THEMATIC EVOLUTION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS IN SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR RESEARCH: A BIBLIOMETRIC STUDY

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Abstract

This study examines the research trends in Social Media Marketing and Consumer Behaviour (SMM-CB) by analysing papers published and indexed in Scopus between 2014 and 2024. The analysis centres on the patterns of publication, prominent publications, and the most productive contributors and funding organisations in the field of SMM-CB research. The study used bibliometric analysis to investigate co-authorship networks, keywords, and citation trends in the field of "social media marketing" and "consumer behaviour" research. The Scopus search yielded 240 pertinent documents, and a trends analysis indicated a more than 500% surge in publications from 2014 to 2024. Articles are the most common sort of document, making of 134 publications or 55.83% of the overall output. The most often cited work on SMM-CB is the publication "Setting the future of digital and social media marketing research: Perspectives and research propositions," which has received 786 citations, establishing it as the benchmark in this topic. Researchers Bezawada, Ram, and Kumar, Ashish, have collectively made substantial contributions, accounting for nearly 67% of their institution's SMM-CB papers. A keyword co-occurrence study revealed five prominent areas of research focus in the field of "social media marketing" (SMM) and its impact on buyer behaviour. These areas include important technologies, theories, methodologies, as well as the socioeconomic and financial elements of SMM. Promising avenues for future research involve the amalgamation of deep learning, machine learning, and neural network algorithms to gain a more profound comprehension of consumer behaviour and optimise online sales of products and services.

Keywords

Social media Marketing, Consumer behaviour, Brand Equity, Brand Loyalty, Digital Marketing.

Introduction

The internet has transformed the world into a global community and given humans countless opportunities. Shah (2008), Manjikian MM (2010). Ziyadin et al. discovered that 87-100% of affluent, well-educated, and socially mobile persons globally use the internet. These individuals spend 21 hours per week online for various purposes. Multiple data show that over 3.5 billion people use social media (SM) daily for various purposes. Social media (SM) is a popular online platform for creating, storing, and sharing information. "Social media," or "SM," refers to a variety of online platforms that enable user-generated content creation and sharing in online groups or networks. Kietzman et al. (2011) and Obar JA (2015). Social media (SM) is a set of digital technologies that allow instantaneous creation and unrestricted transmission of content across websites and apps. SM broadly refers to computer- or internet-based technologies that enable user-generated content, information, ideas, and data development, retention, and distribution. Dollahride (2022). Social media (SM) is known for its interactive character made possible by Web 2.0 apps. Objar JA (2015). SM is unique because users or organisations create, generate, and maintain it. 2023 Ajibade et al. It provides fast, unrestricted access to information on "websites, apps, digital devices, or software". According to Kietzmann et al. (2011), social media (SM) has seven main functions: "conversations, identity, presence, relationships, reputation, sharing, and groups". The study found that SM and related actions are largely defined by how much each component is emphasised. (2011) Kietzmann et al.

These interactions make social media (SM) an important part of human efforts. Advertising and marketing use social media to influence consumer behaviour across several channels. Social media marketing has spawned a major social science, arts, and humanities research topic on consumer behaviour. Kumar & Bezawada (2014) defined internet-based social media marketing (SMM) as crucial in the digital age. Kumar and Bezawada studied social media marketing and customer behaviour extensively. Their 2014 study highlighted how internet technology is used to influence consumer behaviour through varied marketing strategies using social media. The authors argue that social media, email, mobile devices, and search engines have made display ads, affiliate marketing, and marketing through social media, email, and search engines easier and more prevalent. Godey et al. (2016) examined how social media marketing (SMM) affects high-end goods purchases. Social media marketing (SMM) improves brand equity, awareness, and perception globally, which influences consumer behaviour (CB). Stephen examined current research on social media marketing and customer behaviour in 2016.

