

**Role of Social Media in Consumer Purchase Decision Making –
A Study in the Indian Context**

**A thesis submitted to the University of Hyderabad in partial
fulfillment for the award of the degree of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

MANAGEMENT

By

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Further, the student has passed the courses towards fulfilment of course work requirement for M.Phil. and was exempted from doing the course work in Ph.D. The copy of M.Phil. certificate has been attached.

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ABBREVIATIONS

| S.No. | Abbreviations | Full Form |
|--------------|----------------------|--|
| 1 | AGFI | Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index |
| 2 | AOL IM | America Online Instant Messenger |
| 3 | CFA | Confirmatory Factor Analysis |
| 4 | CFI | Comparative Fit Index |
| 5 | EFA | Exploratory Factor Analysis |
| 6 | FA | Factor Analysis |
| 7 | GFI | Goodness-of-Fit Index |
| 8 | ICT | Information and Communication Technology |
| 9 | IFI | Incremental Fit Index |
| 10 | IM | Instant Messaging |
| 11 | IU | Intention to Use |
| 12 | KMO | Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin |
| 13 | NFI | Normed Fit Index |
| 14 | OSN | Online Social Network |
| 15 | PC | Personal Computer |
| 16 | PCA | Principal Component Analysis |
| 17 | PEU | Perceived Ease of Use |
| 18 | PLS | Partial Least Square |
| 19 | PSI | Para-Social Interaction |
| 20 | PU | Perceived Usefulness |

| | | |
|----|-------|---|
| 21 | RFI | Relative Fit Index |
| 22 | RMSEA | Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation |
| 23 | SEO | Search Engine Optimization |
| 24 | SEM | Structural Equation Modelling |
| 25 | SMM | Social Media Marketing |
| 26 | SM | Social Media |
| 27 | SN | Social Network/Networking |
| 28 | SNS | Social Networking Site(s) |
| 29 | SPSS | Statistical Package for the Social Sciences |
| 30 | TAM | Technology Acceptance Model |
| 31 | TLI | Tucker-Lewis Index |
| 32 | TPB | Theory of Planned Behavior |
| 33 | UGC | User Generated Content |
| 34 | UGT | User Gratification Theory |
| 35 | WoM | Word of Mouth |

SYMBOLS USED IN THE STUDY

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| %..... | Percentage |
| \$..... | Dollar |
| >..... | Greater than |
| <..... | Less than |
| >..... | greater than equal to |
| <..... | Less than equal to |
| H..... | Hypothesis |
| R ² | Root Mean Square |
| χ^2 | Chi-Square |

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Technology is one of the key driving factors for the success of any organization. In the current competitive business scenario, the capability of an organization to be active and adapt to the changes in technological advancement is more important than ever before. The changes in technology for business organizations may impact in positive or negative way. The technological innovations in information technology and telecommunications have made the business activities easier and simpler.

The rapid pace of technological advancement worldwide has paved the way for the scholars and practitioners to study the adoption and applications of technology by various stakeholders. The capability of an organization and/or ability of an individual to maximize the outcomes of the usage of Information Technology are reliant on their comprehension of the different dimensions of technological know-how. The organizations and individuals are also dependent on their capability to think of creative means as how to use these technologies to achieve their respective goals or tasks. Social Media (SM) is one such technological innovation which is pervasive in all facets of human activities and has social, political, economic and cultural impact. This thesis aimed at the understanding and usage of SM by the users and marketers for fulfillment of their respective objectives.

SM has two features that is social and media. Social refers to “the interaction of the individual and the group” (Merriam-Webster, 2018b) and Media refers to “the system and organizations of communication through which information is spread to a large

number of people” (Merriam-Webster, 2018a). Social Media (SM), is a term which refers to the “forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other contents” (Merriam-Webster, 2018).

The study on SM has to be examined in respect to three dimensions viz. technology, functionality and impact. First and the most important dimension is technology which is the basis on which the different social media applications are developed. The second dimension is functionality. It provides the users a way to use the various facilities which are provided by different social media alternatives. The third dimension is the impact of social media on different stakeholders like individuals, society and the business firms.

1.2 Social Media - An Introduction

The core concepts related to specific research are defined by different researchers as per their research agenda. The objective of this section is to list out the key definitions of SM which are contributed to the growth of literature related to SM research. The numerous definitions of SM which have been used in the previous literature are presented in the table 1.2.1.

The concept of Social Media gained popularity around the year 1997 with the invention of Six Degrees (a social network site). However, in reality social media is older than that and it is an ancient age concept which will be discuss later in this chapter under the evolution of social media in detail. SM was considered “as a domain by itself” (van Osch & Coursaris, 2014) or “a hybrid element in the promotional mix of the organizations (Mangold & Faulds, 2009)”. It is based on the “technological framework classified as Web 2.0” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) which enables the “use of User Generated Content

(UGC)” (Ouiridi et al., 2014). Therefore, almost all definitions of social media comprises of user generated content coupled with Web 2.0 functionality (Davis III et al., 2012). The growing popularity of SM may be accredited to the social and economic phenomenon which is amplified by technological drivers (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The convenience and accessibility of Internet with higher bandwidth has contributed to the popularity and growth of SM. The economic phenomenon refers to the disposal incomes of the users coupled with cheap prices of technology and familiarity to computers in day-to-day life is considered as social phenomenon which drives the use of SM. The availability of UGC which has been made available with the help of free software is capable of generating contents on the Internet drive the usage of SM.

Table 1.2.1: Social Media Definitions

| Definitions | Author |
|--|----------------------------------|
| “SM refers to the means of interaction among people in which they create, share and exchange ideas and information in virtual communities and networks.” | (Drury, 2008) |
| “SM can be briefly defined as web application tools that allow users to publish and broadcast content in order to open and invite participation in conversations.” | (Safko and Brake, 2009) |
| “Social Media is group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content.” | (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61) |
| “Social media employ mobile and web-based technologies to | (Kietzmann et al. |

create highly interactive platforms via which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss and modify user-generated content.” (2011, p. 241)

“Social media technology refers to web-based and/or mobile applications that allow individuals and organizations to create, engage and share new user-generated or existing content, in digital environments through multi-way communication.” (Davis III et al., 2012)

“The technological component of the communication, transaction and relationship building function of a business which leverages the network of customers and prospects to promote value co-creation.” (Andzulis et al. 2012, p. 308)

“Any online service through which users can create and share a variety of content.” (Bolton et al., 2013, p. 248)

1.3 Social Media - The Evolution

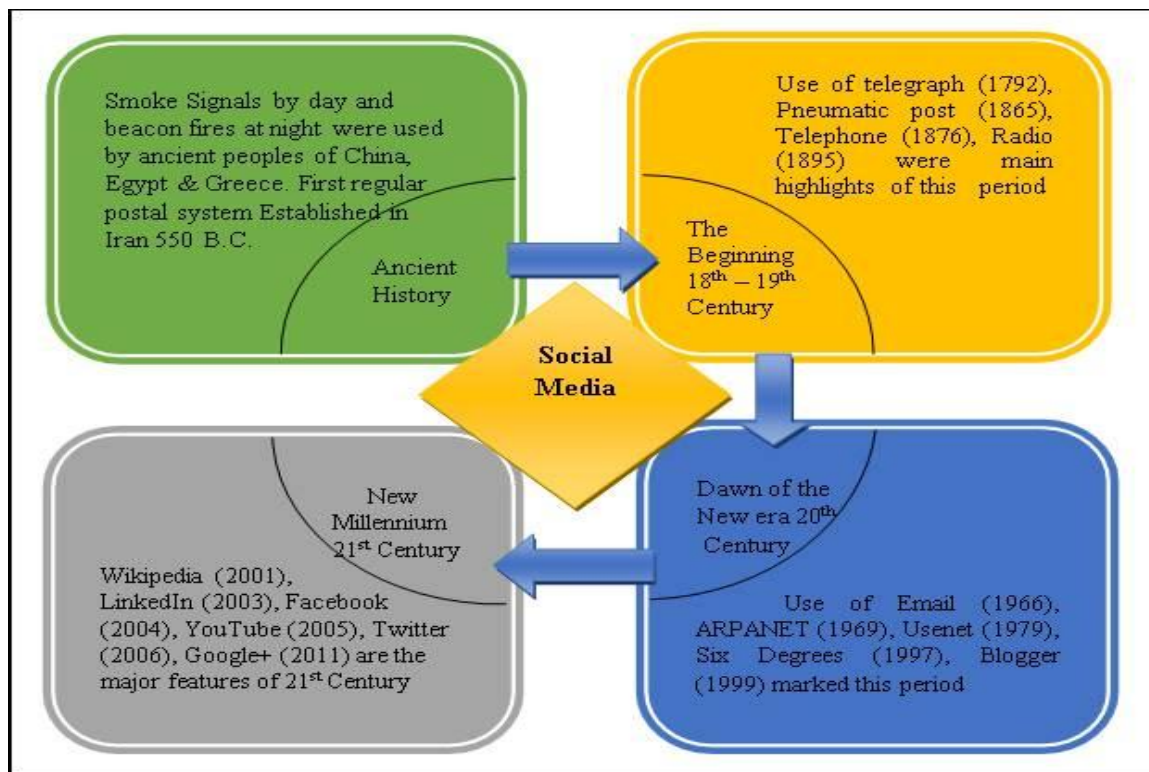
According to the famous philosopher Aristotle “human being is a social animal”. From ancient times, it has been observed that man wherever he footsteps, develops social connections with others. These connections come into existence with the help of networks that depends upon various factors. In past centuries, these networks were being established in order to form societies or communities wherever he is in this world. The connections or networks helped him in getting socialized, helped one another whenever they had some need, and therefore social networking supported him to make their life stable. This social networking was existed even before there was nonexistence of

technology. As the time passes away, it expanded from one region to another region and from specific region to different regions. The act of expansion of networks led to formation of different castes and communities across the region, town, state, country and the world. The features or characteristics of each network are different from one another depending upon the formation of these communities. These networks all together help each other, develop various customs and rituals, and feel humanity as a whole.

The dynamism of technology is an incessant state of change, advancement and development. Every now and then it is heard of new technologies and innovative discoveries which affect day-to-day life. But there is no technology that has had a more growth and development as information and communication technology (ICT) in the past few decades. It has changed the way people used to connect with each other. The communication was done with the help of smoke signals and fires at night in the ancient China, Greece and Egypt. In many places of the world drums were used as communication tools to spread the human voices to reach the maximum distance. The foundation stones of social media were put forth during the 550 BC in Iran by starting the postal system where mail was delivered with the help of horse riders and horse drawn carriage.

The eighteenth and nineteenth century were revolutionary period in which devices such as telegraph in the year 1792, telephone in the year 1876 and radio in the year 1895 accompanied in a new age of exchange of messages to cover long distances. The inventions such as telephone and radio have taken the communication into a different level. The twentieth century manifested the growth and development of internet. The existence of internet made the communication simpler and easy and boasted the

transmission of messages from person to person digitally or with the help of web. The examples of technological development in internet are email, bulletin board system (BBS), Advance Research Projects Agency Network (ARPANET), USENET (USER NETWORK), Internet Relay Chat (IRC) etc. The 21st century witnessed a revolutionary progression in SM with the introduction of Friendster (2002), Fotolog (2002), Flickr (2004), Orkut (2004), Facebook (2004), Digg (2004), Photobucket (2005), Ning (2005), YouTube (2005) Twitter (2006) etc. Social media has come to this juncture after a long journey since the days of telegraph and most recently in terms of internet relay chat as instant messenger (IM) and even still it continues to progress with a faster pace because of the recent technological advancements. Figure 1.3.1 depicts the evolution of SM as given.



Source: (Barua, 2012)

Figure1.3.1: Evolution of Social Media

1.4 An Overview of Social Media

The inventions of computer and related internet technological innovation have changed the things drastically in the progress of social media. In previous eras, emailing and blogging were happened to be the unofficial form which was considered to be a type of social networking. The practice of sending messages to others with the help of electronic mail (email) in place of normal mail seemed to fascinate people. An earlier instance of social networking was sending an email to many which was not possible in regular postal mail. Especially the speed and accessibility of the internet booms the growth of the social networking. With the passage of time, blogging was the major revolution. People started to connect and express emotions, thoughts, views etc. on it. They started to post their opinions and experiences and can be publicly shared with the people. Blogging provided people to create their profile which gives identification to an individual on these sites. It gathered people of same views, opinions, and experiences and provided a place where they can communicate with each other with an ease. Now social networking started to become more active due the incorporation of blogs which was a resultant of computer mediated and related internet technological invention.

With the passage of time, the subsequent progress in the way of SN in technological innovation was Instant Messaging (IM). This introduction of new form of social interaction made people to be more addicted to social networking. People discovered an easy mode to hang on with friends, family, colleagues, schoolmates etc. instead of meeting them specially sacrificing a healthy amount of time and money. Within short span of time, IM achieved tremendous growth and popularity. Few of the examples of IMs are AOL IM (1997), Yahoo Messenger (1999), Google Talk (2005) etc. Even these

developments were not officially considered as social networking sites (SNS) and were not still fair enough to call these developments as SNS.

Community-based websites, which is mostly recognized as SN sites, have emerged to the forefront in recent times to the online world. There are many online and offline platforms that have connected people but none have flourished as like SN sites, which boasted over 3.19 billion active social media users (We Are Social, 2018). In addition to providing an arena in which people interact with each other, it also demonstrated a great potential for marketers to perform businesses by effortlessly reaching prospect audiences. Most businesses firms have already engaged to tap their prospect customers in this new growing medium. The engagement ranges from the old-fashioned practices of SEO (search engine optimization) that was initiated by well-known firm Google to modern forms like the creation of similar groups of user of products that people can join on these social networking sites to share, create, exchange their knowledge, experiences, tastes, preferences etc.

The terminology SM means the application of mobile and web-based embedded technologies which makes communication into collaborative and interactive dialogue. SM is “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). It is a media not only for social interactions but it is considered far beyond the social interaction and communication, facilitated by universally accessible, manageable and scalable communication techniques. It has significantly altered the way business organizations, communities and individuals communicate. It is available in various forms such as forums, blogs, wikis, weblogs,

podcasts, images, video, ratings, social bookmarking etc. An overview of SM has been shown in figure 1.4.1.

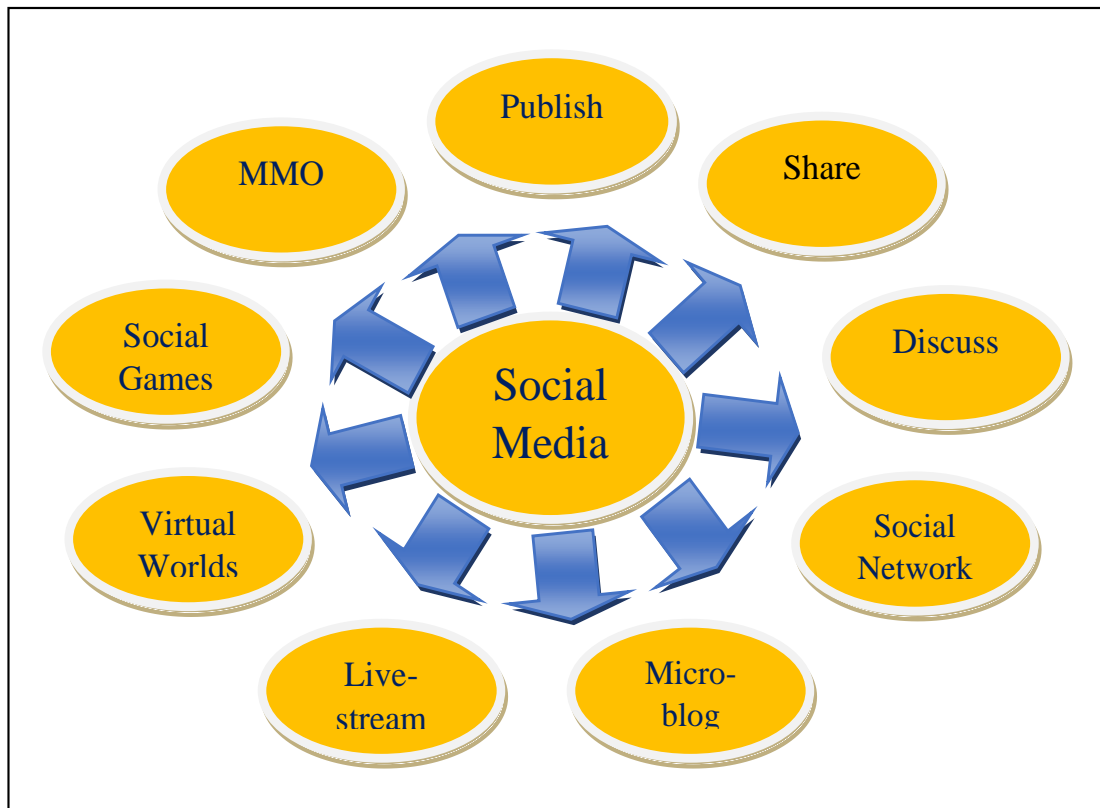
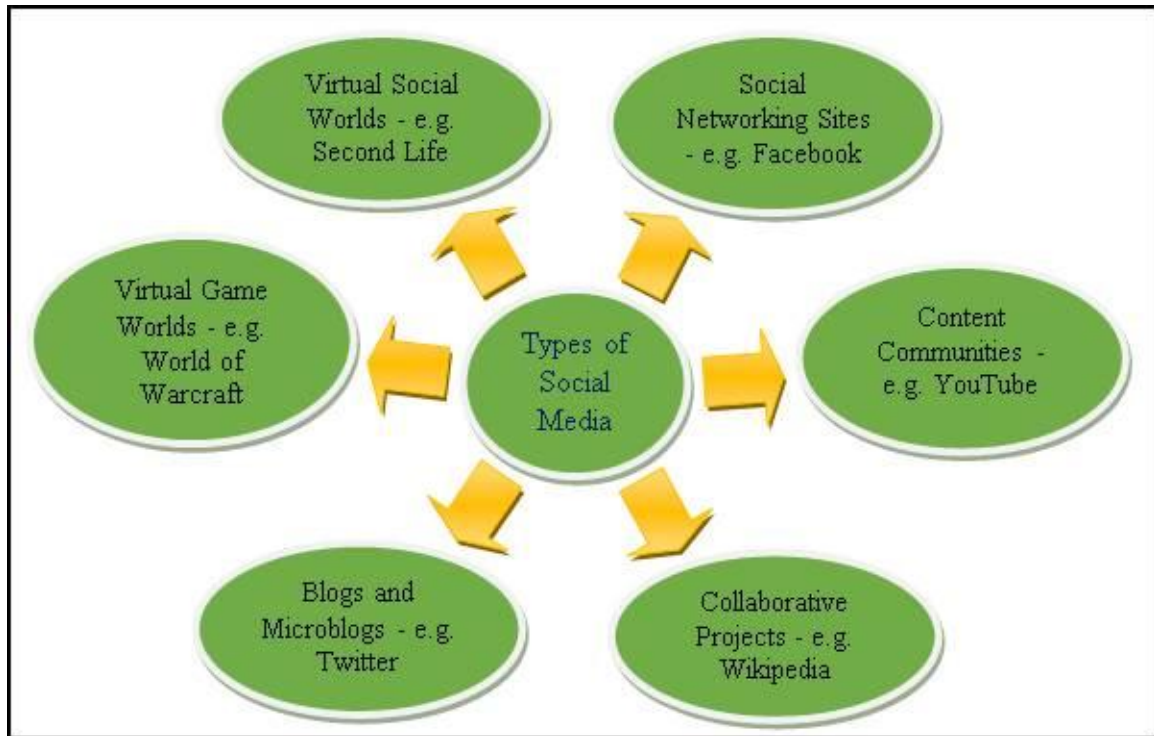


Figure 1.4.1: *Overview of Social Media*

1.5 Classification of Social Media

The current social media alternatives are rich as well as diverse (Kietzmann et al., 2011) and adoption differs from one country to country (Chiu et al., 2012). The previous researches on classification of social media varied by scholars according to their specific research purpose. It has been classified as blogs, image sharing sites, social networking sites, rating and review sites, online community sites, video sharing sites, virtual games sites etc. In all the above classifications user generated content remains the key element based on the platform and psychological motivational factors of the users through which people use to engage with each other (Krishnamurthy & Dou, 2008). The categorization of SM has been done by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) into 6 types based on the “theories

of ‘media research’ – which looks into the richness of media and ‘social presence’ – which looks into self-presentation and self-disclosure aspects”. These are shown in the figure 1.5.1 as below.



Source: Kaplan and Haenlein (2010)

Figure 1.5.1: *Types of Social Media*

SM taxonomy have been suggested by Kietzmann et al (2011) as “seven building blocks namely identity, presence, relationships, reputation, conversations, groups, and sharing”. The above categorization is beneficial in exploring the new SM applications that will be helpful in prioritizing the functionality on each of the building blocks. In all of the classifications of SM, social networking sites (SNS) is considered to be the most popular among them “allowing the users to maintain a public profile and interact with each other with whom they share connection” (Boyd & Ellison, 2008).

1.6 Impact of Social Media

The different usage of SM determines its impact in various circumstances (Davis III et al., 2012). The various features that are being offered by the different social media alternative determine its popularity among the users. The features could be termed as value addition in terms of ease of use in technology and the contents that are being available on these social media alternatives. The impact of SM varies depending upon the usage pattern of different generational cohorts like users who born between 1981 and 1999 known as Generation Y or Millennials (Bolton et al., 2013).

