

Impact of COVID-19 on Social Media Marketing in Tamil Nadu

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Abstract

The present research paper is focusing on quantifying the impact of COVID-19 on social media marketing in Tamil Nadu which raises the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adaptation of social media marketing. The primary data on the field are collected through questionnaires and secondary data were collected through internet and journals. A sample of 117 respondents is collected from social media users, out of which, most of the respondents are of 21–30 age group. It was founded that there is an increase in social media usage during lockdown. Thus, the study concludes that there is a high increase of purchasing through social media during COVID-19 pandemic in Tamil Nadu which was not much before the happening of COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: COVID-19, social media apps, types of ads

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 epidemic has radically altered the planet. People differ in a variety of ways including how they live, shop, and think. Supply chains have seen significant transformations. Retailers are barricading doors. Consumers all across the world are looking at items and businesses through a fresh perspective. The globe as a whole is becoming a more diversified and mature marketplace as a result of globalisation, and rising technology has made it more competitive. With the COVID-19 epidemic, there has been a major and sustained shift in consumer transactions made online. The social media platform is for interaction. Apart from accessing information, people use social media and its platforms for purchase during the pandemic. The complete lockdown has opened a way to purchase online. People use social media to increase their purchases in addition to reading news and other updates. Eighty-two percent of respondents said they can access brand information about any product using social media. Online business marketers utilized the social media usage pattern more favorable to promote their products. Global Web Index survey stated that there was an increase in social media usage by 10.5% from July 2019 to 2020. Therefore, social media ranked second place in digital activity.

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SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Social Media marketing (SMM) is a form of Internet marketing that utilizes social networking websites as a marketing tool. The purpose of social media marketing (SMM) is to create content that users will share with their social networks in order to help a firm boost brand awareness and consumer reach [1].

We have seen a significant change in how business is performed and individuals interact over the last 40 years. Personal computers, the Internet,

and e-commerce have all had a significant impact on how firms work and market. The adoption of social media technologies is speeding up, and we can anticipate that it will have a comparable impact on businesses now and in the future. Businesses that learn to use new technologies benefit greatly as new technologies become available. Some of the best-known examples include technology-driven companies such as Microsoft, ebay, Amazon, and Google. In a short span of time, social media has become one of the most loved mediums for the Indian youths today [2].

The hottest new marketing concept is social media marketing, and every business owner wants to know how it may benefit their company. People are social creatures that gather and exchange knowledge that is meaningful to them. Understanding how technology is making it simpler for people to engage socially with their social networks and how your business can benefit from that understanding is the goal of social media marketing. More and more of your customers utilise social media in their everyday lives, whether for personal, business-to-consumer, or business-to-business reasons. A prevalent misunderstanding is that social media and social networking sites (SNS) are the same thing [3].

Social media platforms allow people to share and discuss information. It is a type of online media that invites all members to provide feedback and contribute. It is a social instrument of two way communication facilitating the sharing of information between users within a defined network via web 2.0. It involves online activities in which the user contributes to content creation. This media encourages user involvement which can be as simple as posting comments or giving votes or as complex as recommending content to other user on the basis of preferences of people with similar interests and lifestyle. As a result, social media can be defined as a broad word that encompasses behaviour in which people rapidly generate, share, bookmark, and network content [4].

Social networking sites, on the other hand, are places where people may build communities of interest and connect with others. To interact with individuals and establish relationships, social networking sites make use of social media technology. Individuals can create a profile within a limited system, share it with other users, and view and navigate their list of connections as well as those generated by others within the system on social networking sites. As a result, social networking sites might be considered a type of social media.

The growing reliance on technology for fundamental communication underscores the need of examining how these social networking sites impact daily operations. A social networking site can be joined by anyone, including teenagers and young adults, women, men, affluent consumers, and the elderly. Once the user has enrolled, he or she can begin to socialise and build a network of people who have common interests or aspirations [5]. Sites like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are changing how people form, maintain, and grow a variety of social ties, from deep friendships to casual acquaintances.

Consumers today want to be more informed about products before they make the purchase. Most significantly, social networks are incredibly capable of informing and influencing purchasing decisions, as many users now place greater trust in their peers' opinions than in marketing strategists'. Customers now have the ability to speak back to brands and share their thoughts about them. Marketers have no choice but to treat them differently and with more respect as a result. India has one of the largest populations in the world and it has developed considerable digital Infrastructure in recent years. Therefore, India is emerging into a significant digital communications market.

India is the world's second-largest telecom market, with 1.2 billion subscribers, and the third-largest Internet market, with 500 million users. Furthermore, social media can give Indian firms with a digital channel for segmented customer communications, thanks to the millions of Facebook and Twitter users. As a result, India offers enormous potential for digital marketing expansion [6].