The literature on SMM-CB focuses mostly on word of mouth (WOM), but it also covers digital advertising, consumer culture, and mobile contexts. In marketing, social media affects consumer behaviour through a questionnaire. The results showed that social media marketing increases consumers' awareness of the variety of products and services, online word-of-mouth (WOM), and perceived risks. Recently, Ajibade (2022) examined how social media marketing (SMM) affects consumer behaviour. The study focused on consumers' digital culture, digital ads, social media's impact on shopping decisions, mobile devices, and internet gossip. The study showed that social media advertising boosts brand loyalty and vendor-consumer communication. Ashrafuzzaman et al. (2022) found that social media marketing (SMM) affects customer behaviour (CB) and is crucial to digital marketing. The research also found that companies use social media (SM) to control consumer behaviour (CB), reduce production costs, increase brand recognition and customer loyalty, and boost sales.

Research Methodology

This study evaluates Scopus publishing data on social media marketing and consumer behaviour (SMMCB) studies. Searching using TITLE-ABS-KEY ("social media marketing" AND "consumer behaviour*") yielded the SMM-CB study on social media marketing and consumer behaviour. This search focused on the subject's title keywords. The SMM-CB Research climate was investigated from 2014 to 2024, meeting the 10-year minimum for full study. Scopus found a wide range of document kinds, source titles, and English-language papers. The search included keywords, connections, and financing sources. The data were evaluated for publication trends, focusing on primary contributors, published papers, citations, study subjects, and field-relevant regions. A bibliometric analysis of the research landscape using published paper data was performed later using VOSviewer. This investigation examined writer collaboration, phrase frequency, and citation trends.

Results & Discussion

1. **Analysis of Published Documents**

Scopus returned 240 SMM-CB research materials, including 134 "articles", 69 "conference papers", 22 "book chapters", 7 "reviews", 3 "conference reviews", 4 "books", and 1 "editorial". The majority of publications on the subject are articles, conference papers, and book chapters, which make up 55.8%, 28.7%, and 9.1% of the total. Published materials are in English only, totaling 240. There are few publications on the issue in "Portuguese, Chinese, Hungarian, Russian, and Spanish". The findings show that field researchers prefer "Articles" and "English" for publication. The explanation is English's global dominance as the dominant scientific

language. Article selection may be due to numerous variables. Articles are normally peer-reviewed to ensure quality and academic community standards. Newton (2010), Funtowicz (2001). Additionally, publishing publications, especially in reputable sources, is essential for academic career advancement, research influence, and field of study. Rond (2005).

Plotting the quantity of published documents versus the years of publication examined SMM-CB growth patterns. The study's 10-year SMM-CB Research publishing trend profile is shown in Figure 1.
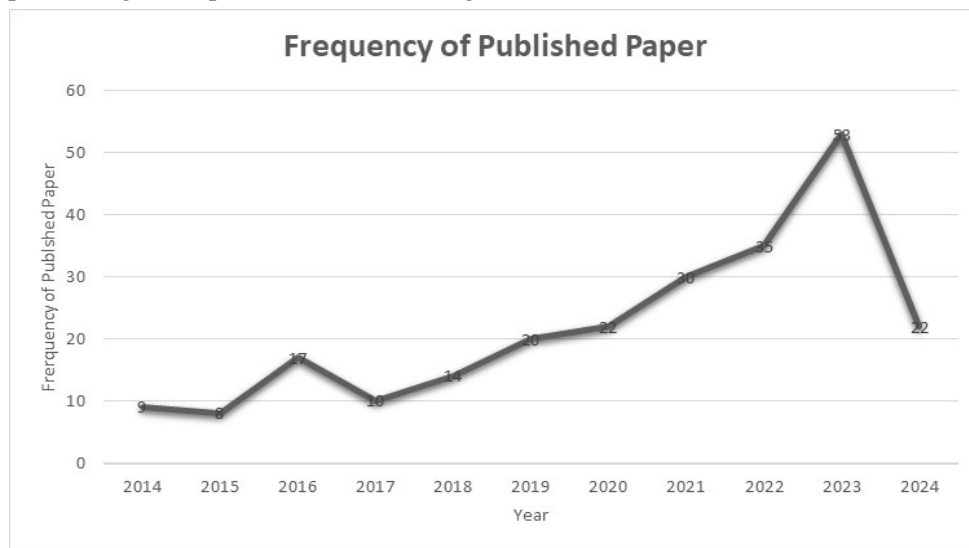