The effect of SM is not confined only to the individuals but it has a wide spread footprints on the business firms as well as society. It is used by individuals which helps them to build self-identity among the users. The influence of SM on business firms have been witnessed as the expectation of the customer from products and services are redefined and the way of engaging with different brands is affected. The various social web applications available to the business firm helps in maintaining customer relations (Dorsey, 2012; Behravan & Rahman, 2012; Faase et al., 2011) by creating sustainable customer engagement (Vivek et al., 2012). The impact of SM activities on brand has been recently studied using social identity theory (Saboo et al., 2015).

For measuring the impact of social media, Murdough (2009) suggested “three parameters – a) the reach of SM with respect to quality and quantity, b) the discussions in respect to the sentiment and topics, and c) the outcomes in respect to traffic of website and intention to purchase”.

1.7 Users of Social Media

The use of social media differs from earlier generation to current generation since the familiarity with the technology varies due to the technological know-how. The research on the use of SM with age has been studied by various researchers and have given name to the different generation of users. Gunter et al. (2009) have defined individuals who born after 1994 called as “Google Generation” and suggested that information and communication technologies have changed the information seeking behavior of the present generation compared to the information seeking behavior of the earlier generation. Bolton, Parasuraman, Hoefnagels, Migchels, Kabadayi, Gruber and Solnet (2013) have suggested research agenda on the usage of SM by defining “Generation Y” for users who born between 1981 and 1999. “The Generation Y usage of social media in a highly developed economy will be different from the way social media is used in a less developed countries due to cultural and technological infrastructure” (Bolton, Parasuraman, Hoefnagels, Migchels, Kabadayi, Gruber and Solnet, 2013). According to Gunter, Rowlands and Nicholas (2009), “effective and advance use of the Internet for information purposes can only be achieved once users have reached a certain level of competence. Despite reports that young people are adopting Web 2.0 applications enthusiastically and in large numbers, there is evidence that casts doubts on the web literacy of many users, young and old alike”.

The social media usage of generational cohorts (for example Gen Y or Google Gen) differs since the way of using technology is not same as compared to the older generation. There is a massive competency lacking between generations in the usage of technology. However, this gap is decreasing as technology develops (Gunter et al., 2009).

1.8 Factors Influencing Growth of Social Media

The factors that influence the growth of SM use are “individual factors (e.g. socio-economic status, personal values, age/lifecycle stage, goals, emotions, norms/identity) and environmental factors (e.g. economic, technological, cultural, legal /political)” as identified by Bolton et al. (2013). The popularity of SM use can be measured with the help of frequency and duration. The technological factors in terms of internet penetration and usage of social media have been discussed below.

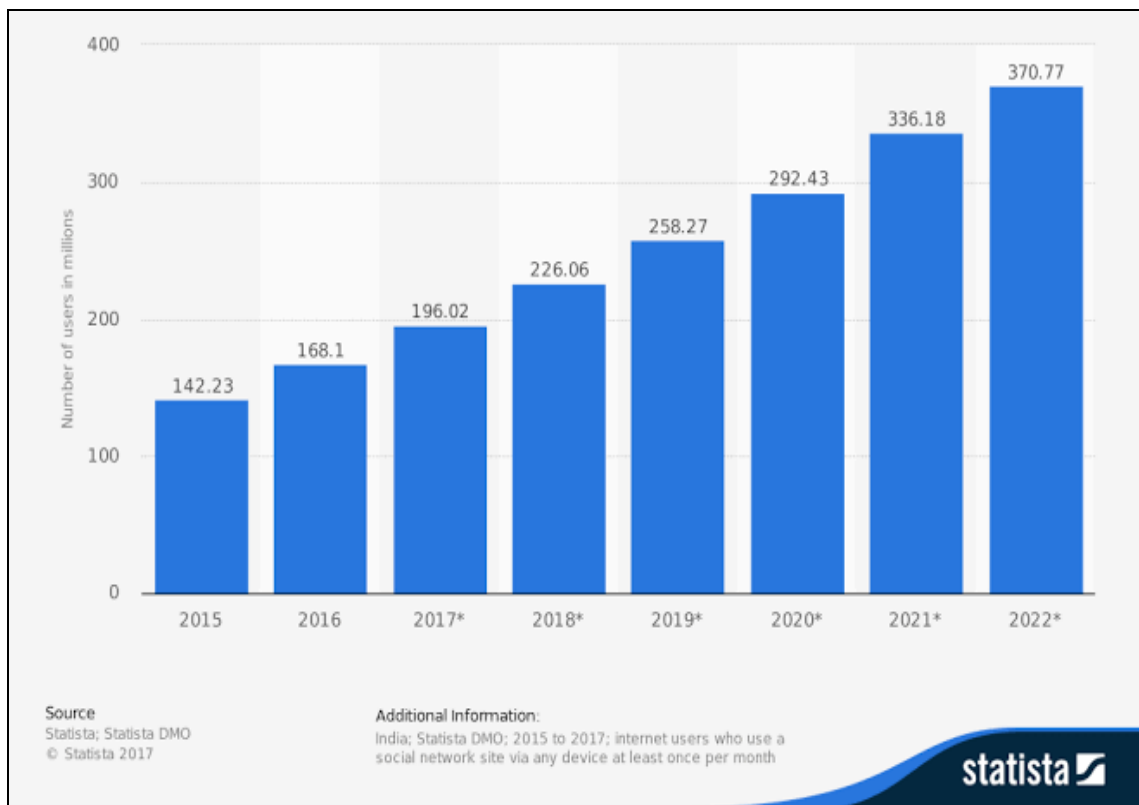
1.8.1 Internet Penetration in India

The Indian internet usage is increasing in leaps and bounds. The internet users stood around 481 million in last year December 2017 and expected to touch five hundred million in June 2018 (IAMAI & Kantar IMRB, 2017). According to Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) and Kantar IMRB (2017) report, the overall internet penetration is 35% of total population. The findings of the report witnessed 295 million users in urban and 186 million users in rural India. The broadband speed also helps in the digital growth of India. According to KPMG India – FICCI - Media and Entertainment report 2017, the average broadband speed in India is 4.1 Mbps in the third quarter ended 2016 which has an increase of 62% year-on-year. The adoption in the broadband is at 30% which represents a 116% year-on-year change. The number of wireless users in India has crossed 389 million in 2016 and it will expect to reach 969 million in 2021, the report says. The 4G connections are expected to grow five times from 2016-2021 at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 38 percent (KPMG-FICCI M&E, 2017). The exponential increase in internet use may be attributed to affordability of smartphones due

to reducing cost, low accessing charges, increase access to the farthest corner of the rural India etc.

1.8.2 Social Media Penetration in India

Social media usage in India continues to grow at a steady pace. It is evident from the secondary data that Indian internet users devote the majority of their time online on social media. The surge in SM usage due to the availability of inexpensive smart phones and tablets with low cost of internet access. The social media penetration in India has been shown in the below figure 1.8.2.



Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/284436/india-social-network-penetration/>

Figure 1.8.2: Social Media Users in India (in millions) from 2015-2022

The above statistics shown in figure 1.8.2 depicts the number of SM users is increasing as it was 142.23 million in 2015, 168.1 million in 2016, 196.02 million in 2017, and

226.06 million in 2018. It is estimated that the number of users will touch 370.77 million in 2022 (Statista, 2017).

1.9 Role of Social Media

Social media plays a vital role for organization to strategize its plan in reaching the target customers. Organizations have started to include social media because of the benefits like reaching the masses, ease of communication, accessibility, speed etc. Most importantly it provides a two way interaction between organization and customer which helps in getting feedback from them to make products and services better according to the tastes and preferences of the customers.

1.9.1 Social Media and Marketing

While with traditional marketing communication, companies were able to talk to the customers, social media has made it possible for customers talking to each other (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). In the words of Weber, “marketing to the social web means to adopt a completely new way of communicating with audience in a digital environment. Instead of continuing as broadcasters, marketers should become aggregators of customer communities.” According to Weber (2009), “it is not about broadcasting marketing messages to an increasing different audience. Instead, when marketing to the social web marketers should participate in, organize and encourage social networks to which people want to belong. Rather than talking at customers, marketers should talk with them.”

According to Weber (2009), “marketing to the Social web is not only for the largest multinational corporations; it may be easier and more effective, for a relatively small or medium-size company to take maximum advantages of the social media”. The social web has drastically changed the way of segmentation. The demographics characteristics such

as age, gender, income, education, life style etc. have now become less important, and what really matters is segmenting as what people feel and do – their behavior and also their interest and attitudes. The objective of the marketers is to find groups of customers within the larger market so that marketing messages can be reached in an effective manner to the target customers (Weber, 2009).

According to Curran, Sarah and Christopher (2011), “social media sites such as Facebook are better than other advertising avenues because it stores information of all its users thus ensuring marketing reaches a retailer’s specific target market.” SM websites are a great platform for retailers to create an experience and they can utilize information stored on SM sites to improve and enhance user experience.

1.9.2 Social Media and Advertising

Advertising has been an area of concern for many decades. Business firms have already realized that it is an effective way to fascinate consumers and it helps in increasing the share of profits. It is used as a means of communication on social media to create awareness by providing information about goods and/or services which are being offered to the consumers by the company. The importance of advertisements in our day to day interaction with media raises many critical concerns for many businesses and marketers.

According to Shields (1997), “the persuasive images that are presented in advertisements have a direct correlation to how social identities are constructed and maintained in our society.” According to Hadija et al., (2012), the advertisements which are being displayed on social networking sites are not disliked by their users’ but simply are not noticed by them.

1.9.3 Social Media and Branding

The availability of video cameras, mobile phones with recording options create endless opportunities for customers to create media files for social media. Companies have to make the first attempt by creating right platforms (Mangold & Faulds 2009) for the customers to generate content and share these materials with the other fans of same products. This user-generated content will reach to their network of friends, which increases the brand awareness.

1.10 Social Media Marketing (SMM) in India

India's Internet population is growing exponentially, as number of internet users in India reached 481 million as of December 2017 (IAMAI & Kantar IMRB, 2017). India is a key market for social media marketing and currently there are 250 million active social media users in India (We Are Social, 2018). According to Ernst &Young (E&Y, 2016) report, SMM spending in India has been increasing significantly at around 47.5 percent year on year. According to E&Y (2016) report, organizations are planning to spend as much as 31% of their annual marketing budget exclusively on digital and social media (E&Y, 2016). The study also found that customer engagement is one of the top priorities for the businesses and marketers. In terms of presence and engagement between social media users and business firms on Social Media platforms in India, Facebook is on top followed by Twitter. According to Stelzner (2018) report, 90 percent marketers want to master in the tactics of engaging the users on SM and 89 percent wants to know the best way to engage the users on social media.

1.11 Chapter Conclusion

The above chapter has explained the concept of social media and summarized the definitions provided by the various researchers. The chapter also discussed about the origin and evolution of social media. It also presented the categorization, users of social media, impact and factors influencing the growth of social media. The numerical data on the use of SM and SMM in India has been presented. The role of social media in respect to advertising, branding and marketing has been briefly discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The evolution of media from the ancient age to classical era to information based civilization has resulted in the dissemination of information, exploration of knowledge and formation of knowledge society (European Commission, 2008). The combination of internet with digital and electronic media in the current consumerism society has influenced the manner in which individuals and people seek information, share ideas, and interact with each other among the fellows of the society. The synergy of social communication facilitated through internet and digital technology has led to the progress of SM. To have a better understanding of social media, various perspectives like technological innovation, information source as well as source of data for organization to perform analytics related to consumer behavior, customer tastes and preferences, employees etc. need to be studied. The previous literatures have provided the insights from several viewpoints by means of various theories and models. It further extends the literature by discussions on the various models and theories to utilize social media as information source, regarding decision-making, as marketing tool etc. for both the consumer and business organizations.

2.2 Research Approaches for Study of Social Media

The extant SM research has studied a huge number of models and theories to understand the socio-psychological behavior of the user of SM and different stakeholders, like customers and marketers. A review of forty-six article related to theories and models on SM have been consolidated and summarized by Ngai et al. (2015) which have been

identified and categorized in “three groups namely personal behavior, social behavior and mass communication theories”. The personal behavior models and theories on SM research “aims to explain the behavior of human beings at the personal/individual level”, social behavior or social aspect theory is a “collective term comprising all social factors such as social influence (Kelman, 1958), social identity (Saboo et al., 2015), social capital (Chang & Chuang, 2011; Portes, 1998)”, and the theories related to mass communication are “a) Para-social interaction (PSI – to study the effect of celebrities on consumer behavior) theory is used in SM to understand the user behavior in respect to the brand attitudes and purchase intentions and b) User and Gratification Theory (UGT – applied to traditional media to understand customer behavior) is used in SM to investigate how to satisfy customer needs” (Dholakia et al., 2004; Porter & Donthu, 2008; Chen, 2010).

2.3 Decision Making

Decision Making (DM) refers to the process of selecting an option from different alternatives available to the individual or decision maker. The decision making research on individual has been considered as the research by economic theorist. According to Edwards (1954), the economic theory of consumer decision-making or theory of consumer choice has been developed over a period of time.

The DM models can be divided into two categories as analytical and experiential. The analytics emphasizes on the data and processing of these data to sort out the available information so that the appropriate decision can be taken to solve the specific problem. This can be termed as rational approach for making decision which is supported by data,

logic and reasoning. The second category i.e. experiential approach for making decision lies on the decision maker's knowledge and experience.

2.3.1 Decision Making (DM) Theories

The extant literature has developed several theories on decision-making to address specific problems. The decision-making bounded rationality model states that the reality is intricate and the human cognitive ability is limited. The decision maker acts as a satisficer and do not perform an in-depth review of the alternatives, but searches for satisfying solution (Simon, 1959 and 1979; Simon et al., 1987). The decision maker use to compete with the behavior of the social group in order to make a choice (Hayakawa & Venieris, 2016).

The decision making process proposed by Herbert Alexander Simon (1959) consist of three stages namely Intelligence, Design and Choice. It was further extended by Huber (1981) with adding another two stages as Implementation and Monitoring. The decision maker exhibits particular decision making styles for example rational, dependent, intuitive and spontaneous and at the same time they play a particular role when using SM for example adviser, seeker, observer (Sadovykh, Sundaram and Piramuthu, 2015).

In the present study, the rational approach of decision making is considered in which information plays an important role in an individual decision-making situation and is supported by the users of the SM such as family, colleagues, friends, acquaintances and even the person who are connected through social media virtually for the purchase of goods and/or services. This study choose to assess the use of SM as a source of information with the help of Simon (1959) and Huber (1981) model by the user of SM for their various activities performed from identifying the problem to purchase and post

purchase decision for the products and/or services. Table 2.3.1 shows the different decision making stages with operational definition proposed by Sadovykh et al. (2015).

Table 2.3.1: Operational Definition of Decision Making Stages

| Decision Making Stages | Definition | Source |
|-------------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| Intelligence | understanding the problem | (Sadovykh et al., 2015) |
| Design | development of alternatives and/or determination of consequence of various course of action | |
| Choice | selection of an option or alternative or course of action and comparing the consequences to resolve the problem | |
| Implementation | identifying the resources and implementing an alternative course of action to make a decision | |
| Monitoring | monitoring or evaluating the implemented decision | |

2.3.2 Social Media and Decision Making

In the context of SM, social and observational learning and the electronic word-of mouth with peer largely influences the purchase decision making by the individual (Chen, Lu & Wang, 2017; Wang & Yu, 2015). Social Media provides a platform where individual use to look for and share information related to various decision making aspects. SM acts as an instrument for word-of-mouth (WoM) communication which helps in consumer buying decision. The interactive ability of SM allows the users to ask for and provide advice about the different alternatives available as they move towards the attainment of their specific goal or objective.

2.4 Overview of Literature Reviewed for Social Media Research

In this section the various articles related to social media research that were reviewed have been tabulated and presented below in table 2.4.1.

Table 2.4.1: Overview of Literature Reviewed for Social Media Research

| Author & year | Area of Application, Research Methodology | Analysis Technique Used | Focus on the Study | Theory or Model Studied | Factors Studied | Consequence(s) of the Study |
|------------------------------|--|--|---|--|---|---|
| Alalwan et al., (2017) | Social media and marketing, Concept-driven systematic review, 144 articles | - | To examine and review the current related area of SM and marketing. | - | - | The study shows evidence that SM and their application should be the focus of attention for both perspectives researchers and practitioners. |
| Djafarova & Rushworth (2017) | Exploratory, In-depth Interview, Purposive Sampling, Sample size 18 | - | To study the impact of identified items on Instagram with various types of celebrities. | - | Source credibility, consumer buying intention and social identification with different types of celebrities. | The finding shows that Instagram celebrities influence the young female users' purchase behavior. |
| Liu et al., (2016) | Online Survey, Questionnaire, Sample size 349 | CFA, SEM, Covariance-based SEM (CBSEM) | To find the effect of social shopping sites on purchase intention. | Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Model | Expertise, Benevolence, Support for Recommendations, Support for Social Interactions, Perceived Utilitarian Value, Perceived Social Value, Purchase Intention | The perceived utilitarian value and social value predict individuals' consumption intentions. |
| Duffett & Wakeham (2016) | Descriptive, Questionnaire, Sample size 15,027 | Chi-square, ANOVA | To know the attitudes of millennials regarding SM as advertising medium. | Hierarchy Response model | Attitudinal responses (cognitive - awareness and knowledge; affective - liking & preference; and behavioral - intention-to-purchase and purchase) | "SMM communications had a significant impact on all of the hierarchy response attitude stages. The SM usage and demographic characteristics impact on |

| Author & year | Area of Application, Research Methodology | Analysis Technique Used | Focus on the Study | Theory or Model Studied | Factors Studied | Consequence(s) of the Study |
|--------------------------|--|--|---|---|--|---|
| Chen et al., (2016) | Online field experiment | ANOVA, Generalized Linear Model Analysis of Variance (GLM ANOVA) | To examine the effects of identified factors on impulsive buying. | Latent State Trait Theory, Social Distance Theory | Relevance, accuracy, ease of understanding, completeness, format, currency, number of likes | the hierarchy response model stages.” Results indicate that “impulsiveness positively affects consumers’ buying. Impulsive consumers are affected by the presence of peer. Based on the findings of this work, high textual IQ and a high number of “Likes” could generally increase consumers’ impulsive buying.” |
| Sadovykh et al. (2015) | Exploratory, Questionnaire, Sample size 73 | Chi-square, T-test, ANOVA | Online Social Network (OSN) as support tool for DM | Decision Making (DM) Process and Styles | DM Process – Intelligence, Design, Choice, Implementation & Monitoring DM Styles – Intuitive, Dependent, Spontaneous, Avoidant & Rational | OSN supports Intelligence, Design, Choice, Implementation – identification of resource supported but implementation of option/course of action not supported, monitoring not supported. |
| Luo & Zhong (2015) | Tourism, Exploratory, Questionnaire – Online | Centrality Analysis | SN analysis of travel related eWoM on SNS | - | Contact frequency, Contact duration, Intimacy, Mutual confiding, social ties, travel behavior | eWoM relies on social relationship as strong, middle or weak ties and influences users through |

| Author & year | Area of Application, Research Methodology | Analysis Technique Used | Focus on the Study | Theory or Model Studied | Factors Studied | Consequence(s) of the Study |
|---|---|---|--|--------------------------------|--|--|
| | Survey, Nomination method, Sample size 289 | | | | | interactions. |
| Bion Aldo Syarief S and Genoveva (2015) | Descriptive, Questionnaire – Online Survey, Sample size 140 | Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) | Role of SM on intention to buy products | Communication Process | Tie strength with peers, Identification with the peer group, Peer communication, Product attitude, Purchase intention, Product involvement, Need for uniqueness, | The communication on SM influence in two ways; directly through communication with peers moderated by need for uniqueness and indirectly by reinforcing product involvement. It proposed two SMM strategy – Passive approach utilizing SM as source of customer voice & marketing intelligence and Active approach engaging SM as direct marketing and public relation channels. |
| Constantinides, E. (2014) | Conceptual paper | - | The paper outlines the nature, effects and present status of the Social Media, underlying their role as customer empowerment agents. | - | - | Peer consumer purchase (more influential) and peer consumer review influence consumer purchase decision. |
| Cheung et al., (2014) | Exploratory, Questionnaire – Online Survey | Regression Analysis, Omnibus test | Evaluating the signaling role of online social community in consumer purchase decision | Information signaling theory | Peer Consumer review, Peer Consumer Purchase, Peer Consumer Engagement, Consumer Expertise | |

