

Impact of Social Media on Consumer Decision Making

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Abstract - Social media play a significant role in consumer decision making as the users generated information has a huge influence on their decision making process by the usage of social media. It became more popular now days. The tools are perceived as a source to the consumers to gather the information about the products. Especially In pre-purchase stage many of the consumers agreed that social media provides them with external stimuli to recognize their need for something before purchase of a product. The consumers will trigger their need to purchase that what to buy, where to buy, why to buy through the interaction with their peer groups, friends, influences. The social media setting is best way to reach the consumers and helpful in decision making. Marketers are beneficial by the social media to advance their marketing strategy, which helps to reach more consumers and to lead the market. People believe in what the others recommended, their reviews and experiences. post purchase will help to know about the satisfaction levels of consumers. The marketers will analyze the consumer's opinion after the purchase. The consumer makes a decision to repeat the purchase or to choose another brand. Social media is more reliable, it contributes the purchase preference by providing relevant information to consumers. It gives differentiation between alternative brands and its price variations, so that consumers will identify their information and select to purchase a product. The main aim of this paper is to know how social media tools influence consumer decision making by comparing other products.

Key words: Social media, Decision making, Tools, Consumers buying behavior, Market analysis.

I. INTRODUCTION

Today's technology driven world social media has become avenue where marketers can extend their marketing campaigns to reach a wider range of consumers. Social media is associated with social networks such as face book, you tube, twitter, instagram, pinterest etc.....

Now the social media has a great influence on every stage of consumer decision making process

Present days consumers trust user reviews, ratings, recommendations, suggestions rather than traditional media. It becomes supreme source for consumers who are seeking to obtain product information. Many researchers' suggested that consumers engagement via social media interactive tools is becoming critical important as more marketers incorporate social media.

Social media is a form of interactive media by which users can communicate with each other through posts , content , photos ,videos , comments ,forums ,blogs all forms of social media.

Social media is a collection of online plat forms and tools that people use to share content, profiles, opinions,

perspectives, experiences and media itself facilitating conversations and interactions online between groups of peoples. In recent years the development of technology has provided with a virtual environment which brings them together and increase the interaction between consumers and marketers

Mangold and Fauds (2009) also suggest that social media has important influences on every stage of consumer decision making process including information acquisition, brand awareness, purchase behavior and post- purchase communication and evaluation nowadays consumers trust more on user reviews and online consumer recommendations on social media websites rather than traditional media before making a purchase decision. The consumer's comments about a product on social media platform produce negative and positive virtual messages and these messages affect their purchase decision (**chung and Austra, 2010**)

Every day people are buying things which are relevant to their needs. At the same time they are making purchasing decisions. Specific consumers behavior is defined as the activities people undertake when obtaining, consuming and

disposing of products and services (Blackwell, Miniard & Engel, 2001) many researchers have suggested that consumers' interaction via social media interactive tools is becoming critically important to the marketers. Social media websites are creating a venue for consumers to exchange the information about brands and products. Social media is a tool to understand how young online consumers think the factors that influence their attitudes, as it determines social media marketing communication

OBJECTIVES:

- To know the impact of social media on consumer decision making
- To know How the consumers attend and select the information before purchase on social media
- To know the changes social media has brought to consumers in different stages of their decision making process

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mainye assumpter nyagucha, Dr. Peter kiriri(2017), the main thing is how the social media will impact to the youth in online buying process especially how the social media will influence in pre-purchase, purchase and post purchase stages. Social media is more reliable on uncertainties about to purchase a product. It contributes the information to give preference after getting relevant information consumer make a decision to buy the products.

Liana Razmerita, Veronika Rouckova(2015) the social media has a huge influence on consumer decision making especially to the marketers to make a marketing strategy to develop the e-consumers relation management that connects to the people to the marketers. The social media gives tips or hints to others who are searching for the online recommendations.

Ghania Bilal, Mirza Ashfaq Ahmed And Mirza Naveed Shahzad,(2014), that how social media networks will affect on consumer decision making. They make a research on students and employees both private and public sectors. The social media will give inputs to different industries to know their consumers needs and happiness. The consumer believes on social media information. On the basis of this information more consumers make comparison among the alternative brands.

Kamajeet Kour And Selvi Salome Gnasigamoney (2014), to examine the impact of social media on the purchase behavior. In the past years there is not a wide scope to the social media but present day's strong influence of the social media. Especially in different stages in purchase decision making the reason why the consumers will trust the social media information because it is only source to first hand information.

