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RESULTS & DISCUSSION

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EFFECT OF FACEBOOK ON PURCHASING BEHAVIOR OF YOUTH**PREYAL DESAI****ASST. PROFESSOR****R.B. INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES****AHMEDABAD****PRATIMA SHUKLA****ASST. PROFESSOR****R.B. INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES****AHMEDABAD****NIKUNJ THAKKAR****ASST. PROFESSOR****R.B. INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES****AHMEDABAD****ABSTRACT**

Facebook is relatively an inexpensive platform for organization to implement marketing campaigns with the objectives ranging from creating awareness to customer purchase. Through Facebook sites, company can have interactions with consumers which can have impact on every stage of buying cycle. Due to expensive traditional media, more ways have evolved through which consumers can block themselves of communication. This creates a gap between consumer and company which hinders communication. Facebook can bridge this gap by establishing communication in informal way and can help consumer to make purchase. This study examines the impact of facebook on purchasing behavior of youth. The study tries to identify which mode of communication is more effective i.e. Facebook advertisement is more effective or reviews of friends and other for purchase behavior. Further, it tries to explore the preference of facebook among male and female for various product categories. Descriptive research design was used with the sample of 100 youngsters of Ahmedabad. Structured questionnaire was developed to study the effect of Facebook on purchasing behavior of youth.

KEYWORDS

Facebook, Purchasing Behavior.

1. INTRODUCTION

Let's imagine for a moment that the world has gone mute. There's deafening silence. No one speaks. No one hears. No one voices opinion. No one is influenced by an opinion. Communication is dead. Facebook is exactly the opposite"

Nowadays facebook has become an important source of information and communication for customers. People are more equipped with digital technologies like i-phones, Blackberries, Tablet PCs, search engines, etc. and hence they have more exposure of information. There are various social networking sites like Orkut, You Tube, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook etc.

Social networking websites provide platform for virtual networking where anyone can share pictures, music, videos, events, activities, reviews about products and brands, etc. It creates a new forum of consumers Internet Communities. Blogs and Social networks have become a part of life for the youth in India. The explosion and increasing usage of facebook websites provides a platform for nurturing brands and products. As a result, marketers consider these as the best platform for advertising their brands.

Social networking websites allow individuals to interact with one another and build relationships. When products or companies join these sites, people can interact with the product or company and share their views. Social networking sites like Twitter, Facebook, Google Plus, YouTube and Blogs allow individual followers to "retweet" or "repost" comments made by the product being promoted. By repeating the message, the connected people are able to see the message and therefore reaching more people. Social networking sites act as word of mouth. Usage of social networking sites creates more traffic to the product/company.

Through social networking sites, products/companies can have conversations and interactions with individual followers. This personal interaction can instill a feeling of loyalty into followers and potential customers. Also, by choosing whom to follow on these sites, products can reach a very narrow target audience. Facebook marketing refers to the process of gaining website traffic or attention through Facebook sites.

Facebook marketing programs usually center on efforts to create content that attracts attention and encourages readers to share it with their social networks. A corporate message spreads from user to user and presumably resonates because it appears to come from a trusted, third-party source, as opposed to the brand or company itself. Hence, this form of marketing is driven by word-of-mouth, meaning it results in earned media rather than paid media. Facebook has become a platform that is easily accessible to anyone with internet access. Increased communication for organizations fosters brand awareness and often, improved customer service. Additionally, Facebook serves as a relatively inexpensive platform for organizations to implement marketing campaigns.

Forrester Research estimates that "Facebook marketing budgets will grow 34 percent per year from 2009 to 2014- faster than any other form of online advertising."

In the entire world there are more than 292.7 million users of Facebook sites. "Facebook users in India are expected to touch the 45 million mark by 2012" according to a study conducted by the Nielsen Company in collaboration with Absolute Data, almost 45,000 Indians are likely to join social networking sites every day over the next six months. An important finding of the study is that Facebook in India is becoming bigger than email with Indians spending more time on facebook than checking personal email. The study also found that nearly 40 million Indians are using online reviews to make informed purchase decisions.

Indians also want brands to communicate with them using Facebook. Another study notes that 60 percent Indians who are Facebook users are open to being approached by brands indicating that facebook has the ability to change the dynamic between brands and consumers who are typically time-starved and may consider traditional forms of advertising.

