EXPLORING THE POWER OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING: SHAPING CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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Abstract

The usage of social media platforms by consumers has significantly increased in the modern era, and these platforms have a profound impact on consumer behavior in various ways. Numerous online networking sites have an influence on consumer behavior, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, which offer appealing features that attract a large number of people. In today's society, social media has become a powerful and valuable tool for consumers in making purchasing decisions. Social media marketing is of great importance and is considered one of the most successful techniques in the advertising industry. Business owners are well aware of how various marketing tools and techniques can increase sales. The main objective of this study is to examine the impact of social media marketing on consumer behavior among individuals who are frequent users of social media websites. Additionally, the study aims to identify the expected relationships between various social media marketing activities, customer activities, and consumer behavior.

Keywords: Social Media, Consumer Behaviour, Advertisement.

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

Internet, 'network of networks' may very well be termed as one of mankind's finest inventions and 'Internet of Things' (IOT) could be pitted as the optimal enablement of this invention, owning to its scale and utility. The scenario outlined earlier will soon be real as the internet is becoming accessible at one's fingertips and over diverse devices. The ABI Research data states that there are more than 10 billion wirelessly connected devices in the market today; with over 30 billion devices expected by 2020. Internet is visibly making every object or machine around us smarter, right from connected toothbrush, sports gear with embedded sensors and smart refrigerators.

Social Networking Sites like, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Reddit, Pinterest, Twitter, Linked In, Google Plus, etc., now a days, have become an integral part of life of every individual. The young generation of India, which constitutes majority portion of Indian population, is termed as major market force by Indian as well as Global Business houses. The young generation is techno savvy and is dependent on various technological devices for availing information inputs for all aspects related to the life.

The out performance of advertisement on various Social Networking Sites in terms of meeting advertising objectives of creating awareness, interest and converting the potential buyers into actual buyers has compelled all business tycoons to re-plan and re-design their advertising strategy including advertising outlays. Social media marketing seeks to engage customers where they naturally spend their time.

A social networking website is an online platform that allows users to create a public profile and interact with other users on the website. Social networking websites usually have a new user input a list of people with whom they share a connection and then allow the people on the list to confirm or deny the connection. After connections are established, the new user can search the networks of his connections to make more connections, A social networking site may also be known as a social website or a social networking website.

Social networking sites are defined as web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site.

Figure 1: Most popular social networks worldwide as of January 2022 (in millions)
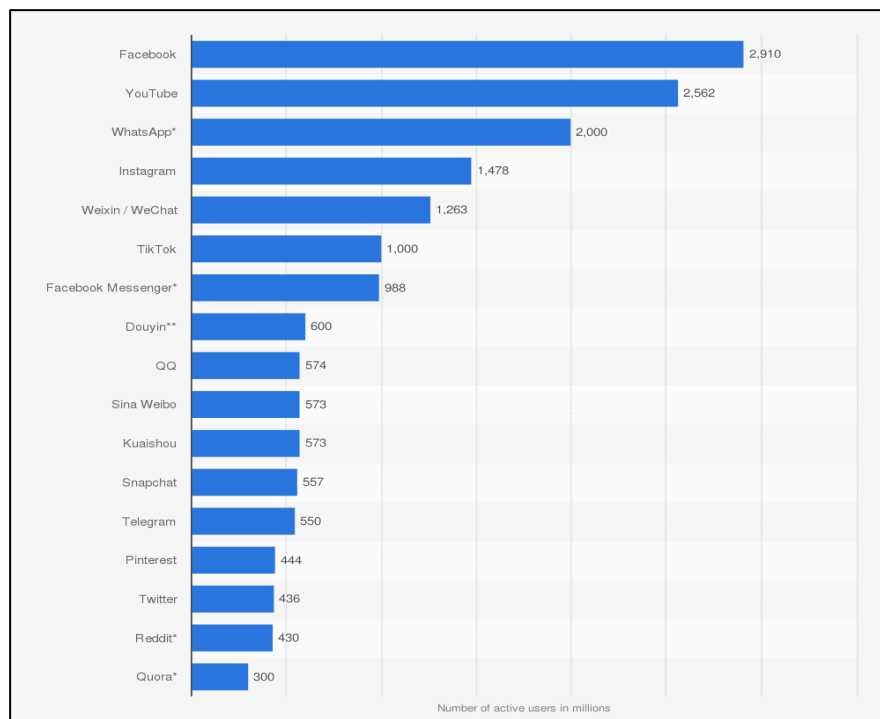
Sources: Data Report – Kepios, January 2022.

