

LITERATURE REVIEW: AWARENESS ABOUT THE SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AMONGST VARIOUS GENERATIONS

Dr. Krupa Rao

Dr. Umesh Dangarwala

Abstract: A social networking service is an online platform that people use to build social networks or social relations with other people who share similar personal or career interests, activities, backgrounds or real-life connections. The study focuses on various research papers and articles related to the awareness about the social networking sites. The generations are facing a trend where the appalling changes are observed in usage of mobile phones, internet services and social networking through social media applications available on the mobile phone devices. The researchers have viewed the research papers exhaustively and drawn inferences from the secondary data.

Keywords : social networking sites, social relations

Vanitha Swaminathan, *et. al.*, (2012), In their paper entitled “The Internet and Consumer Buying Behavior: A Research Framework and Analysis”, the antecedents to electronic exchange in the online context were examined. Secondary data from an e-mail survey were analyzed. The study had implications for both theory and practice. The findings extend our knowledge of factors influencing marketing exchange from the traditional setting to the internet context. In addition, the findings regarding factors enhancing the propensity to shop online had implications for internet retailers seeking to enlarge their online customer base. This study used secondary data based on an e-mail survey conducted by the Georgia Visualization and Usability Center at Georgia Tech of approximately 5000 respondents. The respondents were invited to participate in the e-mail survey through announcements on Internet related newsgroups, banners randomly rotated through high-exposure sites, banners rotated through advertising networks, announcements made to the www-surveying mailing list, a list maintained by GVU's WWW User Surveys composed of people interested in the surveys, and announcements made in the popular media. The results of the study shown that social interaction as a shopping motivation deters consumers from shopping frequently ($b_1 = 0.48, p < 0.01$) and from spending money on the Internet ($b_1 = 0.64, p < 0.01$).⁵ These consumers were likely to treat the shopping experience as a social experience. On the other hand, consumers who valued convenience tend to use the Internet to purchase goods frequently ($b_1 = 0.55, p < 0.01$) and they seemed to spend more money ($b_1 = 0.55, p < 0.01$) in the electronic transactions. The result regarding the importance of convenience as a motivator of internet shopping was interesting from the perspective of enhancing our understanding of shopping motivations in the internet context.

Alok Gupta, *et. al.*, (2012), In their paper entitled “Risk Profile and Consumer Shopping Behavior in Electronic and Traditional Channels”, Analyses of results shown that after making purchases through one channel, electronic or traditional, risk-averse consumers tended to be more loyal customers than risk-neutral consumers. Observations from the model, confirmed by numerical examples, shown that under certain channel characteristic values, the two types of consumers exhibited split channel behavior—risk-neutral consumers preferred one channel and risk-averse consumers prefer the other. In this paper, they developed an economic model of consumer shopping decision that takes into account consumer risk profiles and the substitution effects of economic factors such as prices, product range, ease of product evaluation, and product acquisition time. An examination of these substitution effects highlighted the importance of quick delivery for online shopping, especially when the product in question required long lead-time, as is the case with customized or rwere items. By focusing on substitution effects of various economic factors and consumers’ risk-aversion in online shopping environments, the researchers proposed that retailers wishing to attract customers should develop strategies that segment consumers into two types: risk-neutral or risk-averse.

Marizeih Zendehdel, *et. al.*, (2011), explored three dimensions of trust that affected consumers’ attitude towards online shopping and online shopping intention in Malaysia. Data was collected from students’ samples in Malaysia. SEM (Structural Equation Model) was used to test the hypotheses and confirmed the fit of the model. Questionnaire was developed using a 5-point Likert scale from the literature, and questions were designed for each single construct. The reliability of each measurement was confirmed by means of the pretest. The researcher has examined the variety of dimensions like integrity, ability and benevolence where the hypotheses were tested on the bases of variables like the attitude towards online shopping. The model for testing the data was relative chi-square test. The researcher found that there were only two factors for explaining attitude towards online shopping, which were integrity and ability; and there was no significant in consumers’ attitude towards online shopping based on benevolence; however, there was a relationship between attitude toward online shopping and online shopping intention.

Joanna Phillips Melancon, (2011), in his study entitled “Consumer profiles in reality vs fantasy-based virtual worlds: implications for brand entry”, Virtual environments (VEs) were computer-based, three-dimensional virtual worlds where users created avatars and interact socially and competitively within the environment. Users spent millions of dollars every year consuming items for their avatars. Marketers had begun offering branded items in these communities with mixed results. The purpose of this paper was to examine motivational, usage, and demographic differences in VEs across two popular VE types: reality and fantasy-based platforms. The variables for the study were Virtual worlds, Consumer behaviour, Virtual environments, Interactive marketing, Avatars, User motivation, Branding. A sample of 106 users of reality and fantasy based VEs was collected using an online survey methodology. Results indicated that both reality and fantasy worlds were outlets for escapism and immersion. Reality VE users were more motivated to seek social relationships with other users and were more highly involved in the VE than fantasy users. Fantasy-users were motivated by achievement and manipulation of others and were slightly more likely to be male, younger, and engage in the VE with members of their household. Little empirical work addresses successful marketing strategy in VEs, although hundreds of

brands had entered these worlds. This research was the first to consider VE type and user motivation, usage, and demographics in the framing of marketing messages.

