



## SOCIAL MEDIA PERCEPTION OF CONSUMERS IN CHENNAI CITY

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### Introduction

The traditional media is just a one-way communication, whereas social media is a two-way communication where in the consumers have the ability to communicate too. With the advent of technology and Internet, business communication has been simplified, thereby enabling them to sell, promote products and services. Social Media is the new form of social communication. Social media is an online platform for promoting business to the wider audience. Social Media is the media that users can easily participate in, share and create content, for including blogs, social networks, wikis, forums and virtual worlds. Internet penetration is rising appreciably world over. This has given rise to a new form of marketing called Social Media Marketing. Many companies are making use of social media sites such as Face book, orkut, My space, Twitter, You tube to spread the message of their product in a relaxed and conversational way. Social Media gives marketers a voice and a way of communication with customers and potential consumers. The social Networking platforms have brought some drastic changes in the way of selling goods and services. Social media has the potential to deepen the relationship with customers and their social connections on many levels and over time at remarkably little cost. Social media sites are proving to be serious sales channels as well. Social media promotes social influence by sharing the information and contents over the online platforms. Social media has a measurable impact on consumer purchase decisions.

### Review of Literature

Vivek Sundar Kanchan (2009), a social media Consultant said that social networking site acts as an inexpensive communication tool, create brand awareness as many advertisements are showcased over the websites. Businesses and Professionals are extensively making use of social networking sites. Social networking sites is not only an entertainment tool but also impacts masses world over. Facebook happens to be the top ranked social network.

Ms. Sisira Neti(2011) Educationist puts forth the role of social media in marketing. Social media is the communication tool that makes companies accessible to those interested in their product and makes visible to those who are unaware of their product. Social media gives marketers a voice and a way to communicate with peers, customers and potential customers. Blogging has a positive effect on company's branding and growth.

According to Michael Trusov, Randolph E. Bucklin & Koen Pauwels (2009), Analysts, word-of- mouth marketing is a prominent feature on Internet. The usage of social networking sites, offers spreading the word in a natural way. The word-of-mouth referrals have a strong impact on new customer acquisition.

Dr. Jai Singh Parmar (2011) Educationist, conducted a detailed study to reveal the benefits of social media services and networking sites. The study showed that Face Book is the most popular social networking site followed by Twitter and Linked In. The interactive features of photo sharing and chatting allow people to interact with each other irrespective of their age.

G. Gopalakrishnan, M. Arunachalam, M. Mathiyarasan (2009), have brought out that the marketers use internet as an advertising media for their businesses. Blogs and communities is the new approach adopted by the online marketers. Blogs mean the comment posted by a person on satisfied / unsatisfied things. Communities allow internet users to enter into a discussion about any article or political incident. The study revealed that respondents are highly satisfied with blogs and communities as it gives credible information to purchase products and reduces the risk in decision making.

Digital content, including social media, is pervasive in daily life – its influence on consumer's lives is unquestionable and powerful. The research undertaken by Advertising Research Foundation (2010), enables to understand usage of social media in the purchase decision process. Social media expands the range of people that they trust. Word-of-mouth recommendations passed through Face book, Google+, forums, blogs helps to gather input for purchase decisions. Consumers use digital and social sources to research and validate information, and they use the retail environment to gain firsthand experience on products and brands.

According to Mehmood Rehmani, Muhammad Ishfaq Khan (2011), Researchers, social media applications through mobile has created an impact on consumer purchase intention. The younger generation spend more time on social media. Social



media has better reach and impact over younger generation people and the flow of information through social media, helps the marketers to target this audience.

Social media has an increasingly important role to play in helping companies to identify and address the unmet customer needs according to Caroline First Brook and Robert Wollan (2011), an analyst. Social media is regarded as a communication channel. Nokia operates an online lab that allows users around the world to download beta applications and provide feedback on its product development teams. Southwest Airlines monitors its twitter and face book pages enabling the company to respond promptly to customer complaints.

Rebecca Walker Naylor, Cait Poyner Lamberton, & Patricia M. West (2012) researchers focused on the demographic characteristics of online supporters in relation to brands. The study provided many theoretical insights. The findings revealed that age and gender influence the type of brands and products consumers buy. Brand liking influence purchase intentions. Buying decisions are influenced by responses given by supporters. The significant one being, that in contrast to traditional advertising, social media exposure is provided by individuals voluntarily.

Maoyan, Zhujunxuan, Sangyang(2014) put forth that social media marketing is a kind of internet marketing model which points to achieve marketing objectives by participating in various social media networks. The external factors affecting consumer purchase intention based on social media marketing were found to be advertisements over social media, event marketing activities such as group buying, seconds kill and draw, products price incentives, customers experience and interaction over social media interactive platforms. The internal factors affecting purchase intention were found to be of perceived value (information search) and perceived risk in using social media shopping. Social media marketing promotes the personalized marketing of E-commerce, in order to satisfy the individual needs of consumers.

