

CONSUMER PREFERENCES TOWARDS LINKEDIN SOCIAL MEDIA WEBSITE IN TIRUCHIRAPPALLI CITY

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Abstract

In India, an advantage is gained by marketers to magnetize customers through social media advertisements, but on the other hand, the consumers in India are still unaware and stay unexplored. This research paper focuses on the perceptions of the consumers towards the LinkedIn social media website in Tiruchirappalli City. The data collection was done by using a survey method, from 120 sample respondents by administering a questionnaire by adopting a convenience sampling method. The proposed study will facilitate recognizing the basis of awareness and knowledge of Indian consumers' perception towards the "LINKEDIN" social media website.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Social media websites, and apps, consumer behavior.

Introduction

LinkedIn provides explicit tools for young adults to utilize during their job search or networking activities, no matter where users are located. Features like University Pages or the ability to explore different career paths are available in many counties for permitting the users to search for careers and companies. Professional networking platform LinkedIn social media website is an important resource for job seekers and provides an opportunity to showcase skills, accomplishments, and brand oneself professionally (McFadden, 2014). Having access to these outlets makes it easier for users to connect to others and expand their network. Most of the job seekers online are young adults aged 18-29 (Kelkar & Kulkarni, 2013). These young adults, who are about to enter a competitive job market, can benefit from professional social networks tremendously to launch a career upon graduating. LinkedIn, a social network for professionals, launched in 2003, and currently has more than 300 million members worldwide

(Novet, 2015). Besides allowing members to browse job listings, this study gives insight into what would encourage young adults to use the site more actively and reveals how LinkedIn can serve young adults better to resonate with the site's mission, connecting professionals to make them more successful.

Significance of the study

The purpose of this study is to plug in the awareness and knowledge gap by investigating consumer preferences towards LINKEDIN social media website. This study also gives a total level of preferences of the consumers in the social media environment, in Tiruchirappalli City. LinkedIn is a raised platform to exhibit the profile, expertise, connections recommendations, etc but also helps recruiters to find the right person for the right job. This online platform helps to create a link or connections with new members and to establish expertise through more opportunities by offering more networking every day, more than Facebook or Twitter. The members in this LINKEDIN community are acknowledged as connections with varying levels of degree of a network to interact and get connected with them but can be aware not to send a private message to unknown connections. Job search, keep tabs on industry trends and reports, maintain good contacts, and make use of them when needed. LinkedIn offers users access to a wide variety of articles written by business professionals, such as Arianna Huffington or Bill Gates. Regularly, such industry professionals post articles on LinkedIn on diverse topics focusing on professional development or career insights and advice. Nowadays, LinkedIn plays a significant role in looking for a novel job to maintain personal brand, being a full-fledged professional in any industry. Thus, keeping in mind the significance of the need of the Indian consumers for their day- to -day network connections in social media for their business or profession this research has been undertaken to study **“CONSUMER PREFERENCES TOWARDS LINKEDIN SOCIAL MEDIA WEBSITE IN TIRUCHIRAPPALLI CITY”**.

Review of Literature

Various studies have emerged in the context of social media in areas of business development (Booth and Matic, 2011; Li, 2012; Trainor, 2012; Huy and Shipilov, 2012; Edosomwan et al., 2011), demographics and generation (Ruleman, 2012; Hardey, 2011),

functions and services (Branthwaite and Patterson, 2011; Colliander and Dahlen, 2011; Rothschild, 2011; Noone et al., 2011; Sharp, 2011; Sarringhaus, 2011), human resources management (Madia, 2011; Freer, 2012), law and privacy (Petty, 2012; Carpenter, 2012; Elefant, 2011), learning (Thomas and Thomas, 2012; Machin-Mastromatteo, 2012; Mccorkle and McCorkle, 2012; Tuten and Marks, 2012; Castro, 2012), marketing (Mitic and Kapoulas, 2012; Taylor et al., 2011; Kumar and Mirchandani, 2012; Hensel and Deis, 2010; Geho and Dangelo, 2012), purchase (Powers et al., 2012); relationship management (Baird and Parasnis, 2011; Sashi, 2012) and sales (Agnihotri et al., 2012; Andzulis et al., 2012; Rodriguez et al., 2012). Among these, the aspects of marketing in social media are interesting from both academic and industry perspectives. Marketing has evolved significantly from being static to dynamic, such transformations being a result of the evolution of the internet itself.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To study the demographic factors of the sample respondents and
- To analyze the preferences of the consumers about the LINKEDIN social media website in Tiruchirappalli City.

Research Methodology

This research is descriptive in nature which examines, “The Consumer Preferences towards LINKEDIN social media website in Tiruchirappalli City”.

Primary data was administered to collect data through a well-structured questionnaire using Rensis Likert’s five-point scales from 120 sample respondents using convenience sampling technique by adopting a survey method. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where subjects are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher. Secondary data has been obtained from the website, journals, articles, newspapers, magazines, and unpublished thesis. The collected data has been analyzed with the help of statistical packages namely SPSS 20 by using statistical tools such as the Data Validity & Reliability Test and Chi-square test.

Analysis and Interpretations

The most widely used measure to assess the internal consistency of constructs is Cronbach's alpha. The generally agreed-upon value of Cronbach's alpha is 0.70, although it may decrease to 0.60 in case of exploratory research (Hair et al. 2006; pp.137). The reliability test has been depicted in the table given below:

TABLE: 1

RELIABILITY TEST

General Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
Demographic factors of the sample respondents using LinkedIn social media website.	.669
Consumer Preferences towards LinkedIn social media website.	.804
Overall reliability	.938

In this research, the reliability measure for the whole scale is 0.938 which is acceptable as the reliability for all the constructs in the values. The result of Cronbach's alpha draws a significant amount of correlation between the variables tested. The validity of a test is the extent to which differences in scores reflect differences in the measured characteristic. Predictive validity is a measure of the usefulness of a measuring instrument as a predictor. Proof of predictive validity is determined by the correlation between results and actual behavior and construct validity is the extent to which a measuring instrument measures what it intends to measure.

