

An Empirical Analysis to Evaluate the Influence of Social Media Marketing On Online Consumer Purchasing Behaviour

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ABSTRACT

In today's world , organizations commercial activities are conducted primarily for the purpose of sales growth. In this context, due to the advancement of information technology, significant portion of the commercial activities takes place over the Internet. Therefore, it becomes inevitable for company's to analyse and monitor the customers online purchasing behaviour. Furthermore, in order to develop and apply effective marketing strategies the factors that affect consumer behaviour such consumer engagement and social media marketing techniques.

Thus the importance of engaging consumer has been recognized in the existing research studies. However, customer engagement until now has been predominantly researched only under the exchange paradigm, with very few systematic or empirical attempts to explore the functionalism of consumer engagement in the context of social media marketing . This article encounters to investigate the mechanism framework in which social media marketing influences online consumers purchasing behavior mediated by consumer engagement.

1. Introduction

In recent times, several research studies began to focus on the domain of consumer online purchasing behaviour which can provide effective inputs to formulate online marketing strategies . One such study conducted by Mirabi, Akbariyeh, and Tahmasebifard (2015), found that factors such as product quality, brand and advertisement can be the most important factors that contribute to consumer's purchase behaviour. Primarily these research studies developed new marketing theories and additionally highlighted the antecedents and the outcome of online marketing techniques such as consumers trust and loyalty towards the company's product .Moreover, bonds between seller and buyer can be easily formed through consumer engagement. As the two parties bond, the value creation experience for both could be nurtured (Hapsari, Clemes, & Dean, 2017).Engaged consumers derive all possible extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction from being engrossed with the company's product offering on the internet .

2. Objectives of the Study

Primary Objective

1. The article aims primarily to illustrate the relationship between Social Media Marketing and its influence on online consumer behaviour.
2. In addition to this, the article enumerates the mediating influence of consumer engagement between the relationship between organizations social media marketing methods and the consumer purchasing behavior .

Hypothesis:

H1: There is a positive correlation between organizations social media marketing process and its online consumer purchasing behavior .

H2: There association between organizations social media marketing process and its online consumer purchasing behavior is mediated by online consumers engagement attribute .

H3: The consumer engagement levels differentiate significantly in corresponding with the online consumer age.

3. Research Methodology

Snowball sampling is adopted to identify the online consumers of the desired population (Saunders et al, 2009; 240). This kind of sampling starts with small group of people who are appropriate with the research topic and these small group identify further members and then they identify further members and so the sample snowballs. The advantage of snowball sample is that the sample will represent the whole population because respondents are most likely to reach respondents who are similar to themselves (Saunders et al, 2009; 240).

Since the topic deals with behaviour of online consumers, online questionnaire was used. A free service website Google Spreadsheets was used for the participants to answer the questionnaire online. After the online questionnaire has been created, the questionnaire link was emailed to participants. A sample survey of 410 online consumers was collected with the formulated questionnaire. Subsequently SPSS 21 statistically software was applied to conduct the following analysis test and to interpret its results.

Correlation analysis augmented to establish the hypothesized relationship between organizations social media marketing and its impact on its consumer purchasing behavior.

Regression analysis was applied to determine the mediating effect on the relationship between social media marketing and employee engagement only.

ANOVA test to validate the association between online customer's age group and the consumer engagement towards purchasing the product.

Measurement of Constructs

Kim and Ko (2012) and Ahmed and Zahid (2014) questionnaire consisting of eight items was used to measure social media marketing variable (cronbach value is 0.783). Consumer engagement was measured through a 6 item scale adapted from Weman (2011), Gummerus, Liljander, Weman, and Pihlström (2012) (cronbach value is 0.752) while 7 items to measure consumer online purchase behaviour were extracted from McKnight and Chervany (2002) Wang and Chang (2013), Yoo and Donthu (2001) the cronbach value is 0.769. All the items used a five point Likert scale ranging from 1= Strongly Agree to 5= Strongly Disagree.

Normality of data

Social media marketing and its items being the independent variable recorded a skewness value ranging between -.004 and -.065, SE 0.099 and the kurtosis value was ranging between -0.337 to -0.995 SE 0.198. Likewise Consumer engagement being the mediator obtained skewness value ranging between -0.247 to -0.636, SE 0.099) and kurtosis value lied between the range of -0.023 to -0.331, SE 0.198) and lastly Consumer Online purchasing behavior derived the skewness value ranging

