

AN INVESTIGATION OF MEDIA MARKETING ON ONLINE CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

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Abstract: Social media tools have become superb channels for marketers to reach consumers. Social media is important for marketers because it allows them to dialogue directly with consumers, which in turn engages consumers directly with company brands. Social media has revolutionized consumer purchasing behavior over the last few years, directly impacting the way they buy products and services. The fact that there are billions of opinions and reviews out there means marketers have to change their perception about social media from 'fun to have' to 'must focus on'. The use of social media platforms such as Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs and Facebook among buyers has grown considerably over the last two years. Social media allows customers and prospects to communicate directly to your brand representative or about your brand with their friends. However, the obvious question is: who are the people interacting online and how engaged are they in online activities? This paper aims to answer this question based on a study regarding the online activities of 250 social media users, by identifying different types of users, a segmentation of these users and a linear model to examine how different predictors related to social networking sites have a positive impact on the respondents' perception of online advertisements. The answer can help discover how to engage with different types of audiences in order to maximize the effect of the online marketing strategy.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Internet and especially social media have changed how consumers and marketers communicate. The Internet has distinct characteristics (Peterson et al., 1997), such as:

- The ability to inexpensively store vast amounts of information at different virtual locations
- The availability of powerful and inexpensive means of searching, organizing, and disseminating such information Interactivity and the ability to provide information on demand.
- The ability to serve as a transaction medium.
- The ability to serve as a physical distribution medium for certain goods (e.g. software) Relatively low entry and establishment costs for sellers.

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One of the advantages of internet is that it enables businesses to reach a worldwide customer population, so that customers can survey, select, and purchase products and services from businesses around the world (Al Kalian & Kumar, 2011). In particular, peer communication through social media, a new form of consumer socialization, has profound impacts on consumer decision making and thus marketing strategies. Consumer socialization theory predicts that communication among consumers affects their cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes (Ward, 1974). Social media, especially social networking sites, provide a virtual space for people to communicate through the Internet, which also might be an important agent of consumer socialization. In recent years the online environment is viewed by users from a new perspective, in a commercial way. Its development and the emergence of online stores have turned users into consumers. Also the most important role of social media has changed the way of how consumers and marketers communicate. Moreover, by using social media, consumers have the power to influence other buyers through reviews of products or services used. Consumers are also influenced by other psychosocial characteristics like: income, purchase motivation, company presentation, company or brand's presence on social networks, demographic variable (age, sex, disposable income etc.), workplace method of payment, type of stores (online or physical), etc. Social media has also influenced consumer behavior from information acquisition to post purchase behavior such as dissatisfaction statements or behaviors about a product or a company. The last few years can be noticed a great influence of the companies on online networks. Social media websites provide an opportunity for businesses to engage and interact with potential consumers, encourage an increased sense of intimacy with consumers, and build all important relationships with potential consumers. Since inception, social media platforms like Facebook have been a primary vehicle for the promotion of businesses as it allows consumers engage in a discussion about a product or service which they like or intend to purchase and this influences consumer purchasing behavior.

II. OBJECTIVES

- To study the effect of social media on buying behavior in Chennai City.
- To do an analytical review on effect of social media on online shopping behavior of apparels in Chennai City.

AREA OF UNIVERSE: Chennai City

SOURCES OF DATA: Primary and Secondary Data.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

With people becoming busy with their work and commitments, they are left out with only a little spare time. In addition, with wide availability and usage of smart

devices, people find internet as the easiest medium to meet their requirements. This has given immense popularity to online shopping sites in India, numerous online shopping websites are flaunting best deals to lure buyers. According to a recent survey, India ranks at position number three for shopping online and using credit card for online transaction. Indian citizens are now third biggest users of credit cards for making online purchases globally and they are next only to the citizens of Turkey and Ireland.

III. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

In recent years, social networking sites and social media have increased in popularity, at a global level. For instance, Facebook is said to have more than a billion active users (as of 2012) since its beginning in 2004 (www.facebook.com). Social networking sites can be described as networks of friends for social or professional interactions (Trusov, Bucklin, & Pauwels, 2009). Indeed, online social networks have profoundly changed the propagation of information by making it incredibly easy to share and digest information on the internet (Akrimi & Khemakhem, 2012). The unique aspects of social media and its immense popularity have revolutionized marketing practices such as advertising and promotion (Hanna, Rohm, & Crittenden, 2011). Social media has also influenced consumer behavior from information acquisition to post-purchase behavior such as dissatisfaction statements or behaviors (Mangold & Faulds, 2009) and patterns of Internet usage (Ross *et al.*, 2009; Laroche *et al.*, 2012). Social media is “a group of internet based applications that builds on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and it allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61). Social media has many advantages as it helps connect businesses to consumers, develop relationships and foster those relationships in a timely manner and at a low cost as Kaplan and Haenlein discovered (2010). Other functions of social media involve affecting and influencing perceptions, attitudes and end behavior (Williams & Cothrell, 2000), while bringing together different like-minded people (Hagel & Armstrong, 1997). In an online environment, Laroche (2012) pointed out that people like the idea of contributing, creating, and joining communities to fulfill needs of belongingness, being socially connected and recognized or simply enjoying interactions with other like-minded members. The much higher level of efficiency of social media compared to other traditional communication channels prompted industry leaders to state that companies must participate in Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, and others, in order to succeed in online environments (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Laroche *et al.* 2012). Thus, more industries try to benefit from social media as they can be used to develop strategy, accept their roles in managing others’ strategy or follow others’ directions (Williams & Williams, 2008). Social media websites provide an opportunity for companies to engage and interact with potential and current consumers, to encourage an increased sense of intimacy of the customer relationship, and build all important

meaningful relationships with consumers (Mersey, Malthouse, & Calder 2010) especially in today's business environment when consumer loyalty can vanish at the smallest mistake, which can additionally have online propagation of their unfortunate encounter with a particular product, service, brand or company. Some companies are beginning to take notice of the power of social media. A few corporate social networking websites already allow consumers to not only exchange information about products or services, but also engage in co-creating value in online experiences with offline outcomes, with both current and potential consumers.

IV. ONLINE APPARELS SALES PROMOTION

After e-shopping and mobile shopping, one thing that is taking the clothing retail industry by a storm is social shopping. It is a new way to shop online by interlinking retailing with social media networking sites. While shopping, one question that is inevitable to ask is "How does this look?" with the help of social media, whether one is buying in-store or online, they can consult friends and Family before purchasing a garment. Online retailers are boosting their sales and enjoying the rewards by leveraging on their social presence on networking sites. Increasing customer interaction plays an important role in increasing sales in clothing retail. A research study done by EBay estimates more than \$ 3 billion every year to be the future market for social media in retail. Shopping for clothes is a way to socialize and apparel retailers are clouting on it to build a social shopping platform. Purchasing of consumable goods which mainly depends on style, choice and fashion of the modern civilization like Apparels are based on consumers' psychology whether to make demand or not; it is undeniably becoming a part of consumer behaviour analysis. Therefore, it has become very crucial that manufacturers of Apparels should be acquainted with the perceptions and attitudes of the respective consumer. Recent insights published by social media analytics firm Campalyst reveal that the top 10 American clothing and accessories brands on Face book have an average of 14.7 million people followers. Some of the top names in this regard belong to Converse, Victoria's Secret and Nike. A similar situation plays out in Europe, where the top 10 retail fashion brands on Face book get 12.7 million followers on average.