| Author & year | Area of Application, Research Methodology | Analysis Technique Used | Focus on the Study | Theory or Model Studied | Factors Studied | Consequence(s) of the Study |
|--------------------------|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Chang et al., (2014) | Exploratory, Questionnaire, Random Sampling, Sample size 671 | SEM | To explore the intention to continue using SNS | Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) | Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, Attitude, Intention to Use, Perceived Playfulness, Conformity Tendency | “The conformity tendencies and informational influence promoted the continued intention to use SNSs through perceived usefulness, not through normative influence.” |
| Anderson et al., (2014) | Retailing, Exploratory, Questionnaire, Purposive, Sample size 250 | Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), SEM | To investigate the hedonic and utilitarian motivation influence loyalty and purchase intention among consumers that use retail Facebook page | - | Time Savings, information Access, Bargain Perception, Experiential Shopping, Loyalty, Purchase Intention | “The experiential shopping influences loyalty, but not purchase intention, bargain perception influences neither purchase intention nor loyalty, information access influences time savings and loyalty, and loyalty impacts purchase intention.” |
| Hajli, M.N. (2014) | Exploratory, Questionnaire, Convenience Sampling, Sample size 200 | Partial Least Square (PLS) – SEM | To investigate the role of social factors that impact on relationship quality and social commerce intention | Social Support Theory | Social Support - Emotional and informational support, Relationship Quality - Commitment, Satisfaction, Trust | Proposed a new theory of Social Commerce. The social factors influence relationship quality and social commerce intention. |
| Balakrishnan et | Exploratory, | Regression | To study the | - | eWoM, Online | All variables influence |

| Author & year | Area of Application, Research Methodology | Analysis Technique Used | Focus on the Study | Theory or Model Studied | Factors Studied | Consequence(s) of the Study |
|--------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|--|---|
| al. (2014) | Questionnaire – Online Survey, Random Sampling, Sample size 200 | analysis | impact of SMM medium toward brand loyalty and purchase intention in Generation Y | | communities, online advertisement | the brand loyalty and purchase intention. SMM medium has become an important marketing tool to reach emerging younger generation consumers. |
| Gupta, G. (2014) | Exploratory, Questionnaire, Convenience Sampling, Sample size 146 | ANOVA, Correlation, Regression | The influence of SM through three critical variables namely, peer communication, perceived product informativeness & level of product involvement | - | Peer Communication, Perceived Product information, Product involvement, Purchase Intention | SM does affect purchase intentions. Need to investigate fundamental mechanisms driving user behavior on a SM platform. |
| Seng and Keat (2014) | Sports Products, Exploratory, Questionnaire, Convenience Sampling, Sample size 116 | T-test, Correlation | To examine the effectiveness of SNS in influencing consumer perception of quality sports products & consumer intention to purchase. | - | Perception, buying intention | Online social influence affect consumer buying intention of sports products. |

| Author & year | Area of Application, Research Methodology | Analysis Technique Used | Focus on the Study | Theory or Model Studied | Factors Studied | Consequence(s) of the Study |
|------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Zhua et al., (2014) | Exploratory, Questionnaire, Sample size 216 | PLS | To examine the adoption intention of active SNS users toward location-based recommendation agents (LBRAs). | TAM | Perceived Effort saving, accuracy, special treatment, social benefit, control, usefulness, institutional assurance | Perceived usefulness, control and institutional assurance have an influence in adoption intention. |
| Daugherty and Hoffman (2014) | Luxury & Non-Luxury Brand, Exploratory, Questionnaire, Purposive Sampling, Sample size 28 | ANOVA | To construct a conceptual framework that grounds consumer attention within a larger progression of behavioral responses to eWOM. | - | eWoM and consumer attention | eWoM messages and brand classifications interact to influence attention, providing support for the notion that consumer attention is a complex phenomenon and additional attention-related differences exists at the product category level. |
| Goodrich & de Mooij (2014) | Exploratory, Questionnaire – Online & Offline Survey, Stratified – Age & Gender Sample size - 55 countries & 500 samples | Correlation, Regression | Uses cultural dimensions to compare the use of SM and other information sources for consumer decision-making | - | Power Distance, individualism/collectivism, Uncertainty avoidance, long/short term orientation | The use of information sources influence online purchase decisions strongly varies by culture. |

| Author & year | Area of Application, Research Methodology | Analysis Technique Used | Focus on the Study | Theory or Model Studied | Factors Studied | Consequence(s) of the Study |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Yogesh & Yesha (2014) | from each Exploratory, Questionnaire, Convenience Sampling, Sample size 134 | t-Test, ANOVA | To assess the impact of usage of social media on purchase decision process | - | Information search, purchase decision, post purchase decision | The study finds that the SM is most widely used in information source for perceived convenience, effectiveness and perceived credibility. |
| Nusair et al., (2013) | Tourism, Exploratory, Questionnaire-Online, Random Sampling, Sample size 513 | CFA, Chi-square | To evaluate Gen Y users' social interaction with OSNs by testing a theoretical model, which consists of antecedents and consequences of social interactions in an OSN travel context | - | Innovativeness, Social interaction, information Sharing, perceived Risk, Perceived Utility, loyalty, Trust | Innovative users will tend to use OSNs for investing & maintaining social ties with friends and family and more likely to use OSNs as social interaction tool. |
| Vij and Sharma (2013) | Exploratory, Questionnaire – Online Survey, Sample size - Consumers (211) & Marketers (101) | CFA | To elicit the perception of marketers on SMM and factors determining consumers SM behavior. | - | Motives, beliefs, specific actions, and experiences | Marketers should align their SMM effort with the changing tastes and preferences of customers, especially millennials. |
| Sotiriadis, M. | Tourism, | Regression | To develop a | - | Trust, Motivation, Degree | Identified factors |

| Author & year | Area of Application, Research Methodology | Analysis Technique Used | Focus on the Study | Theory or Model Studied | Factors Studied | Consequence(s) of the Study |
|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| D. & van Zyl, C. (2013). | Exploratory, Questionnaire, Purposive Sampling, Sample size 500 | Analysis | conceptual framework for understanding the foundations of digital communication | | of involvement in DM, Participation, Person-group connectivity, Customer to customer knowhow, Ability | influence the recipient decision making and act as integrated marketing communication tool in tourism services. |
| Silvia et al., (2013) | Exploratory, Questionnaire, Purposive Sampling, Sample size 146 | EFA, Multiple-regression Analysis | To analyze the relationships between identified factors on mobile SN. | | Motivation , attitude, frequency of mobile SN use | Entrainment, relaxation, social, informativeness are the drivers for mobile SN. |
| Hsu et al., (2013) | Exploratory, Questionnaire, Snowball, Sample size 482 | SEM | To investigate the factors that motivate users to continue using SN websites | Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) & TAM | Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, Attitude, Continuance Intention, Disconfirmation, Satisfaction, Subjective norm, Perceived Behavioral Control, Flow | “Apart from the two components of TAM (perceived usefulness and ease-of-use), flow experience, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control were also important for SN website users.” |
| Constantinides et al., (2013) | Exploratory, Questionnaire, Quota Sampling, Sample size 400 | CFA and SEM | To explicate the importance of SNS and to develop TAM as a communication system | TAM | PU, PEU, Attitude, IU | SNS perceived as new communication system which connects peers and businesses. |
| Bolton et al., (2013) | Exploratory, Questionnaire, | - | Generation Y’s use of social | - | “Antecedents - Environmental Factors like | Provides a conceptual framework for |

| Author & year | Area of Application, Research Methodology | Analysis Technique Used | Focus on the Study | Theory or Model Studied | Factors Studied | Consequence(s) of the Study |
|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|--|
| | Purposive Sampling | | media and to assess the implications for individuals, firms and society. | | Economic, Technological, Cultural, Legal/political Individual Level Factors like Socio economic, personal, Age/life stage, Goals, Emotions, Norms/identity. Consequences - Individual Level like Social Capital, identity formation, Psychological and emotional well-being, Physical well-being, Behavioral outcomes - Firm Level like Market Intelligence, Brand equity, Customer employee interaction, HRM Societal Level like Civic/political engagement, privacy/safety eWoM” | considering the antecedents and consequences of Generation Y’s social media usage. |
| Nicole A. Buzzetto-More (2013) | Exploratory & Descriptive, Questionnaire, Sample size 258 | ANOVA, Chi-square | To examine the use and perception of SM, impact on CRM and effectiveness of marketing strategies on SM platforms | - | | SNS users promote products & service via eWoM, supports CRM, eWoM most effective form of social marketing. |
| Boley et al., | Tourism, | ANCOVA | To study the | - | Trip Picture Poster, | Trip picture posting on |

| Author & year | Area of Application, Research Methodology | Analysis Technique Used | Focus on the Study | Theory or Model Studied | Factors Studied | Consequence(s) of the Study |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| (2013) | Exploratory, Questionnaire, Purposive Sampling, Sample size 308 | | souvenir purchase behavior on SM | | Souvenir – as gift, as memories, as evidence. | SMS influence the souvenir purchase behavior. |
| Wang & Chang (2013) | Field Experiment, Questionnaire, Random Sampling, Sample size 420 | ANOVA | To examine the effect of identified factors on consumer purchase intention | Information Processing Theory, R-O-S Model | Tie strength, Perceived diagnosticity, Product related risk | For high risk product - product information and recommendation provided by strong ties have greater effect than the weak ties. |
| Lorenzo et al. (2012) | Retailers, Exploratory, Questionnaire, Sample size 90 companies | Chi-square Analysis | To examine the retail branches on adoption and use of SM tools, identifying users and non-users & their impact on management experiences. | - | - | SM helps in improving customer relations, market communication, improving their after-sales services & obtaining customer feedback and customer information. |
| Wang et al. (2012) | Exploratory, Survey, Sample size 292 | CFA | To investigate consumer socialization framework through peer communication using social | Consumer Socialization Framework | Tie strength (TS) with peers, Identification with the peer group, Peer communication (PC), Product attitude, Purchase intention, Product involvement, Need for | “TS with peers, Identification with peer group have positive influence on PC & PC also influence purchase decision directly through peers & indirectly |

| Author & year | Area of Application, Research Methodology | Analysis Technique Used | Focus on the Study | Theory or Model Studied | Factors Studied | Consequence(s) of the Study |
|------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Naylor et al. (2012) | Exploratory, Questionnaire, Purposive Sampling, Sample size 128 & 312 | - | media websites Study focuses on the decision to hide or reveal the demographic characteristics of a brand's online supporters. | - | uniqueness, - | through product involvement.” “The presence of online supporters is only passively experienced and virtual, their demographic characteristics influence consumer's brand evaluations & purchase intentions.” |
| Coulter and Roggeveen (2012) | Exploratory & Descriptive, Questionnaire - Survey, Purposive Sampling, Sample size 502 | Descriptive Analysis | To investigate how identified factors affect consumers respond to a WOM communication in an OSN. | - | Source Closeness, Source Credibility, Directive Message Content, Product page Content, Network Credibility, Network Closeness | Source credibility & source closeness (i.e. strong ties) are significant in WoM communication. |
| Huiju Park Hira Cho (2012) | Apparel Shopping, Exploratory, Questionnaire - Survey, Purposive Sampling, Sample size 186 | Correlation | To understand how SN online communities affect information seeking behavior & decision making for apparel shopping. | - | Weness, moral responsibility, shared culture, commitment, Information Search Behavior (Need recognition, Information Search, Alternative Evaluation, Post purchase behavior), Subjective norm | “There is a positive relationship between commitment to a SN online community and information seeking behavior at the community and commitment will be developed when individuals are |

| Author & year | Area of Application, Research Methodology | Analysis Technique Used | Focus on the Study | Theory or Model Studied | Factors Studied | Consequence(s) of the Study |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| Soares et al. (2012) | Exploratory, Interview, Purposive Sampling, Sample size 150 | SEM, PLS | To analyze the impact of social interactions on marketing interactions within social networks (SN). | - | Social relationship, information disclosure, Trust, WoM, Attitude towards advertising | psychologically attached to the community.” Social Relationships are significant predictors of Information Disclosure, WoM and Attitude toward Advertising. Trust acts as a predictor of Information Disclosure and WoM. |
| Akar & Topçu (2011) | Exploratory, Questionnaire, Random Sampling, Sample size 400 | T-test, ANOVA, factor and regression analysis | To specify the factors affecting consumers’ attitudes toward marketing with SM | - | Attitude, SM use, SM knowledge, Being Affected by Internet & SM, Following/monitoring SM, Foresight about SM, Fear about marketing with SM | All the identified factors except foresight about SM affect consumer’s attitude toward marketing with SM. |
| Sinclair & Vogus (2011) | Exploratory - Three phase analysis i.e. Content Analysis, Survey, Interview, Sample Size 72 | - | To assesses the strategic adoption of SM by large global organizations | Management Fashion Theory, Bandwagon diffusion & Adaptive Structuration Theory | - | There is an increased use of SM & SNS by organizations that results in the form of passive or active, proactive or reactive, & tactical or strategic uses |
| Eduardo et al., (2011) | Tourism, Exploratory, Questionnaire, | SEM, PLS | To explain the factors determining the | - | Benefits of Use - Functional, Social, Hedonic benefits Effort costs, | The intentions to use SM are directly influenced by the |

| Author & year | Area of Application, Research Methodology | Analysis Technique Used | Focus on the Study | Theory or Model Studied | Factors Studied | Consequence(s) of the Study |
|----------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------|---|--|
| | Purposive Sampling, Sample size 404 | | intentions to use SM when organizing and taking vacation trips | | Difficulty of usage cost and loss of privacy costs, Incentives on Use and Adoption - Predisposition, Trust, Altruism, Access, Socio technological environments | perceived benefits of that use (functional, psychological and hedonic and social); however, the costs do not significantly affect the predisposition to use such technologies. |
| Kim et al. (2011) | Exploratory, Questionnaire, Random Sampling, Sample size 225 | SEM | To examine SN communities member decisions to purchase digital items based on customer value theory | Customer Value Theory | Functional Value - price utility, functional quality Emotional Value - Aesthetics, playfulness Social Value - Self-image expression, relationship support | Findings indicate that “the effects of value on member purchase intentions were significant in terms of the emotional and social dimensions.” |
| Mital et al. (2010) | Exploratory, Questionnaire, Purposive Sampling, Sample size 131 | 4 Step partial Mediation Analysis | To examine the mediating effect of trust on the relationship between the type of IE & ID on SN websites | - | Trust, Information Exchange (IE), Information Disclosure (ID) | “There is partial mediating effect of trust on the relationship between the types of IE & ID on SN websites.” |
| Hsiao et al., (2010) | Exploratory, Questionnaire, Sample size 1219 | CFA and SEM | To understand the reason to trust in information regarding product recommendation on social | - | Trust in Product Recommendation - Perceived Ability, Perceived Benevolence Integrity, Perceived Critical mass and trust in Website - | “The trust in product recommendations can influence the consumers’ intention to purchase from the website through increasing their |

| Author & year | Area of Application, Research Methodology | Analysis Technique Used | Focus on the Study | Theory or Model Studied | Factors Studied | Consequence(s) of the Study |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------|--|--|
| Shin, (2010) | Exploratory, Questionnaire, Purposive Sampling, Sample size 351 | SEM | shopping sites. To examine users' underlying motivations for engaging in SN through online social networking services compared with their behavior in USA & Korea. | TAM | Perceived Web Reputation, Perceived Web Quality, Perceived institution Assurance Perceived usefulness, enjoyment, connectedness, involvement - Flow Experience - Intention - Attitude | intention to purchase the products.” “The differences were identified in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions. From the differences, it can be inferred that users' motivations in different contexts are an important explanatory variable when determining cross-national SNS site usage.” |
| Iyengar et al., (2009) | Exploratory, Sample size 208 | Bayesian approach and MCMC Method | To investigate the friends' influence on purchases in social network | - | Social Influence, Past Purchase | Identified three groups (i.e. low, middle and high status) of users with different behavior. The purchase intention of low status – not affected, middle status – highly affected and high status negatively affected. |
| Haenlien & Kaplan (2009) | Exploratory, Questionnaire, | - | To examine the influence of | | Attitude, Store Credibility, Mood | The flagship brand stores within virtual |

| Author & year | Area of Application, Research Methodology | Analysis Technique Used | Focus on the Study | Theory or Model Studied | Factors Studied | Consequence(s) of the Study |
|--------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| | Sample size 580 | | attitude towards brand & purchase intention to flagship brand stores in the virtual social world. | | | world positively influences the attitude towards brand and real life purchase intention. |

2.5 Statement of the Problem

Over the last few decades, the use of SM has increased and its popularity has caught the attention of various businesses as potential platform to harness the benefit of these media. Social media provides platforms to interact between users and organization, so it provides the opportunities for companies in promoting their brands, products and services on these media. India's social media has gained prominence in the marketing arena due to an increasing pool of users, platforms for communication, content creation and sharing etc. The widespread SM adoption has changed the manner in which people use to communicate, interact, search information, share ideas and information. According to Lorenzo et al. (2012), the traditional strategies of performing marketing activities and established previous approaches of communication for marketing are swiftly losing terrain due to peer-to-peer generated content. In some of the countries, adoption rate of internet is high and that is why SM have emerged as one of the key source of information for making products and/or services choice by consumer (Fleishman-Hillard, 2012). In the current scenario of increasing usage of social media, widespread deployment of SM as marketing tool by organizations and advancement in the information technology, social media are bound to play a significant role in influencing the customers' behavior. Therefore, the factors that influence the purchase decision of customers based on the information available on SM gains importance in the present context.

2.6 Key Observations of Past Research

With the help of review of literature following important key observation has been noticed which helped in finding the gaps and has been showed in the table 2.6.1.

Table 2.6.1: Key Observations of Past Research

| Observations | Reference |
|--|---|
| <p>“Consumers worldwide are disillusioned by the relentless bombardment from traditionally mass-mediated marketing messages, they are turning to each other for insight into brands, products and services, in large part because of the perceived greater trustworthiness of the advice they receive from interpersonal relations.”</p> | <p>(Rusticus, 2006)</p> |
| <p>“Social media is perceived by consumers as more trustworthy source of information regarding products and services than corporate-sponsored communications transmitted via the traditional elements of the promotion mix.”</p> | <p>(Foux, 2006)</p> |
| <p>“Social Networking Sites (SNS) support the maintenance of existing social ties and establishment of new connection between users.”</p> | <p>(Donath and Boyd, 2004)</p> |
| <p>Many businesses has already invested substantial marketing resources in SNS where customers are expressing and communicating their ideas, tastes, preferences, worries etc.</p> | <p>(Constantinides & Fountain, 2008; Peres et al, 2010)</p> |
| <p>“One in every 13 persons in the world is an active user of Facebook, which points to the potential of finding a ready market.”</p> | <p>(Curran et al, 2011)</p> |
| <p>Consumer who visits social media sites make better decision compared to one who did not.</p> | <p>(DEI Worldwide)</p> |

- Study, 2008)
- “For current technology savvy consumers, social networking (Huiju, 2012) online community serves as a major place to share and garner shopping information.”
- “User generated product reviews, images and tags serves as a (Ghose, valuable source of information for customers making product Ipeirotis & Li, choices online.” 2009)
- “eWoM has higher credibility and trust than traditional (Blackshaw & marketing.” Nazzaro, 2006)
- “eWoM has a significant effect on purchase intentions regardless (Balakrishnan of the type of virtual communities.” et al, 2014)
- “People trust more their peers’ opinions than marketers (Lorenzo, advertising their products or even product experts.” Constantinides & Amo, 2012)
- “The exposure to electronic word of mouth (eWOM) messages (Zhang, Jansen can generate more interest in a product category than can & Chowdhury exposure to information produced by marketers.” 2011)
-

2.7 Consumer Decision Making Literature

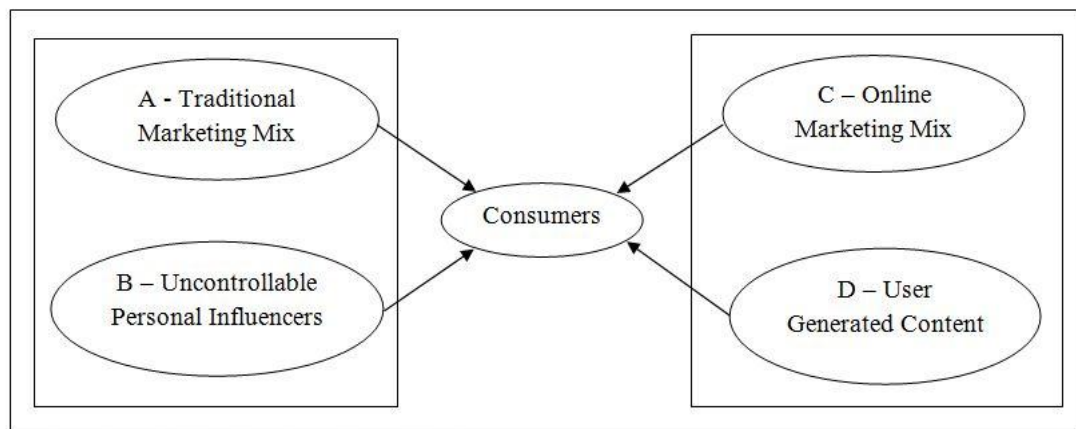
According to Constantinides and Fountain (2008) – the consumers are influenced by

(a) Traditional marketing (b) The Uncontrollable Personal Influencers

In today’s digital-focused marketing environment, the Internet as a communication and transaction channel adds two more inputs and influencers of buying behavior.

- (i) Online Marketing Mix - which basically represents the controllable online experiences provided by the corporate.

(ii) The Social Media experiences - which are by and large beyond the marketer's control.