Patarwadee Sema,(2013) the social media plays a vital role in communication that people use to connect to others. The people use the social media to share their experiences, reviews, information, advice, warnings tips to the other people. Most of people refer the social media for future purchase planning. It also tool for marketers to give advertisements. The social media is very easy to apply and reach the consumers.

Alberto Gonzalez (2013) this tells about how, when and why the social media will impact to the consumers. Here how the individuals are gathering, processing and selecting the information before going to purchase product.

Ayda Darban Wei Li, Desalegan Abraha(2012), to know the growth of social media interaction and communication between the people. Social networks are provides features and blow on people's activities in terms of communication and purchasing. Most of the people are spending more time on social networks and its features attract consumers to interact with the other peoples.

Sinem Ozer(2012), in this the technologies are represents a new way to consumers by developing a different range of content and tools to make a decision. The main thing is how the social network tools attract to the people to know the varieties and alternative brands accessible to a particular product and also the price variations will be existing by comparison in social network sites.

Daniel j. Poer And Gloria Philips Wren(2011) the information technology gives an opportunity to the consumers to make a decision. Social media networks heavily rely rather than experts' opinions and facts to make decisions. People are mostly depend on socially based information because the development of technologies. Social media appears possible to monitor and identify the patterns.

III. CONSUMER DECISION MAKING PROCESS

The relationship between social media and consumer decision making process present the social media affects advertising attitude, brand attitudes and purchasing intention of consumer. It will not necessarily affects consumers decision making but might possess a media can build brand attitudes that affect buying behavior. (2012, **tainikg**)

Consumers on social media shares or recommends services or products on their social media it affects brand attitude and influences their decision making process. Advertisement by social media is provides commercial sources affect both consumer brand attitudes and purchasing (wish , desire , aspiration)from that information's marketers plan their marketing strategies. It is not only for advertising but it can also be a tool for brands

or services to connect with their consumers another way is allows consumers and prospective consumers to communicate directly to a brand representative. Since the most consumers are using the social media as a device to search and purchase products, brands and services.

Consumers have three main gratifications or motives for using the internet as a medium namely as information, entertainment and social aspects. “Engel Blackwell and kollat have developed in 1968 a model of consumer buying decision process in five steps.

Stage 1: Need recognition

Every consumer buying process will be starts with a problem recognition that the significant difference between the desire and actual state of occurrence. Each person learns a need arise from actual surprising situation that may be internal or external. Those needs should be identified by the marketers to develop a best online marketing strategy to move next stage.

Stage 2: Information search

The information source s divided into two types like internal and external. Internal search involves the consumers’ memory about the products and external search includes the word of mouth, stores visit, online social networking and social media. Present generation online marketing effectively involves in purchase decision making process and social media becomes an important tool for information search.

Also have some external sources

- Personal, such as family and friends
- Commercial, such as company websites and online advertising
- Public, including consumer rating platforms, reviews, forums, blogs, communities.

Stage 3: evaluation of alternatives

After gathering of information, the assessing of values given to all possible alternatives Compare and evaluate several alternatives in terms of products features and their needs. Sometimes depending on their motives and goals consumers establish different criteria for evaluating alternatives

Stage 4: purchase decision

Once consumers have found their relevant alternatives and evaluated them, they should make their choice among the alternatives. This stage is accompanied with alternatives from who to buy, when to buy and do not buy the product or service. All those possibilities depends on own or someone experiences.

Stage 5: Post purchase behavior

After the purchase the consumer experiences meets the levels of satisfaction or and evaluates the wisdom of choice

made in selecting the alternative. If the consumers get satisfaction from the product or service then repeats the purchase if consumer may get dissatisfaction then repeats the alternatives evaluation.

Factors influence on consumer behavior to make a decision

1. Social groups:

The consumers interact continuously with their primary groups such as family friends and

Colleagues and the secondary groups such as professional groups. Many researchers said that

Family is the most important consumer buying reference group and the consumer mostly

Influenced by their family members

2. The individual consumer:

The consumers’ decision also influenced by personal characteristics such as age, gender, occupation and economic status, personality and life style, values.

