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A STUDY ON INTERACTIVE MEDIA'S INFLUENCE ON PURCHASE DECISION OF YOUTH**JATIN PANDEY****STUDENT****SRI JAYACHAMARAJENDRA COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING****MYSORE****ABSTRACT**

The major factors influencing buying decision of youth with the advent of interactive media were considered and variables were listed down. A conceptual model was developed which described the impact of each of these variables on the buying behavior of the youth. A structured questionnaire was developed to ensure that the details required to understand the factors influencing are studied. The questionnaire was designed on the basis of 3 variables which were measured by sub variables, the following are the variables and its measures Usage which is measured by Presence in interactive media, Activities on interactive media, Number of online purchases, the second variable is suggestions by friends which is measured by Brand awareness, Product reviews, Experience sharing and the final variable taken in to consideration is Quality of information which is measured by Accuracy of information, Completeness of information, Alternatives. Totally 40 questions were prepared in a 5 point Liked scale and few dichotomies scale among which 4 questions for each sub variables and 4 questions for dependent variable (Influence of interactive media). The data was collected by distributing the questionnaire prepared among a sample size of 90. The results suggest Usage of social media does not influence the purchasing behavior. However, good quality of information and recommendation of friends have a positive impact on purchasing behavior.

KEYWORDS

Social Media, buying decision, Use of interactive Media, Quality of information

INTRODUCTION

Interactive media is the integration of digital media including combinations of electronic text, graphics, moving images, and sound, into a structured digital computerized environment that allows people to interact with the data for appropriate purposes. The digital environment can include the Internet, telecoms and interactive digital television¹.

The nature of communication has undergone a substantial change in the past 20 years—and the change is not over. Email has had a profound effect on the way people keep in touch. Communications are shorter and more frequent than when letters were the norm; response time has greatly diminished; we are even surprised if someone we wish to contact does not have an email address. Although there are still a few people who print out their emails in order to read and respond to them, most of us are accustomed to the daily duty of reading and answering emails that have arrived since we turned off the computer the night before, and to keeping up with them as they trickle (or flood) in during the day.

From the advent of email, bulletin board systems, to current social networking sites, technology has been integrated with communication to become a prominent focus of the new digital age. In the last decade or so internet has evolved from being a privilege of a few to a ubiquitous tool. As the speed and availability of internet has evolved do has the ways of people using it. It has moved from email interaction to a place where family, friends and people with similar and dissimilar interest meet discuss on personal, political, sports and news related issues.

As a result interactive and social media has become the place for people to spread significant part of their daily interaction as people have moved to interactive media. Companies and brands have followed them.

Since their introduction, social network sites (SNSs) such as MySpace, Facebook, Cyworld, and Bebo have attracted millions of users, many of whom have integrated these sites into their daily practices. As of this writing, there are hundreds of SNSs, with various technological affordances, supporting a wide range of interests and practices. While their key technological features are fairly consistent, the cultures that emerge around SNSs are varied. Most sites support the maintenance of pre-existing social networks, but others help strangers connect based on shared interests, political views, or activities. Some sites cater to diverse audiences, while others attract people based on common language or shared racial, sexual, religious, or nationality-based identities. Sites also vary in the extent to which they incorporate new information and communication tools, such as mobile connectivity, blogging, and photo/video-sharing. Scholars from disparate fields have examined SNSs in order to understand the practices, implications, culture, and meaning of the sites, as well as users' engagement with them.

Many companies have started using interactive media as a major tool to get connected with the customers, as reaching the customers and interacting with them is started becoming very much essential. To have a cutting edge over the business it is very much necessary to attain customer satisfaction and being responsive to the needs and issues of customers. The interactive media helps to do this efficiently. The tool is also very vital in marketing the products to the customers and help buying decision making of the customers. In order to influence customers buying decision making it is a great essential to know the factors that would influence the customer buying decision making.

As more and more companies establish their presence on interactive media establish imperative for more than to understand the results of their actions in this new world and the companies are trying to understand how their actions are translating into more revenue and sales for the company.

This study aims to understand the factors influencing buying decision making with the arrival of interactive media.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The interactive media is the new tool to satisfy the needs of customers but the tool should be used effectively in order to achieve the organizational objectives the companies should influence the buying decision making of the individual to determine this the usage, suggestion and the quality of information in interactive media has to be taken in to consideration and the relationship among them has to be observed. The literature is, however, inconclusive on whether the usage, suggestion and quality of information have significant impact on buying decision making.