One of the mind-blowing facts about social media is that; the internet has 5.473 billion users by June 2022 There are 4.62 billion active social media users. For context, as of Dec 2022, total worldwide population is around 8 billion. On average, Gen Z and millennials have 8.5 social media accounts per user. Every 6.4 seconds a new account has been created. The average daily time spent on social is 147 minutes a day 71% of small-to-mid-sized businesses use social media $1268.7bn is expected to be spend on social media advertising in 2023.

The main three basic functions of Social Network Advertising platforms are:

- Drive social actions - generate application installations and clicks

- Encourage deep brand engagement - offer better opportunities for brand alignment and integration. Social network applications can go much deeper than other advertising and viral network distribution and offer experiences much more directly aligned with the values of brands

- Monitoring and Reporting

Online advertising that concentrates on social networking sites is referred to as social network advertising, social media targeting, and other similar phrases. Advertising on social networking sites, such as Facebook, Myspace, Friendster, Bebo, and Orkut, has a number of advantages, including the ability for businesses to target their adverts to certain demographics. To enable precise target group identification, social media targeting integrates existing targeting methods (such as geotargeting, behavioural targeting, socio-psychographic targeting, etc.). With social media targeting, individuals are shown advertising based on data gleaned from target audience profiles.

Everybody in this world is a consumer. In day to day life customers are buying and consuming an incredible variety of products and services. However, we all have different tests, likes and dislikes and adopt different behavior patterns while making purchase decisions. Many factors affect how we, as individuals and as societies, live, buy, and consume. Social external influences such as culture, ethnicity and social class influence how individual consumer purchase. Culture represents the behavior, belief and, in many cases, the way investors act learned by interacting or observing other members of society. Culture is the most fundamental of a person's wants and behavior. Personal Factors include those aspects that are unique to a person and influence purchase behavior. These include demographic factors, lifestyle, and situational factors. Personal factors can also affect the consumer behavior. Some of the important personal factors that influence the buying behavior are lifestyle, economic situation, occupation, age, personality and self-concept.

Figure 2: Various Factors Influencing Consumer Behavior
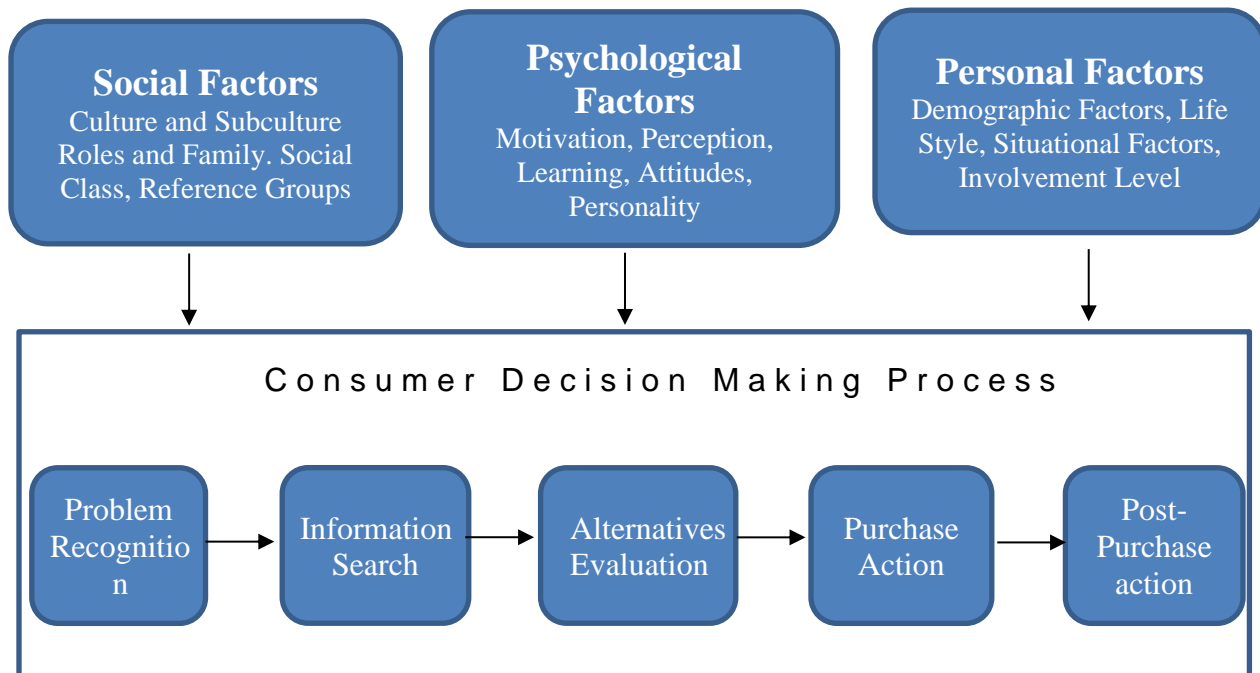
People are frequently influenced by situational conditions when making judgments about time. Indeed, recent research has demonstrated that certain momentary conditions, like mood, play a critical role in the process of time use and allocation. Little attention has been padded, however, to the way in which a consumer's affective states alters his or her evaluation of time and temporal orientation (the relative dominance of the past, present of future in a person's thoughts).

