

# **Uncovering How Social Media Marketing Tactics Drive Gen Z's Fast Food consumer behaviour with special reference to Gampaha District**

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## **DECLARATION**

We do hereby declare that the work reported in this thesis which titled as “Uncovering How Social Media Marketing Tactics Drive Gen Z's Fast Food consumer behaviour with special reference to Gampaha District” is originally prepared by us, Group 01 (Names mentioned Below) in the purpose of partial fulfilment of requirement of the Bachelor of Science Degree in Statistics, Department of Statistics & Computer Science, Faculty of Science, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka and not for any other academic purposes. No part of this thesis has been submitted earlier or concurrently for the same or any other degree.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study explores the influence of social media marketing strategies on Gen Z's fast food purchasing behaviour in the Gampaha District of Sri Lanka. The research examines the effectiveness of marketing tactics on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and YouTube, and highlights how factors like gender, marital status, and trust in social media shape consumer behaviour in the fast-food industry. The findings show that Limited-Time Offers and Promotions are the most effective in driving purchases, particularly among Facebook and WhatsApp users, who are most responsive to time-sensitive deals. Conversely, Instagram and YouTube users are more influenced by Influencer Recommendations, reflecting the growing power of influencers within Gen Z's purchasing decisions. WhatsApp users also show a strong reliance on Customer Reviews, indicating the importance of peer-driven content for this group. Statistical analyses, including Chi-Square tests and multinomial logistic regression, reveal significant relationships between gender, marital status, and platform preferences. Males predominantly engage with Facebook, while females prefer Instagram and YouTube. Single users are more active on WhatsApp and Instagram, whereas married users tend to favour more traditional platforms like Facebook. Cluster analysis identifies three distinct consumer segments based on social media engagement and fast-food app usage, each exhibiting unique responses to marketing strategies. The study highlights the importance of tailoring marketing approaches to platform-specific preferences and demographic characteristics. In conclusion, businesses should adapt their social media strategies to resonate with Gen Z's diverse platform behaviours. This research provides actionable insights for marketers, offering a foundation for future studies on digital marketing in emerging markets.

**Keywords:** Social Media Marketing, Gen Z, Fast Food, Platform Preferences, Influencer Marketing, Customer Reviews, Limited-Time Promotions, Sri Lanka

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

Social media has fundamentally altered the landscape of consumer behaviour, particularly among Generation Z (Gen Z), a demographic that has grown up in the digital age. With its unparalleled access to the internet and a profound reliance on online platforms, Gen Z represents a highly influential and tech-savvy segment of the consumer market. This generation's near-constant engagement with social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube have transformed how they discover, interact with, and make decisions about brands and products. As a result, businesses, particularly those in industries like fast food, have increasingly turned to social media marketing to target this digitally native audience. Fast food companies use platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp to engage Gen Z consumers through a range of marketing tactics, including targeted advertisements, influencer recommendations, customer reviews, and limited-time offers - each aimed at shaping Gen Z's fast food consumption patterns in a competitive digital space.

The growing prevalence of social media marketing has prompted research into how these platforms influence consumer behaviour. Studies have shown that nearly 90% of Gen Z consumers believe social media significantly impacts their purchasing decisions (Kahawandala et al., 2020), highlighting the profound influence these platforms have on shaping consumer preferences and behaviours. This information is crucial for businesses aiming to remain competitive in a digital-first marketplace, where effective social media marketing strategies can make the difference between success and failure. However, while the global and regional impact of social media marketing on Gen Z's purchasing behaviour has been widely studied, there remains a notable gap in the literature concerning localized areas, such as Sri Lanka's Gampaha district.

This gap in existing research creates an opportunity to better understand how social media marketing strategies function within a specific cultural and social environment. The Gampaha district, with its unique demographic, socioeconomic, and digital engagement characteristics, offers an interesting case study for exploring how Gen Z interacts with fast food brands on social media. Understanding the impact of social media on fast food consumption within this localized context is vital for businesses seeking to tailor their marketing efforts to meet the preferences of this demographic.

This study aims to fill this gap by investigating how social media marketing tactics influence Gen Z's fast-food consumption in the Gampaha district. Specifically, the research focuses on four key social media marketing strategies: targeted advertisements, influencer recommendations, customer reviews, and limited time offers. These strategies are examined in detail, considering not only their effectiveness in shaping consumer behaviour but also the specific subtypes of each strategy that resonate most with Gen Z. For example, targeted ads may vary in form, ranging from direct promotions to personalized content, while influencer recommendations could span celebrity endorsements to micro-influencer collaborations. Similarly, customer reviews and limited-time offers each have their own subtypes, such as user-generated content or flash sales, which may vary in their influence depending on the platform.

The study reveals that limited time offers emerged as the most influential strategy, with 29.87% of respondents indicating that these offers were the primary drivers of their fast-food purchasing decisions. Influencer recommendations also proved to be highly effective, influencing 28.57% of respondents. This suggests that while Gen Z values immediate incentives like limited time offers, they are also heavily swayed by the opinions and endorsements of influencers, highlighting the significant role of social proof in shaping purchasing behaviour. In terms of platform usage, Facebook and WhatsApp were identified as the leading social media platforms in the region, with Facebook being particularly effective for targeted advertisements and promotions, while WhatsApp was most effective for customer reviews and word-of-mouth marketing.

The study also explored the role of demographic factors in shaping social media engagement. It found that females were more active on Instagram and WhatsApp, while males were more engaged with Facebook. Additionally, single individuals made up most active social media users, demonstrating a clear link between relationship status and digital engagement. These findings highlight those demographic factors, such as gender and relationship status, can significantly influence which social media platforms are used and how effective marketing strategies are on these platforms.

The results of this study have important implications for businesses seeking to optimize their social media marketing efforts. By understanding the nuances of how Gen Z interacts with various platforms and responds to different types of marketing strategies, fast food brands in the Gampaha district can better tailor their campaigns to maximize

engagement and influence consumer behaviour. For instance, businesses targeting Facebook users may benefit from focusing on targeted ads and limited time offers, while brands looking to engage WhatsApp users should prioritize customer reviews and word-of-mouth marketing.

In conclusion, this study bridges the gap in existing research by offering localized insights into how social media marketing influences Gen Z's fast-food consumption behaviour in the Gampaha district of Sri Lanka. It provides valuable recommendations for businesses aiming to enhance their digital marketing strategies, contributing to a deeper understanding of the evolving relationship between social media and consumer behaviour in this demographic. By recognizing the diverse preferences of Gen Z and the importance of tailoring marketing efforts to specific platforms and strategies, brands can more effectively engage with this influential group, fostering brand loyalty and driving greater success in their marketing efforts.

## **1.1. Research Problem**

***How do social media marketing tactics drive Gen Z's fast-food consumer behaviour with special reference to the Gampaha district?***

The rise of social media as a dominant marketing tool has transformed consumer behaviour, particularly among Generation Z, a group known for its digital fluency and active engagement with platforms like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and YouTube. While global studies have highlighted the effectiveness of strategies such as targeted advertisements, influencer endorsements, customer reviews, and limited time offers in shaping purchasing decisions, their localized impact in Sri Lanka, specifically in the Gampaha district, remains underexplored.

Understanding how these tactics influence Gen Z's fast-food consumption in this region is critical for fast food businesses aiming to create impactful and culturally relevant marketing campaigns. This research seeks to address this gap by examining the interplay of different social media platforms and strategies, identifying the most influential tactics, and offering insights into the unique behaviours of this demographic within the Gampaha district.

## **1.2. Objectives**

This study aims to explore the significant role social media marketing plays in influencing Generation Z's fast-food consumption behaviour within the Gampaha district. By examining the intersection of social media platforms and marketing strategies, the research seeks to uncover insights into how these digital tools shape consumer preferences and purchasing decisions. To achieve this, the objectives are structured to address both the broader and more specific aspects of this phenomenon.

### **1.2.1. Main Objective**

***To investigate the influence of social media marketing strategies on Gen Z's fast-food consumption behaviour in the Gampaha district.***

This overarching objective seeks to understand how various marketing strategies deployed on social media platforms impact the fast-food purchasing decisions of Generation Z in Gampaha. By analysing the overall connection between social media activities and consumer behaviour, this objective sets the foundation for identifying key drivers behind Gen Z's fast-food consumption in a localized Sri Lankan context.

### **1.2.2. Specific Objectives**

- 1. To evaluate the effectiveness of different social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and YouTube, in driving fast food purchasing decisions among Gen Z in Gampaha.***

This objective focuses on identifying the influence of specific social media platforms on fast food consumption patterns. It examines how each platform's unique features and usage trends among Gen Z in Gampaha contribute to the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. For instance, it explores whether visual-driven platforms like Instagram or community-based platforms like Facebook are more impactful in engaging this demographic.

2. *To analyse the impact of various social media marketing tactics, including influencer endorsements, targeted advertisements, customer reviews, and limited time offers, on Gen Z's consumer behaviour.*

This objective delves into the specific marketing tactics and evaluates their effectiveness in influencing Gen Z's purchasing decisions. Each tactic is analysed in detail, examining how strategies like influencer recommendations create trust, targeted ads personalize engagement, customer reviews build credibility, and limited time offers create urgency, shaping the decision-making process.

3. *To explore the behavioural factors that make Gen Z in Gampaha more responsive to social media marketing efforts*

Beyond marketing strategies, this objective investigates the psychological and behavioural traits of Gen Z in Gampaha that make them particularly receptive to social media marketing. Factors such as digital savviness, peer influence, preference for visual content, and trust in social media as a source of information are explored to understand why certain tactics resonate more with this group.

4. *To provide actionable recommendations for fast food businesses to optimize their social media strategies for effectively engaging Gen Z consumers.*

Based on the findings, this objective aims to offer practical insights and strategies that fast food businesses can implement to enhance their social media marketing efforts. These recommendations will focus on platform-specific tactics, leveraging the most effective marketing strategies, and tailoring campaigns to align with the preferences and behaviours of Gen Z in Gampaha.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Behavioural Insights into Gen Z**

Gen Z's unique characteristics as digital natives make them particularly susceptible to social media marketing. This demographic prioritizes authenticity, personalization, and social responsibility, expecting brands to align with their values. Kahawandala, Peter, and Niwunhella (2020) highlight that 66% of Gen Z consumers actively research products online before making a purchase, emphasizing their preference for informed decision-making. Additionally, this cohort is drawn to interactive and visually engaging content, making platforms like Instagram and YouTube ideal for fast-food marketing.

Rai (2017) notes that Gen Z's heavy use of social media influences not only their shopping decisions but also their social and personal values. For instance, fast-food brands that promote sustainability or community involvement are likely to resonate more with this audience. By understanding these behavioural insights, fast-food marketers in the Gampaha District can tailor their strategies to build deeper connections with Gen Z consumers.