3. Culture:

The culture also can be thought as a factor of consumers’ wants and cultural norms and values as guidelines for making a purchasing decision. Every culture consists similar subculture that provides more specification and socialization for their members and includes nationalities, religions and geographic regions.

4. Consumer psychology:

Consumers’ psychological process is also important in decision making process as well as consumers’ characteristics and they combine the four psychological factors like motivation, perception, learning, and memory.

5. Perception:

It means the concept that encompasses a consumer’s impression, awareness and consciousness about a product or service.

6. Learning:

After the perception the people learn the changes in their behavior coming from the experiences. Learning theories will helps to get the experience.

7. Memory:

All the information and experiences that people will get in their life can be store in their long term memory and most widely it will helps in decision making.

Impact of social media on consumer decision making process

Social media has a social interactive tool which is effective source to acquire information about the products at different prices and evaluate brand choices to make a

purchase decision. These tools are more trust worthy and credible source rather than company websites for collecting product and brand information. They also used for passing and sharing information among users.

Main important aspects of consumer decision making is market segmentation, because consumers within their segment are may less or may be more similar in terms of products needs. Consumers' physical and social environment is different and it has huge influence on consumers purchase decision and it makes a big difference between their desire and motives to purchase a product.

How the consumers attend and select the information before purchase on social media

Most circumstances a consumers decisions can be associated with the consumer perceived risk and the consumer may modify ,postpone and avoid a purchase decision because of the perceived risk .the consumers may perceive many type of risk in their purchasing decision function .

1. Consumer attitude:-

Consumer eventually forms preferences among the brands in the choice desk.

However there are two factors which can interfere between the purchase intension and purchase decision attitude of the others and unanticipated situational factors. (Kotler and Keller 2009). Consumers' attitude is key concept on consumer behavior that was defined as set of beliefs, experiences and feelings forming a predisposition to act in each direction. Attitude is created by the evaluation of a product or brand in two directions which is favorable or unfavorable.

2. Consumer motivation:-

Motivation also affects the buying behavior of consumers since every person has different needs some of them are most pressing while others are least pressing. Another one a need becomes a motive when it is more pressing to direct the person to seek satisfaction.

3. Consumer perception:-

Consumer perception (gros,2012) observes might associate low price with low quality and also perceives that social media and brand reputation has force on purchasing decision than price of the product. In (Rant 2014) this perception is the process through which on individual select organizes and interprets the information. The perception exists a relationship between perceived Value, quality and risk. Consumer may use price as an indicator of quality, it creates price- Quality relationship. If the price of the product increase consumer perception of value increases to some extent. Value can decrease the price is beyond price range set by the consumer

IV. POST PURCHASE DECISION

After the consumption of a product the consumer experiences certain levels of satisfaction or dissatisfaction and they know the wisdom of the choice made in choosing the alternative. The consumer decides whether to move from the product to used repeatedly or choose alternative. The consumers always have alternatives regarding the products priority, frequency of usage and new circumstances of new users. It will be influence their future decisions and that customers use social media to talk about their own experiences about the product is good or bad. They share feedback and opinions to their peers.

1. Feedback loop:-

The most valuable aspect of social media are in building and maintaining feedback loop. The conversations are more dynamic and flow in two way. Consumers start to compare their perceptions of the product with their expectations.

2. Product ownership:-

In the post purchase period consumer word of mouth transmissions provide informal communications which are directed at other consumers about the ownership. In this the consumer behavior may easily change time by time and social media has created a way of consumer behavior pattern by providing social interactive tools to share their product related opinions in purchasing process

3. Satisfaction and dissatisfaction:-

Gros describes satisfaction as an important aspect in creating desirable consumer outcomes and the way to measure satisfaction is based on existing consumers those who have experience about the product or service. Savinta (2017) concludes that consumer is more likely to make repeat purchase only if they derive an acceptable minimum level satisfaction.

V. FINDINGS

- Social media will be influence on the pre purchase stage of consumer decision making
- Social media effects on the purchase stage of consumer decision making
- Social media helps on post purchase stage of consumer decision making

VI. CONCLUSION

From the information it is clearly proven that social media has become one of the strongest source of reference used by consumers in the decision making process. The most important reason why social media is more sought after compared to others means due to the firsthand information provided by other users. Previously in making decision consumers will need to relay on information provided mostly one way communication by the organization only.

But in social media users particularly discuss on related to the product such as price, advantages, features and most importantly the comparison is done with the another competitive product.

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