Nowadays, consumers prefer to remain away from the traditional medium of communication. As traditional media are becoming more and more expensive and complex, marketers have started focusing on facebook due to its high usage amongst youth. Facebook establishes communication and influences consumer to make purchase. So, it has become very important for marketers to understand how facebook has the influence on purchase decision of youth which is the most preferred social networking site by customers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Alisa Santiesteban(2010) has done research on The effect of Facebook on purchasing decision and noted that people are using Facebook for personal and business use and purchasing decision can be influenced by the their interaction with brand via Facebook and they purchases those brands because of their interaction. She was not considering Age and gender in her study but time spend on Facebook having a positive correlation with purchasing decision.

Raghuram Iyengar, Sangman Han, Sunil Gupta, (2009) investigated “Do Friends Influence Purchases in a Social Network?” They found that use of Facebook in marketing has increased. The potential social effect has significant impact on the success of companies. They focused on social site CYworld at Korea and found that low status user group were not well connected so unaffected by social pressure, the middle-status group is moderately connected, show reasonable non-purchase activity on the site and have a strong and positive effect due to friends’ purchases. The high-status group is well connected and very active on the site and shows a significant negative effect due to friends’ purchases.

Amrita Pani and Mahesh Sharma (2011) have done research on innovation in Social Networking Media and their impact on the Buying Behavior of Gennext Consumers in India: A new face of Viral Marketing, According to them Innovation in social networking media has revolutionized the world in 21st Century; it has been found that social networking sites are being widely used to influence Gennext consumers in India apparently increasing their susceptibility to viral marketing. Indian youths have realized changes in their brand choices, shopping behavior and lifestyle pattern resulting from their virtual socialization through Facebook. The main purpose of this study was to examine the pervasiveness of Buzz marketing Practices through social networking sites.

Narges Delafrooz, Laily H. Paim, and Ali Khatibi (2010) have done research on Understanding consumer’s internet purchase intention in Malaysia, according to their study Result of path analysis showed that trust and attitude had stronger direct effect on online shopping intention, whereas utilitarian orientation, convenience, prices wider selection, and income had stronger indirect effect on online shopping intention through the attitude towards online shopping as mediation. How consumers form their attitude and make purchase intentions toward online shopping.

Rainer Olbrich / Christian Holsing (Hagen 2011) their study focused on Consumer Product Search and Purchasing Behavior in Social Shopping Communities– A Click stream. Analysis according to them user behavior is consistent with rational considerations involving time constraints and cost-benefit trade-offs. While ratings and tags have a positive impact, lists and styles have a negative effect on the likelihood of a click-out Nevertheless, lists and styles could be regarded as an important website design element that stimulate browsing and inspiration, as well as enhancing trust. Hence, lists and styles could lead to positive long-term effects on the click-out rate.

Mark Renshaw (2010) has done research on The Socialized Shopper according to his study Social-media shoppers are more engaged with media and spend more time shopping Facebook impacts behavior throughout the shopping process. Social brand-contacts are a communal activity Facebook’s impact on shopping varies widely by category.

Sebastián, Valenzuela, Namsu Park, and Kerk F. Kee(2008) have done research on Lessons from Facebook: The Effect of Social Network Sites on College Students’ Social Capital ,according to this study they found moderate, positive relationships between intensity of Facebook use and students’ life satisfaction, social trust, civic participation and political engagement.

Jure Leskovec Daniel Huttenlocher Jon Kleinberg (2009) have prepared report on **Predicting Positive and Negative Links in Online Social Networks** suggest social computing applications by which the attitude of one user toward another can be estimated from evidence provided by their relationships with other members of the surrounding social network.

3. OBJECTIVES

- 1) To study influence of facebook on purchasing behavior of youth.
- 2) To understand most preferred social networking site among youth.
- 3) To understand impact of facebook on various product categories.
- 4) To study preference of facebook among male and female for various product categories.
- 5) To understand the influence of facebook on various stages of buying cycle.

4. HYPOTHESIS

H1: There is a significant difference among males and females in their purchase behavior through facebook.

H2: There is significant difference in gender for being connected with various brands through facebook.