Source: Constantinides & Fountain (2008)

Figure 2.7.1: *Factors influencing the decision-making in an Information-based Marketplace*

The customer preferences and decisions are increasingly based on inputs provided by parties beyond the control of online marketers: peer reviews, referrals, blogs, tagging, social networks, online forums and other forms of user generated content, which is uncontrollable by the marketer. (Constantinides & Fountain, 2008)

Mangold and Faulds (2009) explicate that people are witnessing an explosion of internet-based messages transmitted through social media. These have become a major factor in influencing different aspects of consumer behavior including awareness, information acquisition, purchase behavior, opinions and post-purchase communication.

The impact of peer communication and online messages have also been examined in detail by Harvey et al. (2011), that affect a recipient's decision to forward the digital content/viral message. Findings suggested two factors namely, sender involvement and the amount of online communication as most important in influencing endorsement of message.

An empirical work conducted by Wang et al. (2012) examined the peer communication and socialization framework through Social Media websites. The results confirmed that the two antecedents namely, individual level tie strength and group-level identification with peer group have positive influence on peer communication. In addition, the study reported the impact of peer communication on purchase intentions directly through consumer socialization.

Sin et al. (2012) examined the factors that influence the Malaysian consumers online purchase intention through Social Media. The study tested three factors, namely perceived ease of use, consumer perceived usefulness and subjective norm and reported that perceived usefulness to be the most important factor affecting intention to purchase in a Social Media setting.

Naylor et.al. (2012) indicated that even when the presence of online supporters is only passively experienced and virtual, their demographic characteristics influence consumer's brand evaluations and purchase intentions.

2.8 Research Gaps

The proposed study has identified following research gaps after extensive review of literature.

- Marketing strategies on social media focused on disseminating information about products and services to the customers and mainly focuses on increasing the sales (Agnihotri et al., 2012) and tend to focus on selling products and services from the perspective of organizations and not the customer. There is a need to understand the factors influencing customer decision making to help marketers to make better use of the social media platforms from the customer perspective.
- Social Media have been mainly used for advertising (Wright et al. 2010; Akar & Topçu, 2011; Tan et al. 2013; Hanaysha, 2016), branding (Miller & Lammas, 2010;

Hill and Langan, 2014, Soewandi, 2015; Hanaysha, 2016) and sales promotion which influence the consumer decision making. It is important to know how decision making of the customers get influenced with this new medium.

- In the twenty first century, social media have changed the behavior of users which provides both an opportunity and a challenge from an organization's view point. So, it is important to determine the perception of Social Media users towards the content created by marketers on Social Media. (Uitz, 2012; Nhlapo, 2015).
- Bolton et al. (2013) in a review paper have made the observation regarding the status of research on social media which focuses primarily on US and/or (at most) one other country, ignoring other regions with large and fast-growing populations where social media use and its determinants may differ significantly.

2.9 Research Questions

Based on the research gaps following questions arise as;

- What are the factors that affect the consumers' purchase decision making in the context of social media environment?
- How these factors influence the consumers' purchase decision in the social media environment?
- Do demographics play a role in the consumer purchase decision in the context of social media?
- What are the preferred product or services categories that social media users are seeking information in the context of social media?

2.10 Research Objectives

Based on the research gap and research questions, the main objective of the study is;

- To understand the role of social media in consumers' purchase decision-making.

The sub objectives of the research are as follows:

- To analyze the effect of identified factors in consumer decision making on social media.
- To examine the role of demographic in consumer decision making on social media.
- To determine the social media users' preferences in seeking information related to:
 - (i) Fast moving consumer goods (FMCGs)
 - (ii) Consumer durables
 - (iii) Services
- To examine if there is any digital divide among male and female social media users' preferences in seeking information for the three categories viz. fast moving consumer goods, consumer durables and services.

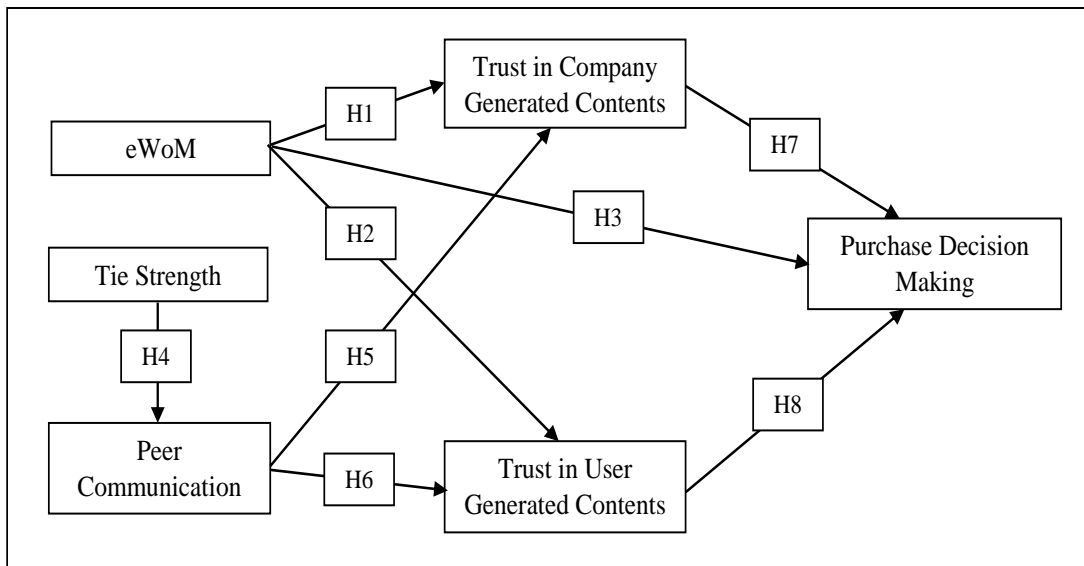


Figure 2.10.1: Proposed Model for the Study

2.11 Research Hypotheses

H1: Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWoM) has a significant effect on the trust in company generated contents (TC) among social media users.

H2: Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWoM) has a significant effect on the trust in user generated contents (TU) among social media users.

H3: Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWoM) has a significant effect on the consumer decision making (DM) among social media users.

H4: Tie strength (TS) has a significant effect on the peer communication (PC) among social media users.

H5: Peer communication (PC) has a significant effect on the trust in company generated contents (TC) among social media users.

H6: Peer communication (PC) has a significant effect on the trust in user generated contents (TU) among social media users

H7: Trust in company generated contents (TC) has a significant effect on the consumer decision making (DM) among social media users.

H8: Trust in user generated content (TU) has a significant effect on the consumer decision making (DM) among social media users.

H9: Demographic variables influence the purchase decision making in the context of social media users.

H9.a: The use of social media for decision making regarding the purchase of products or services is significantly different based on the gender of the respondents.

H9.b: The use of social media for decision making regarding the purchase of products or services is significantly different based on the age of the respondents.

H9.c: The use of social media for decision making regarding the purchase of products or services is significantly different based on the education of the respondents.

H9.d: The use of social media for decision making regarding the purchase of products or services is significantly different based on the profession of the respondents.

H9.e: The use of social media for decision making regarding the purchase of products or services is significantly different based on the income of the respondents.

2.12 Chapter Conclusion

The current chapter has presented the contribution of various authors, practitioners and academicians regarding the social media use and its application in various domains. From the literature review it was found that most of the studies have been carried out in developed countries and ignoring other regions such as India with large and fast-growing populations where social-media use and its determinants may differ significantly (Bolton et al. 2013). Most of the previous studies have focused on the usage, acceptance, and adoption of social media and have been measured through several factors. Since a lot of scholars and practitioners have worked on the various potential issues and application of social media however prospective issues such as factors affecting purchase decision of customers and effect of demographics characteristics on social media outcome need to be addressed.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The current chapter discusses the research design adopted and methodology used in the study. Research methodology provides a crystal clear direction to investigators and guides in each and every step to achieve the goals of the research.

In this chapter, the methodology that has been carried out for this study is presented. The method applied to carry out the study, the reason behind it and explanation why the particular method has been selected are discussed in detail. This chapter deals with the design of the research, data sources, identification and justification of the target population, sampling technique used. The sample size and justification of the sample size, survey instrument, methods and procedure for data collection have been also presented. The operationalization of the constructs and measurement scale of the variables used have been discussed in the current section. Finally, statistical tools and techniques employed for analyzing the data were discussed towards the end of the chapter.

3.2 Research Design

The research design is referred to as the blue print of the study. It describes the strategy that “logically links the research questions with the evidence to be collected and analyzed” (Yin, 2014). It includes the “procedures for collecting, analyzing, interpreting and reporting data in research studies and is guided by the research question(s)” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In short, it provides a systematic way to researchers as to how the investigation should take place.

The research approach undertaken to achieve the objectives of study is a combination of exploratory, descriptive and cross sectional. The exploratory research approach

helps the investigator in exploring the problem and identifying the underlying factors affecting the consumer purchase decision making in social media environment. It is descriptive in the sense as it pursue to describe the present situation in the use of social media by the users' for purchase decision making related to products and/or services. The study is cross sectional because of the respondents' scattered demographical characteristics and is conducted at different locations in a single point of time. The strategy selected for the present study is survey design since the objective of the current research is to accomplish a quantitative measure and examine the relation among the identified factors through social media and consumers' purchase decision making.

3.3 Sources of Data

The sources of data can be divided in to two types viz. primary and secondary data. Primary data refers to the first hand collection of information by the researcher, which is appropriate in answering the specific research purpose of the study (Bryman & Bell, 2011). It provides an up-to-date information that emphasizes on the specific examined problem (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The primary data is difficult to collect since it is costly, time consuming, and tough to gain access to because non-responsive rate is high (Bryman & Bell, 2011). On the other hand, secondary data refers to the data collected from the past researches beforehand, for their specific purposes and can be collected with the help of databases, libraries, websites, magazines, articles, books and other means. It offers several benefits to the researcher for example high quality, cost and time saving, solutions and new perspectives or problem alarms. The disadvantages of secondary data may be complexity, lack of availability, and lack of control or irrelevance (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In this study, empirical investigation has been done by collecting primary data. The information that has been collected

from primary data was up-to-date and focused on the specific research topic which has been taken under consideration.

3.4 Data Collection Method

The survey method has been adopted for data collection. It can also be noted that, prior studies have typically adopted survey methods to study and analyze the customer purchase decision making on social media (Syarief S and Genoveva, 2015; Cheung, 2014; Balakrishnan et al., 2014; Kendall Goodrich & Marieke de Mooij, 2014; Wang et al., 2012; Huiju Park Hira Cho, 2012). According to Bryman & Bell (2011), “there are several methods to adopt when collecting the empirical data within a survey design such as questionnaires, structured interviews and structured observations”. The structured interviews and observations are time consuming and costly compared to the questionnaire.

3.5 Survey Instrument and Design

As previously mentioned there are several methods for collecting empirical data viz. questionnaires, structured interviews and structured observations. Since the present study has adopted exploratory and descriptive approach questionnaire was considered as an appropriate instrument to collect data from the survey (Saunders et al., 2009). Therefore, it is considered that the purpose of the study would be better served with a questionnaire.

The structured questionnaire is opted as a data collection instrument. It is divided into three sections – (A) Users’ behavior on SM, (B) Use of SM for decision making regarding products or services and (C) Demographic details of the respondents and social media uses.

The first section (i.e. A) of the questionnaire comprised of items (i.e. product or services) for which users have asked for or advised others on social media that include

three categories – fast moving consumer goods (FMCG), consumer durables and services. This section also includes the statements related to the factors such as electronic word of mouth (eWoM), tie strength (TS), peer communication (PC), trust in company generated contents (TC) and trust in user generated contents (TU). The statements have been measured with a five point Likert scale, ranging from ‘1 as Strongly Disagree’ to ‘5 as Strongly Agree’.

Section B of the questionnaire comprised of the questions related to the use of social media for decision making regarding products or services with the help of closed ended statements measured on a five point Likert scale. These statements are used to evaluate social media as source of information for decision making based on Herbert Simon (1959) model (three stages i.e. intelligence, design and choice) and Huber (1981) model (two stages i.e. implementation and monitoring). The review of literature helped in defining the five stages of decision making and statements have been used to measure the response on Likert five point scale.

The last section (i.e. C) comprised of demographic details of the respondents and social media usage details. The demographics include gender, age, education, profession, and income. The qualitative closed ended questions have helped in identifying the social media use. The closed ended questions were focused on six social media applications viz. Facebook (FB), Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger (FB Messenger).

3.6 Pretesting

It is important for the researcher to test the appropriateness of the questionnaire before proceeding for collection of data (Saunders et al., 2009). The prior testing helps in improving the questionnaire which ultimately becomes easier for respondents to understand and answer with an ease. The testing of questionnaire also aide the

researcher to determine if the statement or questions probed will serve the research purpose (Saunders et al., 2009).

3.6.1 Pilot Study

A pilot study has been conducted with a small number of respondents to make sure it is feasible for carrying out large scale study. To conduct a pilot study, the draft questionnaire has been distributed and the purpose of the study has been explained to the respondents with a sample of 88 respondents to identify and eliminate potential problems. The analysis of pilot study data helped to ensure that all the collected information would be utilized and the questionnaire would obtain all the necessary data (Reynolds et al., 1993). Based on the feedback in pretest, the final draft questionnaire wordings of a few items have been modified to better understand the constructs being studied.

3.7 Target Population of the Study

In this study, the target population consists of the active users of social media located in India. The target population size of active social media user is presently 250 million in India (We Are Social, 2018). It includes multi social media users as well. An individual who is an active user of at least one social media application constitutes as the sampling unit of the study. But it is found that most of the users are using more than one social media application. The total number of social media users mentioned in the reports are the summation of the number of subscribers in India. The reports do not give a clear picture of the exact number of social media subscription across India. Hence, it is considered that the universe is large and the population size is unknown.

3.8 Justification for the Target Population of the Study

The internet users in India have increased from 52 million in Sep 2009 (IAMAI, 2010) to 481 million in Dec 2017 and expected to reach 500 million in June 2018

(IAMAI & Kantar IMRB, 2017). Therefore the internet user base is growing exponentially. Also the social media users in India have increased from 19 million in 2008 (IAMAI, 2010) to 250 million in 2018 (We Are Social, 2018) and expected to reach 370 million in 2022 (Statista, 2017). This phenomenal growth in the usage of social media attracts business organizations as a potential platform for marketing and therefore organizations are spending around 31 percent of their annual marketing budget especially on digital and social media (E&Y, 2016).

3.9 Sampling Technique

The universe of the study constitutes the users of social media located in India. As mentioned earlier, the universe of the population is large and unknown so it is not possible to adopt random sampling method because the entire social media user's list of India is unavailable. Thus, non-probability sampling technique such as purposive sampling has been adopted for the study.

3.10 Sample Size

The present study approach has considered the non-probability sampling technique with purposive sampling method to collect the data from across India. According to IMAI and IMRB International 2014 report, the majority of Indian Internet users belong to cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Bangalore, Chennai and Hyderabad. Hence, the primary data has been collected from the above mentioned cities. IMAI and IMRB (2014) report has been considered as the basis for choosing the cities in which the survey was conducted. From each city, 150 sample respondents have been targeted which constitute a total of 900 sample size for the study. The planned sample size has been shown in table 3.10.1 as follows.

Table 3.10.1: Planned Sample Size

| S.No. | Cities | Sample Size |
|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Mumbai | 150 |
| 2 | Delhi | 150 |
| 3 | Kolkata | 150 |
| 4 | Bangalore | 150 |
| 5 | Chennai | 150 |
| 6 | Hyderabad | 150 |
| Total | | 900 |

As per the planned sample size, questionnaires have been distributed and collected from each city. The sample response rate and the total valid sample size of the study has been presented in the below table 3.10.2.

Table 3.10.2: Sample Response Rate

| S.No. | Cities | Sample Distributed | Sample Collected | Valid Sample | Invalid Sample |
|--------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Mumbai | 180 | 142 | 132 | 10 |
| 2 | Delhi | 180 | 147 | 138 | 9 |
| 3 | Kolkata | 180 | 143 | 135 | 8 |
| 4 | Bangalore | 180 | 140 | 133 | 7 |
| 5 | Chennai | 180 | 136 | 130 | 6 |
| 6 | Hyderabad | 180 | 145 | 134 | 11 |
| Total Sample Size | | 1080 | 853(78.98%) | 802(74.25%) | 51 |

The above table shows the response rate of the questionnaire distributed for the study which is 74.25%. A total of 1080 questionnaire have been distributed, out of which

853 returned and after screening the questionnaire a total of 802 deemed fit for the study. There were 51 questionnaires which were discarded because of the incomplete responses.

3.11 Sample Justification

It is suggested by Grossnickle & Raskin (2000) that the sample size should be representative of the target population and it should be large enough in number so that the sampling error could be minimized. According to Hair et al. (2010), the determination of sample size should be based on the number of attributes used in the study and suggested that “five subjects for one attribute” in the sample of exploratory factor analysis. A total of 31 attributes have been identified, so the ideal size of the sample should be 155 ($31 \times 5 = 155$). The present study employed the structural equation modelling (SEM) for which the number of subjects should be at least 200 (Kelloway, 1998). The final sample size of the study is 802 which exceeds the suggested margin by a large number.

3.12 Operationalization & Measurement of Variables

In general, operationalization refers to “the process of defining research questions, developing measurement instruments and gathering evidence into a data set” (Schrøder et al., 2003, p. 180). More precisely, it can be defined as “the process by which a researcher defines how a concept is measured, observed, or manipulated within a particular study. This process translates the theoretical, conceptual variable of interest into a set of specific operations or procedures that define the variable's meaning in a specific study” (Burnette, 2007, p. 635). In simple words operationalization means in what way or manner a concept should be measured in a study (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Concepts are elucidated as the mechanism that constitute the theory and represent the essence of research. The measurement of

concepts helps in establishing the differences between people based on the question. It also provides a reliable tool for conducting future research concerning the same concepts.

The concepts that have been used in this study are tie strength, peer communication, eWoM, trust in company generated contents, trust in user generated contents and purchase decision. All the concepts have been discussed in the review of literature and how they associate to each other has also been described. In a quantitative research, it is suggested by Bryman & Bell (2011) that all the concepts which have been employed should be measured. The objective of this research has been fulfilled with the help of a questionnaire. The content of the questionnaire included the questions which were necessary to answer the hypotheses, such as demographics of the respondents for example gender, age, income etc. Further it continued with inquiries which had been designed to measure the other variables viz. tie strength, peer communication, eWoM, trust in company generated contents, trust in user generated contents and purchase decision making.

Table 3.12.1 represents the indicators which have been used in the survey instrument (questionnaire), the type of measurement scale used and its construction, the attributes or items used and their references.

Table 3.12.2 represents the conceptual definition of the constructs and table 3.12.3 shows the decision making stages, based on the established theory from the literature review.

Table 3.12.1: Measurement and Scaling of the Constructs

| Constructs | Description of Item used | Type of Measurement Scale and its construction | Adopted from |
|-------------------|---|--|--------------------|
| Electronic | eWoM1: I talk up about the products or services on SM to my peers, friends, family etc. | 4 items, 5 point Likert scale anchored by: (1) Strongly disagree, (5) Strongly agree | Park. H (2011) |
| Word-of-mouth | eWoM2: I use to suggest/advice or recommend products or services to lots of people on SM. | | |
| (eWoM) | eWoM3: I try to spread the good/bad word about products or services on SM. | | |
| Tie Strength (TS) | eWoM4: I give lots of positive word-of mouth about products or services on SM. | 3 items, 5 point Likert scale anchored by: (1) Very unlikely, (5) Very likely | Wang et al. (2012) |
| | TS1: How likely would you perform a large favor for your peers on SM related to products or services? | | |
| | TS2: How likely are you willing to share your personal experience about the products or services with your SM peers? | | |
| | TS3: How likely are you willing to help your SM peers in purchasing or decision making for product or services? | | |

| | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|---------------------------|
| Peer Communication (PC) | <p>PC1: I talk about purchasing the product or services with my peers on SM.</p> <p>PC2: I ask my peers for opinion or advice about the product or services on social media.</p> <p>PC3: I obtain the product or services information from my peers through social media.</p> <p>PC4: My peers on social media encourage me to buy the product or services.</p> | <p>4 items, 5 point Likert scale anchored by: (1) Strongly disagree, (5) Strongly agree</p> | <p>Wang et al. (2012)</p> |
|----------------------------|---|---|---------------------------|

| | | | |
|--|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| Trust in Company Generated Contents (TC) | TC1: Information about the products or services provided on social media by the company is trustworthy. | | |
| | TC2: Information about the products or services provided on social media by the company is credible. | | |
| | TC3: Information about the products or services provided on social media by the company is reliable. | | |
| | TC4: Promises made by the company on social media about the products or services are reliable. | | |
| | TC5: The company's communications on social media is sincere about its products or services. | 9 items, 5 point Likert scale anchored by: (1) Strongly disagree, (5) Strongly agree | Cleopatra Veloutsou (2015); |
| | TC6: The company's communications do not make false claims about the products or services on social media. | | Goodrich & Merieke de Mooij (2013); |
| | TC7: I trust the information provided by company on social media about the products or services. | | Nick Hajli (2014) |
| | TC8: The companies on social media are genuinely committed to my satisfaction about the products or services. | | |
| | TC9: I have a complete faith in the integrity of information about the products or services provided on social media by the company. | | |

Decision
Making
(DM)

DM1: The use of Social Media (SM) initiates my shopping/buying intention (i.e. I learn about products or services that are not in my mind while surfing SM)

DM2: I use social media to search information about the product or services to support decision making.

