

A study on impact of social media on consumer behaviour with special reference to Mannargudi town, Tamil Nadu, India.

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Abstract

Recent revolution of social media led the consumers to new ways of seeking and obtaining information on products and services in markets. This paper explores the influence of social media on the decision making by consumers on the purchase of products. Thirty per cent of the respondents were most familiar with Facebook, 22 per cent with WhatsApp, 20 per cent with YouTube, 12 per cent with Twitter and the remaining respondents were most familiar with Myspace, LinkedIn etc. Thirty two per cent of the respondents were motivated by availability of more products, 25% by time saving, 23% by price and only 20% of the respondents were motivated by easy delivery.

Key words: consumer behaviour, media platforms, purchase behaviour, social media

INTRODUCTION

The social media revolution has led to new ways seeking and obtaining information on the multitude of products and services in the market. It has enabled consumers to connect and discuss brands with each other quickly and easily. Consumer opinions on products and services are now increasingly dominated by strangers in digital spaces, which in turn influence opinions in the offline space. Social media have empowered consumers, as marketers have no power over the content, timing or frequency of online conversations among consumers. The use of social media by consumers is anxiously followed by marketers, but not much is known about how it influences the consumer's decision-making. Many

studies focus on consumer behaviour in the online shopping environment, but without consideration of the effects internet on the different phases of consumers' decision process. In this paper, a study is made of the decision process of consumers for complex purchase, with a special emphasis on how this process is influenced by possible use of social media. Complex buying behaviour in this context refers to expensive infrequent purchases with high consumer involvement, significant brand differences, and high risk.

This research explores how the presence and abundance of these new information sources is influencing the decision process of consumers for complex purchases.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

The wealth of products and services produced in a country make our economy strong (Tyagi Arun Kumar, 2008). Almost all the products, which are available to buyers, have a number of alternative supplies i.e. substitute products are available to consumers, who make a decision to buy products. Therefore, a seller, most of his time, seeks buyers and tries to please them. In order to be successful, a seller is concerned with:

A buyer makes a purchase of a particular product or a particular brand and this can be termed "product buying motives". And the reason behind the purchase from a particular seller is "patronage motives".

The buyer may take a decision whether to save or spend the money. When he decides to spend, then there are many problems as to what to purchase, because needs are numerous, which leads to ranking the needs in terms of priority, then, the problems are purchasing problems- where to buy, how to buy, from whom to buy etc.

Marketing concepts start with the consumer needs and behaviour in meeting the needs (Kotler, 2005). Every action of a person is based on needs. The real problem is to learn what a customer takes in consideration



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when he chooses a particular brand. Such a study is concerned with consumer behaviour. Consumer or buyer behaviour is that subset of human behaviour that is concerned with decisions and acts of individuals in purchasing and using products. Consumer behaviour, a subset of customer's behaviour, is concerned with decisions that up to the act of purchase.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ♦ To obtain an insight into the impact of social media on consumer behaviour.
- ♦ To study the impact of social media on various stages of decision- making process of consumers.
- ♦ To study the development of trust into consumers by social media.
- ♦ To study the changing scenario of social media and risk in number of bloggers.
- ♦ To examine factors that motivates buyers to shop through social media platforms.
- ♦ To examine how social media channels have affected the buying behaviour of consumers.

AREA OF THE STUDY

The present study carried out in Mannargudi Town, Tamilnadu, South India

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Retrospective questioning through a questionnaire survey was chosen for the study.

SOURCES OF DATA

The required data were collected by both the primary and secondary sources. A well-structured questionnaire was used for this study(Kothari, 2014). The types of questions used in the questionnaire were multiple-choice questions. The research is carried out for five months (November 2019 to March 2020). Data analysis and interpretation were by following Kothari (2014)

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- ♦ Some of the respondents were might be lethargic and not serious in answering to the questions of the researcher.

Table 1. Classification of respondents on the basis of use of social media

S. No	Social Media	No. of Respondents	Percentage %
1	Yes	77	77
2	No	23	23
	Total	100	100

- ♦ The study was carried with in a period of 4 months. It is also one of the limitations of the study.

- ♦ Due to constraints of time and resources, only limited numbers of respondents were interviewed.

Table 2. Classification of respondents on the basis of their most familiar social networking site

S. No.	Most Familiar	No. of Respondents	Percentage %
1	WhatsApp	22	22
2	Twitter	12	12
3	My space	8	8
4	Face book	30	30
5	You Tube	20	20
6	Most of the above	8	8
	Total	100	100

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Source: Primary data

Seventy Seven per cent of the respondents said 'yes' that they are using social media and 23% of the respondents said 'no'. (Table 1)

Table 3. Classification of respondents on the basis of factors that motivate them to buy the products through social media platforms

S. No	Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage %
1	Price	23	23
2	Availability of more products	32	32
3	Easy delivery	20	20
4	Time saving	25	25
	Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

Thirty per cent of the respondents were most familiar with Facebook, 22 per cent with WhatsApp, 20 per cent with YouTube, 12 per cent with Twitter and the emaining respondents were most familiar with Myspace, LinkedIn and most of the above (Table 2).

Source: Primary data

Among the factors that motivate the respondents to buy the products through social media platforms. 32% of the respondents were motivated by availability of more products, 25% by time saving, 23% by price and only 20% of the respondents were motivated by easy delivery (Table 3).

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

FINDINGS

- ◆ 77% of the respondents were using social media.
- ◆ 35% of the respondents always preferred initial purchase after searching relevant information social media.
- ◆ 30% of the respondents always searched for information before purchase.
- ◆ 35% of the respondents observed latest fashion trends through television ads.
- ◆ 32% of the respondents were motivated to buy products through social media platforms by availability of more products.

SUGGESTIONS

- ◆ Social media should be used for positive purposes.
- ◆ Uses of social media in informative way enhances the skills, and abilities.
- ◆ To minimize its negative effects, government has to take some strict actions. Government should ban immoral websites.
- ◆ The steps should be taken by the social media network to help the firms to find their potential customers.
- ◆ The social media network should take efforts to help the B2B firm in generating new clients.

CONCLUSION

Social media has both negative and positive impacts on our community and organizations. The benefits start from informal networking to a way of sharing what we feel about product or services. On the other hand, it will endanger the user's privacy by exposing to any malignant entities. There should be well-versed ethical rules and regulations that can manage the concerns. The social media network should take efforts to attract the customers to buy the products.

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WEB RESOURCES

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