Carlota Lorenzo-Romero, *et. al.*, (2011), studied factors affecting the acceptance of social networking sites (SNS), analyzed users' practices and behavior in these environments and assessed the degree of acceptance of SNS in The Netherlands. An extended technology acceptance model (TAM) was used to analyze the factors influencing the level of acceptance and use of SNS applying a structural equation modeling technique. Data were collected by means of an online national survey among Dutch SNS users. Results support all hypotheses with positive relationships and influence between analyzed constructs; the only exception was the hypothesis on the relation between perceived risk and perceived usefulness. The survey was conducted in The Netherlands. This research was considered as the basis for a more extensive research, covering other geographical areas that produced results allowing more specific and accurate predictions regarding the acceptance of SNS as marketing management tools.

Carla Rossi, (2011), aimed to outline the managerial challenges faced by the organizations interested in leveraging knowledge and creative talent embedded in online customers' communities to sustain innovation in b-2-c industries. Through a detailed case study analysis of a leading food producer who launched an online open collaborative platform to gather users' idea for new products the paper aimed to highlight the transformational effort that firms had to make in order to leverage knowledge absorption from customers in the context of innovation. The paper suggested potential strategies for conventional companies to engage consumers in knowledge (co-creation) and collaborative innovation processes, formulating some hypothesis that could support an interpretative model of the capabilities needed to develop, maintain and increase customers' engagement in the exchange. On the basis of the case analyzed, the paper suggested some managerial actions that could be adopted to facilitate customers' engagement in processes of collaborative learning and innovation, outlining the potential barriers (in primis managerial reluctance) that could prevent a successful result.

Hong-Youl Ha, *et. al.*, (2010), employed a cross-cultural perspective to explore alternative explanations in the development of the online repurchase intentions model. The proposed constructs of alternative models dealt with key online consumer behavior variables such as customized information, web use applications, online service and perceived interactivity which lead to the formation of purchase intentions. These variables form the theoretical foundation for four alternative models. To test these four alternative models 448 online consumers were surveyed in 2007. Structural equation modeling was used to test these models. The results demonstrated that the power of customized information lies in its ability to influence consumer satisfaction and perceived interactivity, were proximated to repurchase intentions. The results also shown that the link of satisfaction and repurchase intentions provided a meaningful empirical representation of the hierarchical sequence in which the cycle of customer repurchasing process i.e. satisfaction, attitude, repurchase and intentions is related. This was the first study to examine online repurchasing models using alternative explanations. By structuring such alternative models, McKenzie argued that researchers might be better able to judge how the evidence relates to each alternative view. The present approach could be viewed as a significant early step on the path toward a comprehensive understanding of online consumer behaviors in new information communication technology.

Rajalakshmi Kanagavel, *et. al.*, (2010), explored how college students create identity for themselves in the virtual world and how they related to others online. It analyzed the cultural differences from the youth perspective in both the countries and discussed whether social networking sites isolated youngsters from the society or help them to build relationships; the participation in these sites were also explored. Survey technique, interview, and online observation were the research methods used. Findings were that Indian students spend more time in these sites than Dutch students and Dutch students participate more actively than Indian students. It was also found that virtual interaction taking place in these sites is just a supplement to real life interaction.

Yann Truong, (2009), evaluated the applicability of the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) model in predicting user acceptance of online video services. Few studies had applied the TPB model within this context, even though the model has proven to be effective in predicting technology adoption. Validating the TPB model would improve the understanding of both academics and practitioners of the most influential antecedents of user acceptance. Past studies had demonstrated the importance of integrating user needs and behaviour as a requirement for building successful user-centric online services. Structural equation modelling was used as the main statistical procedure for data analysis. The results of the study confirmed that the TPB model was viable in predicting user acceptance of online video services. The findings also revealed that perceived behavioural control was the highest contributor to predicting intention to use online video services. Attitude toward use and subjective norm were found to have moderate predictive power, mostly because online video services present obvious benefits to users and were consumed privately. The variables were technology adoption, online video, online television, web TV, Theory of Planned Behaviour, user acceptance of online videos. TPB constructs and references, KMO and Bartlett's test, Rotated component matrix, Inter-construct correlations, Model fit and hypothesis testing, Final model with regression weights. This study used the TPB model to predict user acceptance of online video and TV services. Despite a three-digit growth in online video and TV services over the span of a few years, little research has investigated the factors influencing the use of these services, and the findings of this study contributed to a better understanding of the antecedents of online video use. In particular, the findings helped practitioners to understand and focus on the factors that contribute most strongly toward the use of online video and TV services. The results showed a greater influence of perceived behavioural control on intention to use this type of services. The effects of attitude toward used and subjective norm were positive, but more moderate. This model had never been applied to online video and television services. Given the exponential growth of this type of service, applying the TPB is appropriate, and this study used the TPB to predict intention to use online video and television services.