LITERATURE REVIEW

Andrew N. Mason, Matt Brown, Kevin Mason and John Narcum (2021) [7] summarized the literature on Pandemic effects on social media marketing behaviors in India. The findings demonstrated increased usage of social media as a tool for consumer decision making. Data has been collected 313 Indian consumers to compare how their social media behaviors for consumer decision making have changed since the COVID-19 pandemic started. A Wilcoxon signed rank test was used to test mean differences in social media behaviors prior to and after the COVID-19 pandemic began. A questionnaire created by Mason et al. (2021) was used to examine social media behaviors and was administered as a survey to gather social media behaviors in India. Respondents completed the survey by rating statements about their consumer decision-making social media use.

Andrew N. Mason, John Narcum and Kevin Mason (2021) [8] summarized the literature on Social media marketing gains importance after COVID-19. This research examines how the COVID-19 outbreak in the United States influenced customers' social media marketing practices (U.S.). 327 customers in the United States were surveyed using a questionnaire. To investigate mean differences in consumers' use of social media as a consumer decision-making tool, ANOVA tests were used. Consumers are increasingly using social media to identify items, obtain information about products, evaluate products, and make product purchases, according to the data. As a result, the findings show that social media marketing has become increasingly important since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on consumers' social media behaviors were analyzed using One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) with a blocking factor employed to test for statistical significance between the behavioral mean responses before and after the COVID-19 pandemic was declared.

Hilde A.M. Voorveld, Guda van Noort, Daniel G. Muntinga and Fred Bronner (2018) [9] summarized the literature on Engagement with Social Media and Social Media Advertising. This study looks at how users' interactions with social media platforms influence how they interact with advertising on such platforms and, as a result, how they evaluate that advertising. A total of 1346 persons aged 13 and up were included in the survey sample. Their findings show that engagement is highly context specific and it consists of a variety of different types of experiences on each social media site, each of which is distinct. Furthermore, it is demonstrated that participation with social media advertising is crucial in explaining how social media engagement is linked to advertising ratings. There is no such thing as "social media", according to the common consensus. TNS NIPO, a market research firm, gathered the statistics at the end of 2015. Data was gathered via a questionnaire.

Rupa Rathee, Pallavi Rajain, and Tejaswini (2021) [10] summarized the literature on the impact of YouTube as a social media marketing tool. For this particular study, researchers choosed YouTube as it has more than a billion users worldwide and has usage for all types of people and profession. The goal was to see how effective YouTube is as a marketing and advertising tool. The information was gathered via a structured questionnaire distributed via Google forms. Data was collected from 203 people who watched videos on YouTube on a regular basis using non-probability sampling. The data was analyzed using SPSS version 23. The study found that majority of the users regularly watched advertisements on YouTube. They discovered that advertising featuring memorable music and well-known actors were more appealing. Furthermore, regression analysis demonstrated that users' perceptions of commercials influenced their purchasing decisions for the relevant goods.

A. Navitha Sulthana and S. Vasantha (2021) [11] summarized the literature on usage of social media on purchase during COVID-19. The aim of the study is to find the social media interaction during COVID-19. Finding: the study explores that people were more active on social media during COVID-19. As a result, the online purchase during pandemic increased due to social distancing. The study conducted among thirty social media users. Based on the communication with them, they access social media platform widely to obtain information related with COVID-19. The study was contacted

through interaction in social media platforms and smartphone application. The other information is collected from published articles and websites related to social media and COVID-19. Published journals, periodical, online forums are reviewed and take into account for the study.

Rohit Bansal, Rana Zehra Masood and Varsha Dadhich (2013) [12] summarized the literature on “social media marketing—A tool of innovative marketing”. This article explains what social media marketing is and how to do it. It also identifies the obstacles and possibilities that the social media sector faces as well as the current and future trends in the field of social media marketing. Customers, both existing and prospective are increasingly using social media to discuss the products and services they buy or intend to buy. The relevance of tapping such messages has been acknowledged by leading businesses. Companies that want to develop communication and marketing strategies while gaining a competitive advantage over their competitors can use social media, which is a new innovative tool that has millions of users all over the world. It offers several possibilities and opportunities to companies that want to develop communication and marketing strategies while gaining a competitive advantage over their competitors.

A. Navitha Sulthana, M. Ruby Evangelin, and S. Vasantha (2021) [13] summarized the literature on influence of social media marketing in post COVID-19. The aim of the study is to examine the influence of social media marketing in post COVID-19. To raise awareness and enhance sales, online marketing is promoted through various social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, blogs, and WhatsApp, especially after COVID-19. The primary data was acquired from 207 online users by convenience sampling and a survey approach. According to the conclusions of the study, social media platforms are one of the most successful techniques for increasing sales. Of the digital era, the breakout of COVID-19, social alienation, and the risk of inheritance when visiting a physical store are the key reasons for an increase in online sales.

Yogesh K Dwivedi, Hsin Chen and Kawal Kapoor [14] summarized the literature on social media marketing and advertising. This study aims to compile existing research on social media marketing (SMM) in order to give a review of seventy-one papers that will cover the numerous features of this quickly growing media marketing technique. The limits that have surfaced in the literature on social media have also been identified, as well as possible study initiatives. It has been put on a pedestal across varied streams for facilitating participatory interaction amongst businesses, groups, societies, organizations, consumers, communities, forums, and the like. This subject has received increased attention in the literature with many of its practical applications including social media marketing (SMM) being elaborated, analyzed, and recorded by many studies.