V. ONLINE SHOPPING BEHAVIOR

One of the growing areas of E-commerce is Online Buying. More and more consumers are turning to the World Wide Web for their shopping needs, which gives them access to either local or international products with just a click of the mouse. The theme of anytime any where shopping appeals to consumers who cannot take time off their busy schedules to go out and shop. Keeping this in mind, many online shops have sprung up in cyberspace offering products right from

books, music CDs, household goods, groceries to furniture and cars. The consumers can also avail of a variety of services for communication, consultancy and so on. Online retail sales are the fastest growing segment of retailing, outpacing the growth rate of retailing in general. 7 In early online retailing, a web presence and low prices were believed to be key drivers of success. More recently beyond having a simple online presence and low prices, service has become essential for creating customer loyalty and improving customer satisfaction⁸. On-line shopping is a recent phenomenon in the field of E-Business and is definitely going to be the future of shopping in the world. Most of the companies are running their on-line portals to sell their products/services on-line. Though online shopping is very common outside India, its growth in Indian Market, which is a large and strategic consumer market, is still not in line with the global market. The potential growth of on-line shopping has triggered the idea of conducting a study on on-line shopping in India.

VI. ONLINE SHOPPING BEHAVIOUR FOR APPARELS

In the retail industry of today, having an internet-based outlet for products can be a vital part in defining the amount of success a company has. The fact that internet is one of the most popular media sources used today means that companies using it as a way to sell to customers have the chance of reaching a wider target market than physical stores without such an outlet have. The Apparel Industry in India (AII) is one of the leading apparel industries in the world. Primarily it was quite unorganized but the scenario has been changing with time. It was mainly started after the economic liberalization of Indian economy in 1991. The opening up of economy gave the muchneeded thrust to the Indian apparel industry, which has now successfully become one of the largest in the world. From the past few years fashion retailing sector is aligning with global trends with retailing firms such as Shoppers Stop, and Crossroads entering into middle class segment. It is being predicted that the apparel sector in India will grow at a very fast rate in the next few years. With the change in lifestyle, increase in per capita income and urbanization of the Indian consumers, the attitude of spending money on fashion related articles such as apparel is increasing a lot.

VII. ONLINE SHOPPING TRENDS IN CHENNAI

Gone are the days when city people used to trawl websites and buy items online cautiously. The city also notches a spot among the top 10 cities that drive traffic to the popular lifestyle stores. Driving this band wagon are the city's youngsters, who clearly benefit from the latest range of the coolest brands available online. With cash on delivery options, this rage has even been simplified. Trendy branded clothes, watches and collectibles are the items these sites initially focused on footwear and customized products to lure customer's to splurge online, the focus

has now shifted towards lifestyle and apparel. "Branded clothes are the fastest selling segment. In Chennai, people mostly pick up from the latest items as they are often not found in stores," the latest clothing line from all the big brands is available online before they even land up in the showrooms. It makes sense to buy them off the internet.

VIII. RESEARCH METHODS

This paper focuses on the product review of customers on social networking website to promote Marketing and uses quantitative research methodology. To help understand the users and organizations behavior, a survey is being conducted from social network users and organizations. The survey consists of separate questionnaires for users and the organization. Users' survey consists of questionnaire focusing on the views about the sharing of their purchase information privacy concerns, the influence of others on their purchasing decision and views about the marketing on the social network websites.

XI. DATA COLLECTION

Our survey instrument is derived from the thorough study of the research papers related to social network, word of mouth marketing, internet marketing. The questions are related with influential factor in purchasing, internet marketing, using social network for marketing domain, sharing purchase information on the internet. We did an offline survey, because offline survey helps in getting the reliable response from the members.

X. ANALYTICS

For making this research successful and worthy, a questionnaire was structured. Through the help of the questionnaire, primary data has been collected. Interviews have been taken of 250 respondents. Main inferences of the study are given below-

- the Research revealed that 32.5% of age group 21-30- years were mainly involved in the research work for concluding the influences, demands and improvements in online shopping.
- She revealed that female respondents were 180 higher than the male respondents i.e. 70.

Online Shopping is preferred by the females rather than males.

- According to the study the most preferred website for online shopping is snapdeal, according to the respondents. (see Figure 1).

In the study we have studied awareness of e-marketing among the people in Chennai city. We have also studied the acceptance of e-marketing among consumers and the impact of e-marketing on purchase decision of consumers.

