Awareness and Usage of Social Media: A Study of Navi Mumbai Region

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Abstract

In spite of criticism, the usage of social networks by students in higher education is growing in popularity. This is due to the fact that social networks like Facebook and Twitter alter how people engage, communicate, research, and socialize. This essay aims to investigate the students' familiarity with and use of social networks. The majority of respondents (98.2%), according to quantitative findings, are aware of social networks, have access to the internet, and frequently use mobile devices for social networking. Less than half (37.8%) of them use social media to report and share news or information. Qualitative findings demonstrate that participants intentionally use social networks for academic purposes, self-expression, and forming international friendships.

Keywords: Social Media, Marketing

1. Introduction:

In today's technologically advanced world, businesses are able to reach a bigger audience with their advertising efforts by leveraging social networking platforms. With the advent of social media, businesses have access to new channels for engaging with customers; nevertheless, they must learn to use these channels in a way that is in line with their overall strategy. Based on the findings of this study, it's clear that more and more people are gravitating towards digital media, and social networking sites in particular. This presents a great opportunity for marketers to build brand awareness, obtain direct feedback, and better manage their brands. People in India are becoming more open and vocal about their experiences in the digital sphere, providing a marketing opportunity. Higher education institutions' efforts to promote their brands in today's dynamic digital world benefit greatly from creative marketing tactics and cutting-edge digital best practices. Private higher education institutions are proliferating like mushrooms, yet they face stiff competition from well-established names in the field. Competencies are what ultimately define success or failure in this competitive environment for institutions.

This research will detail how post-graduate schools may make use of social media advertisements. The potential of social media as a marketing and recruitment tool is attracting the attention of universities throughout the world. The study's overarching goal is to better understand the role of social media in bolstering universities' competitive advantages by examining the methods and practises colleges employ to promote their brands online. One primary objective of this research is to examine what influences consumers' perceptions of ads for postgraduate programmes across different social media sites. The study's conceptual framework and the opportunities it presents for investigating current practises in the context of strategy identification, development, and execution pave the way for further research. Students' (as "consumers") perspectives on the various social media advertising practises adopted by higher education institutions were the sole focus of this study; however, additional studies could be conducted from the vantage points of education marketers, academic administrators, and policymakers. The introduction of new media (internet or digital technologies) alters how individual's access and exchange information as well as how they communicate with one another (Balaban-Sali, 2012). Individuals today have the option to search for, read, see, and share the information they want, anywhere, anytime, and on any topic, unlike in the past when individuals were limited to using traditional media or interpersonal contact (Papoola, 2014). In this way, the influence and impact of mass media

information channels on the audience are waning. The emergence of several new avenues of communication, such as message boards, forums, social networking sites, and numerous well-known and obscure search engines, has also resulted from this evolution (McQuail, 2011). Social media technology are quickly taking over peoples' lives and becoming indispensable. According to Chen and Sakamato (2013) and Ma et al. (2014), people use them for communication, reading, commenting, sharing, liking, and creating content. Similar to this, millions of young people, especially students, strongly rely on these social networking sites (Pempek et al., 2009; Edegoh et al., 2013). Researchers are becoming more aware of the widespread usage of these new communication channels, particularly among university students. Lewis (2009), Sponcil and Gitimu (2013), Yoo and Kim (2013), and others have said that higher education students are the main consumers of social media. With internet access, students can use social networking sites such as Facebook to establish, check, and interact with friends (Edegoh et al., 2013; Pempek et al., 2009), Blog to write, edit, and publish information (Hodgson and Wong, 2011), Podcast to listen and share music with peers (Swanson, 2012); Twitter to share information and (Olaniran, 2014); Wiki to update information (Ma and Yuen, 2008). The most common activity on social media right now, however, are reporting and sharing information about events (including unexpected or breaking news) happening in and around students' communities. Students utilise social networks for more than just socialising and pleasure. According to Lin and Lu (2011), Lewis (2009), and Wilson (2012), social media's accessibility, affordability, and advancements have made it possible for people (including students) to create and share images, text, and photos with online communities through Facebook and YouTube. According to Ma et al. (2014), compared to print and broadcast media, individuals prefer using social media to report and share news and information. According to Papoola (2014), this Journalists-like action on the digital media is now championing the theory of citizens journalism. Given this extensive global culture, it is thus imperative to investigate and explore the types of social networks students of mass communication are aware of and why they use them. Veni, K. Krishna (2020)The author studied about social media marketing by taking responses from 120 respondents who had their accounts on different social media platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, Myspace, YouTube, Twitter and others. Bindia Daroch (2017) Using social media is one of the ways in which marketers entice their customers. The researcher in this article sought to learn how consumers responded to the company's usage of promotions and adverts on various social media websites. Abdul Bashiru and others (2019) Given the interaction of consumers' purchasing attitudes in a virtual domain, the researchers in this research paper sought to examine the mediating effect of online based-brand communities using social media platforms.

