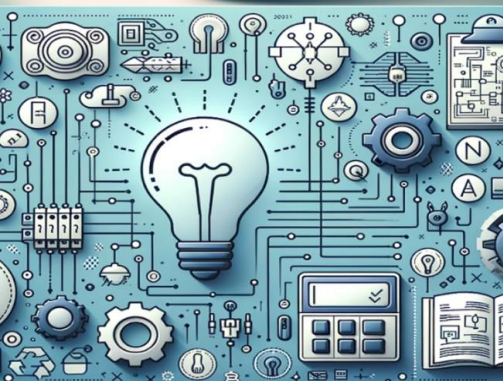# International Journal of Multidisciplinary
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A Study on Consumer Perception towards Social Media Scams in Coimbatore

Dr. S. Renugadevi[1,] S .Perinban[2]

Professor, Department of Commerce with Corporate Secretaryship with CA, Dr. N.G.P Arts and Science College, Coimbatore, India[1]

III B. COM, Department of Commerce with Corporate Secretaryship with CA, Dr. N.G.P Arts and Science College, Coimbatore, India[2]

ABSTRACT: In the digital age, social media platforms have become an integral part of daily life, offering numerous benefits such as connectivity, entertainment, and commerce. However, the rapid growth of these platforms has also led to a surge in online scams, posing significant threats to consumers. This study aims to explore consumer perception towards social media scams, with a specific focus on the city of Coimbatore. The research investigates the level of awareness, experiences, and preventive measures adopted by users in the region. Data was collected through structured questionnaires distributed to a diverse demographic in Coimbatore. The findings reveal that while a majority of users are active on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp, awareness of scam tactics such as phishing, fake promotions, and identity theft remains moderate. Many respondents reported encountering scams but lacked knowledge on how to respond or report them. The study highlights the need for improved digital literacy, stricter regulatory mechanisms, and proactive efforts from both users and social media platforms to combat the rising threat of scams. This research contributes to understanding the behavioral patterns and risk perception of consumers, providing insights for policymakers, cybersecurity professionals, and educators.

KEYWORDS: Consumer perception, social media scams, online fraud, digital awareness, cybercrime, phishing, identity theft, fake advertisements, preventive measures, Coimbatore.

I. INTRODUCTION

Social media has become a vital tool for communication, business, and entertainment, but it has also given rise to increasing fraudulent activities. This study focuses on consumer perception towards social media scams in Coimbatore City, where internet usage is rapidly growing. It explores user awareness, personal experiences, and the preventive measures adopted to avoid scams such as phishing, identity theft, fake advertisements, and financial frauds. The research investigates how users respond to scams, their trust in social media platforms, and the effectiveness of current security systems and cyber laws. Demographic factors like age, education, and profession are also considered in understanding vulnerability. By collecting data through surveys and interviews, this study provides insights into consumer behavior and aims to promote digital literacy and safer online practices in Coimbatore.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess consumer awareness of social media scams in Coimbatore City.
2. To identify common types of social media scams affecting consumers.
3. To analyze consumer perception and response towards fraudulent activities.
4. To evaluate the impact of social media scams on consumers' financial and psychological wellbeing.
5. To examine the role of digital literacy in preventing social media scams.
6. To suggest strategies for enhancing consumer protection and fraud prevention

II. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

1. The study is confined to understanding the perception, awareness, and response of consumers in Coimbatore regarding social media scams.

2.   It focuses on active users of platforms like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Telegram.
3.   The research includes respondents from various age groups, professions, and educational backgrounds to gain a comprehensive insight.
It aims to identify:
- Common types of scams faced by users.
- Consumer awareness levels.
- Preventive actions taken by users.
- Impact of scams on trust in social media.
4.   The study serves as a reference for creating awareness campaigns, improving cyber safety measures, and guiding future research on digital fraud prevention.

III. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1.   The study is geographically limited to Coimbatore, and hence, findings may not be generalizable to other regions.
2.   It relies on self-reported data, which may be subject to bias or inaccurate recall.
3.   The sample size may be limited due to time or resource constraints, potentially affecting the representation of the population.
4.   The focus is primarily on known social media platforms; scams occurring on less popular or emerging platforms may not be fully captured.
5.   The study emphasizes consumer perception, not the technical or legal aspects of social media scams.

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATUE

Gupta and Aggarwal (2022)[1] opined that a developing worry among consumers for wellbeing and environmental perspectives had led to spike in the interest of healthy and safe agricultural items among consumers over the globe. As an outcome of this, there is an expansion in tendency to produce and use organic food products acquired from organic farming. The findings say that, even though high level of awareness and positive attitude of consumers for organic foods was observed, in sharp difference to this, the buy recurrence of the equivalent was exceptionally low. Despite consumers finding these foods healthy, safe and environment - friendly, a disappointment and doubt concerning its information, availability, variety and value level combined with doubt/non-reliability on the wellsprings of flexibly was observed.