SECTION 2: LITERATURE REVIEWS

Nawel Ayadi et. al, (2013), explored the control mechanisms that consumers used when confronted with repeated temptations in an online private sales context. Using qualitative research methods, this study differentiates four segments of consumers, according to their reactions to repeated purchase temptations: myopic, self-regulated, hyperopic, and dispassionate by individual personal interview of 36 respondents. It also isolates the mechanism that consumers used to resist temptations. Previous literature has focused on control mechanisms implemented in isolated temptation situations; this article extended that approach by examining online private sales, in which setting consumers receive frequent solicitations. Thus, it addresses in detail how control evolves when consumers confront repeated temptations.

Mehdi et. al, (2012), provided some insights regarding the adoption of internet advertising by Iranian small and medium-sized enterprises. The recent negative trends leading to a lack of competitive advantage in small businesses and the advantages of internet advertising makes it imperative to study various factors affecting this were as of marketing. The

variables for the study were Internet advertising, Adoption, Product involvement, Internet publishers, Small to medium-sized enterprises, advertising. This study reviewed 59 previous related studies, resulting in a comprehensive theoretical framework which explained the advantages of internet advertising for small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs). The paper found that these constructs successfully explain internet advertising adoption by incorporating readiness and globalization stages. The small and medium-sized enterprises were found to be the most significant for explaining internet advertising adoption.

Payam Hanafizadeh, et. al, (2012), They have intended to provide some insights regarding the adoption of internet advertising by the Iranian small and medium-sized enterprises and the recent negative trends leading to a lack of competitive advantages amongst the different businesses. The study has made analysis over the latent variables like advertising agencies, publishers on websites, product involvement, and government role. By using the structural equation model and the casual model analysis they have developed the different hypothesis on the variable of e-commerce development, user type, government role, product involvement and advertising agencies. They had concluded that they should create the direct routes, ports and the channels by using the banners and other forms of internet advertising in order to grab the more internet users towards their websites.

Catherine Tucker, (2011), investigated how internet users' perception of control over their personal information affects how likely they were to click on online advertising. The paper used data from a randomized field experiment that examined the relative effectiveness of personalizing ad copy with posted personal information on a social networking website. The website gave users more control over their personally identifiable information in the middle of the field test. They obtained daily data from the NPO on how well each of the ads performed for the duration of the experiment. There were 79 different ad campaigns for which we obtained daily data on the number of times they were shown and the number of clicks. In total these ads were shown to 1.2 million users and they received 1,995 clicks. When a user clicked on the ad, they were taken to the NPO's Facebook page.

Michael A. Stelzner,(2011), found that marketers placed high value in social media. Measurement and integration were top wereas marketers want to master, Social media marketing takes a lot of time, Video marketing on the rise, Marketers seek to learn more about Facebook and blogging, The top benefits of social media marketing. A significant 2278 people provided their open-ended responses. They have studied various variables like the demographic features i.e. age, gender and other variables like search engine optimization, email marketing, online advertising, event marketing. The largest group who took the survey was self-employed (33%) followed by people working for a company with up to 100 employees (30%). 19% of people taking the survey worked for businesses with 100 or more employees.