### **2.2. The Influence of Social Media on Consumer Behaviour**

As digital platforms disrupt traditional advertising methods, the role of social media in influencing consumer behaviour has become paramount, particularly for Generation Z (Gen Z). Defined as individuals born between 1997 and 2012, this cohort has grown up with unprecedented access to digital technology, making them highly reliant on social media for information and decision-making. Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and YouTube have significantly altered how brands interact with consumers, particularly within the fast-food industry.

Research consistently demonstrates that social media influences multiple stages of consumer decision-making, from awareness to purchase. According to Klieb, Voramontri, and Leslie (2019), social media facilitates satisfaction in the early stages of decision-making, such as information search and evaluation of alternatives. However, its impact on post-purchase satisfaction remains limited. This distinction highlights the need for brands to create engaging, value-driven content that goes beyond mere advertising. For Gen Z consumers, who value authenticity and personalized experiences, social media

marketing has emerged as a critical tool for influencing their fast-food consumption behaviours.

### **2.3. Social Media and the Fast-Food Industry**

The fast-food industry, characterized by its focus on convenience, affordability, and accessibility, has successfully leveraged social media to engage with Gen Z consumers. Social media platforms serve as dynamic marketing channels, enabling fast-food brands to showcase their offerings, engage with customers, and build brand loyalty.

Nirmani, Gayathree, and Kumara (2017) emphasize the role of food quality, brand image, and promotional efforts in fostering brand loyalty within Sri Lanka's fast-food market. These factors, combined with strategic social media marketing, create a powerful formula for success. Liyanasooriya, Sajeewanie, and Edirisooriya (2023) further highlight the influence of Facebook engagements, particularly shareable posts, and visually appealing promotions, in driving fast-food purchases among Gen Z consumers in the Gampaha District. These findings underscore the importance of aligning social media strategies with Gen Z's preferences to maximize impact.

### **2.4. Social Media Marketing Strategies and Their Effectiveness**

Social media marketing (SMM) strategies, tailored to align with the preferences and habits of Gen Z, have proven to be highly effective in driving consumer engagement and purchase intent. Four key SMM tactics stand out in influencing fast-food consumption behaviors among this demographic: targeted advertisements, influencer recommendations, customer reviews, and promotional offers.

#### **2.4.1. Targeted Advertisements**

Targeted advertisements allow brands to leverage demographic and behavioral data to reach specific consumer segments. Research by Klieb, Voramontri, and Leslie (2019) highlights that tailored ads increase consumer satisfaction during the early stages of decision-making by providing relevant and timely information. For fast-food brands in the Gampaha District, platforms like Facebook enable precise targeting of Gen Z consumers, ensuring that marketing messages resonate with their preferences and needs.



Customized advertisements showcasing new menu items, exclusive deals, or eco-friendly initiatives appeal to Gen Z's desire for both novelty and values-driven consumption.

#### **2.4.2. Influencer Recommendations**

Influencers play a crucial role in shaping Gen Z's purchasing decisions. According to Sriram, Namitha, and Kamath (2021), influencer endorsements significantly impact Gen Z's purchase intentions due to their association with trust and relatability. Social media influencers, particularly those specializing in food content, create a sense of authenticity and emotional connection that resonates with Gen Z consumers. These demographic values real-life experiences and recommendations, making influencer partnerships an effective way for fast-food brands to build credibility and inspire action.

#### **2.4.3. Customer Reviews**

Customer reviews provide social proof, a critical factor for Gen Z consumers who heavily rely on peer feedback when making decisions. Zhan, Chun, and Huang (2023) argue that social media platforms amplify the influence of customer reviews by integrating them into brand pages and advertisements. Positive reviews validate a brand's reputation, increasing the likelihood of purchase among Gen Z consumers. In the fast-food industry, reviews highlighting quality, taste, and service can sway decisions, especially when paired with engaging visuals and relatable content. Platforms like Facebook and Instagram allow for seamless integration of customer feedback, enhancing transparency and trust.

#### **2.4.4. Limited Time Offers and Promotions**

Promotional tactics, such as discounts and limited time offers, are particularly effective in capturing the attention of Gen Z consumers. According to Sriram, Namitha, and Kamath (2021), attention-grabbing promotions significantly influence consumer perceptions and purchase intentions. Fast-food brands frequently use time-sensitive deals to create a sense of urgency, driving immediate action. For example, exclusive online discounts or "buy-one-get-one-free" offers on platforms like Instagram can encourage Gen Z consumers in the Gampaha District to make spontaneous purchases, boosting brand engagement and sales.

## **2.5. Limitations of Social Media Marketing**

While social media marketing offers numerous benefits, it is not without limitations. Klieb, Voramontri, and Leslie (2019) found that while social media enhances satisfaction during the early decision-making stages, it has limited impact on satisfaction with the final purchase. This highlights the need for fast-food brands to integrate social media strategies with other elements of the consumer experience, such as product quality, customer service, and offline touchpoints. Additionally, the dynamic nature of social media requires brands to stay agile and continuously adapt their strategies to evolving consumer trends and platform algorithms.

## **2.6. Conclusion**

The literature underscores the transformative role of social media in shaping Gen Z's consumer behaviour, particularly within the fast-food industry. Effective social media marketing strategies, such as targeted advertisements, influencer endorsements, customer reviews, and promotional offers, have been shown to resonate deeply with this demographic. By leveraging these tactics, fast-food brands in the Gampaha District can drive engagement, enhance brand loyalty, and boost purchase intentions. However, to address the limitations of social media marketing, an integrated approach that combines online and offline strategies is essential. This ensures a holistic consumer experience that not only attracts but also retains Gen Z customers, fostering long-term success in the competitive fast-food market.

## **2.7. Research Gap**

While existing research sheds light on the influence of social media marketing on Gen Z's fast-food choices, there is a notable gap when it comes to understanding how these strategies specifically work in Sri Lanka, especially within the Gampaha District. Much of the current literature focuses on global trends, without addressing the local cultural, social, and economic factors that could shape how social media marketing resonates with young consumers in this region. For instance, the effectiveness of platforms like Instagram, Facebook, or WhatsApp in driving fast food decisions among Gen Z in Gampaha has not been fully explored.

Moreover, while we know that tactics like influencer endorsements, customer reviews, and promotions can influence consumer behaviour, little research delves into how these strategies specifically affect Gen Z in Gampaha, where local preferences and behaviours might differ. The role of local values and regional trends in shaping marketing responses remains unclear.

Another overlooked area is the impact of socio-economic differences within Gampaha, such as varying income levels, access to technology, or family dynamics, which might affect how Gen Z interacts with social media marketing. These local factors could be key to understanding the true effectiveness of social media marketing strategies in this context.

Filling this gap with focused research will provide valuable insights, helping fast food brands tailor their marketing efforts to resonate more deeply with the Gen Z demographic in Gampaha, ultimately improving engagement and sales in the area.

## **CHAPTER 3: MATERIAL AND METHODS**

### **3.1. Subjects**

The study focused on individuals belonging to **Generation Z (Gen Z)**, specifically those aged **18–26 years** residing in the **Gampaha District, Sri Lanka**. This age group was selected due to their high engagement with social media platforms and their substantial influence on fast food consumption patterns. By targeting this demographic, the research aimed to uncover how social media marketing strategies impact the behaviour of a digitally active generation in the region.

The decision to exclude individuals aged **12–17 years** was deliberate, as minors may have distinct fast food consumption habits influenced by parental control and limited purchasing power. Additionally, including only legal adults (18 years and older) ensured participants could provide informed consent without ethical concerns.

#### **3.1.1. Population and Sampling**

The total population of **Gen Z individuals aged 18 - 26 in the Gampaha District** was estimated at **550,000**, based on recent census data and age distribution statistics. Considering the large population size, a robust sample was required to ensure statistical reliability and representativeness.

The sample size was determined using Cochran's formula, a widely accepted method for calculating sample size in survey research. The formula is expressed as follows:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1 - p)}{e^2}$$

Equation 1: Cochran's Formula

Where:

Z: 1.96 (the Z-score for a 95% confidence level),

p: 0.5 (assumed proportion of the population exhibiting the characteristic of interest),

e: 0.05 (margin of error, equivalent to 5%).

Substituting the values into the formula:

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 \cdot 0.5 \cdot (1 - 0.5)}{(0.05)^2} = 384.16$$

The resulting sample size was **384.16**, which was rounded up to **385 respondents** to ensure adequate representation of the population. This sample size provides sufficient precision to generalize findings to the broader Gen Z population in Gampaha with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error.

### 3.1.2. Sampling Method

A **convenience sampling method** was adopted for participant recruitment. This non-probabilistic approach was selected due to its practicality and cost-effectiveness, particularly when engaging a digitally active population. Social media platforms such as **Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and WhatsApp** served as the primary channels for distributing the survey.

These platforms were chosen because they are widely used by Gen Z, making it easier to reach many participants within a short timeframe. Convenience sampling also allowed for flexible participation, as respondents could complete the survey at their convenience using their personal devices.

### 3.1.3. Justification for Sampling Approach

While convenience sampling may introduce some limitations in terms of generalizability, it was deemed appropriate for this study due to the following reasons:

1. **High Social Media Penetration:** Gen Z individuals are active on multiple social media platforms, ensuring a broad reach within the target demographic.
2. **Cost and Time Efficiency:** Recruiting participants through social media reduced logistical challenges and expenses associated with in-person data collection.
3. **Ease of Access:** The Gampaha District has a high rate of smartphone and internet penetration, facilitating online survey participation.

This sampling strategy ensured the collection of a diverse set of responses reflective of the social media habits and fast-food consumption behaviours of Gen Z in the Gampaha District. The approach also aligned with the study's objectives, which sought to explore trends and relationships in social media marketing's influence on consumer behaviour.

## **3.2. Procedures**

### **3.2.1. Research Design**

The study adopted a **mixed-methods** approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative techniques to offer a comprehensive understanding of how social media marketing impacts fast food consumption behaviours among Gen Z in the Gampaha District. The quantitative aspect involved the statistical analysis of survey data, focusing on identifying trends, relationships, and associations between social media marketing tactics and fast-food consumption patterns. The qualitative component complemented the quantitative data by analysing categorical and frequency-based responses, capturing participants' perceptions, motivations, and behavioural influences in a structured manner. This approach ensured a well-rounded analysis while maintaining clarity and consistency in data collection and interpretation.

#### **Type of Research**

**Type:** Mixed method (Quantitative and Qualitative).

**Instrument:** A structured online questionnaire designed to collect diverse data types, including demographic, behavioural, and attitudinal information.

### **3.2.2. Questionnaire Design**

The questionnaire used for this study was designed with a clear focus on gathering both quantitative and qualitative data to examine the influence of social media marketing on Gen Z's fast-food consumption behaviour. Below is a detailed breakdown of the questionnaire structure and the rationale behind its design:

#### **1. Pre-requirements Section**

The Pre-requirements Section is a critical part of the questionnaire, as it ensures that the participants meet the necessary criteria for inclusion in the study. This section is designed to filter out respondents who do not fall within the target demographic or geographic scope of the research. The primary purpose is to confirm that the participants are within the age group of Gen Z and reside in the Gampaha District, Sri Lanka.