Figure 1: Trend profile of publications for SMM-CB Research

The rise of social media (SM) as a marketing strategy has led to more publishing Yadav (2017). SMM tools are designed to promote and sell items and services online. These technologies give marketers analytics, administration, planning, and scheduling capabilities. Additional features include graphic design and editing, hashtag use, caption creation, and growth evaluation. Comprehensive SMM Hops (2022) solutions are also available. Thus, social media is vital for marketing, targeting, and influencing the enormous number of people who have just adopted SM. Hooda (2018), Geho (2012). Many SMM tools are popular, including SocialBee, Sprout Social, Crowdfire, Brandwatch, Hootsuite, Agorapulse, Vista Social, Social Champ, Oktopost, and SocialPilot Hops (2022).

II. Mostly Cited Publications

The increasing prevalence of social media marketing (SMM) and its impact on consumer behaviour (CB) has emerged as a significant factor in the realms of

business and academia, leading to a substantial number of published works on this subject. Consequently, the extensive study output on the subject has resulted in a significant number of references to SMM-CB, which is generally regarded as a crucial indicator of the influence of research. The most cited works on SMM-CB were therefore examined using Scopus data. These studies had more than 45 citations. You can see the 25 most cited articles on the subject in Table 1.

Table 1: Top 25 Most Cited Articles

Title	Year	Cited By	Document Type
"Setting the future of digital and social media marketing research: Perspectives and research propositions"	2021	786	Article
"Social media marketing efforts of luxury brands: Influence on brand equity and consumer behavior"	2016	696	Article
"The role of digital and social media marketing in consumer behavior"	2016	233	Review
"Consumer Brand engagement on Facebook: liking and commenting behaviors"	2014	196	Article
"Omni-channel marketing, integrated marketing communications and consumer engagement: A research agenda"	2017	191	Article
"Measuring consumer perception of social media marketing activities in e-commerce industry: Scale development & validation"	2017	178	Article
"Social Media and Brand Purchase: Quantifying the Effects of Exposures to Earned and Owned Social Media Activities in a Two-Stage Decision Making Model"	2015	145	Article
"Social media marketing gains importance after Covid-19"	2021	131	Article
"A bibliometric retrospection of marketing from the lens of psychology: Insights from Psychology & Marketing"	2021	121	Article
"Understanding user-generated content and customer engagement on Facebook business pages"	2019	115	Article
"Generation Y's dining information seeking and sharing behavior on social networking sites: An exploratory study"	2014	108	Article
"Motivations to interact with brands on Facebook - Towards a typology of consumer-brand interactions"	2016	106	Review

"Consumer engagement with eWOM on social media: the role of social capital"	2018	101	Article
"Antecedents of social media B2B use in industrial marketing context: Customers' view"	2015	101	Article
"Fostering brand–consumer interactions in social media: the role of social media uses and gratifications"	2020	97	Article
"Metric proposal for customer engagement in Facebook"	2014	97	Article
"Ordinary celebrities related criteria to harvest fame and influence on social media"	2020	84	Article
"Community engagement and online word of mouth: An empirical investigation"	2018	76	Article
"Transforming consumers' intention to purchase green products: Role of social media"	2022	72	Article
"The allure of luxury brands' social media activities: a uses and gratifications perspective"	2019	69	Article
"Cross-cultural differences in the adoption of social media"	2019	68	Article
"The influence of YouTubers on followers' use intention"	2020	61	Article
"Eight social media challenges for marketing managers; [Ocho retos de los medios sociales para los Directores de Marketing]"	2016	60	Article
"Narrative persuasion in social media: an empirical study of luxury brand advertising"	2018	54	Article
"Examining consumer participation on brand microblogs in China: perspectives from elaboration likelihood model, commitment–trust theory and social presence"	2020	49	Article