Dr. David Beer (2008), edited a special section to the social networking sites from the issue of the journal danah boyd and Nicole elison(2007). Through the analytical study they had been identifying the idea of exemplified by the kind of discussions taking place on the email groups associated with the internet researchers. They intended the provocation for the debates relating to the direction in which the study of SNS seems to appear. An attempt had been made to simplify and clarify the definition of the social networking sites and in which areas it differs from the other forms of computer-mediated communications (CMC). The other theory which was revisited is about the separate behavior online and offline living. It has also made contention over the SNS friendship and the disconnection from the actual friends. In the context of business, they can get the information produced through the routine engagements of the public with SNS whether it's a supermarket of any online purchasing transaction. Conclusion of the study was that there is very little awareness and sense of the online networks in the society.

Eric K. Clemons, *et. al.*(2007), studied about the confluence of changes had reduced the impact of traditional advertising and the modern advertising and the whether the reduction in the impact of advertising was the result changes in the consumer purchasing alternatives on the consumer purchasing behavior and the changing status-signaling value of many possessions and some were due to changes in consumers' trust of paid messages. The study had been conducted by examining various variables like alternative advertising. The study also focused on the reaching consumers through the advertising is significantly more difficult than in the past and the mis-interpreting implications of failed advertising and the questionable value of social networking websites. The study also examined the websites whether had the value by analyzing the selling something, selling information about the things: peerage and purchase, people to people, things to things.

Ravi Sen, *et. al.* (2006), defined buyers' online search strategy as using one or more of these tools to search for lower prices, and empirically investigates the validity of economics of information search theory in explaining buyers' choice of a particular online search strategy. The study found that buyers' attitudes toward the price offered by their preferred online seller, their perception of online price dispersion, and their awareness of shopping agents have a significant effect on their choice of online search strategy. An understanding of buyers' choice of online search strategies helped an online seller to estimate its expected probability of making an online sale, optimize its online pricing, and improve its online promotional and advertising activities. The empirical study was constrained by the assumptions inherent in the statistical model used for the empirical part of this paper, the use of students as subjects for the study, and focused on B2C e-markets for frequently purchased undifferentiated products. Therefore, the results obtained in the study should be interpreted within these contexts.

Security Spotlight,(2005), discussed recent noteworthy threats that users might be encountered and should be aware of while surfing the web, the article here discuss about the facebook and the popularity of the websites over the members and the growing trend of the social networking sites. It had also taken into consideration variables like the brand awareness and the transformation of the applications from traditional market to the developed e-market and the vision of making the platform materialized in form of the market and the business. The study concluded that the use of Facebook and the other social networks in business were the upcoming and the latest models of the business.

Francisco J. Martínez-López, *et. al.* (2005) empirically tested the sequence of effects based on the standard learning hierarchy to explain consumers' online buying-related responses. It also analyzed the moderating role that consumers' internet expertise can play on the formation of both their affective and buying-related responses towards this medium. This study posed a conceptual model which was tested by means of LISREL. The data used come from a questionnaire applied to American and Spanish internet users. These two countries have been selected taking into account their differences regarding their degree of internet expertise. The variables for the study were Consumer behaviour, Electronic commerce, Internet, Shopping. Of a total of more than 700 questionnaires returned, 652 of these (123 American students from the University of Northern Illinois, Chicago, USA; and 529 Spanish students from the University of Granada, Spain) passed the screening and filtration process. The modelling approach appeared to be adequate to explain online consumer behaviour. Moreover, different levels of consumers' internet expertise determines, in general, the predominance of the central or the peripheral route within the formation of their affective and behavioural responses to this medium.

