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IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO FAST-MOVING CONSUMER GOODS IN KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

In the past few decades, the use of social media has revolutionized the way entrepreneurs do business. Entrepreneurship paired with social media has become one of the factors why entrepreneurs are more encouraged to start up a new business venture. Businesses and entrepreneurs alike have taken advantage of these social media to raise and expand businesses. The most efficient and valuable weapon for entrepreneurs is the social media platforms. In today's technology driven world, most of the small businesses use social media platform for advertising and publicity of their product. The study aims to analyze the impact of social media on consumer buying behavior with reference to fast moving consumer goods in Kanyakumari district. The study is mainly based on both primary and secondary data. The population of the study shall comprise 300 consumers from various parts of Kanyakumari district selected using stratified random sampling. Results of the study revealed that consumers using social media platforms get impacted while purchasing fast moving consumer goods.

KEYWORDS: social media , stratified random sampling , nature of communication.

INTRODUCTION

The recent growth of social media has significantly changed the nature of communication from unidirectional to bidirectional, not only between firms and consumers but also among consumers. Social media remove spatial and time constrains thus enabling individuals to increase the frequency and the content of interaction with the members of their social network. Moreover, Social media has made a consumer a researcher by allowing him to access a great deal of information disseminated by both users and others about a company or product, and giving opportunity for him to communicate directly with the company as companies have their own Facebook pages and interact with consumers as people. It is only the rise of social networks that has made such intimate connections between companies and people possible. It is now possible for companies to literally know their consumers on a one-to-one basis and this study has been designed to answer the main question about the role of social media in consumer buying behavior towards FMCG.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media are interactive Web 2.0 Internet-based applications that facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks. Social media facilitate the development of online social networks by connecting a user's profile with those of other individuals or groups.

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Fast-moving consumer goods

Fast-moving consumer goods sector is the fourth largest sector in the Indian economy. Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) are products that are sold quickly and at relatively low cost. Examples include non-durable goods such as soft drinks, toiletries, over-the-counter drugs, processed foods and many other consumables. FMCG accounts for more than half of all consumer spending.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

A consumer may not act independently in the purchase, but rather may be influenced by various factors. An understanding of the influence of various external factors is essential to know well the buying behaviour of the consumers. Several studies reveal that the consumers are now becoming social consumers which mean consumers consult social media when making buying decisions. Thus, in today's digital world, social media influences consumers while making purchase decision. Inspite of the vast usage of social media by the consumers, certain cases have proved that they also mislead the consumers.Thus, this study is an attempt to evaluate the impact of social media on the consumer buying behavior towards fast-moving consumer goods in Kanyakumari district. This study attempts to understand the extent of impact of social media through two perspectives ie. User generated content and Marketer generated content. To elaborate it, the researcher attempts to know whether the consumers in Kanyakumari district are influenced in making buying decisions regarding FMCG by the chats made by friends, peers and other consumers and social media marketing strategies adopted by the brands in Social Media.

OBJECTIVES:
1. To study the significant relationship between social media and consumer characteristics.
2. To identify the factors in social media that influences the consumer buying behaviour.

METHODOLOGY

This research aims at studying the impact of social media on the consumer behavior related to fast-moving consumer goods. The population of the study shall comprise 300 consumers from various parts of Kanyakumari district selected using stratified random sampling. The study mainly based on primary data and secondary. Secondary data shall be collected from records and documents obtained from various sources.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:
Relationship between demographic characteristics of respondents and social Medias

An attempt has been made to analyze the relationship between demographic characteristics of respondents and social media with the help of chi-square analysis. The chi-square value and its significance are calculated for each demographic profile variable separately. The twelve demographic variables and the five different levels of satisfaction are analysed separately with help of contingency table. The results are presented in table.1

Table.1
Relationship between demographic variables of consumers and Attitude towards social media

Profile Variables	Calculated Chi-Square Value	Table Value at 5 per cent level	Significance
Age	33.27	26.18	Significant
Education	48.62	36.30	Significant
Sex	8.44	2.37	Significant
Caste	16.27	21.01	Not significant
Nature of Family	8.62	9.37	Not significant
Marital Status	23.09	21.01	Significant

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Family Size	22.13	26.18	Not significant
No.of. Earning members	28.71	26.18	Significant
Occupation	36.12	31.31	Significant
Personal Income	28.21	26.18	Significant
Family Income	28.17	31.31	Not significant
Family Expenditure	22.19	26.18	Not significant

Source: Computed data

From table.1, it has been inferred that the demographic variables such as age, education, sex, marital Status, number of earning members, occupation and personal income are significantly associated with the attitude of consumers since their calculated chi-square values are greater than the respective chi-square table value at 5 per cent level. There is no relationship between attitude towards social media and the demographic variables namely caste, nature of family, family size, family income and family expenditure since the respective chi-square values are less than the related table values at 5 per cent level.

