A STUDY ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING AS AN EMERGING MARKETING TOOL AMONG YOUNGSTERS

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ABSTRACT: Internet and its allied services are finding new ways to transform human life. Social media is considered as the most commonly used internet service among youngsters. Youngsters and teenagers around the world use social media to connect with friends and families. Unlike other communication mediums, social media has a universal reach and a large audience. Marketing on social media is considered cost effective than conventional marketing strategies. Various recent studies show that average time spent by youngsters on social media is increasing. Social media is not restricted to geographical boundaries or time. There are over 2.2 billion people all over the globe using internet and its allied service. India is far progressing in the communication technologies. Recent studies reveal that introduction of 4G LTE has changed the way Indians do social networking. The average time spent on internet and social media by Indians, especially youth are much similar to that of developed countries. More advanced Smart phones, and coming 5th generation mobile phone network all will make more people especially youth use to internet and social media. Growing trends of social media proves that the scope of social media is also increasing. Therefor social media marketing is considered as an effective marketing strategy to reach young potential customers. Youngsters being the majority of social media users, this particular study cover the youth. The study will examine the social media as an emerging marketing tool among them.

Index Terms :Social Media ,Social Networking, Social Media Marketing , Information and Communication Technologies

I.   INTRODUCTION

Today, virtually every aspect of our culture has an Internet counterpart; people work online, bank online, check mail online, even make friends online, So it only makes sense that, online shopping has become an increasingly integral part of our society, exceeding $200 billion in sales are expanding by leaps and bounds at a rate of 20% to 80 25% growth each year, indicating a momentous shift in consumer spending habits. Those who don't change with the time will become obsolete. Shoppers are turning to the internet rather that phone directories for convenience, product reviews, and up-to-the-date information. A business owner simply cannot rely on an advertisement in a phone book. In fact, customers are fifteen times more likely to look on the Internet that they are to flip through a phone book to call a company. Research consistently shows that, consumers place less credibility in t business that does not have a web site as opposed to one that does. The more personal the service (haircut, tattoo, financial, counseling, legal etc.), the more research customers want to do to ensure they are comfortable with the service provider. The more potentially expensive the service (legal, medical, automotive, travel, construction, real estate, etc.), the more comparisons customers want to make sure they get the best value for their dollar.
In order for a business to stay successful it is imperative that, selling habits are adjusted to match the change in consumer buying habits. More simply expressed business must sell the way their customers shop or they will buy elsewhere. Even some of the more elaborate websites that allow customers to make purchases online can cost less annually that a typical monthly phonebook ad; therefore, making perfect sense for businesses to evolve with the times. Every business is different, but each is going to require the power if the Internet to stay competitive. 81 In the long run, the net operating costs of a website become insignificant compared to the return on the investment that the advertisement delivers. No other form of marketing compounds value and spreads like an effective Website. Social media marketing is commercial promotion conducted through social media websites. Many companies promote their products by posting frequent updates and providing special offers through their social media profiles. Social media marketing is the use of social media platforms and websites to promote a product or service. Although the terms e-marketing and digital marketing are still dominant in academia, social media marketing is becoming more popular for both practitioners and researchers. Most social media platforms have built-in data analytics tools, which enable companies to track the progress, success, and engagement of ad campaigns. Companies address a range of stakeholders through social media marketing, including current and potential customers, current and potential employees, journalists, bloggers, and the general public. On a strategic level, social media marketing includes the management of a marketing campaign, governance, setting the scope (e.g. more active or passive use) and the establishment of a firm's desired social media "culture" and "tone." When using social media marketing, firms can allow customers and Internet users to post user-generated content (e.g. online comments, product reviews etc.) also known as "earned media," rather than use marketer-prepared advertising copy. As of 2016 there has

been a shift from regular companies being the predominant users of social media marketing, now a range of not-for-profit organizations and government organizations are engaging in social media marketing as well.