S.no	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Flip kart	20	8
2	Myntra	25	10
3	Jabong	26	10.4
4	Amazon	38	15.2
5	snap deal	59	23.6
6	eBay	31	12.4
7	Naaptol	27	10.8
8	Fashionandyou	6	2.4
9	Yepme	9	3.6
10	shoppersstop	5	2
11	Jungle	4	1.6
	Total	250	100

Figure 1: The analysis reveals that respondents were interested to shop Clothing and Accessories online

Response	Number of respondents	percentage
Books and stationery	16	6.4
Grocery	58	23.2
Clothing and accessories	70	28
Furniture	10	4
Household and basic	48	19.2
Electronic	8	3.2
Jewellery	5	2
Footware	15	6
Kids and baby product	20	8
total	250	100

Sample selected comprises of business professionals, students & other educated people. Sample size of research was arbitrarily taken as 250 for the convenience of research data was collected from respondents in Grand mall.

Main inferences of the study are given below-

- According to the study Respondents find e-shopping more convenient because it is time saving, availability of alternatives to choose from & possibly less expensive products and services. It was found that 65% were highly agreed on easy accessibility of online products.

Further, most of the respondents found online shopping more convenient & time saving. (see figure 3)

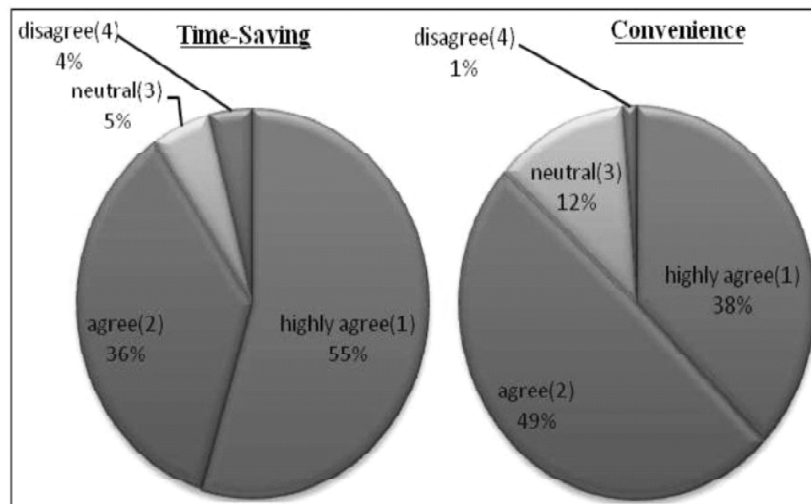


Figure 3

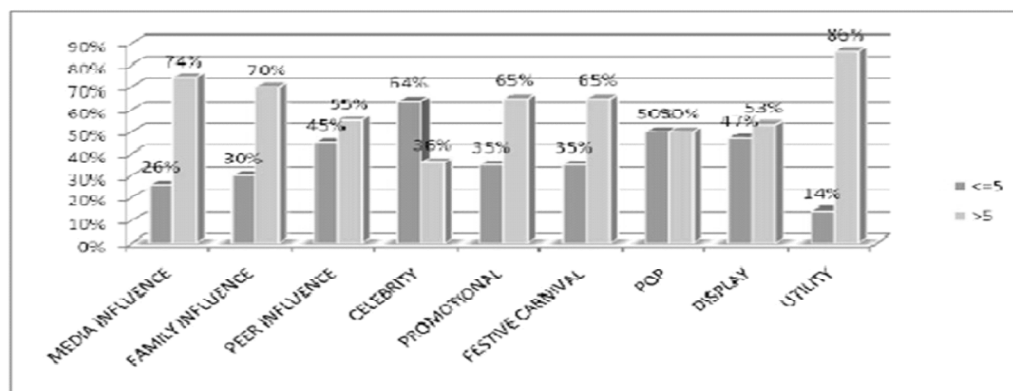
Respondents' reaction was mixed regarding price & quality of the products/ services offered online. 35% of the respondents agreed regarding fair price & 31% on quality of products/services offered, while 28% disagreed on the former & 33% on the later. 37% & 36% of the respondents had a neutral view on the two attributes respectively.

- According to the study there was higher percentage of disagreement on "privacy of personal information & on time delivery of products/services.