H3: There is difference in preference for different types of product categories among male and female.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research was used to the study the effect of facebook on purchasing behavior of youth. A survey approach was chosen to gather information from youngsters of Ahmedabad. Non-probability sampling technique with convenience sampling was used in the survey. A structured questionnaire was developed which was administered to 100 respondents for the survey. Before finalizing questionnaire, opinion of expert panel was taken and it was followed by pilot survey of 15 youngsters of Ahmedabad. Data and information gathered through questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS Software. Various statistical tests like t-test were performed to study preference of facebook among male and female for various product categories. Further, k-s test was performed to check normality of data and chi –square test was also used during the analysis.

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

6.1 PREFERRED SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE

To know the preferred social networking site among youngsters, we had used Likert type scale and asked the respondents to rate according to their preference.

TABLE 1: PREFERRED SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE

| Facebook Site | Mean |
|---------------|--------|
| Facebook | 1.3846 |
| LinkedIn | 2.8889 |
| Twitter | 2.8000 |
| Orkut | 2.8214 |
| You Tube | 1.9545 |
| Google+ | 2.2353 |
| Other | 2.5714 |

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 shows preferred social networking site. Among all, facebook is the most preferred social networking site followed by youtube. LinkedIn, twitter and orkut are not that much preferred as compared to facebook among youngsters.

6.2 PURPOSE OF USING FACEBOOK**TABLE 2: PURPOSE OF USING FACEBOOK**

| Purpose | Responses |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| Keeping touch with friends/Family | 96(35.2%) |
| Looking Photos/Videos | 60(22.0) |
| Playing Games | 25(9.2%) |
| Applications | 29(10.6%) |
| Product purchase | 11(4.0%) |
| To maintain professional relation | 38(4.8%) |
| Sharing experience about product. | 13(0.4%) |

Source: Primary Data

The study suggests that youngsters prefer facebook for being in touch with friends/family members (35.2%), viewing photos/video (22%), for application (10.6%). Very less percentage of youngsters prefer facebook for product purchase and sharing experience about product.

6.3 FREQUENCY FOR FACEBOOK USE**TABLE 3: FREQUENCY FOR FACEBOOK USE**

| Time Frequency | <30 minutes | 30 minutes to 1 hour | 1 hour to 2 hour | >hour | Total |
|-------------------|-------------|----------------------|------------------|----------|-------|
| Daily | 16(34%) | 14(29.8%) | 12(25.5%) | 5(10.6%) | 47 |
| Weekly | 12(26.1%) | 17(37%) | 11(23.9%) | 6(13.0%) | 46 |
| Monthly | 1(14.3%) | 5(71.4) | 1(14.3%) | 0(0%) | 7 |

Source: Primary data

From above table, we found that 47% students use facebook sites on daily basis and 46 students use facebook sites on weekly basis. So, majority of students use facebook sites on daily or weekly basis. Further on daily basis ,34% students spend <30 minutes for facebook use and on weekly basis 37% students spend 30 minutes to 1 hour for facebook use.

6.4 SOURCE INFLUENCING MORE FOR PURCHASING DECISION**TABLE 4: SOURCE INFLUENCING FOR PURCHASING DECISION**

| Sources | Mean |
|------------------------|--------|
| Friends Review | 1.8108 |
| Fan club Review | 2.9600 |
| Celebrity Review | 2.4643 |
| Facebook Advertisement | 2.2424 |

Source: Primary data

To study which source influencing more for purchasing decision we have used rating scale we have asked respondent to rate in scale of 1 to 5. Study suggest that Friends review influencing more for purchasing decision compare to other sources like fan club review, celebrity review.

6.5 PRODUCT CATEGORY ON WHICH FACEBOOK INFLUENCE**TABLE 5: PRODUCT CATEGORY**

| Product Category | Responses |
|--------------------|------------|
| Books & article | 22 (17.7) |
| Food | 11 (8.9) |
| Accessories | 13 (10.5) |
| Movies | 23 (18.5) |
| Games. | 16 (12.9%) |
| Apparels | 9 (7.3%) |
| Auto mobiles | 10 (8.1%) |
| Electronic devices | 19 (15.3%) |

Source: Primary data

The above study suggests that for movies, books & articles, electronic devices facebook has more influence. Further, for food, auto mobiles and accessories less influence of facebook among youngsters of Ahmedabad is found.

6.6 PERCEPTION ABOUT FACEBOOK

To study perception about Facebook sites, we have asked the respondents to rate the statement on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is for strongly agree and 5 is for strongly disagree.

