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Navigating Role of Social Media Marketing on Customer Purchase Intention with Reference to Eco- Tourism in Karnataka

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Abstract

The impact of marketing by social media has become a very important of modern society, significantly impacting on buying behavior of customers, these tools helps in gathering information and proceedings towards purchase. many organization uses, social media to reach their target customers, influencing buyer behavior and their buying decisions, feelings, and customer engagement, particularly among the millennial generation. Considered study helps to systematically identifying the navigating role of social media marketing on consumer purchase intention. Along with it also identifies the numerous factors within social media that affect purchase intention and identifies mediating role in this relationship. Marketing research has focused on using social media to motivate consumers' purchase intentions and maintain consumer loyalty. The earlier studies have identified the some significant impacts of social media on consumers' behaviors. However, few focus on purchase intentions and decisions. This work explore how social media can ultimately market consumer purchase journey by influencing consumer trust, perception, motivation, attitude towards product and services. Hopefully, this paper also can provide some ideas for enterprises of eco-tourism service providers to formulate their strategy, optimize marketing plans, and improve brand benefits and corporate earnings in the increasingly fierce social media marketing competition.

Key words: Social media marketing, consumer behavior; Eco – tourism, Motivation, perception, consumer trust

1. Introduction

Ecotourism is one of the form of nature-oriented tourism intended to contribute to the protection of the natural environment, generally defined as being minimally impactful, and including providing both contributions to conservation and environmental education. In the beginning 1980s, it has been considered an important endeavour by environmentalists for conservation reasons. Organizations focusing on ecotourism often make direct or indirect

contributions to conservation or employ practices or technology that reduces pressure on the environment. However very few organizations make a net-positive impact on the environment overall. Ecotourism has also criticized for often using the same infrastructure and practices of regular tourism under a different name. In general, it deals with interaction with living parts of natural environments, in contrast to ecotourism, which is associated with geology. In contrast to nature

tourism and sustainable tourism in general, ecotourism also usually intended to foster a greater appreciation in tourists of natural habitats and threats they experience, as well as local culture.

Karnataka Eco Tourism- Overview

The Karnataka state cabinet approve the plan to set up the Karnataka eco-tourism development board on 15th August, 2013. The chairman would be. The forest minister of Karnataka. This initiative will enable the government positively in safeguarding the wildlife, developing awareness about it, encouraging eco-tourism, forest safaris and also prevent damage to eco-system in the name of tourism.

Total contribution of Travel & Tourism to the Indian GDP was INR 6,385.1 bn (6.6% of GDP) in 2012 and is forecast to rise by 7.3% in 2013, and to rise by 7.9% pa to INR 14,722.3 bn in 2023.

Considering that multitude of tourists visiting India and the domestic tourists do visit destinations that fall in the categories of Eco tourism and tourism based on nature; it is pertinent that studies in the industry, will add value and bring about positive growth and development if approached from a 360° angle. Karnataka has been ranked in many aspects of tourism promotion and off late there has been a qualitative churn and an intensive focus on Eco tourism. The developing of the Karnataka Eco Tourism Development Board (KEDB) in 2013 has provided a fillip to bring in a new structure, a policy, create guidelines and frameworks, awareness and education, and provide opportunities for training and capacity building amongst the stakeholders, besides standards and certification.

2. Literature Review

W.GlynnMangold, David J Faulds(2009), in this the author has explored that these network, has given the opportunity for the consumers to pass the information with thousands of people without much effort and also reveal that most of the organizations are moving towards nontraditional means of communication to reach their target customers.

Neti, Sisira (2011) in her study entitled *“Social Media and its Role in Marketing*, this article identifies that these new modes is one of the new mode of communication to reach their target customers very deeply, this article proved that social media has become promising mode to companies to reach the customers.

Simona Vinerean (2013) in this study entitled *“The Effects of Social Media Marketing on Online Consumer Behaviour”* this work explored that most of the customers who utilizes these networks has positive perceptions on the content of these networks and this reveals that it allows customers to interact with the brand directly.

Elam Al mukhaini (2013) in his study entitled *“The Impact of Social Media on Consumer Buying Behaviour”* this article revealed that social media has given many opportunity for both customers and companies for communication, social media triggers the customers to make purchase, it determine the various factors of social media triggers the customers.