**Age Requirement:**

The age range for participation is specifically set between 18 and 26 years, as this age group is identified as Gen Z, which is highly active on social media and significantly influences trends in consumption behaviour. This age group was chosen because they are major consumers of fast food and are heavily engaged with social media marketing strategies, making them an ideal focus for this research.

**Location Requirement:**

Respondents are required to confirm that they live in the Gampaha District. This is crucial for maintaining the geographic focus of the study, ensuring that the findings are relevant to the specific region under investigation. The Gampaha District was selected as the study area based on its population demographic and urbanization trends, which may influence social media use and fast-food consumption patterns.

## **2. Demographic Information Section**

The Demographic Information Section gathers additional personal data from participants, which helps provide context for analysing the study results. The data collected here will be used to identify any patterns or differences in fast food consumption and social media behaviour across different gender and marital status categories.

**Gender:**

Gender is recorded in this section to assess whether there are any notable differences in social media usage and fast-food consumption between males and females. Understanding gender differences can reveal whether specific marketing strategies are more effective for one gender over the other. For example, female respondents may be

more influenced by influencer marketing, while male respondents may respond better to targeted advertisements or promotional offers.

### **Marital Status:**

Marital status is another important demographic variable, as it can impact purchasing behaviour. Single individuals, for instance, might have different preferences or frequency of fast-food consumption compared to married individuals. Understanding marital status helps in segmenting the data to explore if married individuals or those with families are less likely to consume fast food or engage with social media marketing strategies compared to single individuals. This information provides insight into how various life stages influence consumer behaviour and media consumption.

## **3. Behavioural Patterns Section**

The behavioural patterns section sought to understand the participants' regular use of social media and its relationship to their fast-food consumption. Key questions in this section included:

### **Frequency of Social Media Use:**

Respondents were asked to rate how often they used social media on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. This helped gauge the level of social media engagement and its potential impact on consumption behaviour.

### **Platform Preferences:**

Participants were asked which social media platforms they use most frequently (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube). This allowed the study to identify the most influential platforms for Gen Z in the context of fast-food marketing.

### **Fast Food Consumption Exposure:**

This question focused on how often respondents consume fast food, particularly in relation to their exposure to social media marketing. The frequency scale helped classify respondents into categories such as frequent consumers, occasional consumers, and non-consumers.



#### **4. Marketing Strategies Section**

The marketing strategies section was designed to assess how various social media marketing tactics influence fast food consumption behaviour among Gen Z. This section specifically explored four key tactics:

##### **Influencer Marketing:**

Participants were asked to rate the impact of social media influencers on their decisions to purchase fast food. This question explored the effectiveness of influencer endorsements in shaping consumer preferences.

##### **Targeted Advertisements:**

Questions in this sub-section examined whether targeted ads on social media platforms influenced respondents' fast-food choices, considering factors like ad relevance and frequency.

##### **Customer Reviews and Testimonials:**

This part investigated how online reviews, ratings, and customer testimonials influenced participants' attitudes toward different fast-food brands. It gauged the importance of social proof in the purchasing decision-making process.

##### **Promotional Offers (e.g., Discounts, Giveaways):**

The influence of promotional offers such as discounts and special deals was examined to determine how often Gen Z members responded to such marketing strategies. This section also explored whether limited time offers, or giveaways were perceived as motivating factors for fast food purchases.

#### **5. Likert Scale Section**

The response measurement for this study utilized a Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). This scale ensured consistent data collection, enabling statistical analysis to identify correlations between social media marketing strategies and fast-food consumption behaviours.

The questionnaire focused on two key questions aimed at assessing the state of trust and state of attraction regarding social media marketing strategies:

**State of Trust:** This question measured how much participants trust social media marketing strategies used by fast food brands.

**State of Attraction:** This question assessed how attractive participants find social media marketing strategies in terms of influencing their decision to purchase fast food.

These two questions provided focused, measurable data on how social media marketing strategies influence trust and attraction, which in turn impact participants' fast-food consumption behaviour.

### **3.2.3. Pilot Testing**

To ensure the reliability and clarity of the questionnaire, two rounds of pilot testing were conducted to refine the survey instrument before the full-scale survey was launched.

#### **First Pilot: Refining the Focus**

The first round of pilot testing aimed to assess the relevance of the survey items to the target population. After reviewing the feedback, the decision was made to focus solely on Gen Z (ages 18–26) in the Gampaha District. This decision was based on the need to concentrate on the demographic most likely to be influenced by social media marketing and fast-food consumption trends. By narrowing the focus, the study ensures that the survey specifically targets the relevant age group and geographic area, optimizing the analysis of social media marketing's impact on fast food consumption behaviour in Gampaha.

#### **Second Pilot: Improving Wording, Flow, and Clarity**

The second round of pilot testing involved 10 respondents from the target group (Gen Z, ages 18–26, in the Gampaha District). Feedback focused on three key areas:

**Wording:** Participants evaluated the clarity of the questions to ensure that all items were easy to understand and relevant to their experiences.

**Logical Flow:** Respondents assessed whether the order of questions followed a natural progression and whether any questions seemed out of place or confusing.

**Clarity:** The participants provided insights into the overall clarity of the survey, including the instructions and specific questions, helping to identify any ambiguities that needed clarification.

Based on this feedback, adjustments were made to improve question clarity, rephrase ambiguous items, and ensure a smooth flow throughout the survey. The two rounds of pilot testing played a crucial role in refining the questionnaire. After the first pilot, the focus was narrowed to Gen Z in the Gampaha District to ensure the study's relevance to the target population. The second pilot testing helped refine the wording, logical flow, and clarity of the survey, ultimately leading to a well-structured instrument for data collection.

#### **3.2.4. Data Collection**

The data collection process for this study was carried out over a four-week period, using a structured approach that combined both digital tools and ethical practices to ensure the quality and integrity of the collected data. Below is a detailed description of the steps involved:

##### **Survey Distribution**

The survey was distributed online using Google Forms, a platform that allowed for easy creation and distribution of the questionnaire. This method was chosen due to its accessibility, user-friendly interface, and ability to reach many participants efficiently. Google Forms also provided automated data collection and preliminary analysis, which helped streamline the process.

To maximize participation and ensure that the survey reached the target demographic of Gen Z (ages 18–26) in the Gampaha District, social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram were used as primary distribution channels. These platforms are highly popular among Gen Z and are frequently used for communication and information-sharing. By leveraging these platforms, the survey was more likely to engage the target audience in a familiar and convenient setting, increasing both the response rate and the relevance of the data collected.

## **Participant Engagement**

To encourage participation and ensure a clear understanding of the study's purpose, clear instructions and study objectives were provided to all potential respondents. This transparency helped set expectations for the participants, enabling them to make an informed decision about whether to take part in the survey. Participants were informed that their responses would contribute to understanding how social media marketing impacts fast food consumption behaviours among Gen Z in the Gampaha District.

Moreover, to foster trust and ensure voluntary participation, respondents were assured of their anonymity and confidentiality. The questionnaire did not request any personally identifiable information, ensuring that all responses would remain anonymous. This was particularly important in maintaining the integrity of the study and minimizing any potential bias or reluctance among participants.

## **Ethical Considerations**

The study was conducted with strict adherence to ethical guidelines, with a focus on ensuring anonymity and privacy for all participants. Below is a detailed description of the ethical practices followed during the study:

### **1. Anonymity**

The study ensured that no personally identifiable information was collected from participants, maintaining the highest level of anonymity:

**No Personal Information Collected:** The survey was designed so that no names, contact details, or any other personally identifiable information were asked for or recorded. This ensured that responses could not be linked back to individual participants.

**Anonymous Responses:** All responses collected were entirely anonymous, allowing participants to answer freely without concern about their identity being revealed.

### **2. Voluntary Participation and Right to Withdraw**

While no formal consent was obtained at the start, it was clearly communicated to participants that their participation was entirely voluntary. Participants were informed

that they could withdraw from the survey at any time without any consequences or penalties. This ensured that participants were comfortable and not pressured to continue if they changed their mind.

### **3. Confidentiality and Data Use**

Although no personal information was gathered, the study ensured that the collected data was kept confidential and used strictly for research purposes:

**Data Use:** The data collected was used solely for the purpose of the study, and no personally identifiable information was associated with any responses. The results were analysed in aggregate form to protect participant privacy.

**Confidentiality:** The collected responses were stored securely and only accessible to the research team, further ensuring confidentiality.

### **4. Ethical Principles**

Throughout the study, key ethical principles were adhered to:

**Fairness:** All participants were treated with fairness and respect, without any bias or discrimination.

**Transparency:** The general objectives of the study were communicated to participants, ensuring they were aware of the research purpose while maintaining their anonymity.

The data collection process was conducted in a structured, transparent, and ethical manner to ensure that the survey accurately captured the behaviours, attitudes, and perceptions of Gen Z in the Gampaha District. By utilizing accessible online platforms for distribution and emphasizing ethical considerations throughout the process, the study successfully gathered high-quality, reliable data. These measures contributed to the overall credibility and integrity of the research, allowing for meaningful analysis of the impact of social media marketing on fast food consumption behaviour.

### **3.2.5. Data Pre-processing**

Data pre-processing is a crucial step in transforming raw survey data into a clean and organized format, ready for analysis. This phase ensures the data is free from inconsistencies, missing values, and outliers, which could skew the results. Below is a detailed description of the data pre-processing steps taken in this study:

#### **1. Data Import and Organization**

The collected survey responses were initially stored in Google Forms, which automatically populated a Google Sheets file. This data was then exported into a format compatible with the analysis software (such as Excel or SPSS). The dataset was organized in rows and columns, where each row represented a single respondent's answers, and each column represented a survey question or demographic information.

#### **2. Handling Missing Data**

During data pre-processing, we found that no missing data was present in the dataset. All respondents had provided complete responses, including demographic information and key survey questions. Therefore, no imputation or removal of missing values was necessary. The dataset was fully intact, with no gaps in responses.

#### **3. Data Transformation and Standardization**

Several transformations were applied to ensure consistency and compatibility for statistical analysis:

##### **Likert Scale Responses:**

All Likert scale responses, ranging from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree"), were encoded numerically. This standardization allowed for easier analysis, treating these responses as ordinal data.

##### **Categorical Variables:**

Categorical variables, such as gender, marital status, daily spend time and frequency of fast-food ad exposure were encoded as numerical codes for ease of analysis:

- Gender: Coded as 0 for female and 1 for male.
- Marital Status: Coded as 0 for married and 1 for unmarried.
- Daily Spend Time on Social Media: Coded with numeric ranges (e.g., 1 for less than 1 hour, 2 for 1-3 hours, etc.).
- Frequency of Fast-Food Ad Exposure: Coded from 1 (Occasionally) to 3 (Daily).