Alexandru M. Degeratu, Arvind Rangaswamy and Jianan Wu, one of the paper discusses are brand names more valuable online or in traditional supermarkets? Does the increasing availability of comparative price information online make consumers more price-sensitive? The paper addresses the related questions by first conceptualizing how different store environments (online and traditional stores) can differentially affect consumer choices. The hypotheses and the empirical results from our choice models indicate that: (1) Brand names become more important online in some categories but not in others depending on the extent of information available to consumers – brand names are more valuable when information on fewer attributes is available online, (2) Sensory search attributes, particularly visual cues about the product, have lower impact on choices online, and factual information have higher impact on choices online (3) Price sensitivity is higher online, but this is due to online promotions being stronger signals of price discounts. The combined effect of price and promotion on choice is weaker online than offline².

¹ Elaine England and Andy Finney ATSF January 2002 ... updated 2011 ATSF White Paper—Interactive Media UK—©2002/2011 ATSF

² Alexandru M. Degeratu, Arvind Rangaswamy and Jianan Wu, "Consumer Choice Behaviour in Online and Traditional Supermarkets: The Effects of Brand Name, Price, and other Search Attributes"

Irena Pletikosa Cvijikj, Goekmen Cetin, Stephan Karpischek, Florian Michahelles, describes a system for evaluating the behavioural impact of Facebook on the decision making process. We have developed Thing Book, a prototype Facebook application for creating repositories of things and sharing opinions with friends. The paper describes initial results obtained from an online survey. These results confirm the existing statements from sociologists that people see their friends as the most reliable source of information³.

Another study empirically examines these issues. Do friends influence purchases of users in an online social network; which users are more influenced by this social pressure; and can we quantify this social influence in terms of increase in sales and revenue. The results showed that there are three distinct groups of users with very different behaviour. The low-status group (48% of users) are not well connected, show limited interaction with other members and are unaffected by social pressure. The middle-status group (40% users) is moderately connected, show reasonable non-purchase activity on the site and have a strong and positive effect due to friends' purchases. On average, their revenue increases by 5% due to this social influence. The high-status group (12% users) is well connected and very active on the site, and shows a significant negative effect due to friends' purchases. In other words, this group differentiates itself from others by lowering their purchase and strongly pursuing non-purchase related activities. This social influence leads to almost 14% drop in the revenue of this group⁴.

Deborah Cowles and Lawrence A. Crosby This studied the number of factors that could influence consumer acceptance of interactive information systems in complex service marketing situations. Further, it investigates the potential relevance of various theoretical perspectives to research involving new communication media such as videotex and teletext. Technical characteristics of the medium, which determine its degree of interactivity, are found to affect user perceptions of the medium's 'personalness' or 'social presence'. Characteristics of both the medium and the user are found to affect consumer acceptance of an interactive medium in a financial services setting⁵.

Helen Streck did a two-fold: research 1) to provide the reader with the information collected and reviewed by the researcher, and 2) to begin, in earnest, the discussion by records and information professionals about what they can, will, and cannot do with the records and information created on, distributed by or displayed on Social Networks⁶.

Christopher G. Gooley James M. Lattin formulated a unique procedure to exploit the benefits of interactive media. We study the general problem of a marketer whose objective is to maximize expected return (e.g., response rate) over the course of a direct response marketing campaign. The marketer has the ability to dynamically allocate two or more unique marketing messages (e.g., ads, Web pages) to achieve this objective. Consumer response to a particular message may depend on a set of covariates (e.g., demographic characteristics). In ignorance of the true relationship between response and the covariates, the marketer can use regression techniques to learn about the parameters of the response functions. Moreover, because the marketer can continually update the parameter estimates, he can also continually adapt the decision of message selection⁷.

Sheila I. Sasser, Scott Koslo, Edward A. Riorda examined IMC media use by advertising agencies from a perspective of how creative and media implementation effects impact the scope of media selected for campaigns. The study was based upon a quantitative analysis of 872 advertising campaigns from 309 respondents from the largest advertising agencies in New York and Detroit. Overall, campaigns contain more integrated media when there is solid consumer research, formal advertising testing, diverse media experience, agency industry specialization, and high agency motivation. Creativity is positively correlated with wider IMC media use, showing that integrated interactive media campaigns using a broader media palette can be highly creative. However, neither the presence of strategy in the client's brief nor the perception of the campaign being "on strategy" has any effect on the scope or number of media used⁸.

