IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISEMENTS ON CONSUMER'S ATTITUDE AND PERCEPTION

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Abstract

 Social media has become a part of our daily life. Consumers are influenced by the various social segments of the media. Consumer today feels conformable to buy the products/ services through e -commerce methodology. Hence they watch the social media platforms and get them educated though it may be positive or negative but feel comfortable to buy such products online. So, majority of consumer amaze the products values, prices, usages, utilities through various social Medias and get involved in online shopping. Consumer is the end user of the product and also a chain of products marketing as if one consumer is satisfied , the same will convey his/her perception with other consumers as it is a general attitude of the human psychology. Hence this paper is designed to understand the attitude and perception of the consumer by the side effect of the various pillars of the social media and internet. Thus, six factors have been identified which would affect the perceived value and attitudinal value of consumers towards advertising on social networking sites, as identified from the existing literature on advertising offline, advertising on internet and social media. These factors were (1) information worthy, (2) credibility, (3) entertainment, (4) Intrusiveness, (5) relevance of the advertisement and attitude etc.

 Key Words: social Media, Relevance, Credibility, Instructiveness, Hypothesis, Advertisement, Attitude, Perception etc.

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Introduction

A social media is an online platform which people use to build social networks or social relations with other people who share similar personal or career interests, activities, backgrounds or real-life connections. The impact of social networks on young people is significant. It is becoming increasingly clear that social networks have become part of platform
 that allow users to have conversations, share information and create web content. Social media has different forms, together with blogs, micro-blogs, wikis, social networking sites, photo-sharing sites, instant messaging, video-sharing sites, podcasts, widgets, virtual worlds, and more. Billions of people around the world use social media to share information and make connections.

On an individual level, social media allow us to communicate with our friends and relatives, gain knowledge of new things, develop your interests, and be entertained. On a professional level, we can make use of social media to Social Media is a innovative idea with a very brilliant opportunity with additional scope for advancements. With the advancement of social media many organizations are making use of this medium to better their practices. With the use of social networking we can advertise or communicate on the media or TV to get their daily dose of news it can all be obtained from a social networking site. People can track or get information from all over the world.

An advertisement, otherwise known as an advert or ad, is generally considered a public communication that promotes a product, service, brand or event. To some the definition can be even broader than that, extending to any paid communication designed to inform or influence. If these definitions feel vague, it's because they are – the truth is that advertisements can be tricky to define, now more than ever. From bus shelters to search engines to Instagram influencers, the field of advertising has never been broader, deeper or more complex. It's important to note that advertising is not the same as marketing; it is rather a subcategory of it. Advertising is a type of paid marketing that the advertiser enjoys complete control over

Perception, as defined by Kotler and Armstrong (2001) and cited in Adnan & Khan, (2010), is "the process by which people select, organize and interpret information to form a meaningful picture of the world". The process of perception consists of three elements - exposure, attention and interpretation. It is the first and the most practical step in consumer buying decision processes to select stimuli from their atmosphere.

The aim of this study is to get an insight on consumer perceived value of advertisements on social networking sites and consumer attitude towards social media advertising and to find the effect of level of internet usage on their perceptions and attitude towards the advertising on social media and there is hardly anyone across the globe who is not aware of it, irrespective of their class, creed, race or culture. Facebook, Twitter, Linked In, Myspace, Tiktok, pinterest, snapchat instgram, WAYN ,networks, YouTube plateform etc. have become an integral part of peoples' life. It has become tremendously popular amongst marketers as well to reach to their actual and potential customers.

Limited studies have been made in India on social media and its potential for effective and powerful advertising amongst its users. Most studies of social media describe the functionality and characteristics of social networking websites and the challenges and opportunities for advertisers to implement marketing communication programs (Hill & Moran, 2011; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Mangold & Faulds, 2009), the influence of social media content on consumers (Ko, Chun, Song, & Kim, 2013), and the effects of social network users' lifestyles on brand loyalty (Park, Song, & Ko, 2011). However, there is a lack of understanding of consumers perceive advertising on social media and what characteristics of advertisements on social media affect their attitude, especially in the case of Indian consumers.