DM3: I provide information to others about the product or services on social media to support decision making.

DM4: I use information from social media in evaluation of various options/alternatives/courses of action to take a decision related to products or services.

DM5: I provide information on social media to help others in evaluation of various options/alternatives/courses of action to take a decision related to products or services.

DM6: I use information from social media in selection from various options/alternatives to take a decision related to the product or services.

DM7: I use SM to provide information/feedback to others to get opinion after purchasing a product or services.

DM8: I use SM to post/share my comments/questions to get opinion after purchasing a product or services.

8 items, 5 point Likert scale
anchored by: (1) strongly
disagree, (5) strongly agree

Sadovykh et
al. (2015)

| | | | |
|---|--|---|------------------------|
| Trust in User Generated Contents (TU) | <p>TU1: I think that the product or services information/recommendations provided by the social media users are credible.</p> <p>TU2: I trust the product or services information/recommendation from social media users.</p> <p>TU3: I believe that product or services information/recommendations from social media users are trustworthy.</p> | <p>3 items, 5 point Likert scale anchored by: (1) Strongly disagree, (5) Strongly agree</p> | <p>Alghamdi (2012)</p> |
|---|--|---|------------------------|

Table 3.12.2: Research Construct and Operational Definition

| Construct | | Conceptual Definition | Operational Definition |
|--|---|---|---|
| Electronic Word-of-mouth (eWoM) | | “All informal communications directed at consumers through Internet-based technology related to the usage or characteristics of particular good and services, or their sellers. It includes communication between producers and consumers as well as those between consumers themselves.” (Litvin et al., 2008) | When someone share or posts a comment regarding a product and/or services or about company on the social media, available for others to see. |
| Tie Strength (TS) | | “The degree to which a person is willing to maintain relationship with peers through social media.” (Wang et al., 2012) | It refers to the degree of potency of bond with peers in terms of contact duration, contact frequency, contact intimacy/closeness etc. on social media. |
| Peer Communication (PC) | | “It refers to the interactions about products/services among individual consumers through technology (web or mobile applications) aided social networks.” (Wang et al., 2012) | The interaction about products and/or services among family, friends, colleagues, acquaintances, strangers etc. on social media. |
| Trust | Trust in Company Generated Contents (TC) | “A willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence.” (Moorman et al. 1993) | A willingness to rely on the information provided by the company regarding products and/or services on social media. |
| | Trust in User Generated Contents (TU) | | A willingness to rely on the information provided by the users regarding products and/or services on social media. |

Table 3.12.3: Conceptual and Operational Definition of Decision Making Stages

| Decision Making (DM) Stages | Conceptual Definition | | Operational Definition |
|------------------------------------|--|------------------------|--|
| Intelligence | Identifying/understanding the problem | Sadovykh et al. (2015) | It includes searching or scanning the environment influencing the choice for the purchase of products and/or services. |
| Design | Development of alternatives/determination of consequences of various course of action | | It includes discovering, developing, analyzing a set of possible decision alternative for the choice of a particular product and/or service to purchase. |
| Choice | Selection of option/alternative/course of action and comparison of consequences to resolve the problem | | It includes the selection of a particular decision from the available alternatives. |
| Implementation | Identification of resources and implementing an alternate course of action to make a decision | | It includes the execution of choice by examining all the information accessed regarding the purchase of products and/or services. |
| Monitoring | Monitoring/evaluation of implemented decision | | It comprises the activities which involves the evaluation of implemented decision such as feedback in terms of opinion, advice etc. |

3.13 Data Analysis Method

For analyzing the data different statistical techniques have been used such as descriptive statistics, chi-square test, independent sample t-test, analysis of variance (ANOVA), exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modelling (SEM). The software which have been used include MS-Excel, statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 20 and Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) version 20.

The data analysis method used in this study may be divided into four parts. The first part used the descriptive statistics to summarize the data for easy understanding. It consists of demographic profile of the respondents and the social media use such as device used for accessing social media, SM application used, number of hours spent on SM, frequency and purpose of using different social media alternatives etc. which have been analyzed with the help of graphs, percentages and frequency tables.

The second part of the analysis focused on the analysis of the identified factors in consumer decision making for the purchase of goods and/or services. The scales reflecting the usage of social media at different stages of decision making have been identified and adopted from the past literature and summated,. For analyzing data, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) have been conducted. After EFA and CFA, structural equation modelling (SEM) has been applied to test the model fit and the relative significance of relationships among the various construct used in the study.

The third part of the analysis focused on the examination of the role of demographics in DM. The statistical tool used for testing the hypothesis is independent sample t-test in

case of two sample groups and one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used in case of more than two sample groups. If the ANOVA result shows a significant result then Duncan (Multiple Range Test) Post Hoc test have been conducted further to draw key inferences as to which group is different from the other groups.

The fourth part have been focused on to determine the preferences of social media users in seeking information related to fast moving consumer goods (FMCG), consumer durables and services and to examine if there is any digital divide between male and female respondents' preferences in seeking information for the above mentioned products and/or services categories. For this purpose descriptive statistics such as graphs, percentage and frequency tables have been used. To examine the differences between male and female preferences, chi-square test of independence has been used to assess statistical significance of the differences.

3.14 Chapter Conclusion

The current chapter has described in detail the research methodology adopted for the investigation. The discussion included various aspects related to research design, sources of data, data collection method, survey instrument and design, pretesting, target population, justification of target population, sampling technique, sample size, justification of sample size, operationalization and measurement of variables and data analysis method.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The present chapter begins with quantification of results by presenting descriptive statistics. This chapter discusses the issues in data analysis related to data tabulation, coding and purification. The reliability and validity of measurement scale used has been tested. The data analysis techniques employed to address the objectives of the research and hypotheses formulated in the previous chapter have also been presented.

4.2 Data Tabulation, Coding and Purification

The collected data have been entered into the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for easy understanding. The various columns of the excel sheet contain the details of the respondents such as city, age, gender, profession etc. and each row of the excel sheet represent the data of individual respondents. After the data entry, it has been imported into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 for purification and finalization.

In the data entry, data coding is an important step. Prior to data entry, coding of data have been done for categorical and Likert scale data. For example, male is coded as 1 and female is coded as 2 while entering the data. In the data analysis, purification of data is also an important step. The data must have to be complete in all aspects for each individual respondent for studying the specific theory that has been undertaken for the study.

4.3 Software Used

For analyzing the data, Microsoft Excel, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 and Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) 20.0 have been used. The convergent validity and discriminant validity of the factors which have been derived from exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis were tested with the help of 'Stat Tool Package' developed by James Gaskin (2016).

4.4 Data Analysis

In the present study, there have been four parts to in the data analysis. The first part describes the demographic details and the different purposes of the usage of social media of the respondents. For this purpose descriptive statistics have been used to summarize the data for easy understanding. The second part dealt with analyzing the identified factors for purchase decision making of goods and/or services. For this, exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis has been conducted followed by a model validation with the help of structural equation modeling (SEM). The third part examines the role of demographic in decision making. The independent t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) with post hoc Duncan test have been used for this purpose. The fourth part focused on to determine the preferences in seeking the information related to fast moving consumer goods (FMCG), consumer durables and services. For this, descriptive statistics for example graphs, percentage and frequency table have been used. Chi-square test of independence has been conducted to calculate if the observed values are as per the expected values or not.

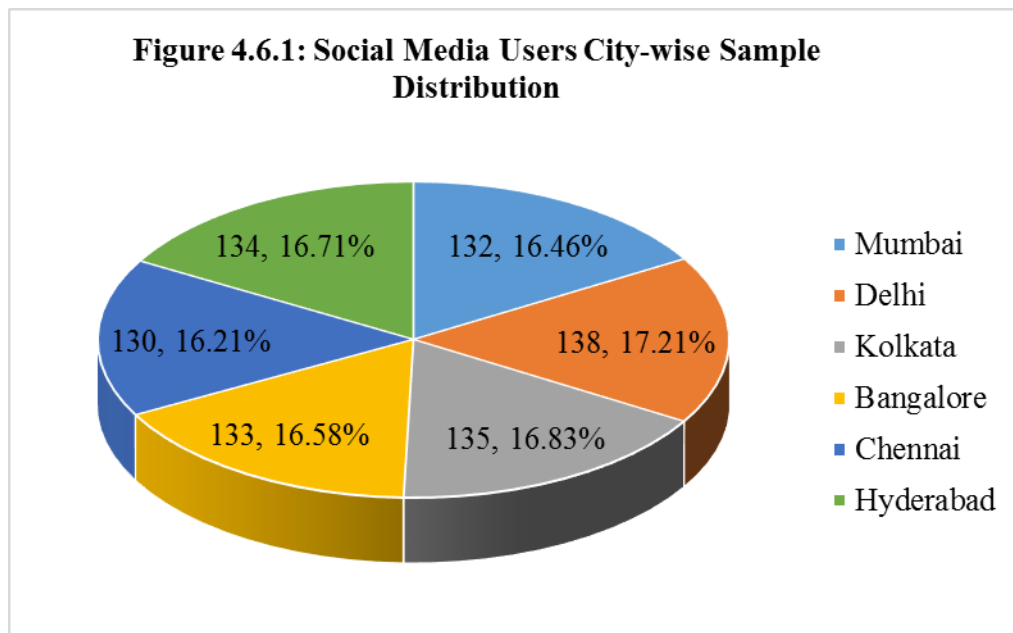
4.5 Test of Hypotheses

In this study, several hypotheses have been formulated to achieve the objectives of the research. For testing the hypotheses various techniques such as independent sample t-test, chi-square test, ANOVA and structural equation modeling (SEM) have been used.

4.6 Demographic Details of the Respondents

Table 4.6.1: Social Media Users City-wise Sample Distribution

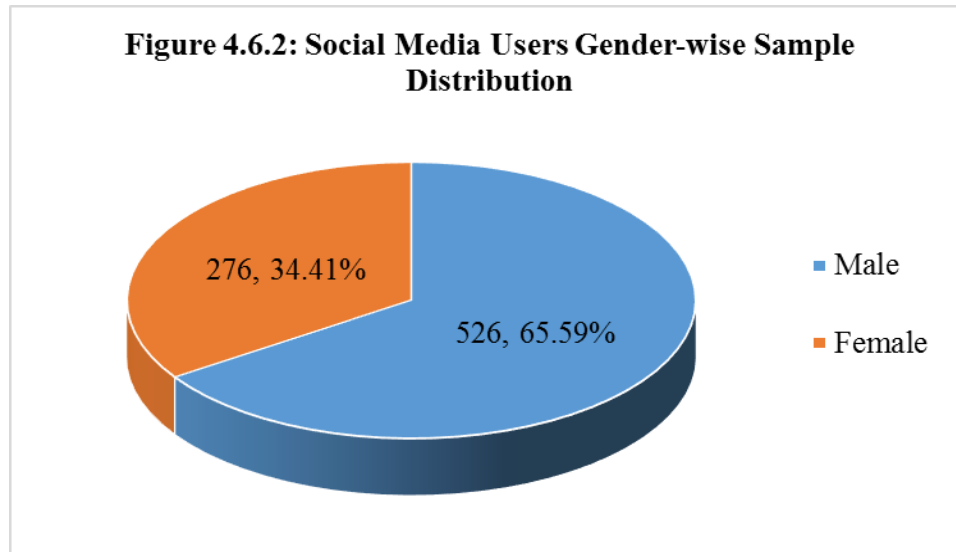
| City | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Mumbai | 132 | 16.46 |
| Delhi | 138 | 17.21 |
| Kolkata | 135 | 16.83 |
| Bangalore | 133 | 16.58 |
| Chennai | 130 | 16.21 |
| Hyderabad | 134 | 16.71 |
| Total | 802 | 100.0 |



Inferences: The above table 4.6.1 shows the city wise social media users in the six select cities in India. The distribution shows that approximately 17 percent samples have been drawn from the each city.

Table 4.6.2: Social Media Users Gender-wise Sample Distribution

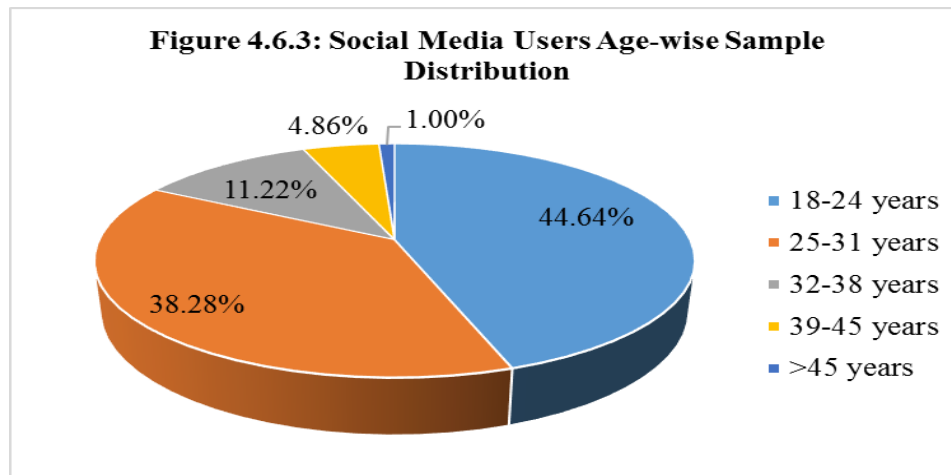
| Gender | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| Male | 526 | 65.59 |
| Female | 276 | 34.41 |
| Total | 802 | 100 |



Inferences: The above table 4.6.2 shows the gender wise distribution of the sample. The distribution shows that the sample comprises of 65.59 percent of male respondents and 34.41 percent of female respondents.

Table 4.6.3: Social Media Users Age-wise Sample Distribution

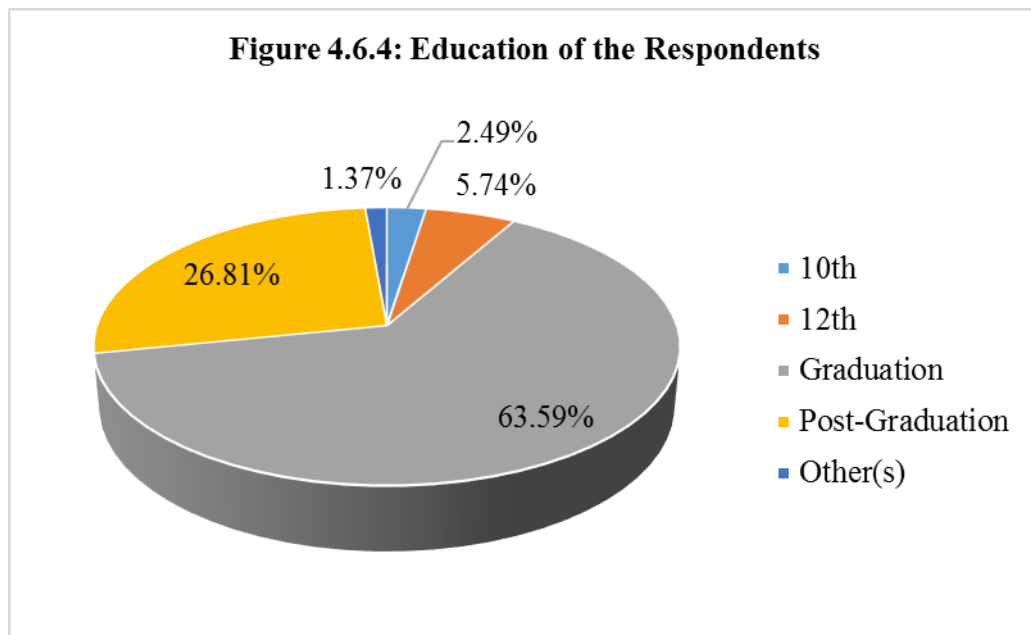
| Age | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 18-24 years | 358 | 44.64 |
| 25-31 years | 307 | 38.28 |
| 32-38 years | 90 | 11.22 |
| 39-45 years | 39 | 4.86 |
| >45 years | 8 | 1.00 |
| Total | 802.0 | 100.0 |



Inferences: The above table 4.6.3 shows the age wise social media users. The distribution shows that 44.64 percent of the respondents belong to 18-24 years age group, 38.28 percent of the respondents belong to 25-31 years age group, 11.22 percent of the respondents belong to 32-38 years age group, 4.86 percent of the respondents belong to 39-44 years age group, and only 1.0 percent of the respondents belong to above 45 years age. It is evident from the above table that the age group of 18-31 years forms the majority of the social media users with approximately 83 percent of the whole sample taken into consideration.

Table 4.6.4: Education of the Respondents

| Education | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 10th | 20 | 2.49 |
| 12th | 46 | 5.74 |
| Graduation | 510 | 63.59 |
| Post-Graduation | 215 | 26.81 |
| Other(s) | 11 | 1.37 |
| Total | 802 | 100.0 |

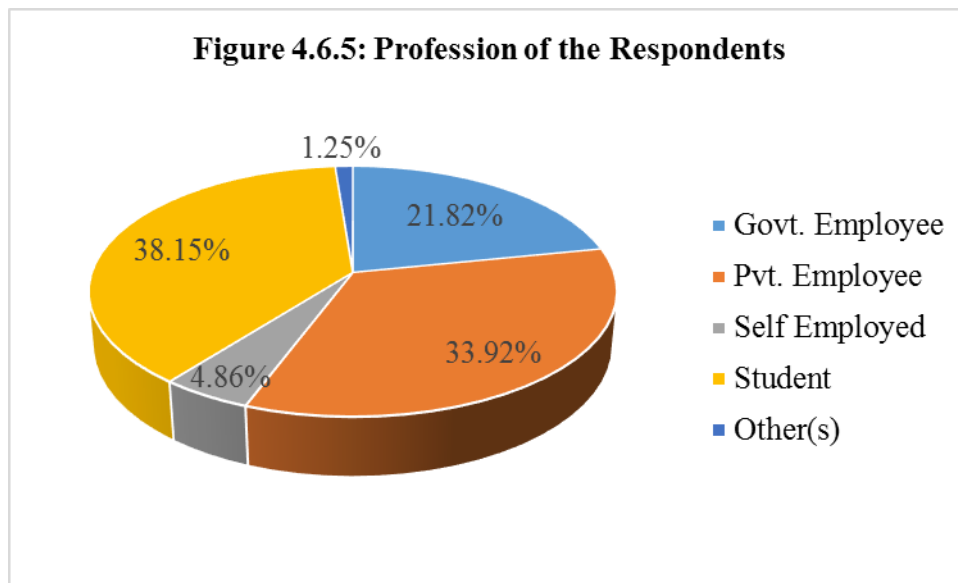


Inferences: The above table 4.6.4 shows the educational background of the social media users. The distribution shows that 2.49 percent of the respondents belong to 10th (Secondary school), 5.74 percent of the respondents belong to 12th (Intermediate), 63.59 percent of the respondents belong to Graduation, 26.81 percent of the respondents belong to Post-Graduation , and 1.37 percent of the respondents belong to other educational

background like M.Phil., Ph.D. It is evident from the above table that the mostly users of social media are graduate which is approximately 64 percent.

Table 4.6.5: Profession of the Respondents

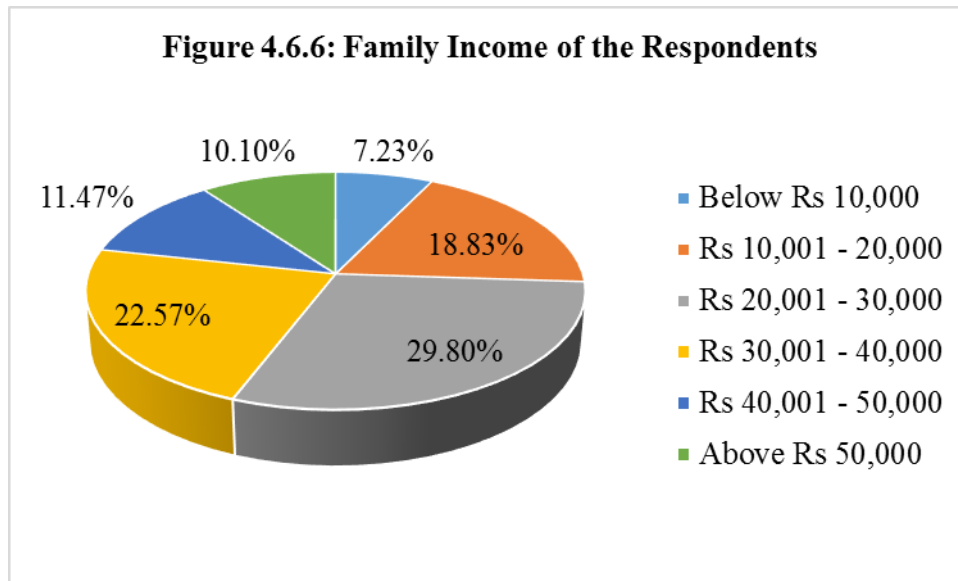
| Profession | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Government Employee | 175 | 21.82 |
| Private Employee | 272 | 33.92 |
| Self Employed | 39 | 4.86 |
| Student | 306 | 38.15 |
| Other(s) | 10 | 1.25 |
| Total | 802 | 100.0 |



Inferences: The above table 4.6.5 shows the educational background of the social media users. The distribution shows that 21.82 percent of the respondents are government (Govt.) employees, 33.92 percent of the respondents are private (Pvt.) employees, 4.86 percent of the respondents are self-employed, 38.15 percent of the respondents are students, and 1.25 percent of the respondents are from other profession. It is evident from the above table that the majority users of social media are students.