From the literature review, we can conclude that the buying decision through interactive media happens with the number of users of interactive media, recommendation of friends on interactive media can be considered for the study and quality of information about the product through interactive media is very much essential for the study. Hence, the following study considers usage, recommendation and quality of information as the factors that would influence the buying decision.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

PROBLEM STATEMENT

In the past decade or so technology has taken a drastic turn, the organizations has to change accordingly and capitalize on the changing technology. The customer has to so much to choose with to make a decision. With the introduction of interactive media online buying has started becoming a trend; it now boils down on what factors customers make a buying decision which would help the organizations to cash on.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study is to know the factors influencing the buying decision making among the youth with the advent of Interactive media and to know the relationship among the variables considered.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

With technology creeping day after day the companies must understand there is a necessary to be equipped with the necessary tools and analyze what would be the factors that would influence the youth to make a buy online. With the emergence of interactive media like Facebook, Youtube, eBay, Amazon.com and similar such media vehicles which when utilized effectively will turn out to be an opportunity but if not utilized effectively can turn out to be a threat in the competitive business world. The study concentrates on what would be the factors that would influence the consumers in making a buying decision.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To know the factors affecting the buying decision making of youth with the advent of interactive media.
- To determine the significance of these variable on buying decision making through interactive media.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION

The major factors influencing buying decision of youth with the advent of interactive media were considered and variables were listed down. A conceptual model was developed which described the impact of each of these variables on the buying behavior of the youth. A structured questionnaire was developed to ensure that the details required understanding the factors influencing are studied.

The questionnaire was designed on the basis of 3 variables which were measured by sub variables, the following are the variables and its measures Usage which is measured by Presence in interactive media, Activities on interactive media, Number of online purchases, the second variable is suggestions by friends which is measured by Brand awareness, Product reviews, Experience sharing and the final variable taken in to consideration is Quality of information which is measured by Accuracy of information, Completeness of information, Alternatives. Totally 40 questions were prepared in a 5 point liked scale and few dichotomies scale among which 4 questions for each sub variables and 4 questions for dependent variable (Influence of interactive media). The data was collected by distributing the questionnaire prepared among a sample size of 90.

DATA ANALYSIS PLAN

A survey among the youth was conducted using the questionnaire. The following tests were made to check the hypothesis, firstly the reliability was checked through Cronbach's alpha, the validity was established through discussion with marketing experts, later regression was done to test the validity and the reliability

³Irena Pletikosa Cvijikj, Goekmen Cetin, Stephan Karpischek, Florian Michahelles, "Influence of Facebook on Purchase Decision Making".

⁴Raghuram Iyengar, Sangman Han, Sunil Gupta "Do Friends Influence Purchases in a Social Network?"

⁵Consumer Acceptance of Interactive Media in Service Marketing Encounters; Deborah Cowles and Lawrence A. Crosby

⁶Helen Streck President/CEO, Kaizen InfoSource LLC "Social Networks and their Impact on Records and Information management." Date: January 25, 2011

⁷Christopher G. Gooley James M. Lattin "Dynamic Customization of Marketing Messages in Interactive Media" April, 1998 Revised, October 2000

⁸Sheila I. Sasser, Scott Koslo, Edward A. Riorda "Creative and Interactive Media Use by Agencies: Engaging an IMC Media Palette for Implementing Advertising Campaign"

among the dependent and independent variables, finally a correlation was done to check if there was any relationship that existed among the independent variables.

HYPOTHESIS

- H1: Majority of youth do not spend significant amount of time on interactive media.
- H2: There is no significant role of friend’s recommendation on buying decision making through interactive media.
- H3: Interactive media do not provide quality information required to make a buying decision.