The 25 most cited SMM-CB papers contain 49 to 786 citations, averaging 159.8. The 25 most highly published publications have 3995 citations, 75.44% of the issue's total citations over 10 years. Further research shows that 92% (23 items) are articles and 8% (2 documents) are reviews. Scopus's high citation metrics suggest these articles are the most influential on the topic. The SMM-CB's most-cited study is Dwivedi et al.'s "Setting the future of digital and social media marketing research: Perspectives and research propositions" (2012). It has 786 citations, 1.48% of the SMM-CB total. The importance of digital and social media in marketing strategy. The authors highlight the need for extensive research to understand consumer engagement, brand management, and social media marketing. Proponents suggest using psychology, sociology, and information systems to improve research. The essay suggests using creative methods to keep up with technology and consumer

trends. Dwivedi et al. outline a coherent study approach, highlighting the necessity for academics to adapt and collaborate across fields to understand the digital marketing environment.

Godey et al. (2016)'s "Social media marketing efforts of luxury brands: Influence on brand equity and consumer behaviour" is the second most cited article. The literature considers this research a major study on social media marketing and customer behaviour. The 696-citation study showed that Social Media Marketing (SMM) includes personalisation, entertainment, interaction, trendiness, and word-of-mouth. Together, these traits boost brand preference, prices, and consumer loyalty. The study showed that Social Media Marketing (SMM) improves brand equity. Stephen A.T. (2016) writes in "The role of digital and social media marketing in consumer behaviour" that these platforms allow businesses and customers to interact directly and interactively, increasing engagement and loyalty. This article has 233 citations. Peer reviews, endorsements, and targeted advertising on social media influence buying decisions. The report emphasises the importance of data analytics in understanding consumer preferences and tailoring marketing efforts. Stephen A.T. also recognises that social media trends change quickly, requiring marketers to react to customer behaviour changes. The essay examines how digital and social media marketing shape customer behaviour and emphasises the need for marketers to master these technologies.
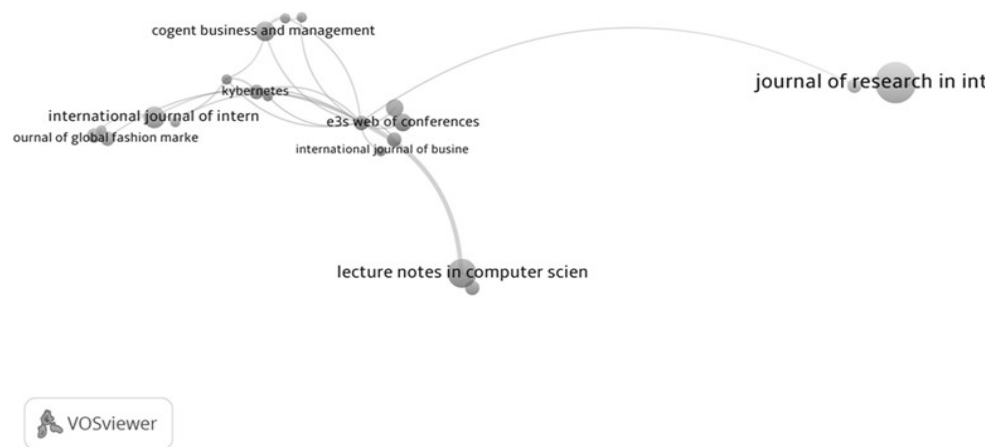

Figure 2: Analysing source titles on SMM-CB through a network map

The application for citation analysis to further explore this contribution, the network of co-citing sources in the SMM-CB study was visualised and analysed

using VOS viewer. A network map representing the SMM-CB citation analysis of the source title is shown in Figure 2. Undoubtedly, JRIM's reputation and impact in the area have expanded due to its recognition as a prominent publication that is extensively referenced by diverse sources. Hence, the journal presents a favourable opportunity for esteemed authors and researchers in the field to contemplate submitting their work there.