On the other hand, attitude can be anything that people discriminate and hold in mind and thereby express in either positive or negative way (Bohner & Wanke, 2002 cited in Alcheva et al., 2009). Evans et al. (2009) noted that "Attitude is the way one thinks and acts towards some aspect of the environment" and an individual's lifestyle is dramatically influenced by attitudes. Attitude consists of three elements: cognitive (beliefs), affective (feelings) and behavioural (response tendencies) (cited in Phanthong & Settanaranon, 2011). In relations to the advertising industry, Javid et al., 2012 states that attitude toward advertising is defined as the consumers' tendency to react positively or negatively in a manner specific to mobile advertising. It is essential for marketers to understand the nature of consumers' attitude and perception towards advertising in order to communicate their messages efficiently. Because the way people perceive and interpret the communication and the attitude they adopt towards the source of communication may vary depending on their perspective
In the studies on consumer attitude towards advertising, respondents typically have been asked not only about their overall attitudes toward advertisements but also about their perceptions of advertising's trustworthiness, offensiveness, informativeness, entertainment, interactivity, effect on product prices, as well as attitudes toward regulatory issues (Ducoffe, 1996; Yaakop, Anuar, Omar & Liung 2012; Wang, Sun, Lei, and Toncar, 2009; Chandra, Goswami, Chouhan, 2012)

Review of literature

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Oh and Xu (2003), states Informativeness, is the ability to effectively provide relevant information. Rubin (2002) states that one of the most vital functions of advertising is to provide information. It also states that searching for information is the primary reason why do people use the Internet. Thus, it is logically sound to believe that those who perceive online advertising to be informative are more likely to favor it. For instance, Ducoffe (1996) identified a strong correlation between informativeness and Internet advertising value and later on in the research conducted by Schlosser et. al 1999, majority of participants agreed either somewhat or strongly that internet advertising is informative. This is supported by Wang, Sun, Lei, & Toncar (2009) that the information-seeking factor acts as a positive predictor for the formation of consumers' attitude towards online advertising.

Moore & Rodgers 2005 defines advertising credibility as the extent to which the consumer believes or trusts in the media or advertising claims. Credibility refers to the quality of being trusted or believable. In the context of advertising industry. Numerous studies affirm that advertising credibility is a key factor that affects the formation of attitude and behaviour (Lafferty and Goldsmith, 1999; Brackett and Carr, 2001; Tsang, Ho, and Liang, 2004; Haghirian and Madlberger, 2005). Credibility of an advertisement is influenced by different factors, such as the company's credibility and the bearer of the message (Lafferty, Goldsmith and Newell, 2002). It is also influenced by the advertising trustworthiness of online advertising.

Advertising has the ability to give pleasure or entertainment to consumers while watching advertising information. Entertainment by any advertisement enhances consumers' sense of satisfaction towards the usefulness of product and message contained in the advertisement. (Ducoffe, 1996; Hoffman and Novak, 1996; Wang & Zhang, 2006; Wang and Sun, 2010; Mir, 2012; Yaakop, Hemsley & Gilbert, 2011). Sutherland (2008) has vividly described at length, how can humour or entertainment in advertising help the advertisers to make their advertisements effective. It reduces counter arguing by the viewers or readers, draws greater attention and makes them more liked.

Khajeh et. al. 2015 state that advertising that is understood quickly and perceived funny by the consumers will trigger their interests and provides their loyalty. There is a propensity in human nature, especially in children and young people to play. So consumers have the highest level of participation in messages that contain entertaining games. Games and prizes sent to target group's mobile phone were considered a successful method usable to restore consumer and their loyalty (Ounal et al., 2011).

Internet advertisers use intrusive tools such as expandable ads, roll over ads, floating ads and interstitials that "take over" the screen, ads in the beginning or middle of an online video and so forth just to make their advertisements get noticed. These intrusive forms can lead to annoyance, irritation and ad avoidance which reduces the effectiveness of advertising and the value perceived by the audience (Ounal et al., 2012).

As of 2016, Around 122 million Internet users in India have installed some kind of ad blocking software on their browsers(mostly anti-virus softwares). This is making advertisers and publishers lose a huge amount of Advertising revenue (Page Fair: Mobile Ad Blocking, 2016).

Another factor mostly used to assess the attitude towards advertising is its value. The perceived value of advertising is the subjective evaluation of the value of advertising and may be used as an indicator of customer satisfaction in the organization's communication products (Liu et al., 2012). Chandra, et. al, 2012 defined value in terms of its usefulness in making purchase decisions and lowering the price of products. Petrovici et al., 2007 states that the economic benefit of advertising is the ability of the advertisers to provide accurate and reliable information about their products to the audience.

