



## The Role of Social Media in Shaping Wedding Vendor Choices in Assam: A Case Study of Local and Global Influence

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### ABSTRACT

The increasing prevalence of social media has transformed the way couples plan their weddings and select vendors. This review article explores the role of social media in shaping wedding vendor choices, with a specific focus on the local context of Assam, India. By synthesizing insights from the broader literature on social media and consumer decision-making, as well as the specific dynamics of the global wedding industry, this article aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how local and global influences intersect in the Assamese wedding market. The review identifies key trends, challenges, and implications for wedding vendors, marketers, and consumers in Assam, and offers recommendations for future research in this evolving field. Ultimately, this article contributes to our understanding of the complex interplay between social media, cultural traditions, and the wedding industry in an increasingly interconnected world.

**Key Words:** *Social media, wedding vendor selection, Assam, consumer decision-making, local and global influences.*

### INTRODUCTION

The rise of social media has had a profound impact on the way consumers make decisions across various industries, and the wedding industry is no exception [1]. In Assam, a state in northeastern India known for its rich cultural heritage and unique wedding traditions, the influence of social media on wedding planning and vendor selection has become increasingly apparent in recent years [2]. As couples in Assam navigate the complex landscape of wedding planning, they find themselves at the intersection of local customs and global trends, with social media serving as a powerful mediator between the two [3].

This review article aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of social media in shaping wedding vendor choices in Assam. By examining the existing literature on social media and consumer decision-making, as well as the specific dynamics of the global and local wedding industries, this article seeks to answer the following research questions:

### How does social media influence wedding vendor choices in Assam?

- What are the key local and global factors that shape wedding vendor selection in this region?
- How do local and global influences intersect and interact in the context of the Assamese wedding industry?

Understanding the impact of social media on wedding vendor choices in Assam is crucial for several reasons. First, it can help wedding professionals in the region adapt their marketing strategies and improve their services to meet the evolving needs and preferences of couples [4]. Second, it can inform policymakers and industry stakeholders about the potential social and economic implications of this shift [5]. Finally, it contributes to the broader academic discourse on the role of technology in shaping consumer behavior and cultural practices in diverse contexts [6].

## Literature Review

The influence of social media on consumer decision-making has been a topic of growing interest among researchers across various fields. Numerous studies have explored the ways in which social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, shape consumer attitudes, preferences, and behaviors [7]. One of the key theoretical frameworks that has emerged in this context is the concept of social influence, which suggests that individuals' decisions are often shaped by the opinions, experiences, and recommendations of others in their social networks [8].

In the specific context of the wedding industry, several studies have examined the impact of social media on couples' vendor choices. For example, a study by Ladkin and Buhalis (2016) found that social media plays a significant role in the decision-making process of couples planning their weddings, with platforms like Pinterest and Instagram serving as key sources of inspiration and information [9]. Similarly, a survey by WeddingWire (2021) revealed that 88% of couples read online reviews when selecting wedding vendors, highlighting the importance of social proof in this context [10].

However, despite the growing body of research on social media and wedding vendor choices, there remain significant gaps in our understanding of how these dynamics play out in specific cultural contexts, such as Assam. While some studies have explored the influence of social media on the Indian wedding industry more broadly [11], there is a lack of research that specifically examines the intersection of local traditions and global trends in shaping vendor selection in this region. By focusing on the case of Assam, this review article aims to address this gap and contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the role of social media in the wedding industry across diverse cultural contexts.

## Methodology

To investigate the role of social media in shaping wedding vendor choices in Assam, this review article employs a case study approach. Case studies are particularly well-suited for exploring complex social phenomena in real-life contexts, allowing researchers to gain a deep understanding of the intricacies and nuances of a specific situation [12]. In this case, focusing on the Assamese wedding industry enables us to examine the interplay of local and global influences in shaping vendor selection, and to generate insights that may be relevant to other cultural contexts facing similar challenges and opportunities.

The data for this review article is drawn from a variety of sources, including existing academic literature, industry reports, and social media analytics. To identify relevant studies on social media and wedding vendor choices, a comprehensive search was conducted using academic databases such as Google Scholar, Web of Science, and Scopus. Key search terms included "social media", "wedding industry", "vendor choice", "consumer decision-making", and "Assam". The search was limited to articles published in English between 2010 and 2021, to capture the most recent developments in this field.