#### 4. Data Coding and Labelling

After the data was cleaned and transformed, the variables were properly coded and labelled for clarity. Each variable was clearly named to ensure that it could easily be identified and referenced during the analysis phase ("Gender," "Marital\_Status," "Daily\_Spend\_SM," etc.). This labelling also ensured that the dataset could be efficiently analysed using statistical software like SPSS, R, Excel.

#### 5. Dataset Finalization

After completing the data pre-processing tasks, the final dataset was ready for analysis:

The dataset was saved in a suitable format (CSV and Excel) and securely backed up to prevent data loss.

The cleaned and transformed data was then imported into statistical analysis software, such as SPSS and R, to begin the analysis phase.

The data pre-processing process ensured that the dataset was clean, organized, and ready for statistical analysis. With **no missing data** and **no incomplete responses**, the dataset was fully intact. Data transformations and encoding were applied to categorical variables and Likert scale responses, while consistency checks ensured the validity of the dataset. These pre-processing steps helped ensure the reliability of the results, providing a solid foundation for drawing meaningful conclusions about the impact of social media marketing on fast food consumption behaviour among Gen Z in the Gampaha District.

### 3.2.6. Data Analysis

The data collected from the survey was analysed using a combination of descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and K-Modes Clustering to provide insights into the research questions. The analysis was performed using SPSS and Excel for descriptive statistics, and R for inferential statistics. Below is a detailed explanation of the analysis techniques used:

#### 1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize and describe participants' demographic characteristics, social media usage, platform preferences, and fast-food ad exposure patterns. These statistics provided a clear picture of the trends in the data:

**Demographic Data:** Basic demographic information, including gender, and marital status, was summarized to ensure the sample was representative of Gen Z (ages 18–26) from the Gampaha District.

**Social Media Usage:** Frequency and patterns of social media use were summarized using frequency distributions to show how often participants used various platforms (Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube). These distributions helped reveal the overall engagement levels of participants with social media.

**Social Media Platform Preferences:** The preference for specific platforms was explored by calculating frequencies of platform usage, which helped identify the most popular platforms among participants.

**Fast Food Ad Exposure Patterns:** Descriptive statistics were used to summarize participants' exposure to fast food ads, including how frequently they were exposed to advertisements and the types of ads they encountered. Frequency distributions were generated to understand the relationship between social media marketing and fast-food ad exposure.



## 2. Inferential Statistics

Inferential statistical techniques were applied to explore relationships between variables and test hypotheses. R was used for these analyses:

### Chi-Square Test of Independence:

This test was used to examine associations between categorical variables, such as most used social media platform and preferences for marketing strategies. The Chi-Square statistic was calculated using the formula:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

Equation 2: Chi-Square Formula

Where:

$O_i$ : The observed frequency,

$E_i$ : The expected frequency.

This test helped determine if there was a significant relationship between the social media platform and marketing strategy.

### Cramér's V:

For significant results from the Chi-Square test, Cramér's V was used to measure the strength of the association between variables. The formula for Cramér's V is:

$$V = \sqrt{\frac{\chi^2}{n(k-1)}}$$

Equation 3: Cramér's V Formula

Where:

$\chi^2$ : Chi-Square value

n: Total sample size,

k: Number of categories.

This statistic indicated the strength of the association, with values closer to 1 showing a strong relationship.

### **Multinomial Logistic Regression:**

This method was used to model the relationship between independent variables (social media platform preferences) and the likelihood of selecting specific marketing strategies. The multinomial logistic regression equation is:

$$\log \left( \frac{P(Y_i = 0)}{P(Y_i = k)} \right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_p X_p$$

Equation 4: Multinomial Logistic Regression Equation

Where:

$P(Y_i = k)$ : The probability of a respondent choosing the  $k^{\text{th}}$  marketing strategy,

$X_1, X_2, \dots, X_p$ : The independent variables (social media platform preferences)

$\beta_0, \beta_1, \beta_2, \dots, \beta_p$ : The regression coefficients.

This model helped identify how different factors influenced the selection of marketing strategies.

### **3. K-Modes Clustering**

K-Modes Clustering was used to segment respondents into distinct behavioural groups based on social media usage and fast-food ad exposure patterns. Unlike K-Means, which works with continuous data, K-Modes is suitable for categorical data, such as preferences for social media platforms and fast-food ad exposure.

The **cost function** minimized by the K-Modes algorithm is:

$$Cost = \sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^m d(X_{ij}, C_{kj})$$

Equation 5: Cost Function

Where:

$d(X_{ij}, C_{kj})$ : the distance between an object  $X_{ij}$  and the cluster mode  $C_{kj}$

$n$ : The number of objects (respondents),

$m$ : The number of attributes (social media usage, exposure to fast food ads),

$C_{kj}$ : The cluster mode for the  $k^{\text{th}}$  cluster and  $j^{\text{th}}$  attribute.

This clustering technique helped identify different respondent segments based on their patterns of social media engagement and fast-food ad exposure. By analysing these groups, we were able to better understand the varying impacts of social media marketing on fast food consumption across different behavioural types.

### **3.3. Equipment**

The data collection and analysis process for this study involved the use of various tools and equipment to ensure smooth execution and accurate results. The following equipment and software were used throughout the research

#### **3.3.1. Survey Platform**

##### **Google Forms:**

Google Forms was used as the primary survey platform for data collection. This platform was chosen for its user-friendly interface, ease of distribution, and ability to automatically capture responses in real-time. Google Forms also allowed for seamless integration with Google Sheets, which facilitated the organization and initial processing of the collected data.

#### **3.3.2. Statistical Software**

##### **Descriptive Statistics:**

Descriptive analysis was conducted using **SPSS and Excel**, which were used for generating frequency distributions and summarizing key patterns in the data.

##### **Inferential Statistics:**

Hypothesis testing, and regression analysis were performed using **R**, which facilitated conducting the Chi-Square test, Cramér's V, and multinomial logistic regression.

##### **K-Modes Clustering:**

The K-Modes clustering algorithm was implemented using **R** to segment respondents into distinct groups based on social media and fast-food ad exposure behaviours.

### **3.3.3. Computing Equipment**

#### **Personal Computer:**

A personal computer was used for data processing, statistical analysis, and visualization of the results. The computer was equipped with the necessary software (SPSS, R, and Excel) and had sufficient processing power to handle the data and run the required statistical analyses smoothly. It was also used for creating data visualizations, including charts and graphs, to present the study's findings effectively.

These tools and equipment provided the foundation for collecting, processing, and analysing the survey data, allowing the study to achieve its objectives and generate reliable results.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESULTS**

In this section, we present the findings from the analysis of the survey data, shedding light on the key trends and patterns observed regarding Gen Z's fast-food consumption behaviour in the Gampaha District. By analysing responses related to social media marketing strategies and their influence on fast food choices, we were able to draw insights into how different factors, such as platform preferences and ad exposure, shape consumer behaviour. Through both descriptive and inferential statistical methods, the results provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between social media marketing tactics and fast-food consumption among the target demographic.

### **4.1. Sample Analysis**

#### **4.1.1. Demographic Data Analysis**

We examined the respondents' gender and marital status to have a better understanding of their demographic profile. These elements offer important background information for understanding their preferences and behaviours. The *Table 1* summarizes the composition of the sample group.

Table 1: Demographic Data

| <b>Variable</b> | <b>Category</b> | <b>No of Respondents</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Gender          | Male            | 169                      | 43.9 %            |
|                 | Female          | 216                      | 56.1 %            |
| Marital Status  | Married         | 100                      | 26.0 %            |
|                 | Unmarried       | 285                      | 74.0 %            |

The sample consisted of 385 respondents, with 43.9% (169) being male and 56.1% (216) female, indicating a slightly higher representation of females. Regarding marital status, most respondents were unmarried, making up 74.0% (285), while 26.0% (100) were married. This demographic breakdown helps set the foundation for understanding the group's behaviours, particularly in terms of their exposure to social media marketing strategies and fast-food consumption behaviour.

#### 4.1.2. Social Media Usage Analysis

Understanding the social media usage patterns of Gen Z in the Gampaha District is essential to explore how these behaviours might influence fast food consumption. In this section, we analyse the frequency of social media usage and the preferred platforms among the respondents, offering insight into the connection between their online activity and interactions with marketing strategies. *Table 2* below presents the detailed breakdown of social media usage patterns among the participants.

Table 2: Social Media Usage Patterns of Gen Z in Gampaha District

| Variable                              | Category             | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Average time spending on social media | Less than 1 Hour     | 36                | 9.4 %      |
|                                       | Between 1 to 3 Hours | 129               | 33.5 %     |
|                                       | Between 4 to 6 Hours | 137               | 35.6 %     |
|                                       | More than 6 Hours    | 83                | 21.6 %     |
| Most Used Social Media Platform       | Facebook             | 100               | 26.0 %     |
|                                       | YouTube              | 58                | 15.1 %     |
|                                       | WhatsApp             | 98                | 25.5 %     |
|                                       | Instagram            | 72                | 18.7 %     |
|                                       | Other                | 57                | 14.8 %     |

The data reveals significant variations in the amount of time Gen Z spends on social media. Most respondents (35.6%) report spending between 4 to 6 hours daily on social media, followed closely by those who spend between 1 to 3 hours (33.5%). A smaller portion of the respondents (21.6%) spends over 6 hours a day, while 9.4% of participants report spending less than an hour a day on social media.

When it comes to platform preferences, the analysis shows that Facebook and WhatsApp are the most popular platforms among the respondents, with 26.0% and 25.5% of users respectively favouring these platforms. YouTube comes in next at 15.1%, followed by Instagram at 18.7%. A smaller percentage (14.8%) of participants listed other platforms they use, underscoring the diverse digital landscape Gen Z engages with daily.

These findings underscore the varying levels of social media engagement and provide insight into the platforms that might be most influential in shaping fast food consumption behaviours through targeted marketing strategies.

#### 4.1.3. Social Media Marketing Strategy Analysis

The level of exposure to social media marketing on fast food plays a crucial role in understanding how different strategies impact the consumption behaviours of Gen Z. In this section, we analyse the frequency of exposure to social media marketing and the most influential marketing strategies that resonate with the respondents. Table 3 below highlights the breakdown of marketing exposure and the preferred strategies among participants

Table 3: Social Media Marketing Exposure and Influence on Fast Food Consumption Behaviour

| Variable  | Category                         | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|---|----------------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Frequency of Social Media Marketing Exposure on Fast Food | Daily                            | 199               | 51.7 %     |
|   | Weekly                           | 94                | 24.4 %     |
|   | Occasionally                     | 92                | 23.9 %     |
| Most influenced Social Media Marketing Strategy           | Targeted Ads                     | 87                | 22.6 %     |
|   | Influencer Recommendation        | 110               | 28.6 %     |
|   | Customer Reviews                 | 40                | 10.4 %     |
|   | Limited Time Offers or Promotion | 115               | 29.9 %     |
|   | Other                            | 33                | 8.6 %      |

The data reveals that over half of the respondents (51.7%) are exposed to social media marketing for fast food daily, with another 24.4% experiencing such marketing weekly. A smaller group (23.9%) reported occasional exposure to marketing content, indicating that frequent exposure is common among the majority of Gen Z in the Gampaha District.