Hilde A. M. and others (2018) This research paper explores how consumer use of social media platforms affects consumer interaction with and evaluation of the advertising that is integrated into those platforms. According to Anas et al. (2014), brand equity serves as the foundation for a new strategic framework from which to create marketing initiatives that are more effective, customer-focused, fiscally responsible, and measurable. According to Tonino et al. (2021), the coronavirus crisis struck the entire world and had an impact on all facets of our life, including consumer preferences, purchasing patterns, and routines. The researchers looked at how consumer preferences and buying habits changed as a result of the pandemic in Slovakia and Italy. "Josiah et al" (2012) whether it comes to marketing or requesting information from an institution, social media outperform the conventional bureaucracy. The goal of the literature evaluation was to determine whether or not prospective students use social media during their college search and how higher education institutions are utilizing social media for recruiting and admissions.

2. Objective:

• To know the level of awareness of different social media platforms amongst the respondents

• To know the different social media platforms actively used by the respondents

3. SOCIAL MEDIA

The term "social media" refers to websites that facilitate online social interaction and communication. Registered members of these networks are given the ability to submit content that they have created, manipulated, explored, and interacted with. Any online community that encourages social interaction among its users, fosters relationships among its members, provides a safe space where everyone's thoughts and input are valued, and is open to new members fits this criteria. In addition, the phrase social media is an umbrella term for many different types of online communities and information sharing platforms (such as social networking sites, microblogging, news feeds, blogs, review forums, etc.). All of these mediums encourage users to interact with one another and share information. The virtual interactions made possible by social media platforms, however, have advanced society by making relationship management easier for the general public, allowing many individuals to reclaim this lost time. The goal of relationship management is to establish and maintain productive online interactions, particularly through social media. The need for relationship management is met by social media sites, along with those for amusement, information sharing, content production, and e-learning. All of these social networks are available for use by companies as promotional channels, and they all have similarities and peculiarities among themselves.

3.1 SOCIAL MEDIA AND MARKETING

From a marketers' point of view, the utilization of social media in marketing are overwhelming. Expect that what the group says is legitimate and that you have restricted command over what they state but if you figure out how to impact the perspective of group successfully you can really make a strong market position which would result in positive social acceptance. If the Social media platforms utilized accurately, is about how to use your locale of allies to assist you with building your brand value. Social media is an integral expansion of the entirety of other marketing endeavours. What would be the best way to impact your consumers? All things considered, given that you can't advise users what to think, the next best alternative available is to act as per the actions of for consumers. Gain from their actions and afterward strategize on them. One of the qualities of social media is that you can analyse your consumer's behaviour, measure it, and track it over the time and alter your strategies in the manner that create an effective brand image.

Considering the primary definition of the social media ―Participatory online media where posts, news, photographs, videos, and web links are made public by means of social media sites through user profiles. Social media is described to a great extent if not totally by the content trail i.e. likes, comments and shares, that simply make people to think about that content. Thus social media provide marketers a platform to understand social behaviour that marketers can use to manage their marketing endeavours. Hearing and reacting to users on social media platform and paying attention on their discussions is an extraordinary method to utilize social media to understand their conversations and making strategies accordingly to impact them. This probe brings us to the core of what social media is and how to utilize it appropriately as a marketing tool. The concept of social media is based on a basic characteristic of socialization, a discussion platform for individuals to share something of common interest. Since social media gains its popularity from user generated content and if marketers try to gain mileage be it any means other than genuine, participatory and transparent they might face negative marketing on social media platforms. Rather than being dishonest or deceptive -while impacting the users the marketer should give them an

experience that they want to discuss positively and afterward utilizing the subsequent discussion to influence others.