Elayaraja and Vijai (2021)[2] expressed that the worldwide market for organic food items has been developing essentially since the most recent decade. Organic food products have become most popular in public. The farming of organic product is a novel practice which adjusts the ecological sustainability and furthermore controls the inconvenient impact both on customer's safety by making a positive thought in the minds of the customers.

Aarthi and Balusamy (2020)[3] sought to identify the background for why consumers are shifting to organic food products and are willing to pay a premium. 77% of women and 23% of men were receptive to purchasing organic food items, according to the study's findings. The article gives a deeper knowledge of organic food buyers' attitudes, purchasing intentions, and actual purchasing behaviour.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.   **Research Design**

This study follows a plan to collect and analyze data step by step.
2.   **Data Source**

Both primary and secondary data are used. A questionnaire was given to people for primary data. Books, journals, and magazines were used for secondary data.
3.   **Primary Data**

S.NO	GENDER	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	Male	87	68%
2	Female	43	32%
	TOTAL	**130**	**100%**

Collected through questionnaires and interviews. It included both online and offline surveys, and interviews with experts and officials.

4.   **Secondary Data**

Taken from research papers, government reports, articles, and reports from RBI, CERT-In, and social media platforms.

5.   **Sampling Design**

Stratified random sampling was used to include students, professionals, homemakers, and senior citizens in Coimbatore.

6.   **Data Collection**

Surveys were conducted among different groups in Coimbatore. Secondary data came from various sources like newspapers and websites.

7.   **Method of Data Collection**

Survey method was used to gather data.

8.   **Instrument of Data Collection**

A structured questionnaire with five parts, including open and closed questions, was used.

9.   **Period of Study**

Data was collected over three months in Coimbatore City.

VI. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In today's digital age, social media plays a major role in daily life, offering convenience, connectivity, and business opportunities. However, its widespread use has also led to a rise in crimes such as phishing, fake ads, financial fraud, and identity theft, causing financial loss and reduced consumer trust. Despite efforts to improve awareness and security, many users in Coimbatore remain vulnerable due to limited digital knowledge and deceptive scam tactics. This study aims to understand consumer perception, experiences, and awareness of social media scams in Coimbatore. It also evaluates the effectiveness of existing security measures and seeks to offer insights for improving awareness and reducing risks linked to online fraud.

ANALYSIS

SIMPLE PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

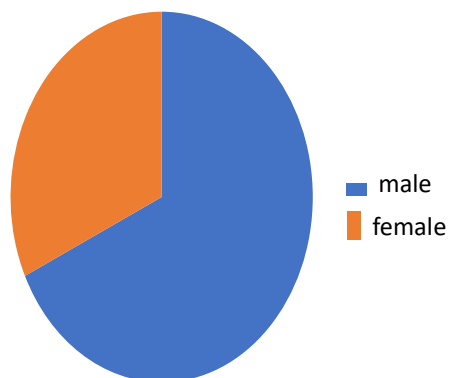**Simple percentage of age**

INTERPRETATION

From the above table, it is inferred that 68% of the respondents are male and 32% of the respondents are female. Thus, it is evident from the above analysis that majority (68%) of the respondents belongs to the gender of male.

68% male
32% female

VII. CHI SQUARE TEST ANALYSIS

CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS AND FLEXIBILITY OF YOUR WORK SCHEDULE

		G Gender		T Total
		Female	Male	
modes of social media scams	Dissatisfied	8 8	15 15	23 23
	neutral	23 23	19 19	42 42
	Satisfied	5 5	12 12	17 17

Very dissatisfied	3 3	30 30	33 33	
Very satisfied	4	11 11	15 15	
Total		43 43	87 87	130

Chi Square Calculated Value	df	Chi Square Table Value	Sig	Hypothesis Results
11.370	4	8.5392	.013	H_0 Rejected H_1 Accepted

INTERPRETATION

The above chi square test analysis shows that the chi square calculated value of x^2 test recorded 11.370is more than the chi square table value of x^2 test is 8.5392for eight (4) degree of freedom and 5% level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis for gender of the respondents and flexibility of your work schedule is rejected and alternative hypothesis accepted. There is a significant association gender of the respondents and social media scams schedule.
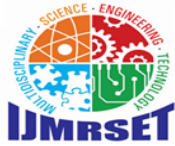
INFERENCE
There is a significant association gender of the respondents and social media scams schedule.