Nick Pemisco (2011), focused on various issues like social media and companies, social media harassment, the importance of being literate, methods advertisers use on social media sites, balancing social media advertising with user freedoms and the social media changing social interactions and the global advertising. The study concluded that there were

various issues of the e-marketing which were needed to be focused to improve the marketing all over the global businesses.

P. Sri Jothi et. al, (2011), analyzed the effective communication strategy through social networking sites, to study the effectiveness of brand communication through social networking sites from its users and communicators, to find the impact of interaction through these communication among Indian users (with reference to Face book, Twitter and Orkut). To analyze and find the effectiveness of communication strategy in developing brand, communication through social networking sites was done with the survey method and content analysis in the research. The survey method helped to identify the reach of the brand among its target audience, ways of impact, usage of these social networking sites and access to these forms of communication. And the content analysis is another method used to analyze the communication strategy of different social networking sites with certain parameters among top three Indian social networking sites which were tabulated with results. This research study adopted survey and content analysis in order to find the effectiveness and the impact of communication in branding any product or the service among the target market through social networking sites like Face book, Twitter and Orkut. Survey was conducted randomly among Face book, Twitter and Orkut user community, by sending questionnaire. through online to collect the individual opinion from the respondents. The study found that all the respondents that is, 100% of respondents have profiles on Face book. And also, 88% respondents of the same group have profiles on Orkut, 62% respondents have connected to Twitter and 37% of users have account on other social networking sites. The finding of the study states that the audiences respond more to interactive marketing than the traditional ads followed in internet advertising. Almost everyone is communicated through social networking sites. Nearly 70% of the audience has impact through ads in social networking sites and half of them access these ads e.g. games, quiz, events, etc. Users remember the brand by the way they advertise. They respond to any new form of advertising which interest them. Social networking sites will become the primary wereas for highly targeted marketing and advertising. Social networking sites present an unmatched opportunity to build brand. Users of Face book and Orkut were of same age group and category. In Twitter, people do not show much interest because it's just like a micro-blogging site.

Christopher Chan, (2011), examined the effectiveness of using online advertising on the social networking site Facebook in encouraging university students to connect with their library's Facebook page. In total, 102 new fans were recorded over the two-month campaign period A two-month paid Facebook advertising campaign was conducted. Using the tools provided by Facebook Adverts, the campaign was targeted only at current students at the university who were not already connected with the library's Facebook page. At the conclusion of the campaign, the statistics recorded by Facebook Adverts were used to assess how effective the advertisement had been in attracting new connections. The campaign statistics showed that the advertisement was shown frequently to the targeted user group, and that the click through rate for the advertisement was high. Furthermore, the advertisement accounted *for over half of the new connections made to the library's Facebook page during the campaign period.

Kumar, et. al, (2010), focused on the social network advertising, direct advertising and the advertisements effectiveness with the help of reach, prominence, uniqueness, purpose, customizability and data and personal experience. They had focused on the main reasons for the social networks used as advertising tools as the cost efficiency, large reach, targeted advertising, time spent online. The objective of the study was to determine the impacts of advertisements on social networking sites and to determine the criteria for successful advertising and social networking medium. There were certain criteria/variables which were the part of the study were age group filtering, enlightening ads in celebrities' pages, attracting the users towards their motive, seasonal ads, best use of calligraphy, the place and time to advertise and the appearances of the site and advertisements. The survey was conducted on 80 people on the bases of these criteria and they concluded that the company should apply such marketing techniques which make the product introduced which can earn enough revenue. They had also mentioned that an advertisement in a website was unable to convey the actual Intel to use then the need for an advertisement is not fulfilled.