The Converged Lifestyle, KPMG International, 2011 states that only about a third of respondents admit that they are influenced in their purchasing decision by 'fan pages' and advertisements on social media while almost half say that they look to company websites instead. This may merely indicate consumers' desire to see the 'technical specifications' of products, more typically found on a company's web-site rather than on 'fan pages' which are predominantly for brand-building.

The online privacy debate has existed since the creation of the Internet (Roberts 2010) explains the online debates due to creation of internet.. This is because of the practice of behavioural targeting of internet users by the advertisers. Consumers prefer advertisements to be tailored to them specifically and will ignore irrelevant advertisements.

(Bhattacharya, Scott, & Arthur, 2006). However, making the ads relevant to the audience leads to loss of privacy of consumers. Mc Donald, et. al 2009 revealed that respondents were seriously concerned about their online privacy and held negative attitude towards online ads based on privacy concerns. In social networking sites, privacy concern has also been an issue since usersshare their information and preferences such as their personal details, images, status, hobbies and so on.

Barnes (2006) stated that youth culture has embracedonline social networking and they are now publicly sharing very personal information on these sites. On Facebook, however, it offers an access to user information and generates profile privacy settings in order to overcome the concern of privacy (Ragan 2009).

It may be noted that there have been less studies on finding the impact of internet usage level of consumers on their perception and attitude towards social media advertising. The limited number of have tried to throw light on this area have shown that internet experience, internet usage frequency and internet browsing history do have an impact on the consumers' perception and attitude towards internet advertising. Furthermore, gender, age and education have been found to have an impact on the internet usage levels and patterns (Gross, 2004).

While women mostly go online to shop or chat, men are keen towards surfing on the net or playing games(Gross, 2004). Undergraduate students are mostly involved in online communication via e-mail, chat room with friends compared to other educational level groups. Those with higher education or in professional world tend to search for more informative things rather than looking for entertainment and stuff (Heinz, 2002). Factors like personal interest, demography, internet connectivity, location of use, etc. highly affect the usage frequency of the internet (Christos, 2000).

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this study are:
• to examine the attitude and perceptions of digital consumers towards advertisement on social networking sites.
• to analyze the effect of internet usage level on attitude and perception about social media advertising

Research Hypothesis

The research hypotheses for this study are categorized in two parts according to the two objectives of this study. The first objective of the research is to examine the attitude of consumers towards advertisement on social networking sites and their perception on five dimensions, viz., in formativeness, entertainment, intrusiveness, credibility, value. The hypotheses (H1a to H1e) formed for this objective such as (H1a) Consumers have positive attitude towards advertisements on social networking sites, (H1b) Consumers find advertisements on social networking sites as informative (H1c) Consumers find advertisements on social networking sites as credible, (H1d) Consumers find advertisements on social networking sites as entertaining, **(H1e)** Consumers find advertisements on social networking sites as intrusive, and Consumers find advertisements on social networking sites as relevance,

The second objective is to analyze the effect of internet usage level on consumers' attitude towards and perception about social media advertising. The related hypothesis is:

H2a: There is a significant difference between internet usage groups in terms of their attitudes towards and perception about social media advertising.

Methodology

Primary data was collected through structured questionnaire. Sampling was used to select potential respondents. Most of the researches conducted on analyzing the factors affecting consumers' attitude towards internet advertising particularly advertising on social networking sites in India or in most parts of the world have collected samples from youth or students of different universities (e.g.; Goldsmith & Lafferty 2002; Calisir 2003; Ling et. al. 2010; Yaakop et. al. 2012; Mehla et. al., 2015; S. Manjunatha 2015; Aqsa et. al. 2015; Khajeh et. al. 2015). Very few researches have taken a wide (or different from students/ undergraduates) demographic profile of the respondents (e.g. Ducoffe 1996; Mehta and Sivadas, 1995;

Schlosser et. al, 1999; Motwani et. al. 2014). However, in this study, a sample including persons of age ranging from 18 to above 70 years, both males and females, from different education backgrounds and different occupations were targeted from the city Solan of Himachal Pradesh. It was also made sure that only those persons were targeted who have profiles on at least one of the social networking sites and who spend some time per day online. The sample size for this study is 524.

The questionnaire consisted a total of 30 questions excluding the name, email id, demographic questions and internet usage per day. Questions related to liking, disliking, concerns, perceptions and attitude towards advertising on social networking sites were included. Questions were prepared on a 5 point likert scale. The questionnaire was circulated online- through whatsapp, facebook and emails, and also by distributing hard copies to 1069 respondents. Total sample size came out to be 524.

