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# Social Media Detox Marketing for Promoting Digital Wellbeing

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**ABSTRACT:** In the context of rising digital fatigue and mental health concerns driven by excessive social media use, social media detox marketing has emerged as an innovative and responsible approach to promoting digital wellbeing. This study examines the role of social media detox marketing in promoting digital wellbeing among consumers. Adopting a descriptive research design, primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire from 120 active social media users. Percentage analysis and ANOVA were employed as statistical tools. The findings reveal that a majority of respondents are aware of social media detox campaigns and understand the concept of digital wellbeing. Detox campaigns were found to positively influence screen-time behavior and psychological wellbeing. The ANOVA results confirm statistically significant differences in digital wellbeing outcomes linked to detox marketing stimuli. The study concludes that social media detox marketing serves as a meaningful strategy for brands and organizations to promote responsible digital habits, foster consumer trust, and contribute to a healthier digital ecosystem.

**KEYWORDS:** Social Media Detox, Digital Wellbeing, Screen Time, Detox Marketing, Consumer Behaviour, Mental Health, Digital Fatigue.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the past decade, social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and X (formerly Twitter) have become deeply embedded in daily communication, entertainment, and marketing practices. While these platforms offer unparalleled connectivity, their excessive use has been increasingly associated with anxiety, stress, sleep disturbances, and diminished productivity — collectively referred to as digital fatigue. In response, the concept of a social media detox has gained traction, encouraging users to intentionally reduce or temporarily abstain from social media to restore mental and emotional balance.

Beyond individual practice, brands and organizations have embraced social media detox marketing, a strategy that promotes responsible digital usage, healthier online habits, and self-regulation. This form of marketing presents a notable paradox: platforms that depend on user engagement for revenue now advocate for reduced usage. This raises critical questions about the authenticity, effectiveness, and consumer perception of such initiatives.

This study aims to explore how social media detox marketing influences digital wellbeing, its effectiveness in shaping user behavior, and demographic variations in consumer responses. The findings are intended to guide marketers, policymakers, and researchers toward more responsible and sustainable digital marketing practices.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Throuvala et al. (2023) demonstrated that structured social media reduction interventions significantly reduced anxiety and improved self-reported wellbeing among young adults, recommending the integration of digital detox strategies into mental health promotion programs.



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Vannucci and Ohannessian (2022) found that passive social media consumption was more strongly correlated with poor wellbeing than active engagement, and suggested detox marketing campaigns should emphasize emotional awareness and purposeful use.

Radtke et al. (2022) reviewed that short-term digital detox improved mood and life satisfaction; however, fear of missing out (FOMO) remained a significant barrier to sustained disengagement. Detox marketing should proactively address FOMO and offer community-based challenges.

Schmuck (2020) found that planned digital detox periods reduced upward social comparison and improved self-esteem, suggesting campaigns promoting social media breaks should highlight identity autonomy and reduced comparison culture.

Tromholt (2016) confirmed through an experimental study that a one-week Facebook detox significantly increased life satisfaction and positive emotions among habitual passive users, advocating for periodic platform breaks with incentive programs.

Przybylski and Weinstein (2017) identified a non-linear 'Goldilocks' effect, suggesting that moderate digital engagement (1–2 hours/day) was associated with the highest wellbeing scores, emphasizing that detox marketing should promote balance rather than total abstinence.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive research design to examine the role of social media detox marketing in promoting digital wellbeing. Both primary and secondary data sources were utilized. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to active social media users.

#### 3.2 Sample and Sampling Technique

A convenience sampling technique was employed. The key parameters are:

- Area of Study: Coimbatore and surrounding regions
- Sample Size: 120 respondents
- Sampling Technique: Convenience Sampling
- Data Source: Structured questionnaire (5-point Likert scale)

#### 3.3 Statistical Tools

The following statistical tools were applied for data analysis:

- Percentage Analysis – to summarize demographic profiles and response patterns
- ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) – to examine significant differences in digital wellbeing outcomes across demographic groups

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Demographic Profile

Table 4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Percentage (%)
Age	18–25 years (majority)	41.67%
	26–35 years	29.17%
Gender	Female	50.83%



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Variable	Category	Percentage (%)
	Male	41.67%
Occupation	Students (majority)	41.67%
	Employed	31.67%
Education	Postgraduate	37.50%
	Undergraduate	35.83%
Social Media Usage	1–3 hours/day	37.50%
	More than 5 hours/day	20.83%

The majority of respondents (41.67%) belong to the 18–25 age group, and together with the 26–35 group, they constitute over 70% of the sample. Female respondents slightly outnumber male respondents. Students form the largest occupational group at 41.67%. A significant 20.83% of respondents reported spending more than 5 hours daily on social media, indicating considerable levels of digital overuse.