In addition to academic sources, this review article also draws on industry reports and surveys, such as those conducted by WeddingWire and The Knot, to gain insights into the practical realities and challenges faced by wedding professionals and consumers in the context of social media. Finally, social media analytics tools, such as Hootsuite and Sprout Social, were used to gather data on the social media presence and engagement of wedding vendors in Assam, as well as the online behavior and preferences of couples in this region.

The data collected from these diverse sources was analyzed using a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques. Thematic analysis was employed to identify key patterns and themes in the existing literature and social media data, while descriptive statistics were used to summarize the characteristics and preferences of the sample population. The findings of this analysis are presented in the following section, organized around the three research questions guiding this study.

## **Findings**

### **The influence of social media on wedding vendor choices in Assam**

The review of existing literature and social media data reveals that social media plays a significant role in shaping wedding vendor choices in Assam. Couples in this region increasingly rely on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest to discover and evaluate potential vendors, seeking inspiration, information, and social proof to guide their decisions [13]. For example, a survey of recently married couples in Assam found that 82% used social media to find and research wedding vendors, with Facebook being the most popular platform, followed by Instagram and Pinterest [14].

One of the key ways in which social media influences vendor choices in Assam is through the power of visual content. Platforms like Instagram and Pinterest have become virtual mood boards for couples planning their weddings, allowing them to explore and curate ideas for every aspect of their big day, from attire and decor to photography and catering [15]. Wedding vendors in Assam have responded to this trend by investing in high-quality visual content, such as professional photos and videos, to showcase their offerings and attract potential clients [16].

In addition to serving as a source of inspiration, social media also plays a crucial role in the evaluation and selection of wedding vendors in Assam. Online reviews and ratings have become key factors in couples' decision-making processes, with 79% of surveyed couples in Assam reporting that they read reviews before hiring a vendor [17]. Social media has also facilitated word-of-mouth referrals, with couples turning to their friends, family, and online communities for recommendations and advice on vendors [18].

### **Key local and global factors shaping wedding vendor selection in Assam**

While social media has undoubtedly had a significant impact on wedding vendor choices in Assam, it is important to recognize that these choices are also shaped by a complex interplay of local and global factors. On the local level, Assamese weddings are steeped in rich cultural traditions and customs that reflect the region's history, beliefs, and values. These traditions often dictate the choice of specific vendors, such as goldsmiths for traditional bridal jewelry, silk weavers for ceremonial attire, and local caterers for authentic Assamese cuisine [19].

At the same time, the influence of global trends and aesthetics cannot be overlooked. With the increasing exposure to international wedding styles and practices through social media, couples in Assam are increasingly incorporating elements from other cultures into their own celebrations [20]. This has led to a growing demand for vendors who can

offer a fusion of traditional and modern elements, such as wedding planners who can create personalized, themed celebrations, and photographers who can capture the event in a contemporary, artistic style [21].

Another key factor shaping vendor selection in Assam is the growing trend towards destination weddings. With its picturesque landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and improved infrastructure, Assam has emerged as a popular destination for couples looking to tie the knot in a unique and memorable setting [22]. This trend has created new opportunities for wedding vendors in the region, particularly those who can offer comprehensive packages and services tailored to the needs of destination weddings [23].

### **The intersection of local and global influences in the Assamese wedding industry**

The findings of this review highlight the complex interplay of local and global influences in shaping wedding vendor choices in Assam. While social media has undoubtedly facilitated the flow of global trends and aesthetics into the region's wedding industry, it has also served as a platform for the celebration and promotion of local traditions and customs [24]. Many wedding vendors in Assam have leveraged social media to showcase their unique offerings and cultural expertise, appealing to couples who seek a balance between tradition and modernity in their celebrations [25].

Moreover, social media has enabled the formation of online communities and networks that bring together wedding professionals, couples, and other stakeholders in the Assamese wedding industry. These communities serve as spaces for the exchange of ideas, experiences, and support, fostering a sense of solidarity and collaboration among local vendors, while also facilitating the integration of global best practices and innovations [26].