III. Authors and Affiliations

Stakeholders in a field greatly impact research climate Mannocci (2019 & 2016). Researchers, affiliations/organizations, funding entities, and countries actively invested in a field are the main stakeholders or actors. This study used Scopus to identify key stakeholders for a critical examination of SMM-CB research. Figure 3 shows the top SMM-CB researchers by number of publications per year from 2014 to 2024. Figure 4 shows that the top five SMM-CB researchers published three more documents over the study period. One of the most productive researchers is Ram Bezawada, Ashish Kumar, and the author, who each published four documents. Figure 4 shows that Aalto University School of Business, Finland, publishes the most, with six documents. Bezawada, Ram, and Kumar, Ashish, who have produced 67% of the school's SMM-CB publications, contribute to its output. Hofacker and Belanche [64] "Eight social media challenges for marketing managers" (Cited 45 times) and Labrecque et al. (2013) "Consumer power: Evolution in the digital age" (Cited 324 times) are two of the author's important studies. Over the 10-year study period, Both the State University of New York, Buffalo, and St. John's University, NY, released five documents, contributing to the subject. Grigoriou, Nicholas, Lyu, Jewon, and Mahmoud, Ali.B. produced three publications from their linked institutes, exhibiting productivity.
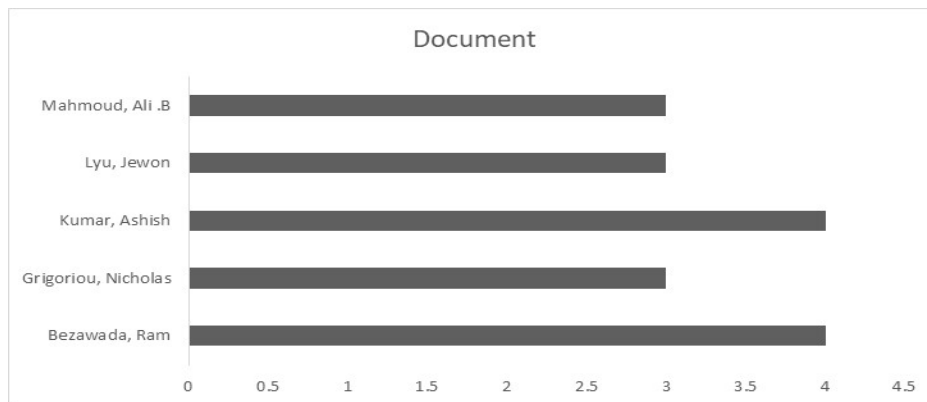

Figure 3: Top 5 most prolific researchers on SMM-CB research (2014-2024)

The output of authors and connections is commonly ascribed to a multitude of factors. Several studies suggest that the availability of funding, institutional research focus, national policies, and research collaborations have a significant impact on research productivity, which is measured based on the number of published documents Hofacker (2016) & Lee (2021). An analysis of the co-authorships between the active/major stakeholders in a specific field of research Sooryamoorthy (2014) & Mali (2017) can provide insights into the impact of collaboration on productivity. This study utilised the VOSviewer programme to analyse the level of collaboration and its influence on productivity in SMM-CB research. Figure 4 displays the network diagram illustrating the co authorship connections among writers in relation to the determined topic using VOSviewer.