Testing of Hypotheses

It is clearly evident from table.1 that there is a significant relationship between age, education, sex, marital status, number of earning members, occupation and personal income and influence of social media. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it could be inferred that the demographic variables such as age, education, sex, marital status, occupation and personal income influence the attitude of the respondents towards influence of social media.

Social Media platforms that influences the consumer buying behavior

Table.2
Different types of social media platforms that influences the consumer buying behavior of FMCG

Sl.No	Types	Mean Score	SD	CV	t-value	Rank
1	Face book	1.72	1.89	4.95	88.51	IV
2	Twitter	1.53	2.84	6.66	69.69	VII
3	Google+	1.98	1.01	3.29	110.16	I
4	Linked In	1.79	1.49	4.26	91.79	III
5	MySpace	1.50	2.98	7.09	54.38	VIII
6	YouTube	1.81	1.26	4.05	96.43	II
7	Pinterest	1.60	2.65	6.18	75.43	VI
8	Instagram	1.69	2.16	5.16	81.66	V
9	Whatsapp	1.47	3.11	8.42	22.62	IX
Multiple response Overall mean score =1.724						

Source: Computed data

Table.2 reveals that out of the nine social media platforms that influence the consumer buying behavior of FMCG, Google+ contributed first place and followed by YouTube, Linked In, Face book, Instragram, Pinterest, Twitter, MySpace and Whatapp with the mean score of 1.98, 1.81, 1.79, 1.72, 1.69, 1.60, 1.53, 1.50 and 1.47 respectively. The study further shows that the Google+ is the most important factor as the standard deviation and coefficient of variation for the Google+ is the least. Further, 't' value shows that they are significant at 0.05 level. Hence it is concluded that all the types taken into consideration have a significant bearing on their influencing activities.

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Social media factors influencing the consumer buying behavior

Table.3
Different types of social media factors that influences the consumer buying behavior

Sl.No	Types	Mean Score	Rank
1	Informative	77.2	I
2	Interactive	75.9	II
3	Entertainment	29.6	X
4	Credibility	51.1	VII
5	Accessibility and transparency	45.3	IX
6	Content quality	57.4	V
7	Perceived usefulness	49.6	VIII
8	Memorable visual slogan	55.7	VI
9	Innovative customer engagement	69.3	III
10	Trust	59.0	IV

Source: Computed data

Table.3 shows that different types of social media factors that influences the consumer buying behavior, Informative with mean score of 77.2 contributed first place, Interactive with mean score of 75.9 contributed second place, Innovative customer engagement with mean score of 69.3 contributed third place, Trust with mean score of 59.0 contributed fourth place, Content quality with mean score of 57.4 contributed fifth place, Memorable visual slogan with mean score of 55.7 contributed sixth place, Credibility with mean score of 51.1 contributed seventh place, Perceived usefulness with mean score of 49.6 contributed eighth place, Accessibility and transparency with mean score of 45.3 contributed ninth first place and entertainment with the mean score of 29.6 contributed last place. It is inferred that most influencing social media factors are informative, interactive and innovative customer engagement.

FINDINGS
❖ The study expresses that there is a significant relationship between age, education, sex, marital status, number of earning members, occupation and personal income and influence of social media. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it could be inferred that the demographic variables such as age, education, sex, marital status, occupation and personal income influence the attitude of the respondents towards influence of social media.
❖ The study reveals that out of the nine social media platforms that influence the consumer buying behavior of FMCG, Google+ contributed first place and followed by YouTube, Linked In, Face book, Instragram, Pinterest, Twitter, MySpace and Whatsapp with the mean score of 1.98, 1.81, 1.79, 1.72, 1.69, 1.60, 1.53, 1.50 and 1.47 respectively. The study further shows that Google+ is the most important factor as the standard deviation and coefficient of variation for the Google+ is the least. Further, 't' values show that they are significant at 0.05 level. Hence it is concluded that all the types taken into consideration have a significant bearing on their influencing activities.
❖ The study shows that different types of social media factors that influence the consumer buying behavior, Informative with mean score of 77.2 contributed first place, Interactive with mean score of 75.9 contributed second place, and entertainment with the mean score of 29.6 contributed last place.

SUGGESTIONS:
1. The importance social media is highlighted to consumers (facebook, twitter and youtube) due to its significant impact on purchasing decisions of FMCGs.

2. Social media covers not only urban areas the rural areas should also be focused for the promotion of the fast moving consumer goods.
3. Training given to the retail outlet employees can promote the sale of FMCGs with a help of social Medias.
4. Social media tool may be adopted in the FMCG manufactures projects for generating more trust of the public in general.
5. There is a need to create awareness about the social media for changing the present status of fast moving consumer goods.

CONCLUSION:

This study was conducted to find out the impact of social media on the buying behavior of the people in fast moving consumer goods. Study express that there are two important social media platforms which can influence the buying behaviors of the customer like Google+ and You Tube. These two platforms are not solely reason to change the behaviors of the consumers rather they can contribute in changing the behaviors of the consumers. The study concluded that social media are useful in covering the awareness among the consumers.

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