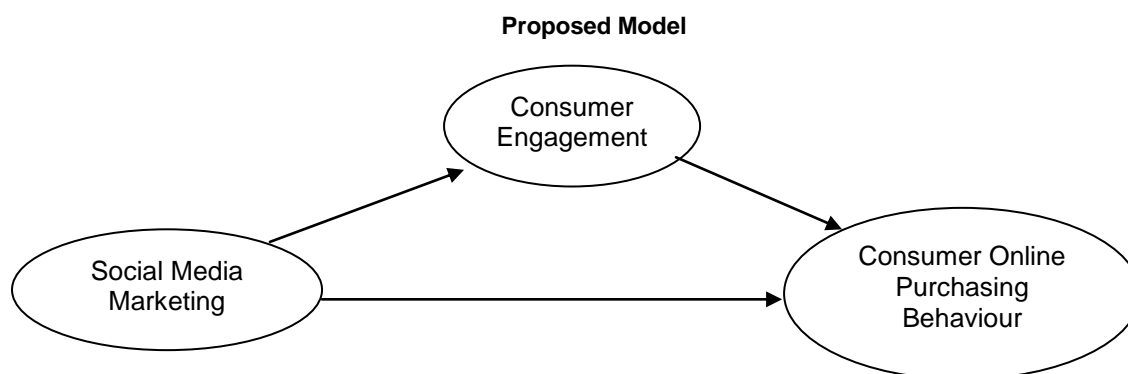
between -0.118 to -0.460 of, SE 0.099) while the kurtosis value recorded were -0.110 to -0.572 SE 0.198). To access the sampling adequacy KMO and Bartlett test was conducted and the derived the following values (Social Media Marketing 0.772, Consumer Engagement 0.697 and Consumer Online Purchasing Behaviour 0.769).

From the above results it can be seen that the sample distribution is approximately normally distributed as the skewness value and kurtosis value to + or - zero and within the value range of the doubled value of the SE (i.e. + or - 1.96).

Demographic Profile

The descriptive statistics revealed the following information: - males constituted 73% and female were 27%, the marital status showed 34% of the participants were married while 66 % were unmarried. As for the age of the respondents 71 % belonged to the age between 18 yrs to 30 yrs and 21% between 30 yrs to 50 yrs and 8 % belonged to above 50 yrs.

As per this study, the social media marketing sites used by the respondents were majorly Face book (70.1%) twitter (5.9 %), what sup (4.5 %), instagram (5.6 %) and Google Chrome (13.9%). In looking at the criteria used to measure their daily time spent on social media platforms, it was noted that majority of the respondents spent between 1-3 hours daily on social media marketing sites.



Correlation Analysis

Karl Pearson correlation co-efficient test was conducted to evaluate the hypothesis 1 which predicts a strong relationship between Social Media Marketing and Consumer Online Behaviour (n= 410, p < .01). The results displayed in table 1 establishes the positive association between Social Media Marketing (m= 3.73 Std Dev =0.396) and Consumer Online

Purchasing Behaviour (m= 3.66 Std Dev =0.677) correlation value 0.52. The association between consumer engagement (m= 3.70 Std Dev =0.257) and social media marketing , consumer purchasing behavior is also proved the correlation value is .233** and .099*, significant at p < .01.

Table 1
Correlations

		SM_TOTAL	CE_TOTAL	CP_TOTAL
SM_TOTAL	Pearson Correlation	1	.233**	.052*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.196
	N	410	410	410
CE_TOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.233**	1	.099*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.014
	N	410	410	410

	Pearson Correlation	.052*	.099*	1
CP_TOTAL	Sig. (2-tailed)	.196	.014	
	N	410	410	410

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), SM- Social Media Marketing

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).CE- Consumer Engagement, CP- Consumer Online Purchasing Behavior.

Regression Results

Linear regression test was applied on the collected sample data of 410 numbers . Primarily, the basic assumptions of the data normally distributed have been established as per the results mention in the descriptive section. As per the multicollinerity issues the required VIF value is 1 (refer Table 3) indicating the absence of linearity issues. The Adjusted R square value being 0.011(refer Table 4) significantly p <0.001

(refer Table 2) implies that 1.1 % of social media marketing variance is predicted by the online purchasing behavior of the consumers . The regression equation being $y = a + bx$ ($a = (3.570) + (0.034) x$) in which x is being social media marketing and y being consumer online purchasing behaviour (Refer Table 3).

Table 2

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.111	1	.111	1.676	.001b
	Residual	40.152	608	.066		
	Total	40.263	609			

a. Dependent Variable: CP_TOTAL, CP- Consumer online purchasing behavior.

b. Predictors: (Constant), SM_TOTAL- Social media marketing .