3.2 Future of social media

Online networking is still a moderately new medium, in dynamic use by clients and organizations for under five years. Nobody knows how online networking will advance after some time as a promoting classification. It may turn out to be a piece of a coordinated methodology that incorporates conventional media and internet promoting, or it may supplant some or much customary showcasing and publicizing. There have been some real changes with respect to promoting and publicizing, for example, buyer wariness and imperviousness to promoting, the developing pattern of purchasers to have control of advertising messages, and weight for enhanced focusing for organizations, and these are the truths that organizations need to adjust to keeping in mind the end goal to be effective. As Paul Chaney states in his book "Markets are discussions and interest is promoting", that is the way showcasing is advancing as clients are progressively utilizing online networking thus the vicinity of organizations is requested also.

Some individuals trust that online networking is a passing pattern, however it is obvious that individuals' data utilization propensities have changed fundamentally and forever. Likewise, the insights about the development of new media and the decrease of the old exhibit that online networking will be a key a portion of future buyers' media blend. "The media world has changed more in the most recent five years than it has in the last 50 and it will change at that rate again in the following five years."

3.3 Uses of social media

Social media technologies provide to their users equal freedom (Wilson, 2012) of what they do with them. As social media platforms are many, so also their functions and uses. Osatuyi (2013) elaborates that: Social networks are classified based on how people use them. For instance, Social Networking Sites such as MySpace, Facebook are used to share and update message, Microblogs such as Twitter is used for short messages, Wikis are mainly used for educational and informational purposes, Blogs are usually personal or collaborative online publishing diary, while Online Forums are interactive space where participants discuss issues which are posted on a discussion board.

Bilandzic et al. (2012) introduce three main "Social Use of Media" as: Interactivity, Recognition, and Participation. People use social media for either hard or soft issues or both. For instance, some people use social media to play online games, while others use it to negotiate, establish, maintain, and participate in political and cultural issues. Therefore, the popularity, availability, and accessibility of social media technologies make their usage in almost every aspect of life. Osatuyi (2013) adds that people use social networks to organize campaigns (political or non-political), create awareness, social interaction, marketing, and healthcare activities. But the list of its usage goes beyond that. Edegoh et al. (2013) assert that many students of higher institutions in Nigeria are assumed to be using social networks.

4. RESEASRCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 DATA COLLECTION

Primary Data: Primary data is a type of information that is gathered by researchers directly from primary sources using methods including tests, questionnaires, and interviews. The best type of data for study is considered to be primary data, which is typically gathered from the source, where the data initially originates. I have used primary method of data collection for my research by circulating questionnaire to students.

Secondary Data: Data that has previously been gathered from primary sources and made easily accessible for academics to use for their own research is known as secondary data. It is a category of information that has previously been gathered. For my research, I gathered secondary data by consulting a number of research papers, websites, books, and blogs.

4.2 SAMPLE SIZE

Population

The population of a research survey is defined as the complete and total set of elements of anything the researcher wants to study. It can be concrete, abstract, or both in nature but should be characterized and influenced by cause or effect. Such elements have been included adhering to the generally accepted rule of thumb, keeping the size of the sample adequate and representative to the population. The statistical method of analysis allows for the simplification of the co-relational links between varieties of continuous variables. Exploratory factor analysis is a catch-all term for a group of techniques used to summarize and reduce data.

Sample of the study: Approx. 250 graduate students and working professionals from Navi Mumbai region.

4.3 METHODS

The research questions to be addressed on the inference to be evaluated essentially decide the data analysis methods (which also determine the format of the instrument and how the data was gathered) the means, standard deviation, frequency counts, and percentages are among the most often used descriptive statistics.

5. Result and discussion

Survey

111 respondents participated in the first phase of the study. 79.3% were males (n=88) and 20.7% were females (n=23). Their ages ranged from 18-24; 71.2% (n=79), 25-31; 12.6% (n=14), 32-38; 2.7% (n=3). 11 participants did not reveal their age. Similarly, majority of the respondents (44.1%) were self-employed, 34.2% were unemployed while 18.9% were employed.

Table 1: Do you know about social media?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	109	98.2
No	2	1.8
Total	111	100.0

The above table reveals that, out of 111 respondents of the study, 98.2% knew about social media while only 1.8% was not. This shows that the majority of the respondents were aware of the existence of social media.