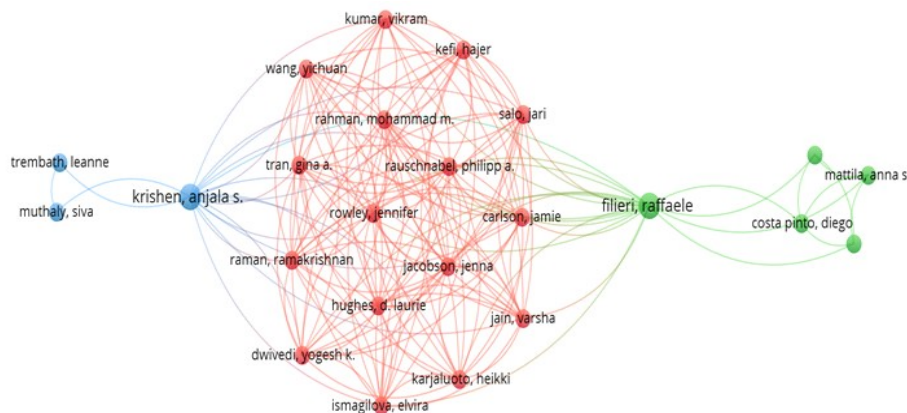**Figure 4: Top 5 most affiliations on SMM-CB research (2014-2024)**

Figure 5: Network visualization for co-authorship among authors

Figure 5 illustrates the association between authors and co-authors, which may be observed in three distinct groups. Cluster 1 elucidates the connection among 16 authors, cluster 2 depicts a network of 5 interconnected authors, and cluster 3 indicates that 3 authors have collaborated. This suggests that the writers belonging to the red cluster exhibit a significant level of collaboration with their peers in the same field, resulting in a high level of productivity. The presence of a conducive research environment, facilitated by adequate financial and material resources, is often associated with high productivity Ajibade (2022).

IV. Research Hot Spots & Themes.

The current research focus and hotspots/themes on SMM-CB were examined using a keywords co-occurrence analysis. An essential component of analysing the research climate in a particular topic of study is to provide a comprehensive summary of the current research concepts and potential future directions Dongmei (2017) & Ma (2021) . Figure 05 displays the co-occurrence map of terms for SMMCB subjects, utilising data from Scopus and VOS viewer.

Figure 6: Co-occurrence network of keywords

Using a keyword co-occurrence analysis with a threshold of five, we created a network of 53 items. The network unveiled six distinct groups, each representing major study topics or focal points in the field of social media marketing and consumer behaviour. Cluster 1 focuses on the core principles and techniques of advertising

and marketing through social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM). It emphasises the importance of these platforms in shaping customer attitudes and behaviours. Cluster 2 investigates the influence of social media marketing on consumer loyalty and preferences, utilising structural equation modelling to understand these complex dynamics. Cluster 3 investigates the utilisation of email marketing, search engines, and social networking to demonstrate how these channels function together with social media platforms to transmit and gather customer information. Cluster 4 investigates the correlation between social media marketing and brand-related results, such as brand loyalty and equity. It emphasises the significance of surveys in quantifying these impacts. Cluster 5 explores the effects of future technologies, like as artificial intelligence, on consumer behaviour and decision-making. It offers a forward-looking view on how technology might be integrated into marketing. Cluster 6 examines the wider socioeconomic consequences of social media marketing, namely its impact on consumer buying behaviour and the interaction between advertising methods and socioeconomic conditions. These clusters highlight the complex and diverse aspects of research in social media marketing, demonstrating its substantial influence on consumer behaviour and the changing digital marketing environment.

Conclusion

The study examined how social media marketing (SMM) affects academic consumer behaviour (CB) using publishing patterns and bibliometric data. Scopus was used to find 2014–2024 publications. VOSviewer mapped keywords, co-authorships, and citations. SMM-CB research articles increased significantly throughout this decade, largely due to the growing use of social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and influencer marketing for online corporate promotion. The increase in published documents, citations, and partnerships among authors, affiliations, and nations shows that the interest has spread outside the sector and affected academia. The stakeholder study identified important contributors Bezawada, Ram, Kumar, Ashish, and prominent institutions like Aalto University School of Business in Finland, The State University of New York, Buffalo, and St. John's University in New York. The theories, methodology, and socio-economic and financial implications of social media marketing on consumer behaviour are the focus of this research. Future study may use artificial intelligence, deep learning, machine learning, and neural network techniques to better understand and anticipate client behaviour. This would enable tailored advertising and marketing. This strategy could boost global internet sales.

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