### 4.2 Awareness and Perception of Social Media Detox Marketing

**Table 4.2 Awareness and Perception (% Agree + Strongly Agree)**

Statement	Agree + Strongly Agree (%)
Aware of social media detox campaigns promoted by brands	65.83%
Have seen advertisements encouraging reduced screen time	67.50%
Understand the concept of digital wellbeing	67.50%
Social media detox marketing initiatives are relevant today	60.84%
Brands should promote responsible social media usage	80.83%
Detox campaigns create awareness about mental health	71.67%

Over 65% of respondents are aware of brand-promoted social media detox campaigns, and 67.5% understand the concept of digital wellbeing. A strong 80.83% agree that brands should promote responsible social media usage, reflecting widespread consumer expectation for ethical brand communication. Notably, 71.67% believe detox campaigns effectively raise mental health awareness.

However, only 43.33% viewed detox marketing initiatives as genuinely authentic rather than promotional tactics, indicating room for improvement in campaign credibility.

### 4.3 Behavioral Impact of Detox Campaigns

**Table 4.3 Behavioral Impact of Detox Campaigns**

Behavioral Statement	Agree + Strongly Agree (%)
Detox campaigns have made me think about my screen time	69.16%
I have reduced my social media usage after seeing detox campaigns	55.00%
I consciously monitor my daily screen time	60.00%
I take intentional breaks from social media	55.00%
I feel mentally better when I reduce social media usage	64.17%



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Behavioral Statement	Agree + Strongly Agree (%)
Detox initiatives positively influence my lifestyle	65.83%
I am willing to participate in future detox campaigns	55.83%

The behavioral findings demonstrate a meaningful impact of detox marketing. 69.16% of respondents reported that detox campaigns prompted them to think about their screen time. 55% indicated they reduced their social media usage after exposure to detox campaigns. Crucially, 64.17% reported feeling mentally better when they reduced usage, and 65.83% agreed that detox initiatives positively influenced their lifestyle. Additionally, 58.33% have recommended a social media detox to a friend or family member, reflecting a social multiplication of the detox message.

#### 4.4 ANOVA Analysis

Table 4.4 ANOVA Results

Variables Compared	F-Value	P-Value	Result
Willingness to participate in future detox vs. daily social media usage decreased due to wellbeing prompts	14.95	0.000142	Significant
Detox initiatives positively influence lifestyle vs. marketing campaign made user reconsider screen time	73.90	$1.11 \times 10^{-15}$	Significant

Both ANOVA tests confirm statistically significant differences between the variables. In the first test, the F-value (14.95) exceeded the critical value (3.88) and the p-value (0.000142) was well below 0.05, indicating a significant relationship between wellbeing prompts and willingness to participate in future detox campaigns. In the second test, the extremely high F-value (73.90) and negligible p-value confirm that lifestyle influence by detox initiatives is strongly and significantly associated with marketing-driven reconsidering of screen time. These results validate that social media detox marketing has a statistically meaningful impact on user behavior and digital wellbeing.

#### V. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was guided by the following two primary objectives:

- To measure the level of consumer awareness and perception toward social media detox marketing initiatives aimed at promoting digital wellbeing.
- To assess the impact of social media detox marketing on consumers' social media usage behaviour and adoption of digital wellbeing practices.

The first objective was addressed through percentage analysis of awareness and perception statements, while the second was assessed through behavioral and psychological impact statements and ANOVA testing.

#### VI. LIMITATIONS

The study is limited to a specific geographic region and a convenience sample of 120 respondents, which may restrict the generalizability of findings. The reliance on self-reported data introduces potential subjectivity and response bias. The study focuses on immediate behavioral perceptions rather than long-term psychological outcomes, and does not explore the technical design of social media algorithms.

#### VII. CONCLUSION

This study confirms that social media detox marketing plays a meaningful role in promoting digital wellbeing among consumers. The majority of respondents demonstrated high awareness of detox-oriented campaigns and a positive perception toward brand-driven digital wellness initiatives. More importantly, a significant proportion reported



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behavioral changes — including reduced screen time, improved mental wellbeing, and adoption of intentional digital breaks — attributable to detox marketing exposure.

The ANOVA results further validate that detox marketing stimuli are statistically significant drivers of behavioral change. However, the study also reveals that authenticity remains a concern, with a notable proportion viewing detox campaigns as primarily promotional in nature.

Organizations and marketers must therefore design transparent, evidence-based, and consumer-centric detox campaigns that genuinely support digital wellbeing rather than serving solely as brand differentiation tools. Embedding digital wellness into corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategies can enhance credibility and long-term consumer trust.

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