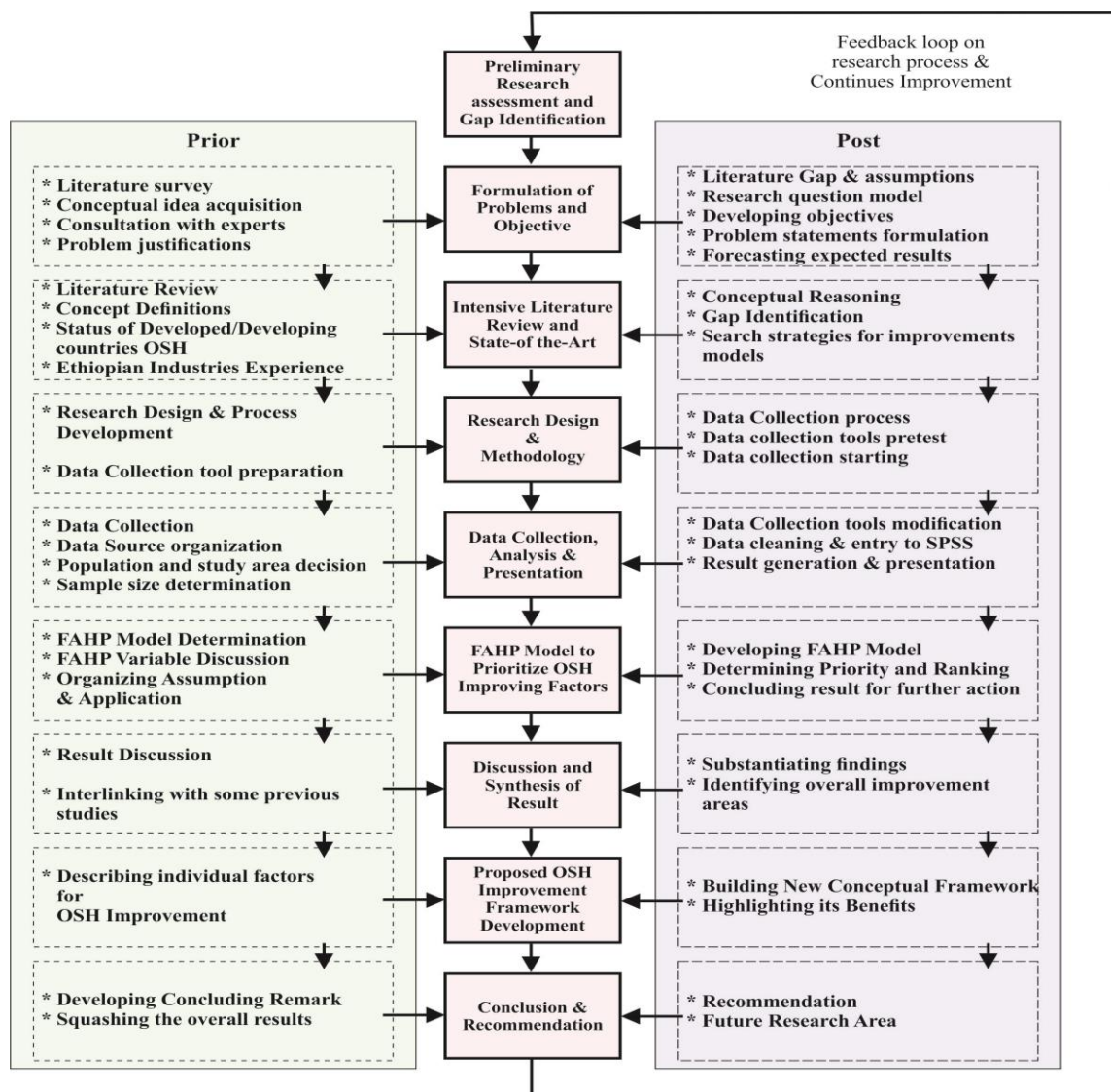


Figure 1. Research methods and processes by Kassu Jilcha Sileyew

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A systematic questionnaire was developed, which included aspects on Social Media structures, trust, and buying intentions. A pilot study was conducted with a limited group of participants, comprising Ph.D. students and university faculty members. An online questionnaire was used to collect data from January 2019 to January 2021. Social Media constructs were evaluated using forums and communities, ratings and reviews, and suggestions and referrals.

5. SURVEY INSTRUMENT AND DATA COLLECTION

Social Media Information is a new scale item. A large number of replies were collected, with 228 of them being considered for the research. Respondents in Indian states such as Maharashtra, Gujarat, Punjab, and Uttarakhand provided data.

Table 1. Planned versus actual coverage of the survey

Instrument	Planned	Actual coverage	Success level %
Interview /discussions	10	7	70
Survey questionnaires	300	228	76
Observation	10	8	80
Workplace site exposure measurement	10	9	90

Quantitative data was derived from the main and secondary sources covered earlier in this paper. This data analysis was performed using Excel, Office Word format, and other tools depend on their data type. This data analysis is mostly concerned with numerical and quantitative data analysis.

5. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Advantages of Using Social Media throughout the Corona virus epidemic Humans have been exposed to a range of dangerous illnesses over the years. The Corona virus (COVID-19) spread like wildfire in 2019, sweeping the entire globe. Over a million cases of the sickness have been discovered in over 200 countries at this time. However, it is worth noting that this is the first time a pandemic has been primarily covered and reported via the internet and Social Media.