Fahri Karakaya et. al, (2010), studied the different tools of advertisement used as the television, radio and print media and their comparison with the online advertisements as the opinion polls and comments generated by the internet users. On the basis of certain hypothesis like value placed on online sources of information about the customer were experience positively impacts consumer opinion about online media making a difference in customer were, value placed on online sources of information about customer were experience positively impacts consumer engagement of online activity. For measurement purpose, the survey instrument included questions using five-point likert scales to capture data on consumer use of social media to learn about customer were, and the availability of the sources of information and different motivational factors for a customer through social media. A descriptive statistic of the variables measuring the value of social media, consumer opinion, consumer online engagement and consumer decision on choosing brands on the basis of factor analysis, construct reliability and validity. The hypotheses were accepted that there is a strong positive relationship between the consumer engagement in online activity and consumer decision to choose brands/companies based on the customer cwere experiences shwered online. The conclusion for the study was that the companies can utilize the information provided by consumers through different online channels which shows the customers about the concerns of the company and the companies can also get better idea about the consumers whether they were satisfied or not and can take the corrective actions.

Eric K. Clemons, (2009), founded that the social networking sites had an impact on the traditional advertisements and the current advertising, techniques and also focuses on the future of the advertising. The modem consumer views the net as transparent and naturally occurring community postings and the recommendations of known friends outweigh paid placements and paid reviews. Placements of products in movies or in video games were likely to be ignored; the presence of advertisements directly into movies or video games .be resented.

Cece salamon-lee, (2009), found about the charges for the advertisements on the social networking sites and the misconception was that social media was free the social media was charging certain amount for the advertising on the various social networking sites. While this may be for the tools, the time cost was the time and people power to develop, implement, monitor, respond and measure a social media program.

Rohan Miller, et. al, (2009), found some way to follow their target audiences, many new media opportunities were presented to advertisers. However, they were still social media pioneers. While the boom in social marketing appears persuasive with an estimated 70% of consumers visiting a social website for information, other research points out that 90% of WOM conversations still occurred face to face or by phone, and only 7 percent occurs online. In contrast to traditional advertising media such as television, there were measurement and consumer behaviour modelling issues that needed to be addressed before marketers that measure and manage their media investments were able to fully embrace the opportunities and navigate the risks presented by social media. Ultimately, advertisers will be forced beyond the "oldschool" approaches to adopt many of the principles and techniques of relationship marketing in order to effectively use social media and likely the multiple niche co-creations of products and services. By tapping into or creating their own online social networks, social media marketers could influence a brand community and potentially influence consumer behavior. The paper concluded that advertising effectiveness in the rapidly digitalizing world of television was improved through the adoption of synergistic paradigms of multiple-niche co-creation.

Irena Pletikosa Cvijikj, et. al, (2009), described a system for evaluating the behavioral impact of Facebook on the decision-making process. The variables for the study were Social networks, Social influence, Consumer behavior, Internet of Things. The paper described initial results obtained from an online survey. At the time this paper is being written, the Facebook Developer application statistics show a total number of 534 active users and they had added 220 things to their repositories. These results confirmed the existing statements from sociologists that people see their friends as the most reliable source of information. The results indicated that friend's opinion on a product plays a bigger role than whether a friend possesses a product. The participants agreed that they can use Thing Book to Shwere their product experiences with friends. This paper had described a Facebook application that allowed sharing information about products among friends, as a tool for analyzing the impact of friends on consumer behavior. Initial results obtained from the survey have confirmed our expectations, that friends were considered as the most reliable source compeered to other sources of information.

Mrinal Todi, (2008), emphasized on why social networks were important to businesses as an advertising medium and attempt to review the current advertising methods that were in place. There were major two objectives on which the research has been carried out they were, to establish the importance of social networks as an advertising medium and to determine the criteria for the successful advertising on this new medium. The variables for the study were the large reach, cost efficiency, targeted advertising, time spent online for which they found out certain reasons they were the reach, prominence, customizability and the data and personal experience. The study has concluded that the advertising on social

networking sites that went beyond the traditional banner ads and it has gone beyond the traditional marketing factors and it has found that mostly successful cases in order to draw its hypotheses about successful criteria for online advertising. Unfortunately, time constraints and lack of information prevented the testing of these hypotheses against more unsuccessful cases. This was one which cannot be ignored in future research.