However, the intersection of local and global influences in the Assamese wedding industry is not without its challenges. The increasing pressure to create Instagram-worthy weddings has led some couples to prioritize aesthetics over authenticity, potentially eroding the significance of local traditions and customs [27]. Additionally, the influx of global trends and competition has put pressure on local vendors to adapt and innovate, which can be challenging for those with limited resources or digital literacy [28].

### **Discussion**

The findings of this review article offer several important theoretical and practical implications for understanding the role of social media in shaping wedding vendor choices, both in Assam and in other cultural contexts. From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on the influence of social media on consumer decision-making, highlighting the complex interplay of local and global factors in shaping vendor selection. The case of Assam demonstrates how social media can serve as a powerful mediator between tradition and modernity, facilitating the flow of ideas and aesthetics across cultural boundaries, while also providing a platform for the celebration and promotion of local customs and practices.

For wedding vendors and marketers in Assam, the findings of this review underscore the importance of developing a strong social media presence and strategy. By investing in high-quality visual content, engaging with online communities, and showcasing their unique cultural expertise, vendors can attract and retain customers in an increasingly competitive and globalized market. Moreover, by staying attuned to the evolving needs and preferences of couples, and offering a balance of traditional and modern elements, vendors can position themselves as valuable partners in the wedding planning process.

However, this review also highlights the potential challenges and pitfalls of the increasing influence of social media on

the wedding industry in Assam. The pressure to create picture-perfect, Instagram-worthy weddings can lead to unrealistic expectations and a prioritization of aesthetics over authenticity, potentially eroding the significance of local traditions and customs. Moreover, the influx of global trends and competition can put pressure on local vendors to adapt and innovate, which can be challenging for those with limited resources or digital literacy.

To address these challenges, it is important for policymakers, industry stakeholders, and researchers to work together to support and empower local wedding vendors in Assam. This may involve initiatives to improve digital literacy and access to resources, as well as efforts to promote and celebrate the unique cultural heritage of the region. Moreover, future research should continue to explore the complex dynamics of social media and wedding vendor choices in Assam and other cultural contexts, to inform the development of more inclusive, sustainable, and culturally responsive practices in the wedding industry.

## **Conclusion**

The Role of Social Media in Shaping Wedding Vendor Choices in Assam: A Case Study of Local and Global Influence" has explored the complex and multifaceted ways in which social media is transforming the wedding industry in Assam, India. Through a comprehensive review of existing literature, industry reports, and social media data, this article has highlighted the significant influence of platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest on couples' discovery, evaluation, and selection of wedding vendors in the region.

The findings of this review underscore the importance of understanding the interplay of local and global factors in shaping wedding vendor choices in Assam. While social media has facilitated the flow of global trends and aesthetics into the region's wedding industry, it has also served as a platform for the celebration and promotion of local traditions and customs. Wedding vendors in Assam who can navigate this complex landscape, offering a balance of traditional and modern elements, and leveraging social media to showcase their unique cultural expertise, are well-positioned to succeed in an increasingly competitive and globalized market.

However, the increasing influence of social media on the wedding industry in Assam is not without its challenges. The pressure to create Instagram-worthy weddings can lead to unrealistic expectations and a prioritization of aesthetics over authenticity, potentially eroding the significance of local traditions. Moreover, the influx of global trends and competition can put pressure on local vendors to adapt and innovate, which can be challenging for those with limited resources or digital literacy.

To address these challenges, policymakers, industry stakeholders, and researchers must work together to support and empower local wedding vendors in Assam. This may involve initiatives to improve digital literacy and access to resources, as well as efforts to promote and celebrate the unique cultural heritage of the region. Moreover, future research should continue to explore the complex dynamics of social media and wedding vendor choices in Assam and other cultural contexts, to inform the development of more inclusive, sustainable, and culturally responsive practices in the wedding industry.

Ultimately, this review article contributes to our understanding of the powerful role that social media plays in shaping consumer choices and cultural practices in an increasingly interconnected world. As the wedding industry in Assam continues to evolve, it is crucial that we remain attuned to the complex interplay of local and global influences, and work together to ensure that the voices, traditions, and aspirations of local communities are heard and celebrated.

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