ANOVA ANALYSIS

ANOVA ANALYSIS DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS AND IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION IN PRIVATE BANKS

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F		Sig.
Social Media Scams	Between Groups	3.936	3	1.312	.952		.421

	Within Groups	90.936	66	1.378			
	Total	94.871	69				
Social Media Scams through Message	Between Groups	1.555	3	.518	.595		.621
	Within Groups	57.530	66	.872			
	Total	59.086	69				

Fallen Victim to Social media Scams	Between Groups	1.548	3	.516	.407	.749
	Within Groups	83.724	66	1.269		
	Total	85.271	69			
Social Media Identity	Between Groups	2.702	3	.901	.722	.543
	Within Groups	82.383	66	1.248		
	Total	85.086	69			
Trust in Social Media Scams	Between Groups	6.805	3	2.268	1.185	.322

Within Groups	126.395	66	1.915			
Total	133.200	69				

INTERPRETATION

The above anova analysis Shows that the Social Media Scams (F = .952, Sig.0.421), Social Media Scams through Message (F = .595, Sig.0.621), Fallen Victim to Social media Scams (F = .407, Sig.0.749), Social Media Identity (F = .722, Sig.0.543 and Trust in Social Media Scams (F = 1.185, Sig.0.322). Hence the null hypothesis for Social Media Scams, Social Media Scams through Message, Social Media Identity, Trust in Social Media Scams compared with age of the respondents are accepted and alternative hypothesis rejected. There is no mean difference between age of the respondents and impact on employee satisfaction in private banks.

INFERENCE

Hence the null hypothesis for Work Life Balance Policies Social Media Scams, Social Media Scams through Message, Social Media Identity, Trust in Social Media Scams compared with age of the respondents are accepted and alternative hypothesis rejected. There is no mean difference between age of the respondents and impact on Social media Scams.

VII. CORRELATION ANALYSIS

|		Income	Rate the level of job pressure and workload
Age	Pearson Correlation	1	.016
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.628
	N	65	65
Platform of social media scams	Pearson Correlation	.016	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.628	
	N	65	65

VIII. FINDINGS

1. Majority 68% of the respondents belongs to the gender of male.
2. Majority 65% of the respondents belongs to the age group of 18-20.
3. Majority (69%) of the respondents belongs to bachelor's degree.
4. Majority (38%) of the respondents belongs to Occasionally.
5. Maximum 38% of the respondents belongs Fake contests/giveaways.
6. Majority (38%) of the respondents belongs to No, they balance both ➢ Majority (31%) of the respondents belongs to Yes, but not excessively.
7. Majority (31%) of the respondents belongs to Maybe, if they seem suspicious.
8. Majority (34%) of the respondents belongs to they are very transparent.
9. There is association between gender of the respondents and Modes of social media scams schedule.
10. There is no association between gender of the respondents and Modes of social media scams schedule.
11. There is mean difference between age of the respondents and impact on Social Media Scams
12. There is no mean difference between age of the respondents and impact on Social Media Scams

IX. SUGGESTIONS

1. Conduct workshops and awareness programs to educate consumers about common social media scams.
2. Encourage users to enable two-factor authentication and use strong passwords to protect their accounts.
3. Leverage social media platforms to spread awareness about the latest scams and preventive measures.
4. Banks and financial institutions should actively educate customers about fraudulent transactions and secure online banking practices.
5. Social media platforms should enhance their AI algorithms to detect and remove scamrelated content more effectively.
6. Strengthen existing cyber laws and implement stricter penalties for fraudsters to deter online scams.
7. Improve coordination between consumers, law enforcement agencies, and cybersecurity experts to track and penalize scammers.
8. Marketplaces and social media platforms should implement stricter verification processes for sellers and advertisers.
9. Consumers should be encouraged to purchase only from verified websites and sellers with good reviews.
10. A user-friendly digital platform should be created for consumers to report scams easily.
11. Special training programs should be conducted for older adults, as they are more vulnerable to online scams.
12. Local communities and educational institutions should collaborate on initiatives to raise awareness

X. CONCUSTION

Social media has become a vital part of daily life, but it has also led to a rise in scams that compromise user trust and financial safety. This study examines consumer perception of social media scams in Coimbatore, focusing on awareness, common scam types, and preventive actions. Findings show that while many are aware of online fraud, a lack of digital literacy still leads to victims—particularly among older users. Phishing, fake ads, and identity theft are the most reported scams. Measures like two-factor authentication and source verification help reduce risks. Younger users tend to be more cautious, while older ones remain vulnerable. The study emphasizes the need for stronger regulations, digital literacy programs, and responsible social media use. Future research can assess AI's role in detecting and preventing scams.
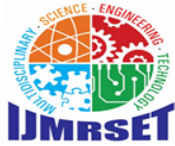
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| Mobile No: +91-6381907438 | Whatsapp: +91-6381907438 | ijmrset@gmail.com |