Hamisah Haji Hasan, *et. al.* (2004), examined the relationship between consumer personality and cultural dimensions to that of purchasing behavior through cyber advertising. A survey was conducted in the Subang Jaya, Puchong and Kuala Lumpur werea. A survey was conducted in the middle of September 2004 and 504 completed questionnaires were returned by early November 2004. A 12-pages questionnaires survey forms were distributed to respondents chosen through simple random sampling from amongst the Internet users from the Subang Jaya, Puchong and Kuala Lumpur wereas. The sample was relatively homogenous in terms of its demographics and thereby helps enhance internal validity. Appropriately the simple random sampling was chosen since the purpose of the study was to test the relationships among the variables Spearman Correlation Coefficients was used to analyze the data. The study showed as suggested by Krugman's Low Involvement theory, high involvement products and attitude towards Internet contributed significantly to the purchasing behavior through cyber advertising. Thus indicating the Internet to be better suited for high involvement products and services as well as help increase the tendency to purchase products and services online. The study examined the relationship between consumer personality and cultural dimensions to that of purchasing behavior through cyber advertising. (Calder, Phillips and Tybout 1981). The questions consisted of both open-ended and close-ended questions. The variables for the study were the demographic profile of the respondents, purchasing through the cyber ads. In this study an attempt had been made to understand the online purchasing behavior of consumers in country, the amount that they had spent on online purchasing, the frequency of their online purchasing activities and the products that they had purchased. This finding suggested that online purchasing was fast emerging as an important media choice for certain products/ services. The result also implied that the Internet was medium better suited for high involvement products/ services especially in the Informative category. This further suggested that cyber advertising was able to fulfill consumers' information needs. While the percentage of online shoppers were still very low, however as the growth rate of Internet users in Malaysia increased, there is a possibility of the increase in online purchasing.

Fred K Beard, (2003), Little research had focused on college students' attitudes toward advertising's ethical, economic, and social consequences over the last two decades. Exploring and tracking the attitudes of college students toward advertising is important, however, for several reasons. College students represent an important segment of consumers for many marketers, negative attitudes toward advertising on the part of college students could lead to their support for restrictive regulation in the future, and there were potentially negative consequences concerning the effects of advertising that college students uniquely shwere with other youth markets. The results of this study – a differentiated replication of an earlier study of college students in the late 1970s – indicate the salience of various beliefs that help determine attitudes toward advertising and provide a useful benchmark for future studies. The implications of the study's findings for advertising practice and future regulation were discussed. The variables for the study were advertising, advertising regulation, college students, consumer skepticism, ethical consequences, Generation Y The sample of 129 students contained a larger percentage of females (63.8%) than did Larkin's (1977) sample of 80 students (42.5%), although it was otherwise demographically similar. the data were analyzed using Q-mode factor analysis and certain attitudinal dimensions, as opposed to the clusters of attitudes produced by the more commonly used R-mode factor analysis. Beliefs regarding advertising and its ethical consequences and characteristics were not as salient for the students in the present sample as they were for the students in the original study.

Ian Phau, *et. al.*, (2000), focused on the shopping experience of the online consumers. There were various dimensions of the study were low outlay, frequently purchased goods, high outlay, infrequently purchased goods. Other dimensions for the research was the value propositions tangible or physical, value propositions intangible or informational, value proposition tangible or physical, value proposition intangible or informational, another dimensions for the study were about the differentiation of the higher or the lower potentials about different products and the services which were available online. The study presents the findings of an empirical investigation of Internet shopping in Singapore. Specifically, Internet buying behavior was compared between potential Internet buyers and non-Internet buyers. It was found that the classification of different types of products and services will significantly influence the consumer choice between a retail store and Internet shopping mall. Products and services that have a low outlay, were frequently purchased, have intangible value proposition, and relatively high on differentiation were more likely to be purchased via the Internet. Based on the analysis and results obtained from the study, some recommendations were presented to retailers who were interested in selling their products via the Internet.

Conclusion:

The primary objective of the research undertaken was to throw light on how effectively the awareness of social networking sites affected the different generation by evaluating both of its positive and negative aspects. With reference to the study it was evidently figured out how smart, intelligent, witty and aware the generation is in the current era. Through the aid of the data that was collected and analyzed quite a few conclusions have been drawn down which can be detailed and elaborated as follows- The generation today is not only aware of what fits in best for them but are also keen and enthusiastic to draw their own priorities and fix on to which ones are most important and how. Similarly these sites serve to their purpose of connecting them with people all across the globe by not hampering their work hours and schedules. However, social networking sites offer them a platform to connect with new people, share experiences and gain exposure. The youth comes to terms with gaining relevant and quick information about what goes around in their near and dear ones' lives through the source of social networking sites offering them a ground to updates. The generation can thus discriminate between the real and virtual world and admits to the fact that social networking sites do not provide an opportunity to build stronger contacts with people than in person. The level of trust and faith weighs higher on their contact building in the real world than in virtual for the plain reason of cybercrimes still attacking a significant number of people which has thereby been justified in the findings.

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