When examining the most influential social media marketing strategies, **limited time offers or promotions** stand out as the most impactful, with 29.9% of participants indicating that these types of offers influence their fast - food consumption the most. **Influencer recommendations** follow closely behind, with 28.6% of respondents stating that they are strongly influenced by this marketing tactic. **Targeted ads** were cited by 22.6% of respondents, while **customer reviews** were the least influential, with only 10.4% of participants considering them a key factor in their decision-making process.

Additionally, 8.6% of respondents noted other marketing strategies not specified in the options.

These findings highlight the importance of targeted and promotional marketing strategies, particularly limited time offers and influencer recommendations, in influencing the fast-food consumption patterns of Gen Z.

#### 4.1.4. Detailed Analysis of Social Media Marketing Strategies

This section delves deeper into the specific types of social media marketing strategies that most influence fast food consumption within Gen Z. Table 4 presents the breakdown of different strategies, categorizing each by the specific tactics employed and showing the influence of each within the sample. These insights help to further understand the individual components that make up the larger marketing strategy landscape.

Table 4: Detailed Analysis of Social Media Marketing Strategies on Fast Food Consumption

| Type of Social Media Marketing Strategy          | Category              | No of Respondents | Percentage |              |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------|------------|--------------|
|  |                       |                   | Each Group | Whole Sample |
| Targeted Ads<br>(Total: 87)                      | Video Ads             | 48                | 55.2 %     | 12.5 %       |
|  | Flyers and Banners    | 39                | 44.8 %     | 10.1 %       |
| Influencer Recommendation<br>(Total: 110)        | Celebrities           | 13                | 11.8 %     | 3.4 %        |
|  | Content Creators      | 35                | 31.8 %     | 9.1 %        |
|  | Food Bloggers         | 62                | 56.4 %     | 16.1 %       |
| Customer Reviews<br>(Total: 40)                  | Positive Comments     | 15                | 37.5 %     | 3.9 %        |
|  | Ratings               | 13                | 32.5 %     | 3.4 %        |
|  | Friend Recommendation | 12                | 30.0 %     | 3.1 %        |
| Limited Time Offers or Promotion<br>(Total: 115) | Discount              | 31                | 26.9 %     | 8.1 %        |
|  | Buy One Get One Free  | 53                | 46.1 %     | 13.8 %       |
|  | Free Delivery         | 10                | 8.7 %      | 2.6 %        |
|  | Combo Box Offer       | 21                | 18.3 %     | 5.5 %        |



The data reveals that **video ads** are the most popular form of **targeted ads**, accounting for 55.2% of respondents who chose this option, while **flyers and banners** follow with 44.8%. The influence of targeted ads on the whole sample is about 12.5%, indicating a moderate impact across Gen Z.

For **influencer recommendations**, **food bloggers** have the strongest influence, cited by 56.4% of respondents, with a notable 16.1% of the entire sample feeling influenced by food bloggers. **Content creators** also play a significant role, with 31.8% of respondents favouring their recommendations, and **celebrities** have the least influence, with only 11.8% of respondents being influenced by them.

When it comes to **customer reviews**, **positive comments** are the most impactful, influencing 37.5% of respondents, while ratings and **friend recommendations** have similar levels of influence, with 32.5% and 30% respectively.

**Limited time offers** show a strong presence in influencing fast food decisions, with **Buy One Get One Free** offers standing out, chosen by 46.1% of respondents, and impacting 13.8% of the whole sample. **Discounts** and **combo box offers** also have their share of influence, though **free delivery** offers the least influence at 2.6%.

These findings highlight the varying degrees of impact that different marketing strategies have on fast food consumption among Gen Z in the Gampaha District. Video ads and food bloggers stand out as the most influential strategies, while free delivery promotions and celebrity endorsements have a lesser effect.

## 4.2. Descriptive Analysis

We used cross-tabulation to analyse the relationship between different categorical variables, helping us understand how demographics and social media usage influence fast food marketing preferences. This method allowed us to uncover patterns in the data, such as how often respondents are exposed to ads and which marketing strategies are most effective among various groups. The results provided valuable insights into the behaviours and preferences of Gen Z in the Gampaha District.

*i.e., The descriptive analysis section incorporates insights from various tables, including those in the cross-tabulation tables subsection (4.2.6), to provide a detailed understanding of the data and highlight key trends and relationships.*

#### 4.2.1. Cross- Analysis of Social Media Marketing Strategy with Gender

The data in this analysis aligns with the findings presented in Table 5, which also explores the relationship between demographic factors and preferences for social media marketing strategies. By focusing on gender-based preferences, this table provides a more detailed perspective on how different strategies resonate with male and female respondents.

In this analysis, females show a clear preference for **Influencer Recommendations**, with 66 respondents (30.6% within females) identifying it as the most influential strategy. Similarly, males are most influenced by **Limited-Time Offers or Promotions**, with 52 respondents (30.8% within males) favouring this strategy. However, the gender-based split reveals distinct preferences, highlighting the effectiveness of influencer-driven campaigns among females and promotional campaigns among males.

This gendered analysis provides valuable insights for marketers aiming to tailor social media strategies to different demographics. A graphical representation of this data is provided below in the form of a bar chart (Figure 1) for better visualization and comparative analysis.

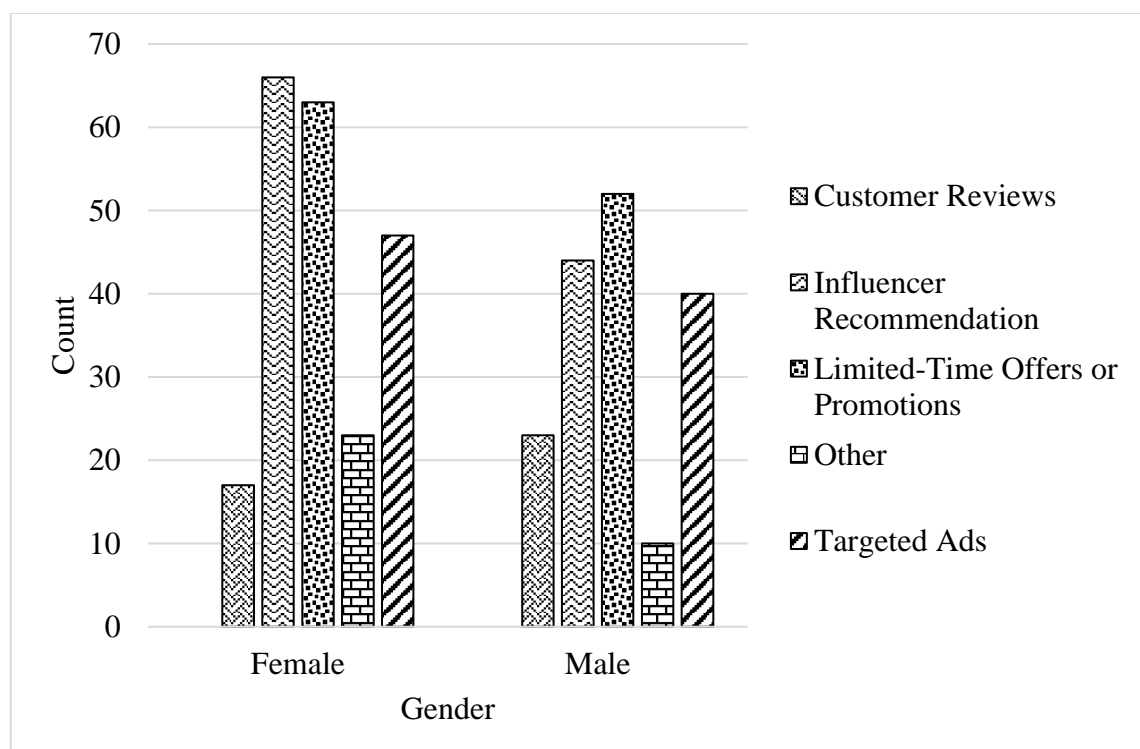


Figure 1: Bar Chart of Social Media Marketing Strategies Vs Gender

#### 4.2.2. Cross- Analysis of Social Media Marketing Strategy with Marital Status

The data presented in Table 6 is part of the cross-tabulation section (Section 4.2.6) and provides insights into marital status-based preferences for social media marketing strategies. This analysis highlights distinct patterns in how married and single respondents are influenced by various marketing approaches.

Among married respondents, **Limited-Time Offers or Promotions** (LTO) and **Targeted Ads** are equally influential, with 27 respondents (27.0% within married) favouring each strategy. This indicates a dual appeal for promotional discounts and personalized advertisements among this group. In contrast, single respondents show a clear preference for **Limited-Time Offers or Promotions**, with 88 respondents (30.9% within singles) identifying it as the most impactful strategy. **Influencer Recommendations** are also significant for singles, with 84 respondents (29.5% within singles) citing them as influential. However, the marital status-based split underscores how married individuals value a mix of targeted ads and promotions, while singles lean more toward promotional offers and influencer-driven campaigns.

This analysis, represented in Table 6, is visually summarized in the bar chart (Figure 2) provided below, offering a clear graphical representation of the data for easier interpretation.

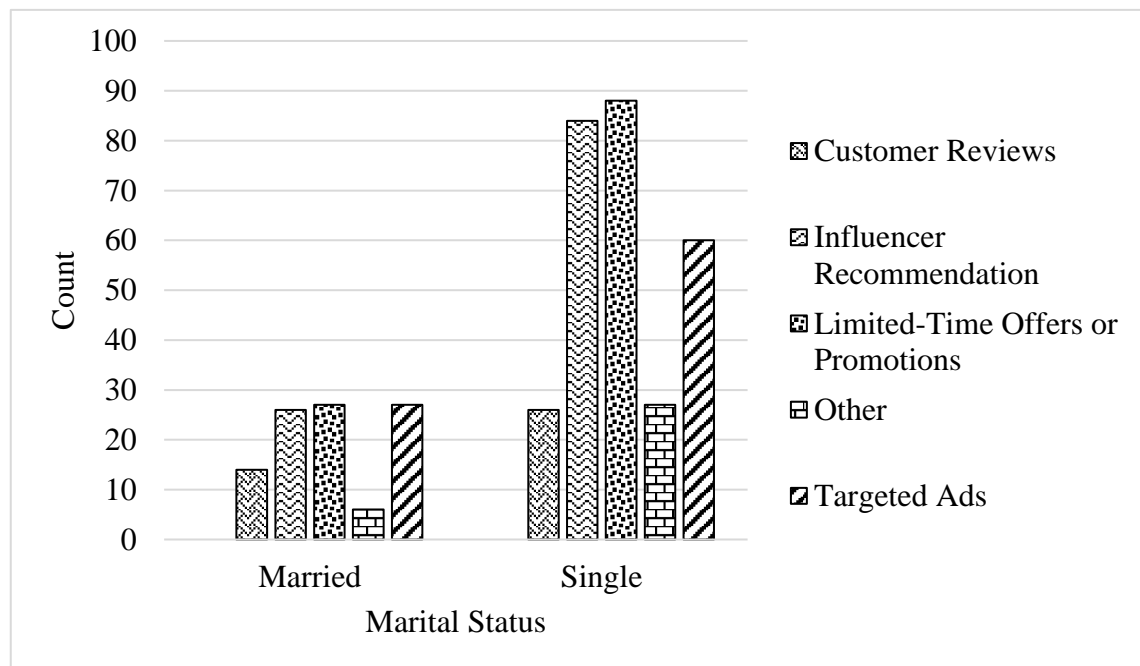


Figure 2: Bar Chart of Social Media Marketing Strategies Vs Marital Status

#### 4.2.3. Cross- Analysis of Social Media Marketing Strategy with Daily Spending Time on Social Media

The data in Table 8, provided in the cross-tabulation section (Section 4.2.6), explores the relationship between daily time spent on social media and preferences for social media marketing strategies (SMMS). The analysis highlights distinct trends based on the amount of time respondents spend online.