Table 2: Which social network are you aware of among the following?

Social networks	Frequency	Percent
Facebook	105	94.6
Twitter	60	54.1
WhatsApp	94	84.7
YouTube	50	45.0
Instagram	25	22.5
Skype	13	11.7
Blog	22	19.8
LinkedIn	2	1.8
Wiki	22	19.8
MySpace	7	6.3
Google	81	3.0
Others	25	22.5

The above table reveals that, out of 111 respondents of the study, 94.6% was aware of Facebook, 84.7% was aware of WhatsApp, and 73% was aware of Google. This implies that Facebook and WhatsApp were the most popular while LinkedIn and MySpace were the least popular among the students.

Table 3: Which social network do you use among the following?

Social networks	Frequency	Percent
Facebook	87	78.4
Twitter	23	20.7
WhatsApp	80	72.1
YouTube	26	23.4
Instagram	12	10.8
Skype	7	6.3
Blog		12.6
LinkedIn	0	0
Wiki	17	15.3
MySpace	2	1.8
Google	69	62.2
Others	24	21.6

The above table indicates that, out of 111 respondents of the study, 78.4% used Facebook while 72.1% used WhatsApp. This also demonstrates that Facebook and WhatsApp were the most popularly used social networks among the students while none of them was using LinkedIn.

Table 4: Do you have access to social media?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	96	86.5
No	14	12.6
No response	1	.9
Total	111	100.0

The above table shows that, out of 111 respondents of the study, 86.5% had access to social media while 12.6% students had no access to social media. This indicates that the majority of the respondents had access to social media.

Table 5: If yes, how do you access social media?

	Frequency	Percent
I buy data	84	75.7
I go to café	7	6.3
Both	1	.9
No response	19	17.1
Total	111	100.0

The above table reveals that, majority of the respondents, 75.7% bought data to access social media while only 6.3% went to café. This implies that majority of the respondents used data subscription to connect to social media.

Table 6: How do you access social networks?

	Frequency	Percent
Mobile phone	78	70.3
Computer	8	7.2
Smart phones	14	12.6

Others	1	.9
No response	10	9.0
Total	111	100.0

The above table shows that, majority of the respondents, 70.3% accessed social networks using mobile phones while only 7.2% used CP or laptop computer. This reveals that the majority of the respondents accessed social networks using their mobile phones while very few used other computers.

Table 7: Do you report or share news on social media?		
	Frequency	Percent
Yes	42	37.8
No	68	61.3
No response	1	.9
Total	111	100.0

The above table indicates that, only 37.8% of the respondents used to report or share news on social media while61.3% was not. This shows that majority of the respondents who use social media were not reporting or sharing news on it.

Table 8: If yes, how often do you report or share news on social media?		
	Frequency	Percent
Most often	13	11.7
Very often	7	6.3
Often	14	12.6
Rarely	10	9.0
Never	67	60.4
Total	111	100.0

The above table reveals that, out of 111 of the respondents, only 11.7% used to report or share news on social media. This indicates that majority of the respondents who use social media never report or share news with it.

Table 9: Through which of the following do you frequently report or share news?		
	Frequency	Percent
Print media	2	1.8
Broadcast media	10	9.0
Social media	32	28.8
None	67	60.4
Total	111	100.0

The above table shows that, out of 111 of the respondents, only 28.8%of them was using social media to report or share news while 60.4% never. This reveals that majority of the respondents was not using social media to share or report news.

6. Conclusions

The use of social media by PG students and their awareness of it are the main topics of this study. The use of social networks by and among students in Nigeria's higher education institutions is increasing as Omekwu et al. (2014) assert that they are the primary means of interpersonal and group communication. According to the results of this study as well as earlier ones (Buhari et al., 2014), it is now very difficult to locate a student who is not aware of and/or utilising one or more social networking sites. This suggests that these social networks have taken up a significant amount of the students' lives. The findings of this study

add to the literature review and theoretical framework. The study demonstrates the validity and applicability of the Uses and Gratification theory to the study of social media since the respondents utilise social networking sites to connect with people from all over the world, publish and share information, conduct research, and socialise themselves in the learning process. The fact that the respondents also used social networks to help their academic endeavours suggests that they can be employed in a way that is advantageous.

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