Result and Discussion

The Result of the study is explained on different tables as below:

Table 1: Attitude and perception towards advertisements on social networking sites

N=524, df=523,

Items	Mean	S.D	T. Value	Sig.(2-tailes)
Attitudes	2.03	.698	-3.254	.000
Information worthy	3.84	.811	5.109	.000
Credibility	2.90	.714	-2.399	.003
Entertainment	2.98	.843	-3.07	.046
Instructiveness	2.56	.659	10.38	.000
Relevance	2,65	.655	-7.298	.766

Source created from samples

Table 2: Effect of Internet usage on attitude and perception of consumers towards advertising on social media sites.

Test of Homogeneity of Variance ,   N=524 df= 523

variables	Levene Statistics	Sign	F. Value	ANOVA
Attitudes	5.643	.000	7.028	.000
Information worthy	3.412	.076	4.070	.008
Credibility	3.845	.014	3.402	.027
Entertainment	2.115	.112	9.83	.000
Instructiveness	4.402	.004	9.208	.000
Relevance	5.490	.689	2.092	.070

Source   Created from samples

Table 3: Post Hoc Test

variables	Description			
	Internet usages per day	N	Mean	S.D
Informativeness	0-2 hours	103	2.99	.880
	2-4 hours	184	3.29	.672
	4-6 hours	158	3.35	.903
	Above 6 hours	79	3.42	.745
Credibility	0-2 hours	103	2.72	.852
	2-4 hours	184	3.02	.673
	4-6 hours	158	3.0	.894
	Above 6 hours	79	2.94	.645
Entertainment	0-2 hours	103	2.5	.906
	2-4 hours	184	2.89	.752
	4-6 hours	158	3.04	.715
	Above 6 hours	79	3.18	.678
Instructiveness	0-2 hours	103	2.23	.631
	2-4 hours	184	2.6	.593
	4-6 hours	158	2.64	.841
	Above 6 hours	79	2.7	.545
Relevance	0-2 hours	102	2.83	.811
	2-4 hours	182	3.1	.765
	4-6 hours	148	3.09	.707
	Above 6 hours	92	3.07	.517
Attitude	0-2 hours	102	2.54	.503
	2-4 hours	182	2.6	.738
	4-6 hours	148	2.72	.646
	Above 6 hours	92	2.83	.530

Source: Created from samples

The results of t- test (Table 1) suggest that overall social media users have unfavorable attitude towards advertising on social media. In terms of perception about specific factors, the respondents revealed that overall they take this new kind of advertising as informative &

instructive. They do not find it credible/trustworthy, entertaining and relevant to their interest. They have neutral perception about the value of these advertisements.

The results of ANOVA (Table 2) show that F value is significant for attitude and also for all factors of perception i.e., there is a significant difference between internet usage per day groups in terms of their attitudes towards and perception about instructiveness, credibility, entertainment, informative and relevance of social media advertising. It is noteworthy that for overall attitude and perception about informativeness, entertainment, intrusiveness and relevance, the mean increases as the level of internet usage per day increases (Table 3, Post – hoc tests) show that as the internet usage level increases, the consumers have more favourable (or less unfavourable) attitude and perception about advertisements on social networking sites. This is consistent with previous studies which have shown that the higher the time for which people use internet, the more positive attitude they are likely to adopt towards online advertising (Korgaonkar and Wolin, 2002; Wang, Sun, Lei and Tocar, 2009 as cited in Yan, 2012). Yan, 2012 also showed that internet browsing history is the significant positive predictor for attitudes toward online advertising.

Previous studies have shown that 'informativeness'' is one of the important predictors of overall attitude towards advertising on social media websites. That is, for consumers to have a favourable attitude towards advertising, it is a pre requisite that they get useful up- to – date information about products and services from advertisements. The findings of this study reveal that with mean = 3.84, overall, the respondents find advertisements on social networking sites as informative.
The results of ANOVA show that consumer perception about informativeness of these advertisements improves as their internet usage level increases

The overall mean for credibility is 2.90, indicating that; consumers do not find these advertisements as credible or trustworthy. The mean for the group '0- 2 hours per day' is the lowest (mean = 2.72) amongst all the groups showing that this group considers this new form of advertising as least credible.