Table 4.6.6: Family Income of the Respondents

| Income | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|------------|--------------|
| Below Rs 10,000 | 58 | 7.23 |
| Rs 10,001 - 20,000 | 151 | 18.83 |
| Rs 20,001 - 30,000 | 239 | 29.80 |
| Rs 30,001 - 40,000 | 181 | 22.57 |
| Rs 40,001 - 50,000 | 92 | 11.47 |
| Above Rs 50,000 | 81 | 10.10 |
| Total | 802 | 100.0 |



Inferences: The above table 4.6.6 shows the family income of the social media users. The distribution shows that 7.23 percent of the respondents belong to the income bracket of less than Rs 10,000, 18.83 percent of the respondents belong to the income bracket of Rs 10,001-Rs 20,000, 29.80 percent of the respondents belong to the income bracket of Rs 20,001-Rs 30,000, 22.57 percent of the respondents belong to the income bracket of Rs 30,001-Rs 40,000, 11.47 percent of the respondents belong to the income bracket of Rs 40,001-Rs 50,000, 10.10 percent of the respondents belong to the income bracket of

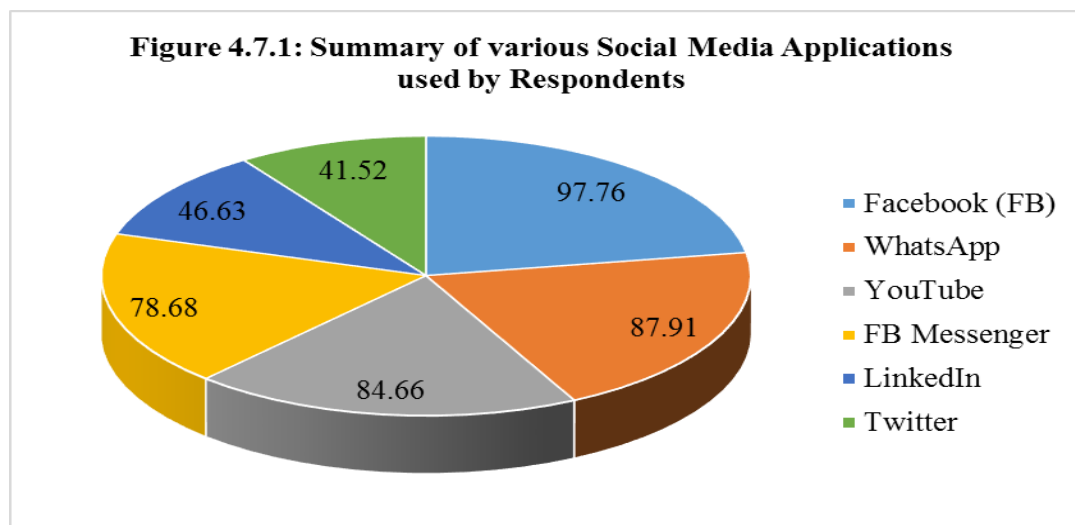
more than Rs 50,000 It is evident from the above table that the more than half (i.e. 52.37%) of the users of social media belong to the income bracket of Rs 20,001-Rs 40,000.

4.7 Uses of Social Media

In this section, information related to various social media platforms being used and the respondents' purpose for using these social media alternatives like Facebook (FB), Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger (FB Messenger) was analyzed.

Table 4.7.1: Summary of Various Social Media Applications Used by Respondents

| Social Media Application Used | No. of Users (Total 802) | Percentage |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Facebook (FB) | 784 | 97.76 |
| WhatsApp | 705 | 87.91 |
| YouTube | 679 | 84.66 |
| FB Messenger | 631 | 78.68 |
| LinkedIn | 374 | 46.63 |
| Twitter | 333 | 41.52 |



According to the table 4.7.1, it can be concluded that Facebook (FB) is mostly used social media application followed by WhatsApp, YouTube, Facebook Messenger (FB Messenger), LinkedIn and Twitter. It is also observed that almost all the respondents have been using Facebook and WhatsApp. YouTube is used by 84.66 percent of the users. LinkedIn is used by 46.63 percent and Twitter is used by 41.52 percent of the users.

The uses or purpose of social media for the respondents have been collected through questionnaire. The summary of the uses or purpose for the six selected social media alternatives have been provided in table 4.7.2. It helps in identifying the most preferred use of social media and the usage preference for the various social media alternatives.

Table 4.7.2: Uses or Purpose of using six select Social Media Application

| Uses or Purpose | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Total |
|-------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Entertainment | 494 | 68 | 16 | 630 | 366 | 318 | 1892 |
| Communication | 482 | 83 | 17 | 0 | 604 | 505 | 1691 |
| Information Sharing | 458 | 144 | 33 | 25 | 406 | 429 | 1495 |
| Information Seeking | 247 | 108 | 99 | 391 | 73 | 235 | 1153 |
| Expressing Opinion | 270 | 122 | 64 | 82 | 48 | 44 | 630 |
| Professional Networking | 229 | 97 | 271 | 11 | 44 | 32 | 684 |
| Career Learning | 154 | 48 | 312 | 0 | 26 | 21 | 561 |
| Learning | 51 | 16 | 11 | 146 | 112 | 48 | 384 |
| Total | 2385 | 686 | 823 | 1285 | 1679 | 1632 | 8490 |

1-Facebook, 2-Twitter, 3-LinkedIn, 4-YouTube, 5-WhatsApp, 6-FB Messenger

The inferences drawn from the table 4.7.2 are as follows:

- The most common use of SM is for entertainment purpose followed by communication, information sharing and information seeking.
- YouTube is used mainly for entertainment purposes followed by information seeking and learning.
- WhatsApp is used primarily for communication followed by information sharing and entertainment.
- Facebook is used mostly for entertainment followed by communication and information sharing.
- Twitter is used mainly for information sharing followed by expressing opinion and information seeking.
- LinkedIn is used primarily for career followed by professional networking and information seeking.
- Facebook Messenger is used mostly for communication followed by information sharing and entertainment.
- The preferred social media alternatives used for different purposes have been provided in the bracket next to the usage. Entertainment (YouTube), Communication (WhatsApp), Information sharing (Facebook), Information seeking (YouTube), Expressing opinion (Facebook), Professional networking (LinkedIn), Career (LinkedIn) and Learning (YouTube).

The usage of specific social media alternatives have been examined based on Gender to test if there is any difference in the observed and expected frequency of uses with the help of Chi-square test of independence. For this purpose, hypothesis has been framed as

‘there is a difference in use of social media alternatives (i.e. FB, WhatsApp, YouTube, FB Messenger, LinkedIn and Twitter) for different purposes between male and female users of social media’. The uses of social media on different social media alternatives sample distribution based on gender have been captured from the table 4.7.3 to 4.7.8 for Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, FB Messenger, LinkedIn and Twitter respectively.

Table 4.7.3: Purpose of Facebook Usage - Gender Wise

| Uses or Purpose | Male | Female | Total |
|-------------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Entertainment | 328 | 166 | 494 |
| Communication | 312 | 170 | 482 |
| Information Sharing | 290 | 168 | 458 |
| Information Seeking | 167 | 80 | 247 |
| Expressing Opinion | 177 | 93 | 270 |
| Professional Networking | 144 | 85 | 229 |
| Career | 116 | 38 | 154 |
| Learning | 42 | 9 | 51 |
| Total | 1576 | 809 | 2385 |

The hypothesis, there is a difference in the use of Facebook for different purposes between male and female users of social media have been tested with Chi-square test of independence since the comparison is based on the observed frequency of users. The p-value for the test is 0.033, which is less than 0.05 and hence the research hypothesis has been accepted. It can be concluded that the uses of Facebook have been influenced by the gender of the social media user.

Table 4.7.4: Purpose of Twitter Usage - Gender Wise

| Uses or Purpose | Male | Female | Total |
|-------------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Entertainment | 37 | 31 | 68 |
| Communication | 49 | 34 | 83 |
| Information Sharing | 91 | 53 | 144 |
| Information Seeking | 81 | 27 | 108 |
| Expressing Opinion | 78 | 44 | 122 |
| Professional Networking | 64 | 33 | 97 |
| Career | 40 | 8 | 48 |
| Learning | 6 | 10 | 16 |
| Total | 446 | 240 | 686 |

The hypothesis, there is a difference in the use of Twitter for different purposes between male and female users of social media have been tested with Chi-square test of independence since the comparison is based on the observed frequency of users. The p-value for the test is 0.002, which is less than 0.05 and hence the research hypothesis has been accepted. It can be concluded that the uses of Twitter have been influenced by the gender of the social media user.

Table 4.7.5: Purpose of LinkedIn Usage - Gender Wise

| Uses or Purpose | Male | Female | Total |
|-------------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Entertainment | 10 | 6 | 16 |
| Communication | 13 | 4 | 17 |
| Information Sharing | 27 | 6 | 33 |
| Information Seeking | 70 | 29 | 99 |
| Expressing Opinion | 50 | 14 | 64 |
| Professional Networking | 182 | 89 | 271 |
| Career | 205 | 107 | 312 |
| Learning | 9 | 2 | 11 |
| Total | 566 | 257 | 823 |

The hypothesis, there is a difference in the use of LinkedIn for different purposes between male and female users of social media have been tested with Chi-square test of independence since the comparison is based on the observed frequency of users. Chi-square test requires each cell to have a value of more than 5, for performing the chi-square test value of such cell which is less than the required value have been combined and labeled as ‘others’ to analyze the data. The p-value for the test is 0.195, which is more than 0.05 and hence the research hypothesis has been not accepted. It can be concluded that the uses of LinkedIn have not been influenced by the gender of the social media user.

Table 4.7.6: Purpose of YouTube Usage - Gender Wise

| Uses or Purpose | Male | Female | Total |
|-------------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Entertainment | 412 | 218 | 630 |
| Information Sharing | 16 | 9 | 25 |
| Information Seeking | 253 | 138 | 391 |
| Expressing Opinion | 49 | 33 | 82 |
| Professional Networking | 8 | 3 | 11 |
| Learning | 94 | 52 | 146 |
| Total | 832 | 453 | 1285 |

The hypothesis, there is a difference in the use of YouTube for different purposes between male and female users of social media have been tested with Chi-square test of independence since the comparison is based on the observed frequency of users. Chi-square test requires each cell to have a value of more than 5, for performing the chi-square test value of such cell which is less than the required value have been combined and labeled as ‘others’ to analyze the data. The p-value for the test is 0.897, which is more than 0.05 and hence the research hypothesis has been not accepted. It can be

concluded that the uses of YouTube have not been influenced by the gender of the social media user.

Table 4.7.7: Purpose of WhatsApp Usage - Gender Wise

| Uses or Purpose | Male | Female | Total |
|-------------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Entertainment | 231 | 135 | 366 |
| Communication | 391 | 213 | 604 |
| Information Sharing | 276 | 130 | 406 |
| Information Seeking | 50 | 23 | 73 |
| Expressing Opinion | 29 | 19 | 48 |
| Professional Networking | 32 | 12 | 44 |
| Career | 16 | 10 | 26 |
| Learning | 70 | 42 | 112 |
| Total | 1095 | 584 | 1679 |

The hypothesis, there is a difference in the use of WhatsApp for different purposes between male and female users of social media have been tested with Chi-square test of independence since the comparison is based on the observed frequency of users. The p-value for the test is 0.710, which is more than 0.05 and hence the research hypothesis has been not accepted. It can be concluded that the uses of WhatsApp have not been influenced by the gender of the social media user.

Table 4.7.8: Purpose of FB Messenger Usage - Gender Wise

| Uses or Purpose | Male | Female | Total |
|-------------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Entertainment | 196 | 122 | 318 |
| Communication | 333 | 172 | 505 |
| Information Sharing | 289 | 140 | 429 |
| Information Seeking | 149 | 86 | 235 |
| Expressing Opinion | 30 | 14 | 44 |
| Professional Networking | 22 | 10 | 32 |
| Career | 13 | 8 | 21 |
| Learning | 29 | 19 | 48 |
| Total | 1061 | 571 | 1632 |

The hypothesis, there is a difference in the use of FB Messenger for different purposes between male and female users of social media have been tested with Chi-square test of independence since the comparison is based on the observed frequency of users. The p-value for the test is 0.777, which is more than 0.05 and hence the research hypothesis has been not accepted. It can be concluded that the uses of FB Messenger have not been influenced by the gender of the social media user.

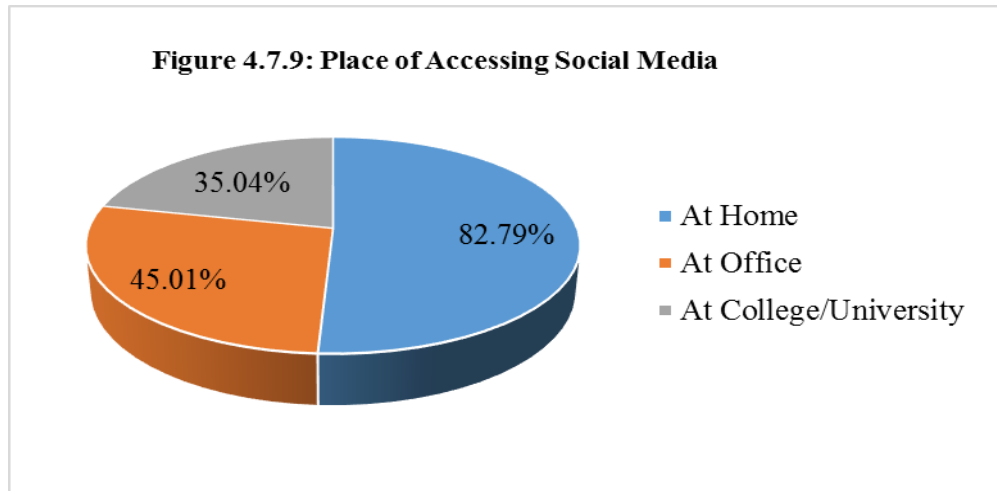
Conclusion: The uses or purposes of social media for different social media alternatives are similar for male and female respondents except Facebook and Twitter.

4.7.1 Place of Accessing Social Media

Below table shows the place of accessing the social media. It has been found from the below table that majority of the users access social media from home followed by office and college/university.

Table 4.7.9: Place of Accessing Social Media

| Place of Access SM | No. of Users (Total 802) | Percentage |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| At Home | 664 | 82.79 |
| At Office | 361 | 45.01 |
| At College/University | 281 | 35.04 |



4.7.2 Preference of Device for Accessing Social Media

When asked about the preference of device for accessing social media, the users have ranked the usage preference of device as follows. It is evident from the below table 4.7.10 that the majority of the users have been accessing social media through Smartphone followed by Laptop, Tablet and Desktop/PC.

Table 4.7.10: Preference of Device for Accessing Social Media

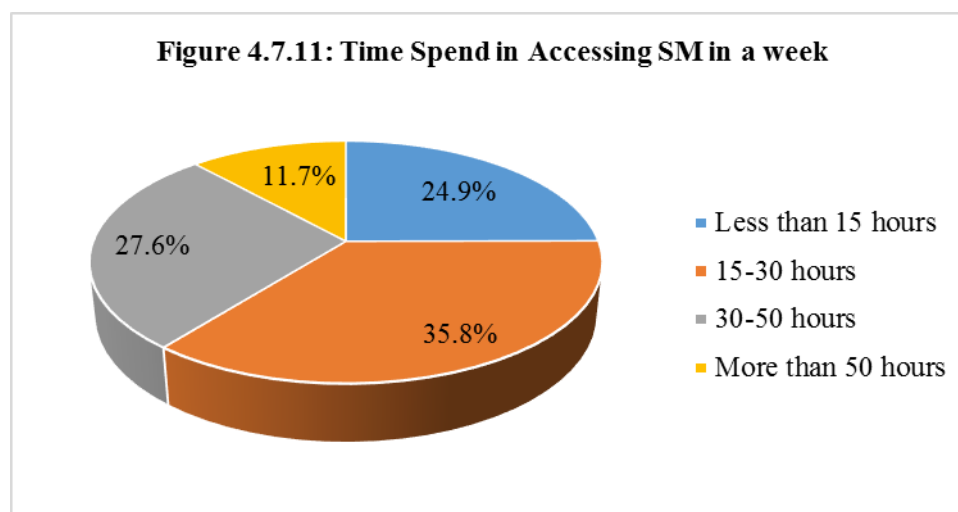
| Device for accessing SM | Rank |
|-------------------------|------|
| Smartphone | 1 |
| Laptop | 2 |
| Tablet | 3 |
| Desktop/PC | 4 |

4.7.3 Time Spend in Accessing Social Media

The below table 4.7.11 provides the frequency distribution of time spend in accessing social media in a week. From the distribution it can be concluded that 35.8 percent use to be engaged on social media for 15-30 hours in a week, 24.9 percent use to be engaged on social media for less than 15 hours in a week, 27.6 percent use to be engaged on social media for 30-50 hours in a week, and 11.7 percent use to be engaged on social media for more than 50 hours in a week. It is evident from the below table that majority of the users use to engage on social media almost 2-4 hours in a day.

Table 4.7.11: Time Spend in Accessing SM in a week

| Time spend in Accessing SM | No. of Users (Total 802) | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Less than 15 hours | 200 | 24.9 |
| 15-30 hours | 287 | 35.8 |
| 30-50 hours | 221 | 27.6 |
| More than 50 hours | 94 | 11.7 |



4.7.4 Frequency of Social Media Use

The table 4.7.4 provides the frequency of social media uses among the SM users. The following inferences can be drawn from the below table.

Table 4.7.12: Frequency of SM Use

| SM Application | I am always logged in to SM | Several times a day | Once in a day | Once in a week | About once in a month | Occasionally | Total |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Facebook | 198 | 211 | 289 | 53 | 8 | 25 | 784 |
| Twitter | 30 | 59 | 84 | 86 | 41 | 33 | 333 |
| LinkedIn | 32 | 36 | 95 | 81 | 59 | 71 | 374 |
| YouTube | 40 | 384 | 142 | 74 | 6 | 33 | 679 |
| WhatsApp | 436 | 236 | 26 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 705 |
| FB Messenger | 161 | 197 | 228 | 21 | 8 | 16 | 631 |
| Total | 897 | 1123 | 864 | 319 | 122 | 181 | 3506 |

The various social media alternatives have been used several times in a day by the users.

The inferences drawn from the table 4.7.12 are as follows:

- Most of the users always logged into the WhatsApp followed by Facebook and FB Messenger.
- YouTube have been used by users several times in a day followed by WhatsApp, Facebook and FB Messenger.
- Facebook have been used most of the users at least once in a day followed by FB Messenger and YouTube.
- Twitter has been used at least once in a week by the social media users.
- LinkedIn has been used at least once in a day by the social media users.

4.7.5 Duration of Using Social Media

The below table provides the details of since how long the different social media applications is used by the users. From the table it is found that most of the users using different social media alternative for 2-3 years.

Table 4.7.13: Duration of Social Media Use

| SM Application | Below 1 year | 1-2 years | 2-3 years | 3-4 years | 4-5 years | Above 5 years | Total |
|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Facebook | 64 | 52 | 200 | 146 | 73 | 249 | 784 |
| Twitter | 40 | 95 | 96 | 51 | 25 | 26 | 333 |
| LinkedIn | 48 | 79 | 85 | 84 | 29 | 49 | 374 |
| YouTube | 11 | 34 | 66 | 95 | 129 | 344 | 679 |
| WhatsApp | 38 | 241 | 198 | 138 | 36 | 54 | 705 |
| FB Messenger | 50 | 145 | 227 | 129 | 68 | 12 | 631 |
| Total | 251 | 646 | 872 | 643 | 360 | 734 | 3506 |

The inferences drawn from the table 4.7.13 are as follows:

- Majority of the users have been using YouTube and Facebook for more than 5 years.
- Twitter and LinkedIn have been used by most the users for 2-3 years.
- WhatsApp has been used by most of the users for 1-2 years.
- Facebook Messenger has been used by most of the users for 2-3 years.

4.7.6 Number of Friends on Social Media

The below table shows the number of friends that have been maintained by users of various social media alternatives.

Table 4.7.14: Number of Friends on Social Media

| SM Application | Below 100 | 100-200 | 200-300 | 300-400 | 400-500 | Above 500 | Total |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------|
| Facebook | 82 | 98 | 248 | 175 | 76 | 105 | 784 |
| Twitter | 108 | 112 | 59 | 37 | 9 | 8 | 333 |
| LinkedIn | 124 | 97 | 85 | 45 | 13 | 10 | 374 |
| YouTube | 485 | 138 | 34 | 10 | 5 | 7 | 679 |
| WhatsApp | 153 | 217 | 207 | 95 | 13 | 20 | 705 |
| FB Messenger | 84 | 91 | 238 | 143 | 40 | 35 | 631 |
| Total | 1036 | 753 | 871 | 505 | 156 | 185 | 3506 |

Facebook and FB Messenger users have been mostly in contact with 200-300 friends on social media. Majority of the WhatsApp users have been in contact with 100-300 friends on social media.