TABLE: 2

Table showing the demographic profile of the sample respondents

DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS	PARTICULARS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE %
Age	Below 30 years old	68	56.70
Gender	Male	83	69.20
Marital status	Unmarried	82	68.30
Educational Qualification	Degree	66	55.00
Occupation	students	53	44.20
Family Type	Nuclear	72	60.00
Monthly Income of the family	Rs. 50,001 – Rs. 1,00,000.	76	63.40
Number of dependents	Less than 2	62	52.00

Source: Primary data

Analysis and Inferences- (Percentage Analysis)

AGE: The majority of the sample respondents (68) have awareness and knowledge about the LinkedIn website and are in the below 30 years of the age group.

GENDER: The gender-wise distribution has been inferred that (83) 69.20% most of the sample respondents are male respondents.

MARITAL STATUS: Marital status of the sample respondents inferred that majority (82) 68.30% of the sample respondents are unmarried respondents.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION: The educational qualification of the sample respondents reveals that most 66 (55%) of the sample respondents are Degree holders.

OCCUPATION: The occupation of the sample respondents reveals that most of the (53) 44.20% are working in Private concerns.

FAMILY TYPE: The majority of the family type of the sample respondents (72) 60% belongs to the nuclear family type.

MONTHLY INCOME: The monthly income of the sample respondents reveals that 76 (63.4%) of the sample respondents fall under the monthly income of the family with between Rs. 50,001- Rs.100,000.

NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS: The majority of the (62) 52% of the sample respondents belong to a family with less than two dependent.

CHI-SQUARE TEST

This study entitled, “CONSUMER PREFERENCES TOWARDS LINKEDIN SOCIAL MEDIA WEBSITE IN TIRUCHIRAPPALLI CITY” has been portrayed here with the analysis and interpretations, using Reliability test, Cross tabulations, and Chi-square tests. The hypothesis has been framed to prove the significant difference between the independent and the dependent variables.

TABLE: 3

Table showing the age group of the sample respondents and their preferences towards LinkedIn social media website

Age Group (in years)	Preferences of the respondents			Total	Chi-square Value	‘P’ value
	Low	Medium	High			
Below 30 years	11 (23.9%)	30 (65.2%)	5 (10.9%)	46 (100%)	11.145 ^a	<0.001
31-60 years	8 (16.7%)	28 (58.3%)	12 (25.0%)	48 (100%)		
Above 61 years	8 (30.8%)	8 (30.8%)	10 (38.5%)	26 (100%)		
Total	27 (22.5%)	66 (55%)	27 (22.5%)	120 (100%)		

Source: Primary Data

Note: ** denotes significant at 1% level.

The cross-tabulations portrayed in the above table explains the preferences of the consumers towards LinkedIn social media website in Tiruchirappalli City. Among 120 sample respondents 30 (65.2%) in the age group below 30 years, fall under the moderate, 11

(23.9%) as low, and 5 (10.9%) as high perceptions towards LinkedIn social media website in Tiruchirappalli City. While, 28 (58.3%) fall under the moderate, 12 (25.0%) as high, perceptions and 8 (16.7%) as low perceptions towards LinkedIn social media website in Tiruchirappalli City, between 31- 60 years age group. In the age group above 61 years old, 10 (38.5%) fall under high, 8 (30.8%) as low, and 8 (30.8%) as moderate perceptions towards LinkedIn social media website in Tiruchirappalli City. Thus, it shows that there is no limit for the age group of the consumers to have networked with connections through LinkedIn social media website. Thus, this online social media website helps many Indian consumers to relax from their daily responsibilities in day to day activities and to chat or network with new friends known as connections to share knowledge, information on employability, get connected personally or professionally to get along with people by giving requests through connections.

Chi-Square Test

This test was applied to analyze the preferences of the consumers towards LinkedIn social media website in Tiruchirappalli City.

HYPOTHESIS

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant association between age group and the perceptions of the towards LinkedIn online social media website.

The above table proves the results of the association between the age and the perceptions of the consumers towards LinkedIn social media website in Tiruchirappalli City.

Hence, the Chi-square value is significant at the 0.01 percent level. With 120 cases, the value of Pearson Chi-square shows **11.145^a**, with 4 as a degree of freedom, with .015 as significance level, which is less than the “p” value 0.001. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted so that there is a significant association between age group and the preferences of the consumers towards LinkedIn social media website in Tiruchirappalli City.

CONCLUSION

In the current scenario, social networking platform has become very huge in usage and has also speeded throughout the globe very vibrantly. People post their comments regularly, share

their likes, thoughts, opinions, own feelings, and post comments and rate the products too. LinkedIn provides a central destination for job seekers and offers many features designed specifically for younger users looking to find their passion. LinkedIn has connected many of its members to many connections throughout the globe. This website is a very prominent platform and helps to serve the professionals for their regular responsibilities. In the same manner in the LinkedIn platform the members belong to the professional background and reveal their opinions, share the post, give likes, comments, etc and also help people to search for jobs. This helps people to learn more from other views opinion; comments etc and make the members to realize the common opinion in a positive, neutral, or negative manner.

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