Entertainment by any advertisement enhances consumers' sense of satisfaction towards the message contained in the advertisement. (Wang and Sun, 2010; Mir, 2012; Yaakop, Hemsley & Gilbert, 2011). Thus, entertainment has been found to affect consumer attitude. However, in this study overall mean for entertainment is 2.98 indicating that overall consumers gave low score to the entertaining nature of these advertisements. Internet usage level of consumers has been found to affect the perception of consumers about entertainment of advertisements on social networking sites. The findings reveal that only the people using internet for more than 4 hours per day have a favourable perception about entertainment of these advertisements.

 Considering the intrusive nature of advertising on social media, the results of this study clearly show that the consumers find even social media advertisements as intrusive in their

work(mean = 2.56). It is noteworthy that all categories of internet usage level find these advertisements as intrusive.
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For relevance, the overall mean is 2.65 (Table 1) indicating that consumer's do not perceive advertisements on social networking sites as relevant to their interest and they are concerned about their privacy for the products they search for on shopping websites, their surfing behavior and their personal and financial information.

The results of ANOVA and post – hoc tests show that mean for all internet usage level groups is below 3 indicating all groups do not find these advertisements as relevant to their interests. Post hoc test show that difference is significant between '0-2 hours' and 'above 6 hours'.

Table 4: Hypothesis

S.No	Hypothesis	Status
H1a	Consumers find advertisements on social networking sites as informative	Failed to Reject
H1b	Consumers find advertisements on social networking sites as credible,	Rejected
H1c	Consumers find advertisements on social networking sites as entertaining,	Rejected
H1d	Consumers find advertisements on social networking sites as intrusive,	Failed to Reject
H1e	Consumers find advertisements on social networking sites as relevance,	Rejected
H2a	There is significant difference between internet users in terms of their attitudes and perception about social media advertisement.	Failed to Reject

However the main hypothesis that consumer have positive attitude towards advertisements on social networking sites is also rejected.

Conclusion

The findings of this study show that though the advertising on social media is increasing at a great pace, consumers still have an unfavorable attitude towards and perception about this new kind of advertising which the advertisers need to take care of.

As the entertainment and information provided by advertising on social media contributes to consumers' attitudes toward this advertising, it can be suggested that advertisers should invest in creating advertisements that consumers enjoy viewing. This is not to suggest that advertisements on social media websites should include more features that have been found to be entertaining in the mass media (e.g., attractive visuals, humor), but rather features that have been found to be entertaining on the Internet particularly social media. Such features include those distinctive with the social media such as interactive product demonstrations and interactive discussions with the consumers after the advertisement

To establish credibility of advertising on social media, it is suggested that advertisers should consider about providing information about strategies such as money-back guarantees, product return policies, improved customer services, and affiliations with credible organizations for a ''seal of approval''. One reason for low credibility of advertisements on social media might be that there is no censorship of these advertisements. Thus, there is a need of increased government regulation so as to create trustworthiness of these advertisements.

The advertisers should also avoid the most intrusive forms of ads like pop ups, hovering ads, rotating ads and long ads before videos which do not provide the option of skipping the ads. All these forms create a negative attitude towards these and thus lead to ad avoidance and using pop up blockers. The results confirm that the consumers are very much concerned about their browsing details, personal information and financial information being passed on to the advertisers for advertising purpose. They do not even want the information of the product they search on shopping websites to be passed on. This clearly implies the need for government regulation in this regard. Even though advertisers on social media are able to track the browsing details of the internet users, the findings reveal that still the respondents do not find these ads as relevant to their interests. This indicates that the technique of tracking the browsing history of internet users is not sufficient for advertisers.

Interestingly, the study showed that the respondents agreed that advertisements on social media websites are informative and they affect their buying decisions. This might imply that if advertisers are able to make advertisement content that the social media users find compelling and relevant to their interests, there are greater possibilities of positively affecting purchase behaviour and even resulting in sales conversion. This is not to say these advertisements would always result in a sale, but could positively influence the purchase behaviour of consumers. Ultimately, the continued success of social websites as a medium of advertising will depend upon finding the best ways to take advantage of the unique capabilities of this medium. Social media advertising is still at its nascent stage as compared to advertising on other mediums. Surely it is increasing at an alarming stage because of increasing number of internet users, more particularly social media users. However, it cannot be used in isolation of other media. Advertisers need to find the right mix of different media of advertising.

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