4.8 Factor Analysis (FA)

Factor analysis is a method of data reduction which is used widely in research studies. The fundamental purpose of factor analysis is to shrink the available information into a reduced set of new, merged factors or dimensions with minimum loss of information. It has been performed by inspecting the pattern of co-relations (or variance) among the observed measures. This method results in a smaller set of variables (mostly uncorrelated) from a larger set of variables (most of them have been co-related to each other) by generating indexes with factors or variables which measures associated kind of things conceptually. It is fundamentally used to reduce the structure detection or data. The structure helps in examining the underlying (or latent) relationship between the variables.

4.8.1 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Exploratory factor analysis is the first step in identifying the variables or items in constituting a factor. The data for EFA have been collected with the help of questionnaire developed by reviewing the past literature. It is employed to condense the items empirically into different variables. Few of the constructs and items have been theoretically defined in the past literature even though EFA has been carried out because of the adopted scale used with small modification to meet the specific purpose of this research. There have been various factor extraction methods available in SPSS to extract the factors. The extraction method used in this research study is PCA (Principal Component Analysis) as it is very often used extraction method in social science research. The chief objective of principal component analysis method is to precise most of the available information in minimum number of factors so that prediction can be done. It gathers a set of co-related items and segregates them into smaller sets of items based on the relatively strong co-relation among these items. The newly generated sets of variables are known as PC (principal components). The extraction method of principal component factor analysis is considered more appropriate and suitable if the primary concern is reducing data and identifying new meaningful and important underlying factors from the set of variables. By keeping in view of the above mentioned purpose, the current study has chosen the PCA method to fetch the underlying factors. The study has applied Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization criterion. The Varimax rotation seeks rotated loading which maximizes the variance of the squared loadings for each factor. Varimax rotation method often yields simple and clear structure which can be easily interpretable (Conway & Huffcut, 2003; Field, 2005). In Kaiser's criterion, the

factors which have eigenvalue >1 (i.e. Eigenvalue more than one) should have to retained and those factors which have eigenvalue <1 (i.e. Eigenvalue less than one) should be discarded. The underlying assumption of Kaiser criterion is that the eigenvalue one signifies a substantial amount of variation which is explained by a factor (Pallant, 2005 and Field, 2005). Hence, in current study Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization has been used to identify factors.

4.8.2 Sample Adequacy

The sample size must be adequate to conduct the factor analysis. The present study has been conducted with a sample size of 802 which fulfills the minimum requirement of 5 subjects or observations per attribute or variable suggested by Hair et al. (2010). A total of 31 attribute or variables have been identified and hence the ideal sample size should be 155 ($31*5=155$). The sample size (802) is more than the five times to that of ideal requirement (155). Therefore, it is sufficient enough to conduct factor analysis.

The sample appropriateness can also be checked with the help of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) which measures the sample adequacy that shows the proportion of variance in variables that might be produced by underlying factors. The KMO Bartlett's test has a sample adequacy of 0.877 which exceeds the suggested value of 0.5 and the value more than 0.8 is considered as great (Hair et al., 2008). To continue with the FA, there is another prerequisite test known as Bartlett's test of sphericity. The value of this test has been significant (at 0.05) and Chi-square (χ^2) = 13637.71 ($p=0.000$).

Table 4.8.1: KMO and Bartlett's Test Result

| | | |
|---|--------------------|----------|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy | 0.877 | |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx. Chi-Square | 13637.71 |
| | df | 435 |
| | Sig. | .000 |

The exploratory factor analysis has been conducted with the purpose of data reduction. The exploratory factor analysis has been performed using PCA and Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization criterion. The KMO measures 0.877 and Bartlett's test measure has a significance of 0.000 with $\chi^2= 13637.71$ which is shown in the above table 4.8.1. The Kaiser criterion uses the latent root method to extract the factors. In this criterion, the factors having eigenvalue more than one have been considered as a factor. The sample size 802 with average communalities of 0.65 (See table 4.8.2) have been met the criteria of 20 to 50 number of items or variables and size of the sample is more than 500 with average communality of 0.55 (Hair et al., 2008; Pallant, 2005 and Field, 2005). Therefore, it is appropriate to apply Kaiser's criterion to fetch the factors based on the eigenvalue more than one.

Table 4.8.2: Communalities of the Items Extracted

| Items | Initial | Extraction |
|-------|---------|------------|
| TC1 | 1.00 | .769 |
| TC2 | 1.00 | .749 |
| TC3 | 1.00 | .700 |
| TC4 | 1.00 | .624 |
| TC5 | 1.00 | .588 |

| | | |
|-------|------|------|
| TC6 | 1.00 | .571 |
| TC7 | 1.00 | .611 |
| TC8 | 1.00 | .483 |
| TC9 | 1.00 | .473 |
| DM1 | 1.00 | .658 |
| DM2 | 1.00 | .570 |
| DM3 | 1.00 | .584 |
| DM4 | 1.00 | .575 |
| DM5 | 1.00 | .545 |
| DM6 | 1.00 | .560 |
| DM7 | 1.00 | .367 |
| DM8 | 1.00 | .384 |
| eWoM1 | 1.00 | .792 |
| eWoM2 | 1.00 | .730 |
| eWoM3 | 1.00 | .776 |
| eWoM4 | 1.00 | .639 |
| PC1 | 1.00 | .800 |
| PC2 | 1.00 | .731 |
| PC3 | 1.00 | .663 |
| PC4 | 1.00 | .624 |
| TU1 | 1.00 | .793 |
| TU2 | 1.00 | .788 |
| TU3 | 1.00 | .777 |
| TS1 | 1.00 | .811 |
| TS2 | 1.00 | .729 |
| TS3 | 1.00 | .725 |

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Total 31 linear components have been identified within the data set. The eigenvalues associated with each factor represents the variance explained by that particular linear component and it is also displayed the eigenvalues in terms of the percentage of variance

explained. The linear component which has eigenvalue more than 1 is considered as a factor. On the basis of this, six factors have been extracted and it explained 65.12% of total variance. The results have been shown in table 4.8.3.

Table 4.8.3: Total Variance Explained

| Component | Initial Eigenvalues | | | Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings | | | Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings | | |
|-----------|---------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % |
| 1 | 6.675 | 21.531 | 21.531 | 6.675 | 21.531 | 21.531 | 5.482 | 17.684 | 17.684 |
| 2 | 5.971 | 19.260 | 40.791 | 5.971 | 19.260 | 40.791 | 4.129 | 13.318 | 31.002 |
| 3 | 3.087 | 9.959 | 50.750 | 3.087 | 9.959 | 50.750 | 3.025 | 9.758 | 40.760 |
| 4 | 1.615 | 5.210 | 55.960 | 1.615 | 5.210 | 55.960 | 2.852 | 9.199 | 49.959 |
| 5 | 1.584 | 5.109 | 61.069 | 1.584 | 5.109 | 61.069 | 2.363 | 7.622 | 57.582 |
| 6 | 1.256 | 4.053 | 65.122 | 1.256 | 4.053 | 65.122 | 2.337 | 7.540 | 65.122 |
| 7 | .938 | 3.027 | 68.149 | | | | | | |
| 8 | .837 | 2.701 | 70.850 | | | | | | |
| 9 | .700 | 2.260 | 73.110 | | | | | | |
| 10 | .671 | 2.164 | 75.274 | | | | | | |
| 11 | .631 | 2.036 | 77.310 | | | | | | |
| 12 | .587 | 1.893 | 79.203 | | | | | | |
| 13 | .555 | 1.790 | 80.993 | | | | | | |
| 14 | .532 | 1.715 | 82.708 | | | | | | |
| 15 | .523 | 1.687 | 84.395 | | | | | | |
| 16 | .455 | 1.469 | 85.864 | | | | | | |
| 17 | .432 | 1.395 | 87.259 | | | | | | |
| 18 | .421 | 1.358 | 88.617 | | | | | | |
| 19 | .391 | 1.260 | 89.877 | | | | | | |
| 20 | .358 | 1.155 | 91.032 | | | | | | |
| 21 | .341 | 1.099 | 92.132 | | | | | | |
| 22 | .296 | .956 | 93.087 | | | | | | |
| 23 | .293 | .946 | 94.033 | | | | | | |
| 24 | .274 | .883 | 94.916 | | | | | | |
| 25 | .271 | .875 | 95.791 | | | | | | |
| 26 | .259 | .837 | 96.628 | | | | | | |
| 27 | .246 | .795 | 97.422 | | | | | | |
| 28 | .233 | .753 | 98.176 | | | | | | |
| 29 | .220 | .710 | 98.886 | | | | | | |
| 30 | .202 | .652 | 99.538 | | | | | | |
| 31 | .143 | .462 | 100.00 | | | | | | |

The outcome of the total variance and eigenvalues of six factors is shown in table 4.8.3. The table shows total variance explained by the exploratory factor analysis and fetches six useful factors having eigenvalue greater than one and extracted factors explains 65.12% of total variance. The six extracted factors have been given the name as Trust in Company Generated Components (TC), Decision Making (DM), Electronic Word of Mouth (eWoM), Trust in Users Generated Contents (TU), Peer Communication (PC) and Tie Strength (TS). The factor Trust in Company Generated Contents explains 17.68 percent, factor Decision Making explains 13.31 percent, factor Electronic Word-of-Mouth explains 9.75 percent, factor Trust in User Generated Contents explains 9.19 percent, factor Peer Communication explains 7.62 percent and factor Tie Strength explains 7.54 percent of the total variance.

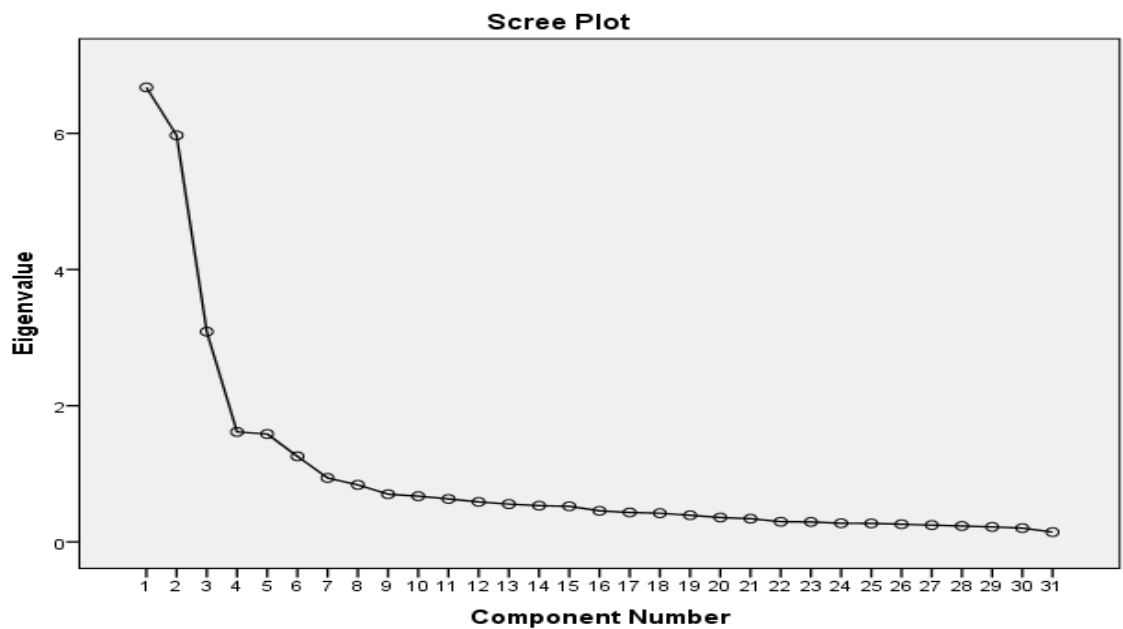


Figure 4.8.1: *Scree Plot for Factor Extraction*

The figure 4.8.1 displays the scree plot which has been derived by plotting the initial eigenvalues corresponding to the number of factors in order of their extraction and resulting curve shape indicates the cut-off point of the each extracted factor.

Table 4.8.4: Rotated Component Matrix

| | | Component | | | | | |
|--|-------|-----------|--------|----------|--------|--------|--------|
| | | F1(TC) | F2(DM) | F3(eWoM) | F4(PC) | F5(TU) | F6(TS) |
| Factor 1 Trust in Company Generated Contents (TC) | TC1 | 0.873 | | | | | |
| | TC2 | 0.859 | | | | | |
| | TC3 | 0.833 | | | | | |
| | TC4 | 0.788 | | | | | |
| | TC5 | 0.756 | | | | | |
| | TC6 | 0.746 | | | | | |
| | TC7 | 0.707 | | | | | |
| | TC8 | 0.694 | | | | | |
| | TC9 | 0.670 | | | | | |
| Factor 2 Decision Making (DM) | DM1 | | 0.793 | | | | |
| | DM2 | | 0.746 | | | | |
| | DM3 | | 0.704 | | | | |
| | DM4 | | 0.686 | | | | |
| | DM5 | | 0.673 | | | | |
| | DM6 | | 0.621 | | | | |
| | DM7 | | 0.581 | | | | |
| | DM8 | | 0.484 | | | | |
| Factor 3 Electronic Word of Mouth(eWoM) | eWoM1 | | | 0.834 | | | |
| | eWoM2 | | | 0.807 | | | |
| | eWoM3 | | | 0.799 | | | |
| | eWoM4 | | | 0.652 | | | |
| Factor 4 Peer Communication (PC) | PC1 | | | | 0.886 | | |
| | PC2 | | | | 0.830 | | |
| | PC3 | | | | 0.797 | | |
| | PC4 | | | | 0.769 | | |
| Factor 5 Trust in User Generated Contents (TU) | TU1 | | | | | 0.814 | |
| | TU2 | | | | | 0.809 | |
| | TU3 | | | | | 0.791 | |
| Factor 6 Tie Strength (TS) | TS1 | | | | | | 0.860 |
| | TS2 | | | | | | 0.835 |
| | TS3 | | | | | | 0.802 |

4.9 Reliability of the Scales

According to Malhotra and Birks (2007), “reliability is concerned with the consistency of the scale’s results if the measurements were repeated.” The reliability of a scale can be tested with methods such as “(a) test-retest method (b) the split halves method (c) the alternative form method and (d) the internal consistency method” (Nunnally, 1970). In this study, Cronbach’s alpha has been employed so that the internal consistency of the scales can be tested. The internal consistency of all the scale items has been examined through Cronbach’s alpha, which has a value of 0.865 and has been shown in table 4.9.1. The reliability measures of six constructs ranges from 0.844 to 0.917 and have been shown separately from table 4.9.2 to 4.9.7. Generally, it is considered that the acceptable Cronbach alpha should be 0.7 but in case of exploratory research it can be decreased to 0.6 (Cronbach, 1951; Hair et al., 2003 and Straub et al., 2004). The Cronbach’s alpha of the all the constructs are more than the acceptable limit of 0.7 so the scales are considered to be reliable and hence used in the analysis.

Table 4.9.1: Reliability Analysis of Total Items used in the Study

| Items | Mean | Standard Deviation | Cronbach's Alpha if item deleted | Cronbach's Alpha |
|--------------|-------------|---------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| TC1 | 2.82 | 1.384 | .857 | 0.865 |
| TC2 | 2.80 | 1.292 | .857 | |
| TC3 | 3.03 | 1.287 | .858 | |
| TC4 | 2.85 | 1.391 | .860 | |
| TC5 | 2.95 | 1.269 | .859 | |
| TC6 | 2.64 | 1.222 | .860 | |
| TC7 | 3.07 | 1.246 | .859 | |
| TC8 | 2.94 | 1.248 | .861 | |

| | | | |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| TC9 | 3.09 | 1.267 | .860 |
| DM1 | 3.39 | 1.117 | .862 |
| DM2 | 3.28 | 1.135 | .862 |
| DM3 | 3.34 | 1.101 | .860 |
| DM4 | 3.39 | 1.106 | .860 |
| DM5 | 3.23 | 1.129 | .860 |
| DM6 | 3.25 | 1.133 | .859 |
| DM7 | 3.33 | 1.126 | .863 |
| DM8 | 3.29 | 1.172 | .863 |
| eWoM1 | 3.30 | 1.073 | .860 |
| eWoM2 | 3.27 | 1.120 | .860 |
| eWoM3 | 3.26 | 1.085 | .859 |
| eWoM4 | 3.29 | 1.135 | .858 |
| PC1 | 3.20 | 1.020 | .864 |
| PC2 | 3.25 | 1.067 | .864 |
| PC3 | 3.21 | 1.026 | .865 |
| PC4 | 3.27 | 1.091 | .865 |
| TU1 | 3.17 | 1.120 | .859 |
| TU2 | 3.18 | 1.164 | .860 |
| TU3 | 3.19 | 1.084 | .859 |
| TS1 | 3.31 | 1.066 | .862 |
| TS2 | 3.49 | 1.136 | .864 |
| TS3 | 3.44 | 1.051 | .862 |

Note: DM-Decision Making, TC-Trust in Company Generated Contents, TS-Tie Strength, PC-Peer Communication, TU-Trust in User Generated Contents, eWoM-Electronic Word of Mouth.

Table 4.9.2: Reliability Analysis of the Construct - Decision Making (DM)

| Items | Mean | Std. Deviation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted | Cronbach's Alpha |
|--------------|-------------|---------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| DM1 | 3.39 | 1.117 | .827 | 0.852 |
| DM2 | 3.28 | 1.135 | .831 | |
| DM3 | 3.33 | 1.126 | .847 | |
| DM4 | 3.39 | 1.106 | .830 | |
| DM5 | 3.23 | 1.129 | .830 | |
| DM6 | 3.25 | 1.133 | .828 | |
| DM7 | 3.33 | 1.126 | .847 | |
| DM8 | 3.29 | 1.172 | .848 | |

Table 4.9.3: Reliability Analysis of the Construct – Trust in Company Generated Contents (TC)

| Items | Mean | Std. Deviation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted | Cronbach's Alpha |
|--------------|-------------|---------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| TC1 | 2.82 | 1.384 | .900 | 0.917 |
| TC2 | 2.80 | 1.292 | .901 | |
| TC3 | 3.03 | 1.287 | .904 | |
| TC4 | 2.85 | 1.391 | .908 | |
| TC5 | 2.95 | 1.269 | .908 | |
| TC6 | 2.64 | 1.222 | .911 | |
| TC7 | 3.07 | 1.246 | .911 | |
| TC8 | 2.94 | 1.248 | .914 | |
| TC9 | 3.09 | 1.267 | .915 | |

Table 4.9.4: Reliability Analysis of the Construct – Tie Strength (TS)

| Items | Mean | Std. Deviation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted | Cronbach's Alpha |
|--------------|-------------|-----------------------|---|-------------------------|
| TS1 | 3.31 | 1.066 | .714 | 0.843 |
| TS2 | 3.49 | 1.136 | .823 | |
| TS3 | 3.44 | 1.051 | .807 | |

Table 4.9.5: Reliability Analysis of the Construct – Peer Communication (PC)

| Items | Mean | Std. Deviation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted | Cronbach's Alpha |
|--------------|-------------|-----------------------|---|-------------------------|
| PC1 | 3.20 | 1.020 | .780 | 0.856 |
| PC2 | 3.25 | 1.067 | .805 | |
| PC3 | 3.21 | 1.026 | .833 | |
| PC4 | 3.27 | 1.091 | .844 | |

Table 4.9.6: Reliability Analysis of the Construct – Trust in User Generated**Contents (TU)**

| Items | Mean | Std. Deviation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted | Cronbach's Alpha |
|--------------|-------------|-----------------------|---|-------------------------|
| TU1 | 3.17 | 1.120 | .828 | 0.874 |
| TU2 | 3.18 | 1.164 | .820 | |
| TU3 | 3.19 | 1.084 | .821 | |

Table 4.9.7: Reliability Analysis of the Construct – Electronic Word of Mouth (eWoM)

| Items | Mean | Std. Deviation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted | Cronbach's Alpha |
|-------|------|----------------|----------------------------------|------------------|
| eWoM1 | 3.30 | 1.073 | .830 | 0.881 |
| eWoM2 | 3.29 | 1.135 | .875 | |
| eWoM3 | 3.26 | 1.085 | .826 | |
| eWoM4 | 3.27 | 1.120 | .856 | |

Table 4.9.8: Reliability of the Construct Scales derived from EFA

| Factors or Variables | No. of Items | Cronbach's Alpha |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Decision Making | 8 | 0.852 |
| Trust in Company Generated Contents | 9 | 0.917 |
| Tie Strength | 3 | 0.844 |
| Peer Communication | 4 | 0.856 |
| Trust in User Generated Contents | 3 | 0.874 |
| Electronic Word of Mouth | 4 | 0.881 |

The reliability measures of all the factors are more than 0.7 which is suggested as acceptable (Hair et al., 2006) and therefore factors measured are considered as reliable.

4.10 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) - Social Media for Decision Making (SM_DM)

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is considered as powerful statistical tool for inspecting the nature of and relationship among latent constructs in contrast to the exploratory factor analysis. The exploratory factor analysis has been conducted for social

media decision making of six latent constructs with 31 observed variable. Now with the help of confirmatory factor analysis, measurement model (to check if the measured variables are accurately reflecting the desired factors or constructs) has to be tested and confirmed before assessing the structural model. CFA helps in to verify the measurement model and test the validity of the constructs. In the process of conducting confirmatory factor analysis, a total of five items (i.e. TC7, TC8, TC9, DM7 and DM8) have been discarded because of smaller (less than 0.05) item to total co-relation (Hair et al., 2006 and Nunnally, 1970). The confirmatory factor analysis (measurement model) for social media for decision making has been presented in figure 4.10.1. The factor loadings corresponding to each item is found statistically significant. All the loadings were in the ranges between 0.642 to 0.916 which have been considered as good loadings and shown in table 4.10.1.