Marta Zembik (2014) in his study entitled *“Social media knowledge source for customers and enterprises”* it includes the set of tools which makes easy communication with customers, this tool enables the customers to freely exchange the information related to products and services, this tool is beneficiary to both the parties of

social media that is customers and enterprise, the reviews and recommendations and experience can be useful

Mr Dharmesh Motwani (2014) in his article entitled “*Customers’ Attitude towards Social Media Marketing*” social media satisfies the social needs of the internet users same time it also created the opportunities for corporate companies to market their products and services, past data says that social media contributed very significantly in changing that customers perceptions towards products and services

M. Nick Hajli Birkbeck (2014) in this work entitled “*A study how Social Media impacts on Consumers*” social media provides the social interaction to customers, in this article a multidisciplinary model is used to show the influence of social media on purchase decisions, any communication by social media will influence the customers, this can new mode of communication to new generation.

3. Need for the Study

In present marketing context social media network have created great way in to marketing communication. These networks provide the ideal forum for direct communication between organizations and customers. Hence particular analysis will

enhance the in better analyzing the navigating role of on SMM on purchase decision process in eco –tourism industry. The study is important to identify and analyze elements of these sites.

4. Statement of the Problem

Present younger generation allots their useful time on internet content, and the contents based on internet will have more effect on purchase journey. Consumers take the help of these networks to fulfill various expectations, particularly in products and services search. The most buying process are triggered by the feedback and responses given by other consumers.

5. Objectives of the Study

1. To identify elements of SMM and their relationship with consumers purchase intention
2. To assess the impact of factors of SMM on purchase intention.

6. Scope of the Study: This study is confined to customers of eco –tourism industry in Chikkamagaluru. The articles is limited to explore the navigating role of SMM of factors such as perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, trust, perceived risk, perceived relevance on the purchase intention.

Research Model

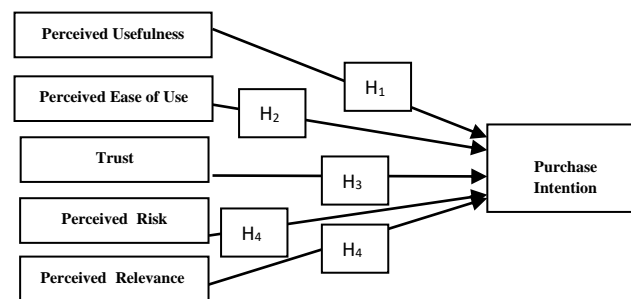


Diagram No 1: Research Model

7. Research Hypothesis

H₁: Perceived usefulness is positively related to purchase intention.

H₂: Perceived ease of use is positively related to purchase intention.

H₃: Perceived trust is positively related to purchase intention.

H₄: Perceived risk is negatively related to purchase intention.

H₅: Perceived relevance is positively related to purchase intention.

8. Research Methodology

Research Design: Empirical research design.

Data Collection

Primary Data: The data is gathered with the help of structured questionnaire.

Secondary Data are gathered from different sources such as articles from e-sources, websites

Sampling Design

Sampling Unit: The target population for the study consists of customers who use these sites

Sampling Technique: Non Probability convenience sampling

Sample Size: 103 customers of eco –tourism industry in Chikmagalur City

Research Instrument: Five point Likert-type scales (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree) was used to record the responses to the items in the questionnaire.

Tools for Analysis of data

Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) sampling adequacy test and Bartlett's test of Sphericity was used to determine whether the sample is adequately appropriate for factor analysis. Structural validity of the proposed research model was ascertained by using CFA- covariance based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM), for which Smart PLS-SEM software was employed.

9. Analysis of Data:

Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) test of Sampling Adequacy

The test of sampling adequacy needs to be performed in order to determine whether the sample is adequately appropriate for factor analysis. Accordingly the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) test of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of Sphericity were conducted. A minimum accepted KMO value of 0.50 was fixed. The values are shown in below Table No.1. Based on the values given in Table No. 1 of KMO, the sample adequacy for all the variables that defined the constructs were found to be acceptable.

Table No.1 KMO and Bartlett's values

Construct	KMO	Bartlett's
Perceived usefulness	0.723	.000
Perceived ease of use	0.766	.000
Trust	0.705	.000
Perceived Risk	0.917	.000
Perceived Relevance	0.817	.000
Purchase intention	0.704	.007

Source: Field Survey

The KMO value was found to be comfortably adequate and the Chi-square value out of the Bartlett's test was found to be significantly positive for the data contained in all the constructs in our study. Hence, we can conduct factor analysis because the variables are loaded properly.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA): CFA was done using co-variance based structural equation modeling (CBSEM), for which Smart PLS-SEM software was employed.

Results of Structural Equation Model:

The core reason of the study is to empirically test the relationship of the six constructs. In other words how do Perceived usefulness, Perceived ease of use, Trust, Perceived Risk, Perceived Relevance will influence Purchase intention.