For respondents who spend 1 to 3 hours daily on social media, **Limited-Time Offers or Promotions** are the leading strategy, with 48 respondents (37.2% within this group) identifying it as the most influential. This suggests that shorter periods of social media use may be particularly responsive to time-sensitive promotional strategies.

In contrast, for all other time categories (less than 1 hour, 4 to 6 hours, and more than 6 hours), **Influencer Recommendations** emerge as the most influential strategy. For instance, 41 respondents (29.9%) in the 4 to 6 hours group and 23 respondents (27.7%) in the more than 6 hours group report being most influenced by recommendations from influencers.

This breakdown is visually summarized in the bar chart (Figure 3) provided below, offering a clear graphical representation of the data.

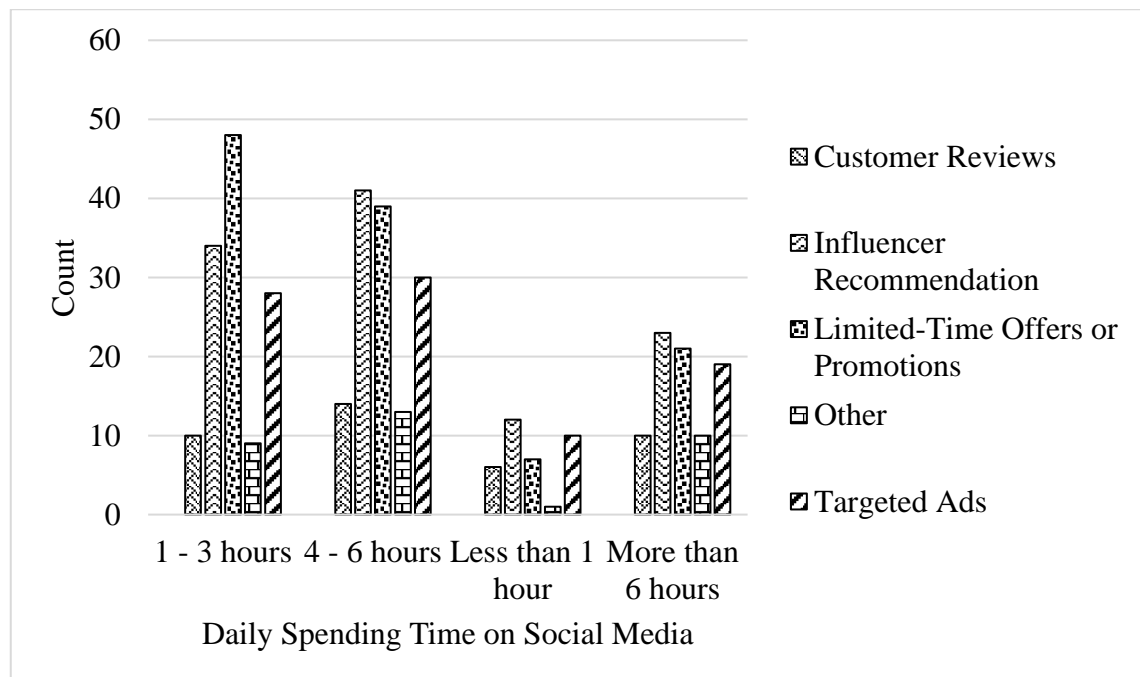


Figure 3: Bar Chart of Social Media Marketing Strategies Vs Daily Spending Time on Social Media

#### 4.2.4. Cross- Analysis of Social Media Marketing Strategy with Frequency of Fast-Food Ad Exposure

Table 7, presented in the cross-tabulation section (Section 4.2.6), illustrates the relationship between the frequency of fast-food ad exposure and the most influential social media marketing strategies (SMMS). The data highlights how ad exposure frequency correlates with preferences for marketing strategies.

Respondents who are exposed to fast food ads daily show a clear preference for **Limited-Time Offers or Promotions**, with 72 respondents (36.2% within this group) identifying it as the most influential strategy. This suggests that frequent exposure to ads creates urgency and makes time-sensitive promotions highly effective. Among respondents exposed to fast food ads weekly, the most influential strategy is **Targeted Ads**, with 29 respondents (30.9% within this group) favouring them. This indicates that targeted, personalized advertising resonates strongly with individuals who engage with fast food ads less frequently than daily. For respondents who see fast food ads occasionally, **Influencer Recommendations** are the most impactful, influencing 30 respondents (32.6% within this group). This suggests that influencer endorsements are particularly effective for users with sporadic ad exposure, likely due to their trust in authentic, relatable endorsements.

This analysis is further illustrated with a bar chart (Figure 4) provided below, offering a visual representation of the data trends.

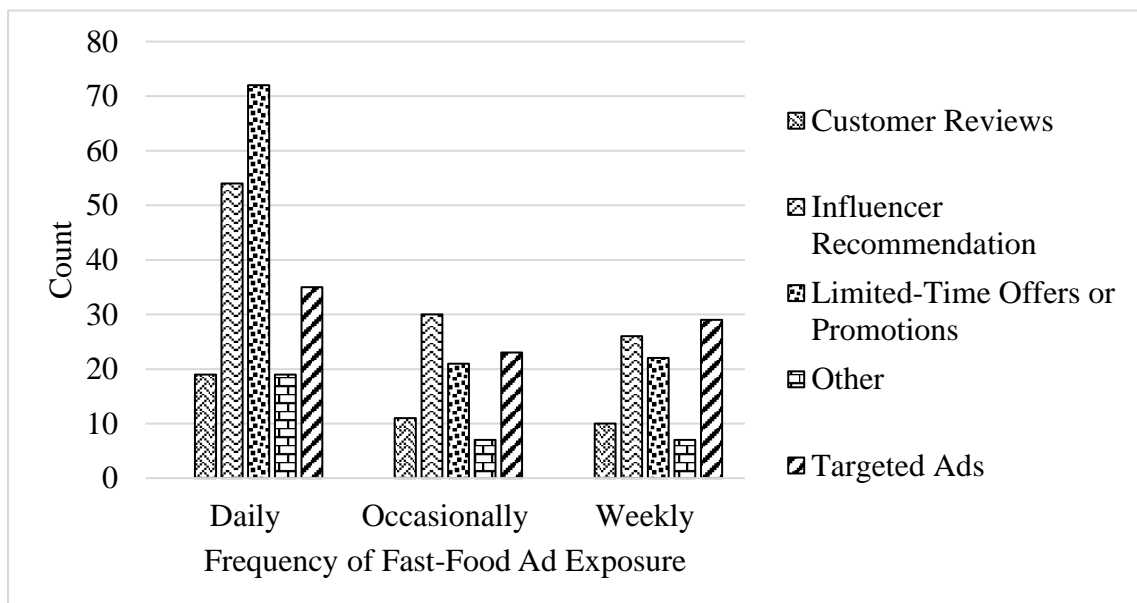


Figure 4: Bar Chart of Social Media Marketing Strategies Vs Frequency of Fast-Food Ad Exposure

#### 4.2.5. Cross- Analysis of Social Media Marketing Strategy with Most Used Social Media Platform

Table 9, presented in the cross-tabulation section (Section 4.2.6), explores the relationship between the most frequently used social media platforms and the most influential social media marketing strategies (SMMS). The data reveals how platform usage influences preferences for specific marketing tactics.

Facebook users are most influenced by **Limited-Time Offers or Promotions**, with 37 respondents (37.0% within Facebook users) identifying it as the most impactful strategy. This suggests that users on Facebook are more likely to engage with time-sensitive promotions, possibly due to Facebook's advertising approach.

For Instagram users, **Limited-Time Offers or Promotions** and **Targeted Ads** have equal influence, each strategy attracting around 27.8% of respondents. This shows that Instagram's platform supports both promotional urgency and personalized targeting effectively.

WhatsApp users also show a preference for **Limited-Time Offers or Promotions**, with 34 respondents (34.7% within WhatsApp users) identifying it as the most influential strategy, reinforcing the popularity of time-limited promotions across messaging platforms.

On YouTube, the most influential strategy is **Influencer Recommendations**, with 17 respondents (29.3% within YouTube users) favouring this approach. This highlights the power of content creators and influencers on YouTube to sway consumer behaviour effectively.

These findings emphasize the importance of platform-specific strategies. While Limited-Time Offers or Promotions dominate on Facebook and WhatsApp, Influencer Recommendations are more influential on YouTube, with Instagram seeing a balanced impact from both Limited-Time Offers or Promotions and Targeted Ads.

The graphical representation of these trends is provided in the bar chart (Figure 5) below, offering a visual breakdown of the data.