II.   STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Internet has revolutionized human life. The internet revolution has transformed all areas of human life. It has changed the way we do shopping, banking, study, entertainment, governance and even war being fought between countries. Marketing strategies opted by the companies are finding new ways in recent years with the help of internet and social media marketing is the most recent addition of internet marketing. Social media is generally considered as a medium to socialize and to connect with friends and families online. It is most commonly used communication platform among youngsters. But it is not just limited with friendly chats and socializing. Social networking has crept into the boardrooms of organization just like the way internet has transformed the modern business. Various organizations are writing success stories with help of social media while some are struggling to find a way on web. Various companies are using social media to advertise about their products and services. This study is intended to know about impact of social media marketing among youngsters. The study examines social media as an emerging marketing tool. An in depth study is intended to examine the various factors which influence customers while purchasing on social media. If there is any problem related to social media marketing, it is supposed to be provided with necessary suggestion to improve its effectiveness.

III.   NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Developed countries are far ahead in social networking due to lifestyle of people and well developed communication networks. India being a developing country is likely to achieve more progress in the area of social networking in recent coming years. The country is witnessing a fast progress in communication technology. It is expected that in the coming years India will overcome the developed countries in number of social media users. Corporate world is also preparing themselves with this scenario. Companies find it easier to reach customers through social media platforms. Social media marketing is recognized as an emerging marketing tool. Unlike the conventional marketing tools, social media provides a two way communication. The customers can interact with the company through personal messages, comments, likes, posts etc. Social media marketing can achieve more audience that conventional marketing tools. Social media marketing does not have limitation of boundaries or regulations. It can reach universally within a short time. Therefore social media is important for today's corporate world. A new era of marketing is being opened by social media marketing. It is the most important and excellent way to reach young customers and therefore it is important to study the influence of social media marketing among customers especially the youth.

IV.   OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

1. To study the impact of social media marketing on the youth
2. To identify the product or service that is most suitable to be marketed on social media
3. To identify mostly used social media platform

V.   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 RESEARCH DESIGN
The present project is a sample study and is descriptive and analytical in nature.
5.2 SAMPLE DESIGN
The population of the study consists of students of Kotarakkara Municipality. Sample sizes of 54 respondents were selected for the purpose of conducting the study.
5.3 SAMPLE TECHNIQUE
The technique used here is Convenient Sampling.
5.4 DATA COLLECTION
Both primary and secondary data have been collected for the purpose of study. The primary data has been collected from the simple respondents selected by using structured questionnaire. The secondary data have been collected from various publications including newspaper, reports, magazine and journals.
5.5 PERIOD OF THE STUDY
The data used for the purpose of the study were collected during the period from 2017-2018.
5.6 TOOLS FOR ANALYSIS
The tools used in this project are mathematical and statistical such as percentages and ranking method. For analyzing and interpreting the collected data, statistical tools such as percentage analysis, scaling with mean scores, bar diagrams, pie charts, graphs, table, etc. were used.

6. Review of Literature

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as "a group of Internet based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and allow the creation and exchange of user generated content." According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) web 2.0 is a platform where content is continuously altered by all operators in a sharing and collaborative way. Web 2.0 is a web based technology which helps to create highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss and modify user –generated content. Social media are the websites which are built upon the technological foundations of web 2.0 that help a user to create user generated contents that can be shared. This technology allows a user to create and publish the content on the social media networks. This information can be shared with other members of the social media website, who are connected with the user. This process is interactive where other members can also respond in different ways.

Mangold and Faulds (2009) describe ―social media as the set of online word of mouth forums which includes blogs, discussion boards, forums or social networks to name a few. Using all mobile and web-based technologies, social media creates highly interactive platforms by bringing together individuals and creating communities. Internet has a lot of websites; each of them has different functional attributes and caters to different sections of society. Websites like Facebook are for general masses but LinkedIn is focused on professional networking. Media sharing sites (i.e. YouTube, Picasa and Flicker) or blogging platforms (i.e. BlogSpot, Word Press) are also members of this ecosystem called social media (Kietzmann , 2011).Social media has equipped the organization to establish an direct relationship with the consumers. Both of the organizations and consumers are free to generate content on the web pages, which further leads to conversations and discussion. Organization on one end are provided with an opportunity to share their information with a large base of customers and on the other end consumers are also free to publish any content whether positive or negative regarding the information.