Anindya Ghose, et. al, (2008), found that the search engines which were used for the advertising purpose and the variables under the study were impressions, clicks, orders, click through rate, conversion rate, cost per click, lag rank, log profit, retailer, brand, length, landing page quality and competitor price. The sample size for the study was 9664 and the methods for data analysis used were mean and standard deviation, coefficient estimates on click-through rate, unobserved heterogeneity estimates in the click-through model, Coefficient Estimates on Conversion Rate, Unobserved Heterogeneity Estimates in the Conversion Model, Coefficient Estimates on CPC, Unobserved Heterogeneity Estimates in the CPC Model, Unobserved Heterogeneity Estimates in the Keyword Rank Model.

Ishat, (2001) examined how branding was affected by the following Web purchase-related factors: security, brand name, word-of-mouth, good online experience, quality of information, and form of advertisement. The major goal of this research was to assist practitioners and researchers who were interested in the strategic aspects of both brand trust and familiarity on the Internet. Quantitative research was the systematic scientific investigation used to measure the feelings and thoughts of people' and actions of the way and why things were done. A sample of 120 respondents was selected. The study obtained six random samples of 20 respondents each and then we compared the sample of 120 respondents on the basis of demographics and the overall Web experience and trust scales used in the study. Thus, we can be reasonably being assured that the data set used in our study was not biased.

SECTION III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Social media marketing seeks to engage customers where they naturally spend their time. Social business picks up on what customers are talking about and connects this back into business where it can be processed to create the next round of customer experiences. No more sweeping consumer's problems under the rug in the Customer Care department - active social listening, understanding consumer sentiment, and having a social policy are baseline of smart business practices in the twenty first century. Out of all this, the researcher sought to study and register down the one important side of this changing buying behavior as a result of influence of advertisement on social networking sites. The viewers of the social networking sites come across such advertisement. The researcher intends to study the Influences of Consumer Products Advertising through Social Networking Sites on Buying Behaviour of Consumers.

Objective of Research:

1. To examine whether buying decisions are independent from the types of advertisement viewed on social networking sites.

2. To examine whether the consumer products' advertisement on social networking sites induce the consumers to buy products.

3. To examine whether the customers who purchased the products on the basis of consumer products' advertisement on social networking sites recommend to others / friends to purchase the same product.

Research design for this study is combination of Descriptive and Analytical in nature. Descriptive is due to the fact-finding characteristics of users of social networking sites and its relationship with consumer products' advertisement and its influence on buying behaviour. The study is Analytical due to the characteristic of its Analysis. It involves a sound and scientific analysis of data with the help of measures of central tendency, measures of variation, hypothesis testing and the regression analysis.

Primary Data have been collected with the help of structured non-disguised questionnaire from the respondents who are referring Social Networking Sites for availing information about the products to be purchased by them. Questionnaire contains four sections. The First section of the questionnaire pertains to demographic profile of the respondents. The Second section of the questionnaire incorporates questions pertaining to consumer products' advertisement and its effectiveness appearing on social networking sites. The third section of questionnaire is about questions related to buying behaviour and influences of advertising, on social networking sites on buying behaviour of respondents under study. Regression Analysis used to establish cause and effect relationship between dependent and independent variables along with functional relationship for prediction of dependent variable on the basis of various independent variable responsible as influencing variables for prediction of dependent variable, thereby evolving regression model. The collected data on independent as well as dependent variables have been analysed with the help of SPSS package.

SECTION IV: DATA ANALYSIS

In this study, considering the main objective, the dependent variable is considered to be the buying decision based on the influence of the consumer products' advertisements appearing on the social networking sites. The independent variables, considering the study undertaken are: Advertisement on Social Networking Sites, Advertisement on other than Social Networking Sites and Income of the Respondents. Under independent variable, Advertisement on Social Networking Sites, four types of advertisements appearing on social networking sites, namely web banner, flash ads, pop ups and video ads are considered. Under independent variable, Advertisement on other than Social Networking Sites, eleven types of advertisements namely, television ads, radio ads, Product website, Store visit, Press release, Print Display Ads, Email Marketing, Friends, Colleagues and neighbors are

considered. Under independent variable, Income of the Respondents, family income (monthly) has been considered.

