

“Influence of Social Networking Sites in Consumers Purchase Intention”

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Abstract: - Social Networks are online communities of people who typically share a common interest or activity. It provides a platform for business owners to market their businesses. Social Network marketing makes use of the process of advertising, promoting and selling ideas, theories, values and philosophies in a social environment. This model is based upon the hive mentality where people identify themselves as part of a group with similar likes and interests that draw them together. Purchase intention is a plan to buying a particular good or service in the future. But purchase intention comes from behavioural science and evolves from the term intention. Intention is the subjective probability that one perform a particular action. Consumer attitudes are a composite of consumer beliefs, feelings and behavioural intentions. The more positive these attitudes are the more positive purchase intentions will be. This article will reveal how the general attitude of the consumers will transform into purchase intention. Also it will show how marketing through Social Networking Sites influence consumers purchase intention.

Keywords: Social Network, Purchase Intention, Facebook, Online Shopping

I. INTRODUCTION

Social Networks are online communities of people who typically share a common interest or activity. They provide a variety of ways for users to interact with each other blogs, e-mail, instant messaging, and newsfeeds which contain information about, or valuable to those in your network. They are powerful in their ability to facilitate communication. Examples of Social Networking Sites include Facebook, and the professional networks. Establishing and maintaining an active presence on Social Networking Sites has emerged as an effective way to promote products. There are many terms for this form of web promotion, including social media optimization and social media marketing, and there are also different types of websites and methods that can be used.

Social Network Sites are essentially online communities where people can meet, communicate, and share ideas. How the company approaches marketing campaign on these websites will depend on the size and nature of business. Many large companies and corporations have already

established a presence on these websites. However, for smaller companies and home-based web businesses a more subtle approach is probably the better option. The company should try to become a member of the community by making friends and joining relevant groups on websites like Facebook and MySpace. Another good tactic is to provide help, advice and valuable opinions on blogs, forums and websites. Social Networking Sites offer some excellent tools to help to influence users to keep coming back and to recommend your website to other people.

II. SOCIAL NETWORK SITES

The term "Social Network Site" to describe this phenomenon, the term "social networking sites" also appears in public discourse, and the two terms are often used interchangeably. "Networking" emphasizes relationship initiation, often between strangers. While networking is possible on these sites, it is not the primary practice on many of them, nor is it what differentiates them from other forms of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC). In other words, Social Network Service as a service which "focuses on the building and verifying of online social networks for communities of people who share interests and activities, or who are interested in exploring the interests and activities of others, and which necessitates the use of software."¹

III. PURCHASE INTENTION

Purchase Intention is a plan to buy a particular good or service in the future. But purchase intention comes from behavioral science and evolves from the term intention. Intention is the subjective probability that one perform a particular action. The concept was then extended to purchase intention which described the probability that consumers are willing to execute the buying action. Purchase intention indicates consumer's predictable behavior, meaning purchase intention can be used to predict what products or brands consumers will buy next time when they do shopping. Positive purchase intention not only indicates high probability of actual purchase but also reflects a consumer's positive commitment or loyalty towards products and brands.

As discussed before, purchase intention is crucial in the decision making process and closely related to consumer buying behavior. Researcher have developed different theories and models to identify the formation of purchase intention as well as the understanding the mechanism from different views and perspectives. At present, there are several views on the study of consumer purchase intention.²

IV. SOCIAL NETWORKING SERVICES

The following are the popular social networking services mentioned as below:

1. *Facebook*: Facebook is a Social Networking Site that allows people to communicate with their friends and exchange information. In May 2007 Facebook launched the Facebook Platform which provides a framework for developers to create applications that interact with core Facebook features.³
2. *Google+*: Google+ is a Social Networking and identity service that is owned and operated by Google Inc. Google has described Google+ as a "social layer" that enhances many of its online properties, and that it is not simply a Social Networking Site, but also an authorship tool that associates web-content directly with its owner/author.
3. *Instagram*: Instagram is an online mobile photo-sharing, video-sharing and Social Networking Service that enables its users to take pictures and videos, and share them on a variety of Social Networking platforms.
4. *Myspace*: is a social networking service with a strong music emphasis, owned by Specific Media LLC and Justin Timberlake. Myspace had a significant influence on pop culture and music and created a gaming platform that launched the successes of Zynga and RockYou, among others.

V. SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AND BUSINESS APPLICATION

The use of Social Network Services in an enterprise context presents the potential of having a major impact on the world of business and work. Social Networks connect people at low cost; this can be beneficial for entrepreneurs and small businesses looking to expand their contact bases. These networks often act as a customer relationship management tool for companies selling products and services. Companies can also use social networks for advertising in the form of banners and text ads. Since businesses operate globally, Social Networks can make it easier to keep in touch with contacts around the world.