Ateş Bayazıt Hayta (2013) studied that social media is on the most important tools communication channels. Consumers do access to information about goods and services to be purchased as per need by means of social media to a great extent. He also studied social media which affects our life in recent years that brings a new dimension to Internet and its effects on the purchasing behaviors of consumers.

Priyanka P. (2015) studied that social media can be used for increasing customer loyalty. With the help of continuous customer support services leads to improvement in customer retention. New applications and social platforms will flourish and allow even greater personalization and real-time, location-based engagements in media.

R.A.Gbadeyan (2010) study examined that there are opportunities for businesses in the market. Businesses can grow with the help of social media marketing. Uses of SNS explored that organization can do direct marketing for online social network there are people who spend more time on SNS. Study also finds the reasons for people were using social networking sites due to safety concerned reason, technically inexperience due to lack of confidence in using internet, intellectual rejecters who feel waste of time.

Russell S. Winer (2008) described the different kinds of new media which was used by companies to engage customers that is social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace, Second Life, and You Tube etc. have generated perhaps the most publicity and also describe challenges that these media were present from the perspectives of the marketing manager where Marketers have been cautious in using this new medium because of the risk that members of a community will become offended from an over-commercialization of the site. Study also shows that the growth of these sites has led to the notion. Importance of Web 2.0 era where user generated content and discussions can create powerful communities that facilitate the interactions of people with common interests.

Mehmood Rehmani (2011) studied because of social media it was easier for ecommerce marketers to communicate directly with their target audiences. This is due to people can take complete information of product also make comparison with different brands which results to buying of product as per choice which leads to brand commitment. Study explored due to increasing number of mobile phone users and internet users, people tend to get influence for purchasing of products. The study intends to explore the impact of social media on purchase intention of mobile phone customers in Pakistan.

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Tesfaye Nekatibeb (May 2012), Studied social media provides benefits of long-term engagement between brands and consumers also provided an opportunity for everyone to communicate effectively and efficiently in a way unprecedented by any other media it can be considered as the communication tool of modern era.

 Priti S. et al (2013) studied the effectiveness of placing brand communication on social networking sites which shows that there is effect of online comments and reviews of products/brands on the buying behavior of consumers. Study revealed that people do come across various advertisements on social networking sites also prefer to go through the online comments and reviews regarding the brand/products before buying the products for them brand communication on social networking sites plays important role to influence buying behavior of the customers.

 Amrita Pani & Mahesh Sharma (2011) study revealed that Social networking sites like MySpace, Orkut & Facebook were widely used. To get influenced by Gen-next consumers in India, there should be changes in their brand choices, shopping behavior and lifestyle pattern.

7. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Social media marketing is the use of social media platforms and websites to promote a product or service. Although the terms e-marketing and digital marketing are still dominant in academia, social media marketing is becoming more popular for both practitioners and researchers. Most social media platforms have built-in data analytics tools, which enable companies to track the progress, success, and engagement of ad campaigns. Companies address a range of stakeholders through social media marketing, including current and potential customers, current and potential employees, journalists, bloggers, and the general public. On a strategic level, social media marketing includes the management of a marketing campaign, governance, setting the scope (e.g. more active or passive use) and the establishment of a firm's desired social media "culture" and "tone." When using social media marketing, firms can allow customers and Internet users to post user-generated content (e.g. online comments, product reviews etc.) also known as "earned media," rather than use marketer-prepared advertising copy. As of 2016 there has been a shift from regular companies being the predominant users of social media marketing, now a range of not-for-profit organizations and government organizations are engaging in social media marketing as well.