- 1. Pinpoint the target market:** The people who are most likely to buy your goods or service are referred to as your "target audience." Age, gender, money, region, interests, and a variety of other characteristics may affect your target audience. The term "target audience" refers to the group of people you're seeking to reach with your advertising. [5]
- 2. Data Measurement Optimization:** Use variables such as volume, reach, exposure, and amplification to determine Covid-19 awareness. What is the scope of your message's communication range? Look for indicators such as retweets, comments, responses, and participation if you want to assess engagement.[6]

- 3. Grow Organically:** On Social Media, there are a few things you can do to boost your organic reach.
- Concentrate your efforts in the correct areas.
 - Make your Social Media profiles as attractive as possible.
 - Put your evergreen material on the internet.
 - Working smarter, not harder, is the way to go.
 - To maximize organic potential, use targeting.
 - Publish at off-peak hours.
 - Post the appropriate material.
 - Promote your profiles everywhere.[7]

6. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF RESEARCH

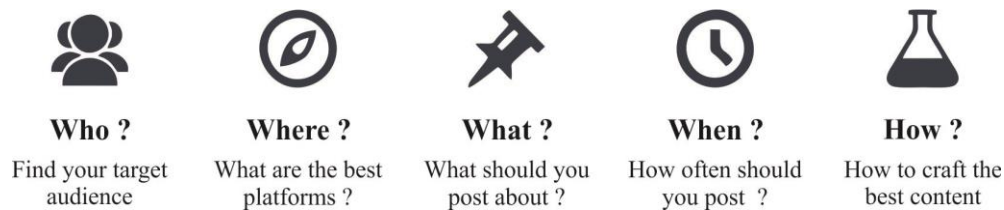


Figure 2. Social media communication channel during pandemic Covid – 19 based on model of communication provided by Harold Lasswell

In this research, according to their model, which stands for marketer or online strategist, say what is the content that is being communicated to the netizens, what is the channel online advertising, what stands for the consumers, and what influence do we have. By means, its effect on the public has been studied.

7. JUSTIFICATION FOR THE RESEARCH

According to the assessment of the literature, the informative categories of websites, particularly Social Media websites, have not been researched to that level, therefore there is a lot of room for future research in this area.

The studies are on Social Media websites, but their idea element has yet to be investigated, leading to the suggested study. The creative element and creative parameters in the context of Social Media ads are also areas that have not been thoroughly investigated, thus the suggested study aims for those perspectives in order to carve out a new dimension.

8. HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

H1: At COVID-19, Social Media was a multifaceted idea that was significantly forecasted by forums and communities, ratings and reviews, suggestions, and referrals.

H2: In this case, trust increases the consumer-brand relationship and buy intents from online merchants.

H3: How to Get, Analyze, and Use Consumer Insights from Social The emergence of Social Media has spawned a slew of new marketing options for companies and organisations of all kinds. Customer relations, organic SERP (Search Engine Results Pages) ranking, and revenues have all been found to improve with an integrated Social Media marketing plan. Global Reach can happily assist you in choosing which sites and communities you should join to fulfill your marketing goals. We can then give training and support to ensure that you get the most out of your investment.

H4: We may utilize the Global Reach continuing Social Media consulting services to acquire professional thoughts, advice, and suggestions. We can collect data and offer recommendations on future emphasis themes. Global Reach may send you a monthly list of post ideas that you can adopt or have published on your behalf.

9. CONCLUSION

Ratings, reviews, recommendations, and referrals all play a role in explaining Social Media and supporting it. H1. Surprisingly, the correlation between Social Media and trust was negligible. High-quality relationships enhance the clarity of progressive living on Social Media sites and have been chosen as the organization's primary activity during epidemics. H2. As a result, the current study proposes a theoretical model of how visual marketing and Social Media changed customer-brand connections during the COVID-19 crisis through customer participation on corporate social networking sites. H4. Messages with instructive, interesting, and useful information affect customer engagement, leading to customer-brand relationships, as evidenced by structural equation modeling. For example, the educational benefits are: Students and lecturers are working hard to ensure that students do not miss out on their education during the winter holidays. This has led to the launch of virtual classes using social networking sites such as Google Classroom, Zoom, and Skype. Most schools have been closed, and exam schedules have been restored, resulting in increased adoption of these new teaching methods. What would we have done if these platforms were not available? Social Media are web-based services (also called "social networking sites") that focus on a network of interactions and exchanges between different users. Social Media facilitates online forums and community through Web 2.0 apps, context, product evaluations, and recommendations for things and shopping experiences. These decisions help in the process of getting things done. Numerous studies have shown that Social Media has a significant impact on shopping intentions.

10. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY:

The 2019 corona virus illness (COVID-19) outbreak has piqued the interest of governments, researchers, and the general public in a number of nations. In this scenario, billions of people are ready to find out more about COVID-19 via Social Media. During the epidemic, public behavior was impacted by the rapid dissemination of COVID-19-related concerns and information. Nowadays, more than 4.48 billion people use Social Media on a regular basis. These Social Media channels have a phenomenal rate of

diffusion, coverage, and penetration. The rapid dissemination of COVID-19-related themes and information has affected the public's behavior throughout the epidemic.

12. RESULTS

Web-based Social Media and visual communication play a vital role in business and public communication in the current (corona-19 pandemic) era. With its clever features, Social Media networking can attract a large number of people who want to interact with one another. In this salutation, visual communication is important for Social Media engagement, which leads to increased sales. It gives information about the COVID-19 pandemic situation and also offers the option of what we can do at this time. It can also provide options for thinking about and selecting the right thing to do, as well as making the right decisions.

Gratifications and Applications Customers' behavioral responses to consumer involvement in the Social Media setting have been studied using theory. This is a groundbreaking study that examines the mediation impact of consumer involvement on Facebook to see if it outweighs the direct association between the independent variable (visual content) and the dependent variable (consumer-brand relationship). Similar studies on other social networking sites may be conducted in the future.

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