Pringal Soni, in her study on "Virtualization of Indian retail market- Study of factors attracting Indian customer towards online shopping" had tried to found out the most important factors, which influence the customer to online shopping instead of in store shopping. She has done analytical research, gathered data from the sample by questionnaire of 150 respondents and find out the important factors that make consumer to shop online, which are as below-

- 1) **COST FACTORS:** As sub factor Price of product and offerings to customers (Discounts and Other) are closely related actually related to the cost of product to the customer. It is a very important factor which influences online behavior.
- 2) **CONVENIENCE FACTOR:** Convenience of shopping without going out, saving valuable time and getting detailed product information and on screen comparison between available Options are three sub factors. They all are concerned with the overall convenience and a better shopping experience with a customer, so they are grouped together and named as a convenience factor.

- 3) **PRODUCT ASSURANCE:** Availability of a wide variety of brands and range to choose from and assurance of quality are concerned with the product, so they are clubbed together in one group and named product assurance.
- 4) **SELLER VISIBILITY:** Awareness about the presence of the seller and information related to offers by advertisement are related to seller introduction. Both sub factors are grouped together and given named seller visibility.



Swati Chauhan, and YaduveerYadav in their research paper, “Media Collision On The Brain Frame: Impact Of Media On The Consumer Buying Behaviour” tried to enlighten the fact that media can also be a factor which can influence the buying behavior of consumers in Chennai city, they have surveyed 250 respondents in the City It was found from the study that 86% of people believed utility of a product is the most important factor in purchase of a particular product whereas 74% of people believe media influence is the second most important factor that influences the purchase of a product. 17 (see figure 4), but yet they have taken media as a common word. They have not cleared that which kind of media influenced i.e. social media or traditional media.

V) FINDINGS

- It has been found from the above analytical study that e-shopping is more convenient because it is time saving, less expensive, more number of available alternatives & possibly products and services.
- Mostly age groups of 21-30 years are mainly involved in online shopping
- It has been observed from the above analysis that Online Shopping is preferred by the females rather than males

- Education Level is also an important criterion for measuring online buying behavior of consumers. Because only educated people more use the social media & only they can effect by their marketing. So it is also a significant criteria for measuring effect.
- It has been found that Most preferred website for online shopping is snapdeal, according to the respondents in City.
- It has been observed that most of the respondents prefer to buy online weekly.
- It has been found that most of the respondents are interested to shop Apparels and Accessories online.
- Most of the respondents of the city are agreed that online shopping sites charged fair prices & they also agreed that quality of services of these sites are also good.
- Most of the respondents of the city are agreed that these sites do not share and misuse their personal information & they timely deliver the products to the customers.
- Cost, Convenience, Seller information, & product assurance are the few factors which motivate consumers to go online for purchase.

IV. CONCLUSION

Online marketing through social media is gaining popularity among people specially the younger generation but in today's scenario to become equally popular among all age groups social media marketing will have to cover a longer distance. People have hesitations in using online purchasing due to security concerns, lack of physical approach towards product offered, delays in product delivery along with price & quality concerns. More-over people are more resistant to change & not easily adaptable to newer technology. To make products globally recognized every small or big, National or International company needs to focus and start selling their products online. In which social media can play a very crucial role so there is a large scope for apparel marketers and retailers to promote their products through social media if designed and processed in the quick, secure and qualitative way. Marketers need to concentrate properly on the requirements of the e-Commerce and online tools and techniques to make wonders and hype their sales. Branding, Product Positioning, Awareness of new features in the products etc. all were supported by the help of online websites. An assessment of these dimensions revealed that individuals, who purchase online, perceived significantly greater benefit in terms of availability, wider selection, meets the expectation of most of the customers. In a nut shell we can conclude that online purchasing of apparels has a potential to grow, only proper boosting needs to be done which can be effectively done by social media only, because this is the only medium of sales

promotions which can be in low cost and maximum reach, however social media is not get so much important in context of chennai city that is why there is a large scope for social media, & online sales of apparels in Chennai both at producer and consumer level Apart from government efforts.

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