For the purpose of study 54 samples were selected from students of St Gregorios College, Kottarakara, Kollam dist., Kerala. The samples were selected at random as one male and one female from each class so that there will be equal representation of both male and female from all courses of studies.

This chapter shows the analysis about various responses collected on the basis of questionnaire. For the purpose of analysis, various mathematical tools, diagrams and charts are used.

- **Internet Access**

The invention of the World Wide Web created a new way to reach out to people—and for business to reach its customers. The table below classifies respondents on the basis of whether they have direct access to internet or not.

Table 7.1

Classification on the basis of internet access

Particulars	Number of respondents	Percentages
Respondents with internet access	53	98.14%
Respondents without internet access	1	1.85%
Total	54	100

Source: Primary Data

Out of total respondents 98% respondents (53) have access to internet through their own phone or computer. Only 1.85% (1) of the respondent have no direct access to internet.

Internet access is the ability of individuals and organization to connect to the world. Majority of the respondents have access to internet. It can be assumed that respondents without direct internet access can access internet through friends, family or internet café.

- **Social Media Users**

The table below classifies the respondents on the basis of whether they have access to any social media platform or not.

Table 7.2

Classification on the basis of social media access

Particulars	Number of respondents	Percentages
Social media access	54	100
No social media access	0	0
Total	54	100

Source: Primary Data

All the respondents have access to or use various social media platforms for learning, marketing, shopping etc,
Social media has gained absolute worldwide growth and popularity among youngsters. The study reveals that majority of young adults use social media.

- **Popular Medium of Social Networking**

The table below identifies the most popular social media websites used by the respondents.

Table 7.3

Classification of Social media websites used by the Respondents

Particulars	Number of respondents	Percentages
Facebook	28	51.85
Twitter	4	7.40
LinkedIn	4	7.40
Google plus	0	0
Instagram	18	33.33
Total	54	100

Source: Primary Data

It is observed that out of the total respondents, 51% respondents use Facebook (28) , nearly 33% of respondents uses instagram (18), Twitter and LinkedIn is accessed by nearly 7%(4) of the respondents.
The present study reveals that majority of the youngsters uses Facebook followed by Instagram and then twitter. LinkedIn and Google plus is not so popular among the respondents.

- **Social media as an important tool of marketing**

The table below shows various response of the respondents to the question do they think that social media is an important tool of marketing.

Table 1.4

Importance of social media as an emerging marketing tool

Responses	Number of respondents	Percentages
Always	41	75.92
Sometimes	10	18.51
Never	3	5.55
Total	54	100

Source: Primary Data

Social media is a new trend of marketing. Majority of the respondents(76%) are of the opinion that social media is an emerging marketing tool. Social media is an effective and cost effective tool for marketing.

- **Impact of Social Media Advertisement on the Buying behavior**

The table below shows the response of respondents to the question whether there advertisement through social media influences the buying behavior.

Table 7.5
Influence of Social media Advertising on Buying behavior

Responses	Number of respondents	Percentages
Always	16	33.33
Sometimes	25	52.08
Never	7	14.58
Total	54	100

Source: Primary Data

Out of the total respondents , 33% of them (16) are of the opinion that social media advertisement influence their online buying behavior.
Social media has provided advertisements with a new opportunity to infibulate and display their message to a vast online audience. Majority of respondents were influenced by social media advertisements to buy online.

- **Product or service that is most suitable to be marketed on social med**ia
The table below shows the products or services most frequently purchased /availed by the respondents.

Table 7.6
Product or service most suitable for social media marketing

Products	Number of respondents	Percentages
Tangible	40	74.05
Intangible	3	5.5
Both	11	20.37
Total	54	100

Source: Primary Data

Out of total respondents 74% (40) of them believe that tangible products are most suitable for marketing through social media. 20% (11) respondents believe both tangible and intangible products are suitable for marketing through social media. Only 6% (3) respondents believe intangible products or services are more suitable to be marketed through social media.