Table 3

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	3.570	.099		36.214	.000					
SM_TOTAL	.034	.026	.052	1.295	.001	.052	.052	.052	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: CP_TOTAL – CP- Consumer online purchasing behavior.

b. Independent variable : SM _TOTAL- Social media marketing

Table 4

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.052a	.010	.011	.257	.003	1.676	1	608	.001

Mediation Effect

The mediation effect is evaluated by correlating the social media marketing methods with the consumer purchasing behavior on the internet. The predictor variable social media marketing is made constant, the outcome variable consumer buying behaviour correlated significantly (refer Table 5 for the f value) thus supporting the criteria for conducting the mediation analysis. Having satisfying the preexisting stipulations for mediation analysis , macros process of Haynes Andrews was utilized to predict the mediation effect among the designated variables. As per the Table 6 it depicts that in Model 1 the linear regression relationship between Social media marketing and the outcome variable i.e. consumer online purchasing behaviour is 0.052 , but subsequently on introducing the mediator variable consumer engagement into this relationship i.e. in Model 2, the beta coefficient values are reduced significantly from 0.052 to 0.031 and the variance explained to that effect is 0.092 (refer Table 6) . Thus it can be concluded that the mediating effect of consumer engagement does exists.

Table 5
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.052a	.003	.001	.257	.003	1.676	1	608	.196
2	.104b	.011	.007	.256	.008	4.897	1	607	.027

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social media marketing_TOTAL

b. Predictors: (Constant), Social media marketing_TOTAL, Consumer engagement_TOTAL

Table 6
Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error				Beta	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance
1	(Constant)	3.570	.099		36.214	.000					
	SM_TOTAL	.034	.026	.052	1.295	.196	.052	.052	.052	1.000	1.000
2	(Constant)	3.494	.104		33.579	.000					
	SM_TOTAL	.020	.027	.031	.748	.455	.052	.030	.030	.946	1.000
	CE_TOTAL	.035	.016	.092	2.213	.027	.099	.089	.089	.946	1.000

Dependent Variable: CP_TOTAL, CP- Consumer online purchasing behavior.

Independent Variable: SM_TOTAL – Social media marketing.

Mediator : CE_TOTAL-Consumer engagement .

One Way ANOVA Test

From the ANOVA descriptives it was found that people from the age group between 18 to 30 yrs (mean score 4.75) and between 30 yrs and 50 yrs (mean score 3.43) displayed more commitment levels. The second inference comes from the Levene statistics (.000 less than 0.05) which reveals that the

variance of consumer commitment levels were significantly different across the various age groups. With reference to the Table 7, the F value is 4.720 significant at p level 0.05 which indicates the variances between the different age groups significantly.

Table 7
ANOVA
Consumer Engagement Levels

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.168	3	1.056	4.720	.003
Within Groups	116.550	521	.224		
Total	119.717	524			

4. Discussion

The formulated Hypothesis 1 presumes positive relationship between social media marketing methods and its influence on consumer online purchasing behaviour, for which the Karl Pearson correlation analysis was conducted. These results proved the significant relationship (social media marketing r = 0.52 , significant at 0.05 level) thus leading to the acceptance of Hypothesis 1.

In continuation to this, regression analysis was conducted to establish the Hypothesis 2 which predicted the mediation effect

of consumer engagement between the association of organization’s social media marketing techniques and consumers purchasing pattern . The outcome of this test results(the co efficient beta value reduced from 0.052 to 0.031) established the mediating role of consumer engagement behavior between organizational internet marketing techniques and its customer purchasing attitude hence Hypothesis 2 was accepted.

One way ANOVA test is conducted to test the (Hypothesis 3) whose results (F value is 4.720 significantly at p < 0.05 level thus corroborating the relationship between employees age

groups and their consumer engagement levels, consequently accepting the Hypothesis 3.

5. Purpose of the Study:

This article endeavors to accentuate the influence of the organizations social media marketing methods on the consumers purchasing behavioural pattern, which in turn provide valuable strategically inputs to augment the company's products sales.

6. Research Contribution

This research article contributes to the existing body of knowledge of social media by identifying the operational mechanism of marketing techniques and its contributing role towards the sales growth, trust and brand reputation of the company's products.

7. Recommendations

In future upcoming research studies can explore the antecedents or the pre requisites of social media marketing

techniques, such as social media user behavior, e-commerce methods, content marketing, whose inferences can guide the organization in improvisation of their marketing strategies.

8. Conclusion

Social media marketing is one of the newest trends of the marketing industry. It helps companies to communicate directly with the customers, to create awareness, to position a product and to inform the market about all the business activity related to a company. It is well-known that companies can reach and engage with their customers through social mediums. This article findings shows that organizations can haul the benefits of social media marketing for positing its new products in new markets and to retain its existing customers by engaging them by gaining their trust and loyalty towards their brand. Therefore, social media is considered as another Place of the marketing's 4Ps (Product, Price, Place, Promotion) like a blog site or a website. Thus research findings in the contemporary fields of Social Media Marketing and Consumer engagement shall provide interesting insights for propelling future research studies in the progressive direction.

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