Consumer Engagement on Social Media – Youth Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Social media is buzzing around and people around playing tune to it. People voice their opinions and experiences of brands/products on social media. The research paper looks at the consumer engagement of youth on social media and attempts to measure the usage of social media respecting consumer goods viz. convenience, shopping, consumer durable and unsought goods. It further assesses the usage of social media respecting purposes viz. getting information about brands/products, referring reviews, recommending brands and offering feedback considering WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn from youth perspective.

Keywords: *Social media; Consumer engagement; Youth perspective; Convenience; Shopping; Consumer durable and unsought goods.*

1.0 Introduction

Social media is buzzing around and people around playing tune to it. People voices their opinions and experiences of brands/products on social media (Zaglia, 2013; Chen et al., 2013). Social media becomes center of the sharing of knowledge in terms of subjective and/or objective forms ((Okazaki et al., 2015). Customers' statements on a product or company are available on the Internet to a wide range of people and institutions (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, p. 39). The term "online engagement" is used to describe a multi-dimensional idea (Calder et al., 2009; Hollebeek et al., 2014).

How to engage the consumers in brand-related activities remains a major challenge for social media (Hodis et al., 2015; Moran and Gossieaux, 2010). They make it easier to translate customer interactions with brands and other consumers, social networking sites have become crucial in dealing with this problem (Morrison and Humlen, 2015). Social networking helps building brand communities ((Trusov et al., 2009) later on affects judgement of products (Lee and Youn, 2009). Credibility perceived by people influences people ‘s communication process (Chu and Kim, 2011; Matute et al., 2016; Teng et al., 2014). So, marketers look for credible social media for delivering the messages (Levy and Gvili, 2015).

The present research attempts to study the youth’s engagement on social media considering consumer goods and purpose of uses of social media empirically.

2.0 Literature Review

Consumer engagement beyond transactions may be the behavioural manifestations of brand (Van Doorn et al., 2010, p. 254). It's a psychological state brought on by interactive, co-creative customer interactions with a focal agent/object, such as a brand (Brodie et al., 2011, p. 9). While it can be a series of actions that customers engage in to interact with others and communicate about brands, it can also be a set of activities that consumers engage in to interact with others to communicate about brands (e.g., Shin et al., 2016; Rossmann et al., 2016).

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Consumers remain engaged in giving, sharing, recommending brand reviews (Van Doorn et al., 2010). Consumer engagement can be attributed to co creation value and experience of consumers. (Brodie et al., 2011; Liou et al., 2016).

Consumer engagement can be explained through cognitive dimension (Thought process during the consumer and brand interaction for brands), emotional dimension (Extent of affection towards brands), and behavioural dimension (Brand centric activities of consumers) (Hollebeek et al., 2014). Receiving, commenting, enjoying, or sharing product/brand information to others via social media is referred to as consumer engagement (Interactive Advertising Bureau, 2009).

Sense of involvement and connect by offered by the channel affects the consume involvement (Calder and Malthouse, 2008). Attributes of social media facilitates interaction and participation of consumer with others of brands (Levy and Gvili, 2015; Steffes and Burgee, 2009).

What drives the consumer engagement includes concerns about merits and demerits of brands, enriching and detrimental aspects of brands in social media circle (Van Doorn et al., 2010). Such attributes are contingent upon the

Communication channel (Loiacono, 2015). Active use of social media enhances consumer brand engagement (Rossmann et al., 2016).

Individuals' expected utility of an action or behaviour, according to expectancy value theory (EVM). The assumption that an action/behaviour has specific properties and the evaluation of those traits are the underlying factors of EVM (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Evaluated qualities influence an individual's intention to behave in a certain way, which leads to that behaviour (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Henning et al., 2012). The applied aspect of EVM can be seen in customer loyalty enhancement (Hur et al., 2011), consumer response to social media advertising (Loda, 2014; Dao et al., 2014), and word-of-mouth (Smith and Vogt, 1995).

Expectancy value theory is used to improve client loyalty (Hur et al., 2011), consumer response to social media advertising (Loda, 2014; Dao et al., 2014), and word-of-mouth (Smith and Vogt, 1995).