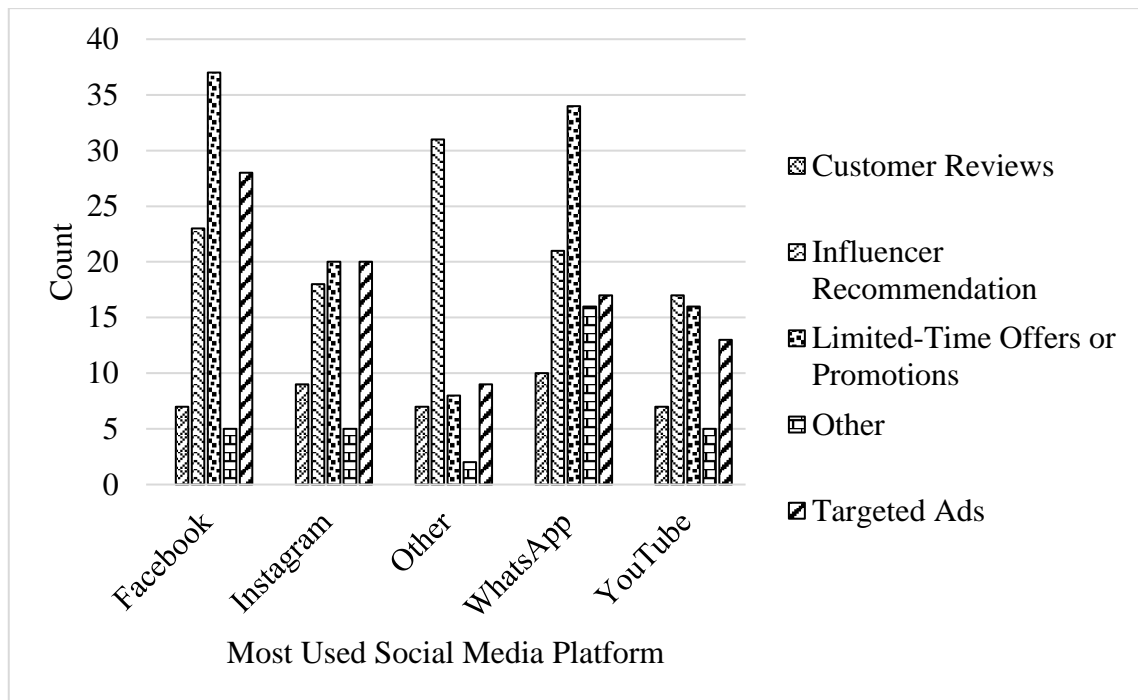


Figure 5: Bar Chart of Social Media Marketing Strategies Vs Most Used Social Media Platform

#### 4.2.6. Cross-Tabulation Tables

The following section presents insights derived from the cross-tabulation tables provided in this subsection. These tables analyse the relationships between demographic factors and preferences for social media marketing strategies. They offer a deeper understanding of how variables such as marital status, gender, and others influence the effectiveness of different strategies.

All the five tables related to the above sections are provided in this section. These tables and their descriptions are specifically designed to highlight patterns and trends essential for targeting and optimizing marketing efforts.

Table 5: Cross-Tabulation of Gender and Preferred Social Media Marketing Strategies

|   | Gender                            |     |        |     | Total  |        |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----|--------|-----|--------|--------|
|   | Female                            |     | Male   |     | N      | %      |
|   | N                                 | %   | N      | %   |        |        |
| Type of Social Media Marketing Strategy | Customer Reviews                  | 17  | 7.9%   | 23  | 13.6%  | 40     |
|   | Influencer Recommendation         | 66  | 30.6%  | 44  | 26.0%  | 110    |
|   | Limited-Time Offers or Promotions | 63  | 29.2%  | 52  | 30.8%  | 115    |
|   | Other                             | 23  | 10.6%  | 10  | 5.9%   | 33     |
|   | Targeted Ads                      | 47  | 21.8%  | 40  | 23.7%  | 87     |
| Total                                   |                                   | 216 | 100.0% | 169 | 100.0% | 385    |
|   |                                   |     |        |     |        | 100.0% |

Table 6: Cross-Tabulation of Marital Status and Preferred Social Media Marketing Strategies

|   | Marital Status                    |     |        |     | Total  |        |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----|--------|-----|--------|--------|
|   | Married                           |     | Single |     | N      | %      |
|   | N                                 | %   | N      | %   |        |        |
| Type of Social Media Marketing Strategy | Customer Reviews                  | 14  | 14.0%  | 26  | 9.1%   | 40     |
|   | Influencer Recommendation         | 26  | 26.0%  | 84  | 29.5%  | 110    |
|   | Limited-Time Offers or Promotions | 27  | 27.0%  | 88  | 30.9%  | 115    |
|   | Other                             | 6   | 6.0%   | 27  | 9.5%   | 33     |
|   | Targeted Ads                      | 27  | 27.0%  | 60  | 21.1%  | 87     |
| Total                                   |                                   | 100 | 100.0% | 285 | 100.0% | 385    |
|   |                                   |     |        |     |        | 100.0% |



Table 8: Cross-Tabulation of Daily Time Spent on Social Media and Preferred Social Media Marketing Strategies

|   |                                   | Daily Time Spent on Social Media |        |             |        |                  |        |                   |        | Total |        |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------|-------------|--------|------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|-------|--------|
|   |                                   | 1 - 3 hours                      |        | 4 - 6 hours |        | Less than 1 hour |        | More than 6 hours |        |       |        |
|   |                                   |                                  |        |             |        |                  |        |                   |        |       |        |
|   |                                   | N                                | %      | N           | %      | N                | %      | N                 | %      |       |        |
| Type of Social Media Marketing Strategy | Customer Reviews                  | 10                               | 7.8%   | 14          | 10.2%  | 6                | 16.7%  | 10                | 12.0%  | 40    | 10.4%  |
|   | Influencer Recommendation         | 34                               | 26.4%  | 41          | 29.9%  | 12               | 33.3%  | 23                | 27.7%  | 110   | 28.6%  |
|   | Limited-Time Offers or Promotions | 48                               | 37.2%  | 39          | 28.5%  | 7                | 19.4%  | 21                | 25.3%  | 115   | 29.9%  |
|   | Other                             | 9                                | 7.0%   | 13          | 9.5%   | 1                | 2.8%   | 10                | 12.0%  | 33    | 8.6%   |
|   | Targeted Ads                      | 28                               | 21.7%  | 30          | 21.9%  | 10               | 27.8%  | 19                | 22.9%  | 87    | 22.6%  |
| Total                                   |                                   | 129                              | 100.0% | 137         | 100.0% | 36               | 100.0% | 83                | 100.0% | 385   | 100.0% |

Table 7: Cross-Tabulation of Frequency of Fast-Food Ads Exposure and Preferred Social Media Marketing Strategies

|   |                                   | Frequency of Fast-Food Ads Exposure |        |    |        |              |        |        |        | Total |  |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------|----|--------|--------------|--------|--------|--------|-------|--|
|   |                                   | Daily                               |        |    |        | Occasionally |        | Weekly |        |       |  |
|   |                                   | N                                   | %      | N  | %      | N            | %      | N      | %      |       |  |
|   |                                   |                                     |        |    |        |              |        |        |        |       |  |
| Type of Social Media Marketing Strategy | Customer Reviews                  | 19                                  | 9.5%   | 11 | 12.0%  | 10           | 10.6%  | 40     | 10.4%  |       |  |
|   | Influencer Recommendation         | 54                                  | 27.1%  | 30 | 32.6%  | 26           | 27.7%  | 110    | 28.6%  |       |  |
|   | Limited-Time Offers or Promotions | 72                                  | 36.2%  | 21 | 22.8%  | 22           | 23.4%  | 115    | 29.9%  |       |  |
|   | Other                             | 19                                  | 9.5%   | 7  | 7.6%   | 7            | 7.4%   | 33     | 8.6%   |       |  |
|   | Targeted Ads                      | 35                                  | 17.6%  | 23 | 25.0%  | 29           | 30.9%  | 87     | 22.6%  |       |  |
| Total                                   |                                   | 199                                 | 100.0% | 92 | 100.0% | 94           | 100.0% | 385    | 100.0% |       |  |

Table 9: Cross-Tabulation of Most Used Social Media Platform and Preferred Social Media Marketing Strategies

|   |                                   | Most Used Social Media Platform |        |           |        |       |        |          |        |         |        |     |        | Total |   |
|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------|-----------|--------|-------|--------|----------|--------|---------|--------|-----|--------|-------|---|
|   |                                   | Facebook                        |        | Instagram |        | Other |        | WhatsApp |        | YouTube |        |     |        |       |   |
|   |                                   |                                 |        |           |        |       |        |          |        | N       | %      | N   | %      | N     | % |
|   |                                   | N                               | %      | N         | %      | N     | %      | N        | %      | N       | %      | N   | %      |       |   |
| Type of Social Media Marketing Strategy | Customer Reviews                  | 7                               | 7.0%   | 9         | 12.5%  | 7     | 12.3%  | 10       | 10.2%  | 7       | 12.1%  | 40  | 10.4%  |       |   |
|   | Influencer Recommendation         | 23                              | 23.0%  | 18        | 25.0%  | 31    | 54.4%  | 21       | 21.4%  | 17      | 29.3%  | 110 | 28.6%  |       |   |
|   | Limited-Time Offers or Promotions | 37                              | 37.0%  | 20        | 27.8%  | 8     | 14.0%  | 34       | 34.7%  | 16      | 27.6%  | 115 | 29.9%  |       |   |
|   | Other                             | 5                               | 5.0%   | 5         | 6.9%   | 2     | 3.5%   | 16       | 16.3%  | 5       | 8.6%   | 33  | 8.6%   |       |   |
|   | Targeted Ads                      | 28                              | 28.0%  | 20        | 27.8%  | 9     | 15.8%  | 17       | 17.3%  | 13      | 22.4%  | 87  | 22.6%  |       |   |
| Total                                   |                                   | 100                             | 100.0% | 72        | 100.0% | 57    | 100.0% | 98       | 100.0% | 58      | 100.0% | 385 | 100.0% |       |   |

### **4.3. Inferential Analysis**

The results of this study provided significant insights into how social media usage patterns influence marketing strategies, with particular attention to factors like platform preference, gender, marital status, and trust in social media. Through various statistical analyses, including chi-square tests, multinomial logistic regression, and k-mode clustering, we were able to examine the relationship between demographic factors and their preferred marketing strategies across multiple platforms like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and YouTube.

#### **4.3.1. Chi-Square Test Findings**

##### **Platform Preference and Marital Status:**

There is a significant association ( $\chi^2 = 20.736$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) between marital status and platform preference. Single individuals (56.1%) show a stronger preference for WhatsApp and Instagram, while married individuals (51.7%) tend to use Facebook more. This indicates that single users engage with more dynamic, real-time communication platforms, while married users gravitate towards Facebook, a platform more suited for family and professional content.

##### **Platform Preference and Gender:**

A significant relationship ( $\chi^2 = 21.773$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) was observed between gender and platform usage, with females (57.5%) showing a higher preference for Instagram (37.5%) and YouTube (28.6%), while males (52.1%) are more likely to engage with Facebook (38.5%). This suggests that women are more inclined to interact with visual content and influencer-driven campaigns, while men favour platforms that provide a mix of informational and social content.

##### **Trust in Social Media Ads and Platform Usage:**

A significant association ( $\chi^2 = 16.444$ ,  $p = 0.036$ ) between trust in social media ads and platform choice was found. Instagram (27.8%) and YouTube (22.4%) users, who tend to trust influencer-driven ads, were more likely to engage with Influencer Recommendations and Promotions. On the other hand, WhatsApp (28.6%) and Facebook (28.0%) users, showing lower trust in ads, preferred Customer Reviews and Organic Content.

### **4.3.2. Multinomial Logistic Regression Findings**

#### **Marital Status and Social Media Usage:**

Single users (56.1%) are more likely to use WhatsApp (29.7%) and Instagram (23.4%), while married individuals (51.7%) prefer Facebook (29.3%). This suggests that single users are more active on platforms offering real-time, visual content, while married users use platforms with more professional or family-related content.