### **Gaps in Literature**

After reviewing the national and international literatures regarding social media perception of consumers in various aspects like information search, awareness and preferences, the researcher identified important lacunae regarding the complete perception of consumers addressing all the implications of social media. Therefore the present research intended to measure the perceived notions of consumers regarding the social media.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To study the elements of social media factors in the perception of consumers.
2. To find relationship between demographic variables and social media perception of consumers.

### **Hypothesis**

There is no significant difference among different social media influence on the perception of consumers.

### **Methodology**

The study is based on the primary data obtained from consumers with more acquaintance with social media. A well structured questionnaire is used to identify the perception of consumers in likert's 5 point scale which ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The demographic details and other facebook details are obtained through optional type questions.

### **Sampling Plan**

The researcher used convenience sampling method to obtain responses from the consumers in Chennai city. The researcher circulated 200 questionnaires in all the 12 zones of Chennai city and able to obtain the representations from all the consumers.

### **Data Analysis**

Linear multiple regression analysis and one way analysis of variance are exploited to analyse the independent and dependent variables of the research.

### **Analysis & Discussion**

The researcher applied factor analysis by principle component method, to measure the elements of social media which consist of 15 variables in likert's five point scale. The results of factor analysis are clearly presented below:



**TABLE – 1**

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.785
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2030.128
	df	105
	Sig.	.000

From the above table it is found that KMO measure of sampling adequacy with approximate Chi-Square value is found to be 2030.128 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity are statistically significant at 5% level. This implies all the 15 variables are highly conducive in reducing them to form the predominant factors. The following table ensures the extraction of 4 factors from 15 variables.

**Table – 2**

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.274	28.495	28.495	2.719	18.130	18.130
2	1.686	11.240	39.735	2.037	13.579	31.709
3	1.305	8.703	48.437	1.907	12.712	44.421
4	1.252	8.345	56.782	1.854	12.362	56.782
5	.937	6.244	63.026			
6	.811	5.405	68.431			
7	.749	4.995	73.426			
8	.730	4.864	78.290			
9	.609	4.062	82.352			
10	.540	3.599	85.952			
11	.498	3.318	89.270			
12	.464	3.096	92.366			
13	.444	2.962	95.328			
14	.389	2.591	97.919			
15	.312	2.081	100.000			

From the above table it is found that 15 variables are reduced to 4 predominant factors with cumulative variance 56.782. The four factors individually have the variances 18.130%, 13.579%, 12.712% and 12.362% . These four factors are named as promotion and marketing mix, attractive advertisement, trend measurement and customer linkage. These factors are subject to the treatment of linear multiple regression analysis. In this analysis the researcher is able to determine the influence of demographic variables of customers on their influence on social media perception. The results are clearly presented below.

**Table – 3, Model Summary**

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.331 <sup>a</sup>	.110	.100	.94892349

a. Predictors: (Constant), ANNUAL INCOME, MARITAL STATUS, GENDER, AGE, QUALIFICATION, OCCUPATION

From the above table it is found that R square = .110. This implies the demographic variables create 11% variance over the dependent factors social media perception. The regression fit verification is done through one way analysis of variance.

<b>Table – 4, ANOVA<sup>a</sup></b>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	57.663	6	9.611	10.673	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	467.337	519	.900		
	Total	525.000	525			
a. Dependent Variable: Perception						
b. Predictors: (Constant), ANNUAL INCOME, MARITAL STATUS, GENDER, AGE, QUALIFICATION, OCCUPATION						



From the above table it is found that  $F = 10.673$ ,  $P = .000$  are statistically significant at 5% level. This implies demographic variables are very vital in determining social media perception of consumers. The individual influence of demographic variables is determined by the following co-efficient table.

Table – 5, Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.002	.300		3.338	.001
	GENDER	.037	.086	.018	.427	.669
	AGE	.067	.041	.072	1.633	.103
	QUALIFICATION	.076	.053	.067	1.433	.153
	MARITAL STATUS	-.144	.106	-.068	-1.361	.174
	OCCUPATION	-.196	.030	-.312	-6.421	.000
	ANNUAL INCOME	-.190	.045	-.192	-4.188	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Perception

From the above table it is found that occupation of the respondents (  $\text{Beta} = -.312$ ,  $T = -6.421$ ,  $P = .000$ ) and annual income (  $\text{Beta} = -.192$ ,  $T = -4.188$  and  $P = .000$ ) are statistically significant at 5% level. The negative influence indicates that the occupational status, house wives have minimum accessibility towards social media. Similarly higher income group negatively perceived the social media.

### Findings and Conclusions

The research revealed that social media is a powerful tool for the business promotion and plays a prominent role in the e-commerce. The advertisements are easily reachable to the consumers through social media. The marketers are able to grasp the latest trends prevailing among customers in the marketing mix. It also builds the personalized touch of products and also helps the marketers to build brand loyalty.

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