One example of Social Networking being used for business purposes is LinkedIn.com, which aims to

interconnect professionals. LinkedIn has over 40 million users in over 200 countries. Companies now using social networking sites as marketing channel to promote its product also called as viral marketing.

VI. LITERATURE REVIEW

Sonia Living stone et al (2009), their study entitled **"On the rapid rise of social networking sites: New findings and policy implications"** author explored that children and youth worldwide have adopted social networking sites enthusiastically, partly because of the erosion of children's freedoms in the physical world. Here the author focuses on the interdependencies between opportunities and risks, the need for digital or media literacy education. In his findings he stresses that there is a need of building safety considerations into the design and management of social networking sites.⁴

Dr. S. Govinda Rao et al (2012), their study entitled **"Social Networking and Recruitment – An Empirical Study"** author says that Social Networking Sites are growing and growing these days, there seems to be no limit to their size. Online recruitment through job portals has shown significant growth. However job portals still focus on a one way process, which is described as prospecting, mating however is described as a two way approach to recruitment, something that can be enabled by recruitment practices on Social Networking Sites.⁵

Houston (2014), study entitled **"Social Networking Sites no longer exclusive to younger generation"** The writer mentions that Youths are not only the users of Social Networking Sites, but also the elder generation are using it... Facebook and Twitters have influenced a lot for the whole world. According to PEW Internet and American Life project says that, usage of Social Networking Sites in adults from 50 to 64 years old, has jumped by 88% in the past year and users above 65 years has doubled. Many of the elders had to walk a long way to meet their friend but now it has become easy. They find their friends from Facebook easily and they are very happy about it. It is astonishing to hear that many of the Facebook users do not accept the friend requests from their parents!!!⁶

An article titled as **"Social Networking Sites"** published in The Hindu on 17th December, 2011 here the writer taunts to the people by saying that having Facebook account has become a common phenomenon nowadays whether a person have a voter id and pan id. Assumption telling that cause for attraction is that Facebook provides free opportunities to advertise oneself by uploading photos. He strongly blames on people that hardly 10% of truth in everyone's comment and all having the sole intention that, "I commented on yours, now you comment on me". A bad impact by Facebook on the people and it making people's to be race in having more number of friends and avoiding own relatives fearing breach of privacy also.⁷

T. Andrew Yang et al, their study entitled **"Social**

Networking as a New Trend in E -Marketing” the author argues that Innovation sells! That is especially true in the Internet world. Due to the growing importance of Social Networking Websites in recent time it is creating a window for marketers to enter into the internet world to promote their product. The larger the number of people using an online social network service, the more revenue may be generated for the marketers.⁸

Reza Alibakhshi et al (2012), their study entitled **“Social Networks, Entrepreneurial Alertness, and Entrepreneurial Opportunities”** investigated the impact of social networks on opportunity recognition by entrepreneurs. The findings of the study shows that different dimensions of the social networks, including networking ties' strength, networking activities, and network ties' type, influence on entrepreneurial alertness influences opportunity recognition. Based on the results, network ties' strength has the most influence, and networking activities has the least influence on entrepreneurial alertness.⁹

VII. RESEARCH GAP

No, doubt there has many studies been made to comprehend the level of impact on youths through social networking sites, but, there is no confirmation that none of the research is focused on the subject matter chosen for the study entitled “Influence of Social Networking Sites in Consumer Purchase Intention”, therefore, present study is undertaken to outline the demographical variable in creating purchase intention through social networking sites.

VIII. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Following are the objectives of the study are:

1. To study the development of Social Networking Sites in the world in general
2. To assess the impact of demographical variables on purchase intention among customers in Karnataka State

IX. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study is restricted to the Influence of Social Networking Sites in Consumer Purchase Intention with the following delimitations:

1. The study on Social Networking Sites is confined to only 500 respondents only
2. The study is done only in the cites of Karnataka state only

X. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

This study suggested three main hypotheses which are:

H₁: There is a significant difference between education and purchase intention

H₂: There is a significant difference between monthly income and purchase intention

H₃: There is a significant difference between demographical variables and purchase intention

XI. METHODOLOGY

1. *Data Collection:* In this article, the required data have been collected from both primary and secondary sources.
 - i. *Primary data* in this research is collected through distribution of structured questionnaires to respondents from certain districts of Karnataka.
 - ii. *Secondary data* are gathered from diverse sources such as articles from e-sources, websites, journals, proceedings of conferences, survey reports, magazines and business NEWS papers are also used to collect the necessary details for the study.
2. *Sampling:* Simple random sampling is used for gathering and collecting the data, because each sample has equal chances to be chosen. The sample of 500 respondents has been selected from different cities of Karnataka. The respondents were chosen from different income groups, educational qualification and geographical areas.
3. *Statistical tools:* Five point Likert scale questionnaire ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree is used to collect data. Questionnaire tool was used in order to conduct the studies effectively. The questionnaire was spread through Email, Online Survey tools and By hand in order to achieve the better results.