#### **Gender and Social Media Usage:**

Males (52.1%) are more likely to use Facebook (38.5%), whereas females (57.5%) show a stronger preference for Instagram (37.5%) and YouTube (28.6%). This indicates that males engage more with Facebook, which blends social and informational content, while females are more inclined toward Instagram and YouTube, where visual content and influencer marketing are more prominent.

#### **Frequency of Fast-Food Exposure and Social Media Engagement:**

Users who frequently engage with fast food apps (58.1%) tend to spend more time on Instagram (23.4%) and WhatsApp (29.7%). This suggests a strong correlation between active engagement with fast food apps and time spent on social media, with users responding to Limited-Time Offers and Influencer Promotions.

### **4.3.3. K-Mode Clustering Findings**

#### **Cluster 1: High Social Media & Fast-Food App Users:**

Primarily composed of single individuals (56.1%), this group uses Instagram (23.4%) and WhatsApp (29.7%) most frequently.

These users are highly responsive to Limited-Time Offers (37%) and Influencer Recommendations (28.6%), emphasizing the effectiveness of dynamic, real-time promotions and influencer-driven campaigns for this group.

### **Cluster 2: Moderate Social Media Users:**

This cluster includes a more balanced demographic, with a mix of single and married individuals (51.7%). Users in this group engage moderately with Facebook (38.5%) and YouTube (22.4%).

They respond to Customer Reviews (12.3%) and Influencer Recommendations (29.3%), highlighting that both organic content and influencer endorsements are effective strategies for reaching this group.

### **Cluster 3: Low Social Media Users:**

Primarily married individuals (51.7%) who use Facebook (38.5%) and spend less time on social media.

This group responds more to Traditional Promotions (Limited-Time Offers) and Customer Reviews (12.3%), suggesting that married individuals prefer direct promotions and peer reviews over dynamic content.

### **4.3.4. Marketing Strategy Implications**

Instagram and YouTube users, who are predominantly females (57.5%), are responsive to Influencer Recommendations and Lifestyle-driven content. Marketers should prioritize influencer partnerships and visual campaigns for these platforms, especially for time-sensitive promotions targeting young, single individuals (56.1%).

Facebook and WhatsApp users (who are more male-dominated, 52.1% and often married 51.7%) are more receptive to Limited-Time Offers and traditional ad formats. Campaigns should focus on time-sensitive deals and direct promotions to engage this group.

Customer Reviews are highly effective on platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp (28.6%), which have lower trust in ads. Businesses should prioritize user-generated content to build trust and authenticity.

#### **4.3.5. Behavioural Patterns and Segmentation**

##### **Cluster 1 (High Social Media & Fast-Food App Users):**

Primarily young, single individuals (56.1%) who frequently use Instagram and WhatsApp (23.4% and 29.7% respectively).

They engage most with Influencer Recommendations (28.6%) and Limited-Time Offers (37%).

Marketers targeting this cluster should prioritize influencer marketing and real-time promotions.

##### **Cluster 2 (Moderate Social Media Users):**

A more balanced group with single (51.7%) and married individuals, who engage moderately with Facebook (38.5%) and YouTube (22.4%).

They respond to a blend of Customer Reviews (12.3%) and Influencer Recommendations (29.3%).

##### **Cluster 3 (Low Social Media Users):**

Primarily married individuals (51.7%) who use Facebook (38.5%) and are less active on social media.

They prefer traditional promotions and Customer Reviews (12.3%).

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION**

The main goal of this study was to understand how social media marketing strategies influence the fast-food consumption behaviour of Gen Z in the Gampaha District. As outlined in the introduction, Gen Z is highly engaged with social media, making it crucial for businesses to align their marketing strategies with their digital behaviours. The results presented in the Results Section provide valuable insights into how different social media platforms and marketing strategies affect Gen Z's fast-food consumption, as well as how demographic factors, such as gender and marital status, influence platform preferences.

In this discussion, we critically examine the findings from the descriptive and inferential analyses and compare them to existing literature. We will also consider the proposed hypotheses and provide suggestions for future research to expand on these findings.

### **5.1. Platform Preferences and Marketing Strategy Effectiveness**

The study revealed that social media platforms are significantly associated with specific marketing strategies that resonate with Gen Z consumers. Platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp were predominantly used for Limited-Time Offers (LTOs), while Instagram and YouTube proved more effective for Influencer Recommendations. These findings align with previous studies that suggest that Facebook is a platform geared towards users who seek transactional content, while Instagram and YouTube cater to more visually driven content that appeals to Gen Z's desire for authenticity and relatability (Kapoor et al., 2021). The results corroborate existing research, which emphasizes the importance of aligning content type with platform characteristics to enhance consumer engagement (Pereira et al., 2020). This suggests that fast food brands should tailor their campaigns based on these preferences to maximize engagement.

The findings also highlight a key marketing strategy, Influencer Recommendations, which had a significant impact on platform choice, especially for Instagram and YouTube users. This result reflects the growing power of influencer marketing, a strategy that has become more prominent with the rise of social media influencers among younger generations. Studies have shown that Gen Z is highly influenced by online influencers, making this an essential strategy for brands aiming to connect with this demographic (Gorry & Westbrook, 2011). However, it is worth considering that trust in social media

plays a crucial role in how consumers respond to these influencers, a finding we will explore further below.

## **5.2. Influence of Demographic Factors: Gender and Marital Status**

The study also found significant relationships between gender and platform usage. For instance, females were more likely to use Instagram and YouTube, while males preferred Facebook. These findings are consistent with research that suggests gender-based differences in social media platform preferences, where females gravitate toward more visual and influencer-driven platforms (Lo et al., 2020), while males tend to favor platforms with a mix of social interaction and informational content. This insight can help businesses better target their campaigns based on these platform preferences.

Similarly, marital status was found to influence the platform choices of Gen Z consumers. Single individuals preferred platforms like WhatsApp and Instagram, while married individuals were more inclined to use Facebook. This finding aligns with the theory that younger, single consumers are drawn to platforms that are more dynamic and influencer-centric, while older, married individuals prefer platforms with informational content and a focus on community-building (Shao, 2009). Given these results, businesses can enhance their marketing strategies by tailoring content to the specific preferences of these demographic segments, ensuring that single consumers are targeted through influencer promotions, while married consumers receive more informational and review-based content.

## **5.3. Trust in Social Media Ads and Consumer Engagement**

A key finding of this study was the impact of trust in social media ads on consumer engagement. The results indicate that users who have a higher level of trust in social media ads are more likely to engage with Influencer Recommendations and Promotions. This finding reflects the growing importance of authenticity in social media marketing, with consumers placing more value on content that comes from trusted sources (Marwick, 2015). On platforms like Instagram and YouTube, where influencers hold significant sway, users' trust in the advertising content directly affects their likelihood to interact with it.



For users with lower trust in social media ads, the study found that Customer Reviews and Organic Content had a more significant effect, particularly on platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook. This suggests that brands targeting these users should prioritize organic content and peer reviews to increase engagement. This finding is consistent with other studies that argue authentic user-generated content plays a key role in building trust and influencing consumer behaviour, especially among younger demographics (Keller, 2016).

#### **5.4. Social Media Engagement and Fast-Food Consumption**

The study also examined the relationship between social media engagement and fast-food consumption. Results showed that individuals who were more engaged with social media, particularly Instagram and WhatsApp, were more likely to use fast food apps. This observation suggests a synergistic relationship between social media engagement and fast-food consumption, where social media platforms serve as both a source of promotion and an engagement tool that drives app usage. This aligns with findings from previous research indicating that social media interaction can directly influence consumer purchasing decisions (Lipsman et al., 2012). Brands should leverage this relationship by integrating app promotions with social media campaigns to boost app engagement and encourage repeat purchases.

#### **5.5. Suggestions for Future Research**

While this study provides valuable insights into the influence of social media marketing strategies on fast food consumption, it also opens avenues for future research. One potential area of exploration is the role of psychological factors, such as brand loyalty, consumer motivations, and emotional engagement, in shaping consumer behaviour. Future studies could also examine the impact of emerging social media platforms, such as TikTok, which was not considered in this study but has shown to be highly popular among Gen Z consumers. Additionally, longitudinal studies could provide insights into how social media engagement influences long-term consumption patterns.

## **CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this study highlights the significant impact of social media marketing strategies on the fast-food consumption behaviour of Gen Z in the Gampaha District. By analysing how different social media platforms and marketing tactics influence consumer behaviour, we can see that platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and YouTube each serve distinct roles in shaping the behaviour of this demographic.

The study also emphasizes the importance of demographic factors such as gender and marital status, which influence platform preferences and responses to marketing strategies. Trust in social media ads emerged as a critical factor in shaping consumer engagement, underscoring the need for brands to develop authentic and trustworthy content to drive engagement.

Finally, the synergistic relationship between social media usage and fast-food app engagement suggests that businesses should integrate their social media and app-based marketing efforts to create multi-channel campaigns that encourage continuous interaction with their brand.

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on social media marketing and consumer behaviour by providing insights into the specific preferences of Gen Z in relation to fast food consumption. It also offers practical recommendations for fast food marketers to design platform-specific strategies that align with the needs and preferences of Gen Z consumers in the Gampaha District. Future research can further refine these findings by exploring the role of psychological factors and newer platforms, ensuring that marketing strategies remain effective in the evolving digital landscape.

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## **APPENDIX**

### **Questionnaire:**

<https://forms.gle/vSSGzREWww6YVfd89>

### **Data Sets:**

Main Data Set:

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ebkBe3\\_TJSg569Hmxsy\\_dpeildlHSV\\_N/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=104362803465331898059&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ebkBe3_TJSg569Hmxsy_dpeildlHSV_N/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=104362803465331898059&rtpof=true&sd=true)

Sub Data Sets:

1. Limited Time Offer Filtered Data Set

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dWHVcUp-nXPKAgu4zgZKnnLI0xPil2n5/view?usp=sharing>

2. Influencer Recommendation Filtered Data Set

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1q-c3lVfqxoXmw3ngOMolQxIAXk3pHFpV/view?usp=sharing>

3. Customer Reviews Filtered Data Set

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MAKdVP4K5Qz5C\\_Qx-nOnjbu8k\\_5P-4\\_t/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MAKdVP4K5Qz5C_Qx-nOnjbu8k_5P-4_t/view?usp=sharing)

4. Targeted Ads Filtered Data Set

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hL2cEw9z52Zo2TeA2alaq5ct3Ff02ELF/view?usp=sharing>

### **Analysis Scripts:**

Descriptive Analysis: (SPSS)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hfpnsWJGXmsitGpkPRY7amDW14i5wsBx/view?usp=sharing>

Inferential Analysis: (R Source Code)

[https://rushinifonseka.github.io/Research\\_Capstone\\_project/](https://rushinifonseka.github.io/Research_Capstone_project/)

### **Group Contribution Sheet:**

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1efLgd34yg05G8fwKTOl6DWZrbYG-e8sWAj2UZIkxr9I/edit?usp=sharing>