TABLE 6: PERCEPTION ABOUT FACEBOOK

| No. | Statements | Mean |
|-----|--|--------|
| 1. | Facebook helps to create more awareness of product or brand. | 2.0200 |
| 2. | Because of Facebook you have more knowledge about Brands | 2.2000 |
| 3. | Assessment and comparison of brands become more easy due to Facebook | 2.4700 |
| 4. | Able to find out more alternatives of brands due to Facebook. | 2.2600 |
| 5. | Facebook influence purchasing decision of yours. | 2.9000 |
| 6. | Socialization of brand is good idea. | 2.2500 |
| 7. | Reviews of friends make it easy to have purchase decision. | 2.1600 |
| 8. | Purchasing through Facebook saves time. | 2.3600 |

Source: Primary data

Majority of respondents agree in accepting that facebook creates more awareness of product or brand, more knowledge about brand, and also assessment of brands become easier for them. They find out more alternatives, socialization of brand is good idea, reviews of friend make easy to have purchase decision and facebook even saves time. But they have neutral opinion regarding the facebook influence on purchasing decision.

6.7 HYPOTHESES

H1: There is a significant difference for influencing facebook for purchase among male and Female.

TABLE 7: GENDER VS FACEBOOK INFLUENCE

| Facebook Influence | Male (55) | Female (45) |
|--------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Yes | 22(40%) | 19(42.2%) |
| NO | 33(60%) | 26(57.8%) |

TABLE 8: CHI SQUARE

| | |
|--------------------------|-------|
| Pearson chi-square value | 0.822 |
|--------------------------|-------|

Source: Primary data

To study whether there is significant difference for influencing Facebook for purchase among male and female, chi-square test of association was applied (Table 7) for hypothesis 1. The significant level for the hypothesis is at 95% confidence level i.e. 0.05 level of significance. Pearson chi-square value which is 0.822 is greater than level of significance so we accept Null Hypothesis (H₀). Hence, we conclude that there is no significant difference for influencing Facebook gender wise.

H2: There is a significant difference according to gender for connecting with brands through facebook..

TABLE 9: GENDER Vs. CONNECTED BRANDS

| Connected with brands | Male (55) | Female (45) |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Yes | 23(41.8%) | 32(51.1%) |
| No | 32(58.2%) | 22(48.9%) |

TABLE 10: CHI SQUARE

| | |
|--------------------------|-------|
| Pearson chi-square Value | 0.354 |
|--------------------------|-------|

Source: Primary data

To study whether there is significant difference according to gender wise for connected with brands through Facebook, chi-square test of association was applied (Table 9) for hypothesis 2. The significant level for the hypothesis is at 95% confidence level i.e. 0.05 level of significance. Pearson chi-square value which is 0.354 is greater than level of significance so we accept Null Hypothesis (H₀). Hence, we conclude that there is no significant difference among male and female for connected with brands through Facebook.

H3: There is significant difference for preference for different type of product category among male and female.

TABLE 11: GENDER VS PRODUCT CATEGORY

| Product Category | Levene's test Sig. | T-test Sig.(2-tailed) |
|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Games | 0.831 | 0.768 |
| Apparels | 0.030 | 0.604 |
| Auto mobiles | 0.228 | 0.384 |
| Electronic devises | 0.085 | 0.224 |
| Books& articles | 0.347 | 0.349 |
| Food | 0.084 | 0.585 |
| Movies | 0.412 | 0.538 |
| Accessories | 0.162 | 0.585 |

Source: Primary data

To explore the difference of influence of facebook for various product categories, we have performed t-test of independent group. First Levene's test was performed for equality of variance. From above table, p-value is less than level of significance and hence t-value of equal variance not assumed has been taken into consideration. For other product categories, p-value of levene's test is greater than level of significance. Hence, null hypothesis is accepted and t-value of equal variance assumed has been taken into consideration. Also, significant t-value for all product categories are greater than level of significance. So, we have accepted null hypothesis and hence there is no difference in preference for different types of product categories among male and female.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS AND FINDINGS

- Facebook is most preferred social networking site among the youngsters.
- Facebook sites are mostly used for being in touch with friends/family members.
- Reviews of friends have positive effect on purchasing decision for movies, books & articles, electronic devices.
- Facebook helps to create more awareness of product or brand.
- Facebook provides more knowledge about brand & assessment of brands becomes easier.
- There is no difference in effect of facebook on purchasing decision of male and female.

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