Sayabek Ziyadin, Raigul Doszhan, Alex Borodin, Aizhan Omarova and Aigerim Ilyas (2019) summarized the literature on the role of social media marketing in consumer behavior. The article examines how consumers experience and are influenced by the digital environment they are in as part of their daily lives. Methodology used here is a comparison was made for the analysis using statistics on the use of social networks. Expert and analytical publications and other open sources of information were used as sources of secondary information. Five different research topics are covered by the recent consumer research on social media. Five themes: consumer digital culture, advertising, digital environment, mobile and online WOM. The most popular topics were online WOM, which covered almost half of the articles, and advertising, represented by just over a quarter of the articles. They concluded that use of social media in marketing will increase brand loyalty, directly, and on a regular basis, to interact with potential customers in the digital economy, so many companies understand the importance and necessity of using social media in marketing [15].

NEED OF THE STUDY

According to a survey conducted on social media usage across India in October and November 2020, the majority of respondents across all generations spent more than six hours per week on social

networking sites. Annual Facebook user growth rate in 2020 is 8%. A survey conducted between July and October 2020 revealed that 61 percent of generation Z and Millennials were watching more videos on social media apps during the COVID-19 pandemic. People are started to spend most of their time in social media during pandemic. This in result gave a way for social media marketers to engage with people. This study results in the effectiveness of social media marketing among social media users during COVID-19.

METHODOLOGY

The type of research taken for the study is descriptive in nature. Primary data was collected through survey from the people of the Tamil Nadu. The questionnaire was constructed with open ended, close ended and Likert scale questions. Sample size 117 respondent is picked with the help of convenience sampling.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyze the awareness level of social media users towards the mode of social media marketing.
2. To find the type of advertisements users coming across every day.
3. To find out the likeliness of seeing advertisement in the social media.
4. To find out the intension to explore the advertisement in social media.
5. To find out the purchase intension of the product.

FINDINGS

1. According to the analysis, it has been founded that 21–30 age group of people are more exposed to social media marketing.
2. The involvement of females towards social media usage is higher than that of males.
3. 50.8% of the people are having account in more than 3 social media apps.
4. Out of 100%, 49.2% of people are using Instagram regularly and 35.6% of the people are using YouTube regularly than other apps.
5. There is a significant difference between before COVID-19 and after COVID-19 in the usage of social media application.
6. People are spending more hours in social media after COVID. Usage of social media has been increased after COVID.
7. Frequency of image ads that people coming across during COVID is medium with 54.2%.
8. Frequency of blog ads that people coming across during COVID is medium with 55.1%.
9. Frequency of video ads that people coming across during COVID is medium with 33.9%.
10. Frequency of text ads that people coming across during COVID is medium with 37.3%.
11. People are most likely to explore video ads than other ads.
12. Music attracts the people to watch ads rather than content, pictures and influencers.
13. Ads are watched less than time limit of 15 seconds by the social media users.
14. Ads are strongly creating irritation to the people according to the survey.
15. The level of interest towards ads is very low among people.
16. YouTube with 83.1% and Instagram with 12.7% showing more ads than other apps.
17. Not more than 1 time social media users have clicked and visited products.
18. Majority of the people does not have any items in their cart.
19. It is observed that price criteria with a highest mean score plays a major role in buying products through social media when compared to other criteria's.
20. Most of the people have bought only one item during COVID through seeing social media ads.
21. Dresses are being purchased more than household materials, beauty products, gadgets and others.
22. After COVID, the purchasing of items through social media has been increased.
23. The repeat purchase is less through social media by the consumers.
24. Products which are marketed through social media are been suggested to other people.
25. There is an influence of exploring social media ads on purchasing behavior of respondents.
26. There is no influence of level of interest towards ads on purchasing behavior of respondents.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Products for female can be more advertised since the usage of social media by female is higher than males.
2. Advertisements can be more published in Instagram and YouTube to reach wide range of customers.
3. Advertising can be designed in the form of video to attract people's attention.
4. Social media marketers should give short and crisp content with attracting music feature.
5. People are losing interest in seeing ads after 15 seconds. So it is suggested to give the useful and needed information to the consumer within 15 seconds.
6. Since people are buying items according to their prices and discounts, so it can be given for the products to attain customers.
7. Repeat purchase is less during COVID; this may be due to the delivery of damaged products. This can be rectified by taking several measures.

CONCLUSION

The influence of social media on consumers is evident. For business marketing strategies, effective usage of social media is recommended. Consumers have increased their online consumer behaviour activities since the commencement of the COVID-19 epidemic. The importance of social media as a marketing tool is growing especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. People can be more concentrated on social media platforms such as Instagram and YouTube where they are highly engaged. According to the research, irritation level of ads is high. So ads should be designed with lesser time with needed crisp information for effective reach. Clothing is the consumers' most preference buying. It is predicted that online purchasing of product can be increased than offline purchasing if it markets its product through right platform with effective advertising.

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