XII. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

After collecting the data, it is analyzed by using SPSS 19.0. Descriptive test was applied for the analysis of properties of data. To empirically determine the relationship among Independent variables and Dependent variable, the study uses various statistical techniques, including One -Way Anova analysis.

Table No. 1: Education and Purchase Intention

ANOVA					
Purchase Intention	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	14.058	3	4.686	4.239	.007
Within Groups	215.548	458	1.105		
Total	229.606	461			

There is significant difference between education and Purchase intention subsequently the significant P-value =0.007 which is lesser than critical value 0.05. Hence Null hypothesis is accepted. This is consistent with the findings of the

researcher that where higher tertiary of education contributes to intention to purchase due to enhanced substitutes accessible in the market. Similarly, more educated individuals have higher expectations in the quality, quantity, price, and choice of product. They need better quality and assortment of products that are unlikely to be seen in offline market.

Table No. 2: Monthly Income and Purchase Intention

ANOVA					
Purchase Intention	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	11.847	3	3.920	3.850	.015
Within Groups	216.336	459	1.003		
Total	228.183	462			

It is apparent from the ANOVA test that, the significant P-value is 0.015 which is lesser than critical value 0.05. Hence Null hypothesis is accepted. It is assumed that there is a significant difference between monthly income of customers and purchase intention. It can be presumed that more the income of consumers, the more will be quality sensible.

Table No. 3: Geographical Area and Purchase intention

ANOVA					
Purchase Intention	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	10.043	3	3.686	3.239	.018
Within Groups	209.649	458	1.001		
Total	219.692	461			

The significant P-value = 0.018 which is lesser than critical value 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that, there is a significant difference between geographical areas and Purchase intention. Hence Null hypothesis is accepted. From the Post Hoc Test, there exists a negative correlation between the geographical areas and purchase intention. It can also be portrayed that customers living in urban places have the propensity to buy the products more through online than the customers living in rural and semi-urban places.

XIII. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Following findings are brought-down based on the testing of study:

1. Education and Purchase intention is consistent that where higher education contributes to intention to purchase due to better substitutes accessible in the market. Similarly, more educated people have higher outlooks in the quality, quantity, price, and choice of product. They need best quality and wide assortment of products that are unlikely to be met in offline market.
2. There is a significant difference between monthly income of customers and purchase intention. It can

be presumed that more the income of customers, the more will be quality consciousness.

3. There is a significant difference between geographical area and Purchase intention. From the Post Hoc Test, there exists a negative correlation between the geographical area and purchase intention, hence it can be depicted that customers living in urban places have the propensity to buy the goods more through online than the customers living in rural and semi-urban places.

XIV. SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

Following are the suggestions offered to marketers to promote their goods in the social networking sites;

1. The marketers should focus and have strong presence on the top social networking sites as their target buyers will spend more time which might help them to create the purchase intention among target buyers.
2. Marketers should create an account with easily identifiable username, uploading a logo, a brief description of business and a track able link of their website. This will help the users to identify the marketers' product and help in building a brand.
3. Most of the social networking sites are about making connections and having discussions. Marketers should regularly share educational content and should also monitor their presence and interact with followers. This will the help marketers to build a brand image.

XV. CONCLUSION

Social Network Marketing has become quite the trend amongst network marketers looking to promote their businesses online. Social networking sites like Facebook, Google+, and Instagram have made it easy for eager entrepreneurs to hop on the internet and network with people from around the world. Terms like tweeting, sharing, and voting have created quite the buzz amongst those who want to hop aboard the viral marketing trend. There is a tremendous amount of opportunity for those that truly capitalize on the Social Network Marketing boom. Social Network Marketing is perspective and interesting way to make successful business and a platform to create an intention to purchase among consumers generally network with people from all over the world. The power of social marketing is so huge and the opportunities are endless for marketers and even consumers are also exposed to a wide assortment of goods which is available in any small place of the World. This easy availability of goods has enriched in creating the consumers purchase intention more.

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