2.0 Objectives

- To study the consumer engagement of youth on social media
- To measure the usage of social media respecting consumer goods
- To assess the usage of social media respecting purposes

3.0 Hypotheses

- HO_1: The consumer engagement of youth on social media is not greater than low (i.e., 2)
- HA_1: The consumer engagement of youth on social media is greater than low (i.e., 2)

- HO_2: The usage of social media respecting consumer goods is not greater than low (i.e., 2)
- HA_2: The usage of social media respecting consumer goods is greater than low (i.e., 2)

- HO_3: There is no significant difference in usage of social media respecting purposes
- HA_3: There is significant difference in usage of social media respecting purposes

4.0 Research Methodology

- Research Design: Descriptive Research Design
- Source of data: Primary and Secondary

- Data collection Method: Online survey through Google form
- Population: Youth aged 18 to 26 years in Gujarat
- Sample size: 182 respondents
- Sampling plan: Convenience sampling
- Sample unit: Youth aged from 18 to 26 years
- Data collection tool: Structured questionnaire

5.0 Limitations

- Data collected through online survey
- Data collection restricted to youth only
- Sample size is small

6.0 Analysis and Interpretation

Profile of Respondents

Attributes	Particulars	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	105	42
	Female	77	58
Age	18-20 Years	32	18
	21-23 Years	139	76
	34-26 Years	11	6
Education	Post Graduate	85	47
	Graduate	97	53
Employment	Student	87	48
	Job	95	52
Place	Gujarat	88	48
	Others	94	52
Annual Family Income	Less than 1.25 Lakhs Rupees	53	29
	1.25 Lakhs to 3 Lakhs Rupees	57	31
	More than 3 Lakh Rupees	72	40

Total 182 respondents have participated in survey. Majority of them have been from the age group of 21 to 23 years. Respondents have either graduate or post graduate background. A quite similar number of the respondents have engaged in studying or job. Respondents have been more or less in same numbers from Gujarat and other states. Majority of the respondents have family income more than 3 Lakh rupees.

- **Users of social media**

Social Media	WhatsApp	Facebook	LinkedIn	Twitter	Others
Respondents (Numbers)	181	108	87	48	43

Majority of the respondents have used WhatsApp and Facebook and followed by LinkedIn, Twitter and Others.

- **Time spent by youth daily on social media**

Less than 1 hour	1 to 3 hours	More than 3 hours
46	109	27
25%	60%	15%

Majority of the respondents have used social media daily from 1 to 3 hours followed by less than 1 hour and more than 3 hours.

- **Rank based on usage of social media for different consumer product categories**

Particulars	1st Rank	2nd Rank	3rd Rank	4th Rank
Convenience Goods	40	40	37	65
Shopping Goods	65	63	35	19
Consumer Durable Goods	38	40	63	41
Unsought Goods	41	41	38	62

Maximally social media has been used for shopping goods followed by unsought goods, consumer durable goods and convenience goods.

- **Purpose of the use of social media**

To get information about the brands (product, price, place, promotion)	To refer to reviews	To recommend the brand	To offer the feedback
155	72	36	38

Majority of the respondents have been using social media for getting information about the brands (product, price, place, promotion and then next for referring to reviews.

- **Use of social media for convenience goods**

Particulars	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very Low
WhatsApp	78	42	41	18	3
Facebook	20	40	58	25	39
LinkedIn	12	38	55	41	36
Twitter	12	28	51	49	42

For convenience goods WhatsApp has been used much more than rest others. Yet Facebook has been ahead than LinkedIn and Twitter.

- **Use of social media for shopping goods**

Particulars	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very Low
WhatsApp	43	35	62	23	19
Facebook	20	31	53	38	40
LinkedIn	12	22	47	49	52
Twitter	13	26	43	52	48

For shopping goods WhatsApp has been used much more than rest others. Yet Facebook has been ahead than LinkedIn and Twitter.

- **Use of social media for consumer durable goods**

Particulars	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very Low
WhatsApp	44	39	63	22	14
Facebook	17	39	63	33	30
LinkedIn	6	28	51	58	39
Twitter	7	33	49	57	36

For consumer durable goods WhatsApp has been used much more than rest others. Yet Facebook has been ahead than LinkedIn and Twitter.

- **Use of social media for unsought goods**

Particulars	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very Low
WhatsApp	75	45	44	13	5
Facebook	25	42	57	28	30
LinkedIn	14	39	56	45	28
Twitter	14	28	55	48	37

For unsought goods WhatsApp has been used much more than rest others. Yet Facebook has been ahead than LinkedIn and Twitter.

- **Use of social media for getting information about the brands (product, price, place, promotion)**

Particulars	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very Low
WhatsApp	50	48	56	18	10
Facebook	38	42	57	32	13
LinkedIn	21	33	63	42	23
Twitter	21	38	63	42	18

WhatsApp has been used more than other social media for getting information about the brands (product, price, place, promotion). Face book has remained on second and followed by Twitter and Linked in.