Table 1: Regression Analysis

Estimation of Coefficients						
Model		**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t – statistics**	**Sig.**
		B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1	(Constant)	2.299	0.126	18.317		0.000
	Web banner	0.182	0.032	0.201	5.645	0.000
	Flash ads	-0.029	0.037	-0.031	-0.787	0.432
	Pop-ups	0.072	0.030	0.083	2.386	0.017
	Video ads	0.032	0.024	0.038	1.299	0.194
	Television Adv	0.209	0.029	0.220	7.220	0.000
	Radio Adv	-0.034	0.028	-0.041	-1.204	0.229
	Product website	0.031	0.032	0.036	0.989	0.323
	Store visit	-0.020	0.028	-0.025	-0.730	0.465
	Press release	0.022	0.030	0.027	0.730	0.466
	Print Display Adv	-0.017	0.031	-0.021	-0.561	0.575
	Email Marketing	-0.033	0.029	-0.041	-1.140	0.255
	Friends	0.009	0.033	0.011	0.267	0.789
	Family	0.052	0.032	0.063	1.603	0.109
	Colleagues	0.032	0.031	0.039	1.013	0.311
	Neighbours	-0.027	0.025	-0.035	-1.087	0.277
	Family Income	-0.046	0.017	-0.066	-2.661	0.008
a. Dependent Variable: Influence on final buying decision						

On the basis of above computation, regression equation is derived as under:

$BD = \alpha + \beta_1 X1 + \beta_2 X2 + \beta_3 X3 + e$

BD = Buying Decision

- X_1 = Advertisement on Social Networking Sites (X_{101} = Web Banner, X_{102} = Pop-Ups, X_{103} = Flash Ads and X_{104} = Video Ads)

- X_2 = Advertisement on other than Social Networking Sites (X_{201} = Television Adv, X_{202} = Radio Adv, X_{203} = Product website, X_{204} = Store visit, X_{205} = Press release, X_{206} = Print Display Adv, X_{207} = Email Marketing, X_{208} = Friends, X_{209} = Family, X_{210} = Colleagues, X_{211} = Neighbours & X_{212} = Family Income)

- X_3 = Income of the Respondents

- e = Error Term and P are the coefficient of estimates.

$BD = 2.299 + 1.82\ X_{101} - 0.029\ X_{102} + 0.072\ X_{103} + 0.032\ X_{104} + 0.209\ X_{201} - 0.034\ X_{202} + 0.031\ X_{203} - 0.020\ X_{204} + 0.022\ X_{205} - 0.017\ X_{206} - 0.033\ X_{207} + 0.009\ X_{208} + 0.052\ X_{209} + 0.032\ X_{210} - 0.027\ X_{211} - 0.046\ X_{212} + e$

The alpha value is worked out to be 2.299 which is constant while the coefficients of various independent variables have been computed which have been reflected in above equation. The regression equation also comprises the error term to nullify the error committed during

the derivation of regression equation. Buying decisions are independent from the types of advertisement viewed on social networking sites. The t value is 28.447 > 1.96 and p value is 0.000 < 0.05. Thus, it is concluded that buying decisions are dependent from the types of advertisement viewed on social networking sites.

Buying decisions are independent from the flash ads types of advertisement viewed on social networking sites. The t value is -0.269 < 1.96 and p value is 0.000 > 0.05. Thus, null hypothesis accepted and it is concluded that buying decisions are independent from the flash ads types of advertisement viewed on social networking sites. Buying decisions are independent from the video ads types of advertisement viewed on social networking sites. The t value is 1.37<1,96 and p value is 0.000>0,05. Thus, it is concluded that Buying decisions are independent from the video ads types of advertisement viewed on social networking sites

SECTION V: CONCLUSION

The main objective is to analyze the extent of influence of the consumer products' advertisement on social networking sites on the buying behaviour of consumers. Thus, it is found that the different types of advertisements appearing on the social networking sites are having positive image in the mind of the respondents as most of them are agreeing to the importance of the types of advertisements that provide the information about the products/services.

Social networking sites not only provides users to have only social relations with the people of their choice, but also provides platform/domain to business houses to have their own identity on product-pages, which are easily accessible by the general users just by writing the name of product/service for which they would like to have the information. Therefore, all business-houses are using social networking sites as aggressive and effective marketing tool. The findings of the study undertaken by the researcher reveal that users of social networking sites do generally view the advertisement appearing on such sites. Those users who are in need of specific product do search for product information on social networking sites. Some of the users who are having time shortage for shopping do solely rely on social networking sites for their buying decisions.

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