- **Most suitable tangible product to be marketed through social medias**

The table below shows the ranking given by respondents on the basis of most frequently purchased tangible product.

Table 7.7
Suitable tangible product for marketing through social media

Products	Number of respondents	Percentages
Electronics	312	II
Clothing	270	III
Accessories	218	IV
Jewelers	200	V
Cosmetics	346	I
Consumer goods	180	VI

Others	120	VII

Source: Primary Data

It is clear from the table that the most suitable tangible product to be marketed through social media is cosmetics (RANK I) followed by electronics (RANK II) and then clothing (RANKIII). RANK IV, RANK V and RANK VI and RANK VII is given to accessories, jewelers, consumer goods and others respectively

Cosmetics followed by electronics and clothing are the most suitable tangible product to be marketed through social media.

- **Intangible product suitable for marketing through social media**
The table below shows the ranking given by respondents on the basis of most frequently purchased tangible product.

Table 7.7
Suitable tangible product for marketing through social media

Products	Number of respondents	Percentages
Online Videos	195	IV
Music	167	V
Travel and Leisure	311	II
Tickets Online	336	I
Financial service	252	III
Others	84	VI

Source: Primary Data

The Above table depicts various intangible products marketed on social media. It is clear from the table that the most frequently purchased intangible product as a result of social media marketing is Movie Tickets -Ticket booking (RANK I) followed by travel and leisure (RANK II) and then financial service (RANK III).

FINDINGS

1. Majority of respondents have direct access to internet. It can be assumed that even the small minority of 2% with no direct access to internet can access it through friends, family members or internet café

2. Majority of respondents (89%) use social media

3. Facebook is most widely used social media platform followed by Instagram and twitter.

4. Majority of respondents thinks that social media is powerful marketing tool

5. Social media advertisements can influence the buying behavior of people more than that of traditional tools of marketing

6. Social media can influence young buyers to a large extent

9. Tangible products are more ideal to be marketed through social media.

10. Cosmetics, electronics clothing and apparel are the ideal tangible products to be marketed on social media

11. Tickets online followed by Travel and Leisure are the most suitable intangible product to be marketed through social media.

5.2 SUGGESTIONS

 Create customer personas - Create social media campaigns that are aligned with what customers really want.

 Use social media analytical platform - like owl metrics in Instagram. This set of data can help marketing team understand if their strategy is producing meaningful results that impact key metrics like revenue/ brand awareness.

 Develop an influence marketing strategy - Develops an influence marketing strategy to gain access to skeptical audiences who have become weary of traditional marketing and advertising techniques.

 Be updated with the latest trends as the social media landscape is constantly changing.

 Majority of customers don't trust social media whole heartedly due to privacy issues and other security related issues. Consumers are susceptible about the user-safety side of internet. They feel that online marketing is unsafe as it may lead to increase in frauds & privacy issue there for a controlling authority must be set up in order to regulate and control social media.

 Offer rewards for sharing social media advertisements by individual customers.

CONCLUTION

The study reveals that main reason for growing importance of online marketing is the increasing literacy about internet among people. They have identified that internet is truly advantageous through which they can serve their various purposes mainly social networking, online shopping & media sharing (photo, music, video). This efficacy of internet has intensified their tendency of being online. Today's consumers strongly feel that every company must use this efficacy to strengthen its marketing efforts. So that they will get motivated to use online 159 marketing with the intent of getting access to exclusive content about the brand and getting discount and sharing their feedback about brand with the advertiser.

With the advent of internet technology, consumers' preference towards traditional marketing tools has decreased. The major benefits of online marketing are its capability of interaction between consumers and advertisers followed by availability of wide range of information & ease of shopping. These benefits make online marketing superior than traditional marketing.

But at the same time consumers are susceptible about the user-safety side of internet. They feel that online marketing is unsafe as it may lead to increase in frauds & privacy issue. Social media marketing is truly an emerging marketing tool and if properly used it can gain more audience than traditional marketing.