- **Use of social media for referring review about the brands (product, price, place, promotion**

Particulars	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very Low
WhatsApp	43	47	59	17	16
Facebook	41	41	58	31	11
LinkedIn	15	35	53	45	34
Twitter	14	34	52	44	38

WhatsApp has been used more than other social media referring review about the brands (product, price, place, promotion). Facebook has remained on second and followed by LinkedIn and Twitter.

- **Use of social media for recommending the brands (product, price, place, promotion)**

Particulars	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very Low
WhatsApp	49	45	57	20	11
Facebook	37	41	58	33	13
LinkedIn	18	33	56	47	28
Twitter	19	34	55	45	29

WhatsApp has been used more than other social media for recommending the brands (product, price, place, promotion). Facebook has remained on second and followed by LinkedIn and Twitter.

- **Use of social media for offering feedback about the brands (product, price, place, promotion)**

	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very Low
WhatsApp	49	49	57	16	11
Facebook	35	37	56	35	19
LinkedIn	11	36	58	48	29
Twitter	12	38	58	46	28

WhatsApp has been used more than other social media for offering feedback about the brands (product, price, place, promotion). Facebook has remained on second and followed by Twitter and Linked in.

- **Rate your overall engagement on social media**

Particular	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very Low
Overall Engagement	4(2%)	11(6%)	65(36%)	64(35%)	38(21%)

Overall Respondents have considered their engagement on moderate or lower side.

- **Hypothesis Test based on t-test**

Hypothesis to Test	P-Value	T-statistic	Interpretation
The consumer engagement of youth on social media is greater than low (i.e., 2)	p-value is 4.50640e-13, (p(x≤T) = 1.00000). Since p-value is very small it supports H1.	The test statistic T is 7.691352 which is quite greater than T critical value of 1.6533 at 95% confidence.	There is significant consumer engagement of youth on social media.
The usage of social media respecting consumer goods is greater than low (i.e., 2)	p-value equals 0.00000, (p(x≤T) = 1.000000). Since p-value is very small it supports H1.	The test statistic T is 23.699877 which is quite greater than T critical value of 1.6533 at 95% confidence.	There is significant usage of social media respecting consumer goods

- **ANOVA for Usage Rating of social media for different purposes**

ANOVA - Single Factor Results	
Alpha	0.05

Groups	Count	Sum	Mean	Variance
To get Information about brands	182	768	4.22	0.82436
To refer to reviews	182	695	3.819	0.79015
To recommend the brand	182	640	3.516	1.00249
To offer feedback	182	589	3.236	1.23116

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F critical
Between Groups	97	3	32.33	33.6092	2.41E-20	2.617204
Within Groups	696.52	724	0.962			
Total	793.52	727				

Anova Interpretation: Since p-value is < 0.05 or F value is greater than F critical, null hypothesis is rejected and that the usage rate of media is different for at least one purpose for using social media.

6.1 Major findings

- Majority of the respondents have used WhatsApp and Facebook.
- Majority of the respondents have used social media daily from 1 to 3 hours.
- Maximally social media has been used for shopping goods followed by unsought goods, consumer durable goods and convenience goods.
- Majority of the respondents have been using social media for getting information about the brands (product, price, place, promotion and then next for referring to reviews.
- Majority of respondents use WhatsApp and Facebook for convenience goods, shopping goods, consumer durable goods and unsought goods.
- Majority of respondents use WhatsApp and Facebook more than Twitter and LinkedIn for convenience goods, shopping goods, consumer durable goods and unsought goods.
- Majority of respondents use WhatsApp and Facebook more than Twitter and LinkedIn for getting information about the brands, referring to review of brands, recommending brands and offering feedback of the brands
- Overall Respondents have considered their engagement on moderate or lower side.
- The consumer engagement of youth on social media is greater than low (i.e., 2)
- The usage of social media respecting consumer goods is greater than low (i.e., 2)
- There is significant difference in usage of social media respecting purposes

7.0 Conclusions

- Majority of respondents are active on WhatsApp and Facebook and spend 1to 3hours daily. They consider their use of social media as moderate or lesser than that.
- Respondents use WhatsApp and Facebook more than Twitter and LinkedIn for convenience, shopping, consumer durable and unsought goods.
- Respondents use Majority of respondents use WhatsApp and Facebook more than Twitter and LinkedIn for getting information about the brands, referring to review of brands, recommending brands and offering feedback of the brands.
- Consumer engagement on social media and usage of it for consumer goods is significant. At the same time there is significant difference in usage of social media respecting purposes.

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