Overall Model Fit: all the indices are shown in From Table No.2 it shows that the calculated values of all the factors of an acceptable model fit namely CMIN, CFI, TLI, NFI, RMSEA suggested a close fit of the model to the data

Fit Index	Value Obtained	Value Desired
CMIN (Chi-Square/Degrees of Freedom) χ^2/df	4.676	Between 2 and 5
Normed Fix Index (NFI)	0.987	0.9 or more
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.989	0.9 or more
Tucker Lewis Index TLI (NNFI)	0.977	0.9 or more
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	0.074	0.08 or less
P value	0.000	0.05 or less
PCLOSE	0.004	0.05 or less

Source: Field Survey

Table No.2: Model Fit Indices – CFA

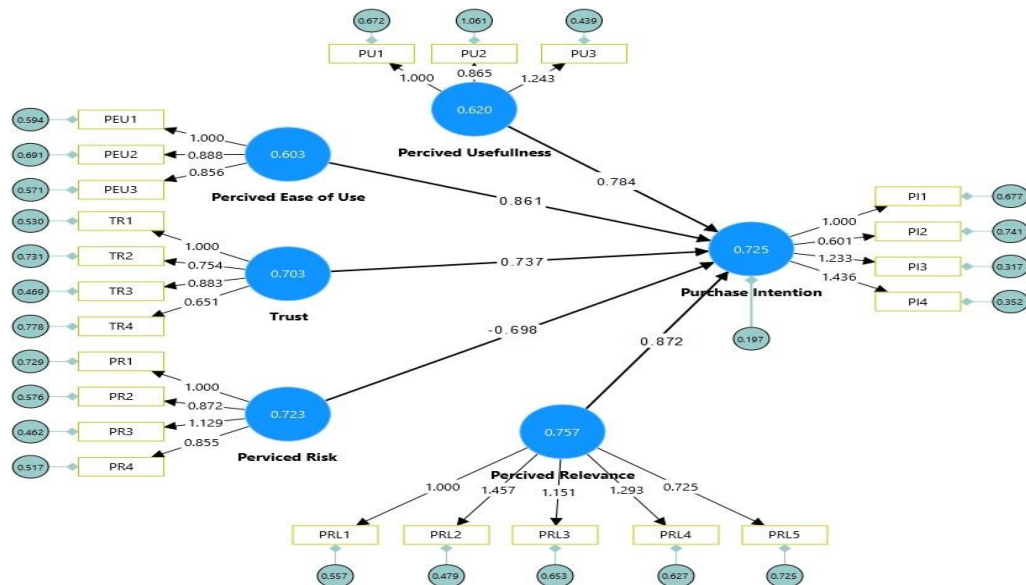


Diagram No 3: Final Model of Purchase Intention

Construct Variables	Path Coefficient	P	Conclusion
PI <---PU	0.784	***	Hence, H_{A1}Accepted ; PUE is positively related to PI
PI<---PEU	0.861	.015	Hence, H_{A2}Accepted ;PU is positively related to PI.
PI<---TU	0.737	***	Hence, H_{A3}Accepted ; PT is positively related to PI.
PI<---PR	-.698	***	Hence, H_{A4}Accepted ; PT is negatively related to PI.
PI<---PRL	0.872	.003	Hence, H_{A5}Accepted ; H ₅ : PR is positively related to PI.

Source: Field Survey

Table No.3: Results of hypothesis testing: Construct – CFA (PLS-SEM)

10. Facts of Findings

The study determineand evaluate the factors that triggers to purchase intentions of customers of eco –tourism industry. the analysis it is noted that t, All the variables of the study ,Perceived usefulness, Perceived ease of use, Trust, Perceived Risk, Perceived Relevance are the factors which triggers on Purchase intention for this research, 5 variables formed part of the structural equation model fit. All 5 variables contributed towards supporting the relevant hypothesis. The results revealed that, Perceived usefulness, Perceived ease of use, Trust and Perceived Relevance has significant positive influence on purchase intention and Perceived Risk has significant negative influence on purchase.

11. Suggestions

1. The organizations which use social media marketing strategy as communication tool should use multiple tools
2. Customers should not only depends reviews and comments given by other social media users
3. Firms that uses social media, should design the contents in such a way, that enhance trust on contents to customers
4. The Government should encourage eco-tourism schemes.

12. Conclusion

Finally the study determine the role of social media in triggering customer purchase intension and also investigated the factors which positively and negatively influence consumer purchase intensions, as the millennial spends much of the time in suing social media, any contents will reach them immediately and influence them I purchase decisions, especially in eco-tourism industry the customers are tech- savvy and most of the decisions are influenced by internet contents. The terms like ease of use, usefulness, relevance has impact on purchase intention of consumers positively .

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