VARIABLES

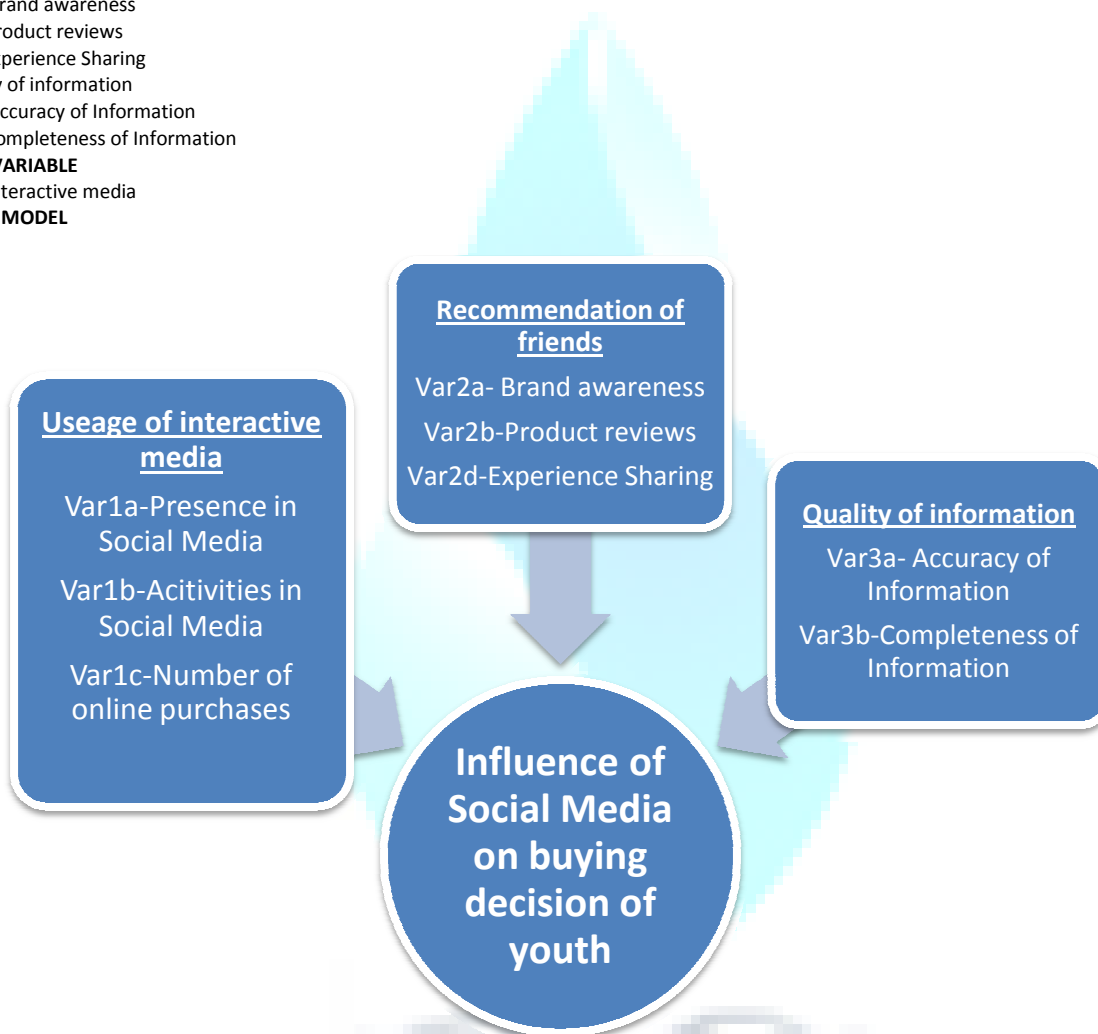
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

- VAR1 - Use of interactive Media
 - Var1a-Presence in interactive Media
 - Var1b-Acivities in interactive Media
 - Var1c-Number of online purchases
- VAR2 - Recommendation of friends
 - Var2a- Brand awareness
 - Var2b-Product reviews
 - Var2c-Experience Sharing
- VAR3 - Quality of information
 - Var3a- Accuracy of Information
 - Var3b-Completeness of Information

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Influence of interactive media

CONCEPTUAL MODEL



ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE 1: RELIABILITY

Table 1.1: VAR1 - Use of interactive Media

TABLE 1.1.1: VAR1A-PRESENCE IN INTERACTIVE MEDIA

SINo	Questions	Cronbach’s Alpha	No of Items
1)	I use interactive media to connect with family and friends.	.816	4
2)	How often you make more than one online purchase every month.		
3)	Number of hours I spend on interactive media.		
4)	I use interactive Media for information on my purchasing process.		

TABLE 1.1.2: VAR1B-ACITIVITIES IN INTERACTIVE MEDIA

SINo	Questions	Cronbach’s Alpha	No of Items
1)	I use interactive media to upload photos and videos of me and my friends.	.817	2
2)	I use interactive Media to further my academic knowledge and career development		

TABLE 1.1.3:VAR1C-NUMBER OF ONLINE PURCHASES

SINo	Questions	Cronbach’s Alpha	No of Items
1)	How much did you spend making online purchases in the last 1 year?	.657	2
2)	How many on line purchases do you make in a year?		

TABLE 1.2: VAR2 - RECOMMENDATION OF FRIENDS

TABLE 1.2.1:VAR2A- BRAND AWARENESS

SINo	Questions	Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
1)	I share my experience of interacting while purchasing a product with my online contacts	.719	3
2)	I know where to find my favourite brands on interactive media.		
3)	I think the product reviews from my friends on the interactive media are helpful		

TABLE 1.2.2:VAR2B-PRODUCT REVIEWS

SINo	Questions	Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
1)	I always provide reviews after purchasing the product	.714	3
2)	I think the experience of buying a product is not as important as the quality of the product.		
3)	I follow experts who provide pre-launch reviews for a product		

TABLE 1.2.3:VAR2C-EXPERIENCE SHARING

SINo	Questions	Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
1)	I still continue purchasing online even if my contacts express a negative experience of purchasing a product.	.689	2
2)	I like to hear the latest information about new releases from my favourite brands		

TABLE 1.3:VAR3 - QUALITY OF INFORMATION

TABLE 1.3.1:VAR3A- ACCURACY OF INFORMATION

SINo	Questions	Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
1)	I think social media provides me with the alternatives in buying a product	.895	5
2)	I feel I have a more open and informed conversation about products because of interactive media		
3)	I think it is easier to compare products using interactive media than in-store shopping		
4)	I believe my friends provide more accurate information of product than other experts		
5)	I feel that I can get access to the positives and negatives of products because of interactive media.		

TABLE 1.3.2:VAR3B-COMPLETENESS OF INFORMATION

SINo	Questions	Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
1)	I know where to find accurate information of product on interactive media	.694	3
2)	I am more aware of substitute and complementary products because of interactive media than before		
3)	Forums and blogs provide me the ability to understand how to use the product once I purchase it.		

INTERPRETATION

From the tables above it can be seen that the questions under different components are found to be reliable.

REGRESSION

The study focuses on the three predictors, whether they are statistically significant and, if so, the direction of the relationship.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.672 ^a	.451	.432	.75373133

INTERPRETATION

The results indicate the correlation (.672^a) and R Square shows 45.1% variation. The overall model is fit.

COEFFICIENTS

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-1.835E-17	.079		.000	1.000
	Quality of Information	.513	.104	.513	4.953	.000
	Recommendation	.244	.111	.244	2.205	.030
	Usage	-.131	.087	-.131	-1.505	.136

- The quality of information (b=0.513) is significant (p=0.000), which proves that quality of information has a significant impact on purchase decision making which is what we would expect.
- Next, the effect of recommendation (b=.244, p=.030) seems to be insignificant to the purchase decision making. This result is somewhat unexpected.
- The usage (b=-.131) is insignificant (p=0.136) to the purchase decision making.

CORRELATION

		Quality of Information	Recommendation	Usage
Quality of Information	Pearson Correlation	1	.630**	.161
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.128
	N	90	90	90
Recommendation	Pearson Correlation	.630**	1	.384**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	90	90	90
Usage	Pearson Correlation	.161	.384**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.128	.000	
	N	90	90	90

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

INTERPRETATION

- Quality of information has a relationship with recommendation as the value seen is 0.630** which proves that it is significant at 99% confidence level.
- There exists a significant relationship between recommendation and usage (.630**) it also shows that there is a significant relationship between recommendation and quality of information .384** at 99% confidence level.
- There exists a significant relationship between usage and recommendation (.384**)

FINDINGS

- Usage of social media does not influence the purchasing behavior. However, good quality of information and recommendation of friends have a positive impact on purchasing behavior.
- There is a positive correlation between the quality of Information available to the impact of recommendation of friends meaning that a better quality information would lead to a higher impact of the recommendation
- There is a positive correlation between the usage of interactive media to the impact of recommendation of friends and usage and quality of information.
- The rotated component matrix shows that among 12 questions considered for each variable only 8 questions of each variable can be taken in to further analysis.
- ✓ This study finally proves that there is no significant relationship between usage and buying decision making. Hence hypothesis is proved.
- ✓ There is a significant role of friend's recommendation on buying decision making through interactive media. Hence alternative hypothesis is proved.
- ✓ There is a significant role of quality information on buying decision making through interactive media. Hence alternative hypothesis is proved.

CONCLUSION

Interactive media is a market that companies have to capitalize on. Many companies are moving to interactive media as an important platform for product design to promotion. Hence it is important for companies to understand the influence of interactive media. This study found that only usage is not sufficient to influence buying decision making. The quality of information and recommendation play a pivotal role in influencing the buying decision making. The challenge for the marketers is to convert the users of interactive media in to potential buyers, by ensuring quality of information is high and influencing buyers to provide recommendation to friends and networks about the purchased products and services.

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