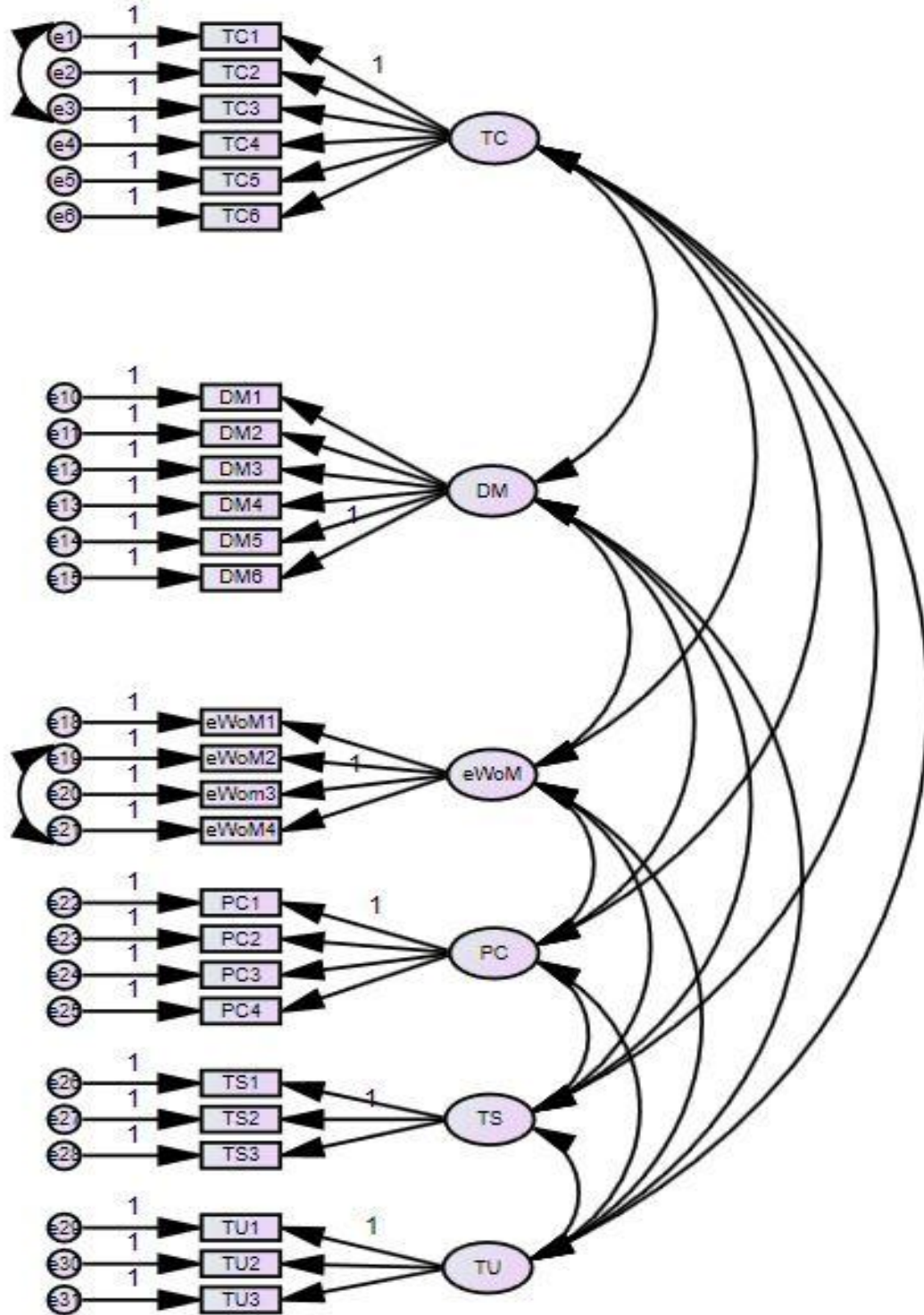


Figure 4.10.1: *Confirmatory Factor Analysis - Social Media for Decision Making (SM_DM)*

Table 4.10.1: Confirmatory Factor Analysis - Social Media for Decision Making (SM_DM)

| Factors | Items | Standard Estimates | P-value |
|--|--------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Trust in Company Generated Contents (TC) | TC1 | 0.87 | *** |
| | TC2 | 0.91 | *** |
| | TC3 | 0.8 | *** |
| | TC4 | 0.77 | *** |
| | TC5 | 0.64 | *** |
| | TC6 | 0.71 | *** |
| Decision Making (DM) | DM1 | 0.7 | *** |
| | DM2 | 0.64 | *** |
| | DM3 | 0.71 | *** |
| | DM4 | 0.67 | *** |
| | DM5 | 0.7 | *** |
| | DM6 | 0.7 | *** |
| Electronic Word-of-mouth (eWoM) | eWoM1 | 0.83 | *** |
| | eWoM2 | 0.8 | *** |
| | eWoM3 | 0.85 | *** |
| | eWoM4 | 0.77 | *** |
| Peer Communication (PC) | PC1 | 0.86 | *** |
| | PC2 | 0.8 | *** |
| | PC3 | 0.72 | *** |
| | PC4 | 0.7 | *** |
| Tie Strength (TS) | TS1 | 0.82 | *** |
| | TS2 | 0.83 | *** |
| | TS3 | 0.84 | *** |
| Trust in User Generated Contents (TU) | TU1 | 0.9 | *** |
| | TU2 | 0.73 | *** |
| | TU3 | 0.77 | *** |

Note: *** Indicates p-value less than 0.001; Note: TS=Tie Strength, TC=Trust in Company Generated Contents, DM=Decision Making, eWoM=Electronic Word-of-Mouth, PC=Peer Communication, TU=Trust in User Generated Contents, A total of 5 items (TC7, TC8, TC9, DM7 and DM8) have been removed because of smaller (<0.50) item to total correlation (Nunnally, 1970 and Hair et al., 2006).

It can be observed from the above table 4.10.1 that the factors Trust in Company Generated Contents (TC) loadings have ranging from 0.64 to 0.91, Decision Making (DM) loadings have been ranging from 0.64 to 0.71, Electronic Word-of-mouth (eWoM) loadings have been ranging from 0.77 to 0.85, Peer Communication (PC) loadings have been ranging from 0.70 to 0.86, Tie Strength (TS) loadings have been ranging from 0.82 to 0.84 and Trust in User Generated Contents (TU) loadings have been ranging from 0.73 to 0.90.

4.10.1 Model Fit Summary for Measurement Model of Social Media for Decision Making (SM_DM)

The model fit indices of the measurement model of social media for decision making (SM_DM) provides an empirical validation of the constructs and the items measured under these constructs. The model fit indices for measurement model has been presented in the table 4.10.2.

Table 4.10.2: Model Fit Indices for Measurement Model of Social Media for Decision Making

| Fit Indices | Actual Value | Threshold Value | Source |
|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| CFI | 0.954 | >0.95 Great | |
| GFI | 0.93 | >0.90 Good | |
| AGFI | 0.912 | >0.80 Good | (Hair et al., 2006; |
| TLI | 0.947 | >0.90 Good | Hu and Bentler, |
| IFI | 0.955 | >0.90 Good | 1999; Mulaik et |
| NFI | 0.932 | >0.90 Good | al., 1989) |
| RFI | 0.921 | >0.90 Good | |
| RMSEA | 0.048 | <0.08 Good | |

Note: CFI=Comparative Fit Index, GFI=Goodness-of-Fit Index, AGFI=Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index, TLI=Tucker-Lewis Index, IFI=Incremental Fit Index, NFI=Normed Fit Index, RFI=Relative Fit Index and RMSEA=Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation.

The CFA model fit statistics of social media for decision making have been resulted as Chi-square (χ^2)=839.454, Degrees of freedom=282, Comparative Fit Index (CFI)=0.954, Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI)=0.930, Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI)=0.912, Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)=0.947, Incremental Fit Index (IFI)=0.955, Normed Fit Index (NFI)=0.932, Relative Fit Index (RFI)=0.921 and Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)=0.048. Since all the fit indices have been satisfying the threshold values so the model of social media for decision making indicates good fit.

4.11 Content Validity

The content or face validity cannot be measured numerically, but with the help of experts and the respondents' consensus that the instrument (i.e. questionnaire) which has been used for measurement have covered all the aspects of the constructs or variables being measured (Saraph et al., 1989). The questionnaire which has been used as measurement instrument designed appropriately with thorough review of past literature and after that it has been fined-tuned on the basis of feedback from the various experts; the content validity of the measurement instrument has been ensured (Kaplan & Saccuzzo, 1993; Churchill, 1992).

4.12 Convergent Validity

It referred as to “the items which are considered as indicators of a specific construct that should converge or share a high proportion of variance in common” (Hair et al., 2008). According to Fornell & Lacker (1981) and Hair et al. (2008), it can be measured in three ways viz. factor loadings, variance extracted (VA) and construct reliability (CR). It is measured by CR (Composite Reliability) and the AVE (Average Variance Extracted). A

convergent validity could be established when it follows two criteria. Firstly, the CR of each factor should have to be greater than the AVE by that factor ($CR > AVE$); secondly, the value of CR of each factor should have to be more than 0.80 ($CR > 0.80$) and the AVE by that factor should have to be equal to or more than 0.50 ($AVE \geq 0.50$). The CR of all the six constructs have been ranging from 0.84 to 0.91 and the AVE of all the six constructs have been ranging from 0.50 to 0.70 which have been above the acceptable limit. The standardized loadings estimates were more than the threshold value 0.7 (loadings ranges from 0.70 to 0.91; except for the items TC5 0.64, DM2 0.64 and DM4 0.67) and the Average Variance Extracted should be ≥ 0.5 (Fornell & Lacker, 1981; Hair et al., 2008). Hence, all the six constructs followed convergent validity as can be seen from the table 4.10.3.

Table 4.10.3: Convergent Validity - Social Media for Decision Making

| Factors | CR Value | AVE | Cronbach's Alpha Value |
|----------------|-----------------|------------|-------------------------------|
| TS | 0.87 | 0.7 | 0.843 |
| TC | 0.91 | 0.63 | 0.917 |
| DM | 0.84 | 0.5 | 0.852 |
| eWoM | 0.89 | 0.67 | 0.881 |
| PC | 0.86 | 0.61 | 0.856 |
| TU | 0.85 | 0.66 | 0.874 |

Note: TS=Tie Strength, TC=Trust in Company Generated Contents, DM=Decision Making, eWoM=Electronic Word-of-Mouth, PC=Peer Communication, TU=Trust in User Generated Contents, CR= Composite Reliability, AVE= Average Variance Extracted.

4.13 Discriminant Validity

It refers to the extent to which a construct is different from other constructs. It can be evaluated with the help of two methods, either inter construct correlation matrix or based

up on variance extracted method. In the first method, there should have to be weak correlation with other constructs and highest correlation with the same construct. On the other hand, maximum shared variance (MSV) of each construct should have to be lesser than AVE (MSV<AVE) of corresponding construct and similarly, average shared variance (ASV) should have to be lesser than AVE (ASV<AVE). The second criteria have been met in this study which has been shown in table 4.10.4.

Table 4.10.4: Discriminant Validity - Social Media for Decision Making

| Factors | CR | AVE | MSV | ASV | TS | TC | DM | eWoM | PC | TU |
|----------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| TS | 0.87 | 0.70 | 0.40 | 0.152 | 0.84 | | | | | |
| TC | 0.91 | 0.63 | 0.07 | 0.026 | 0.05 | 0.79 | | | | |
| DM | 0.84 | 0.5 | 0.41 | 0.193 | 0.6 | 0.01 | 0.70 | | | |
| eWoM | 0.89 | 0.67 | 0.41 | 0.162 | 0.63 | 0.04 | 0.64 | 0.82 | | |
| PC | 0.86 | 0.61 | 0.16 | 0.038 | - 0.05 | 0.16 | -0.04 | -0.03 | 0.78 | |
| TU | 0.85 | 0.66 | 0.16 | 0.047 | 0.01 | 0.27 | -0.02 | -0.02 | 0.40 | 0.8 |

Note: TS=Tie Strength, TC=Trust in Company Generated Contents, DM=Decision Making, eWoM=Electronic Word-of-Mouth, PC=Peer Communication, TU=Trust in User Generated Contents, CR=Composite Reliability, AVE=Average Variance Extracted, MSV=Maximum Shared Variance, ASV=Average Shared Variance.

Note: Diagonal bold values indicate the square root of AVE.

The discriminant validity of social media for decision making has been calculated with the help of Stat Tool package of Microsoft Excel macro sheet developed by James Gaskin (2016) which is accessible on StatWiki site maintained and supported by Doctor of Management Program at Case Western Reserve University and by Brigham Young University.

4.14 Structural Model of Social Media for Decision Making

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) refers as to the “latent variable analysis” (Hair et al., 2008). SEM is developed with the help of “multiple regression analysis to combine a series of multiple equations within one structural model” (Hair et al., 2008). Once the validity of the measurement model has been confirmed, it can be converted into a structural model. Social media for decision making (SM_DM) structural model has been presented in the figure 4.14.1.

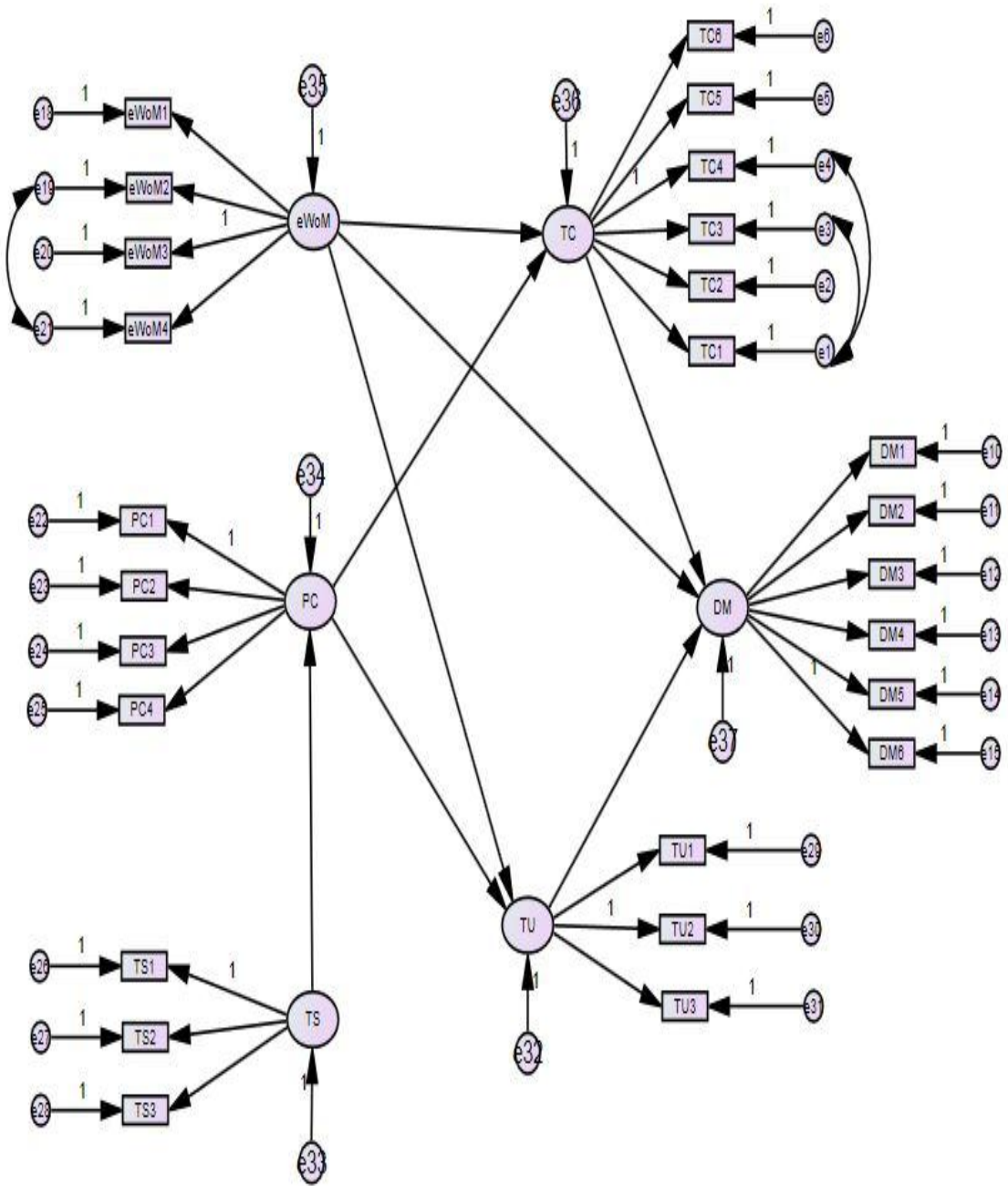


Figure 4.14.1: *Structural Model of Social Media for Decision Making*

Table 4.14.1: Structural Model of Social Media for Decision Making

| Factors | Items | Standard Estimates | P-value |
|--|-------|--------------------|---------|
| Trust in Company Generated Contents (TC) | TC1 | 0.65 | *** |
| | TC2 | 0.91 | *** |
| | TC3 | 0.77 | *** |
| | TC4 | 0.87 | *** |
| | TC5 | 0.81 | *** |
| | TC6 | 0.64 | *** |
| Decision Making (DM) | DM1 | 0.70 | *** |
| | DM2 | 0.68 | *** |
| | DM3 | 0.71 | *** |
| | DM4 | 0.69 | *** |
| | DM5 | 0.64 | *** |
| | DM6 | 0.71 | *** |
| Electronic Word-of-mouth (eWoM) | eWoM1 | 0.83 | *** |
| | eWoM2 | 0.78 | *** |
| | eWoM3 | 0.85 | *** |
| | eWoM4 | 0.81 | *** |
| Peer Communication (PC) | PC1 | 0.87 | *** |
| | PC2 | 0.80 | *** |
| | PC3 | 0.73 | *** |
| | PC4 | 0.71 | *** |
| Tie Strength (TS) | TS1 | 0.91 | *** |
| | TS2 | 0.74 | *** |
| | TS3 | 0.77 | *** |
| Trust in User Generated Contents (TU) | TU1 | 0.82 | *** |
| | TU2 | 0.84 | *** |
| | TU3 | 0.84 | *** |

Note: *** Indicates p-value less than 0.001, TS=Tie Strength, TC=Trust in Company Generated Contents, DM=Decision Making, eWoM=Electronic Word-of-Mouth, PC=Peer Communication, TU=Trust in User Generated Contents.

From the above table 4.14.1, it has been found that the standardized estimate for factor trust in company generated contents have been ranging from 0.64 to 0.91, the standardized estimate for factor decision making have been ranging from 0.64 to 0.71, the

standardized estimate for electronic word-of-mouth have been ranging from 0.78 to 0.85, the standardized estimate for peer communication have been ranging from 0.71 to 0.87, the standardized estimate for tie strength have been ranging from 0.74 to 0.91 and the standardized estimate for trust in user generated contents have been ranging from 0.82 to 0.84.

The model fit indices for the structural model of social media for decision making has been provided in the below table 4.14.2.

Table 4.14.3: Model Fit Statistics for Structural Model – Social Media for Decision Making

| Fit Indices | Actual Values | Thresh hold Value | Source |
|-------------|---------------|-------------------|--|
| CFI | 0.952 | >0.95 Great | (Hair et al., 2006; Hu and Bentler, 1999; Mulaik et al., 1989) |
| GFI | 0.928 | >0.90 Good | |
| AGFI | 0.912 | >0.80 Good | |
| TLI | 0.946 | >0.90 Good | |
| IFI | 0.953 | >0.90 Good | |
| NFI | 0.929 | >0.90 Good | |
| RFI | 0.92 | >0.90 Good | |
| RMSEA | 0.049 | <0.08 Good | |

Note: CFI=Comparative Fit Index, GFI=Goodness-of-Fit Index, AGFI=Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index, TLI=Tucker-Lewis Index, IFI=Incremental Fit Index, NFI=Normed Fit Index, RFI=Relative Fit Index and RMSEA=Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation

The structural model fit statistics of social media for decision making have been resulted as Chi-square (χ^2)= 834.193, Degrees of freedom=282, Comparative Fit Index (CFI)=0.952, Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI)=0.928, Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI)=0.912, Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)=0.946, Incremental Fit Index (IFI)=0.953, Normed Fit Index (NFI)=0.929, Relative Fit Index (RFI)=0.920 and Root-Mean-Square

Error of Approximation (RMSEA)=0.049. Since all the fit indices have been satisfying the threshold values so the model of social media for decision making indicates good fit.

4.15 Comparison between Measurement Model Fit Indices and Structural Model Fit Indices

The validation of structural model depends upon the various model fit indices and individual parameter estimates. Structural model validity can be done by comparing the various fit indices of measurement with the structural model fit indices. The fit indices of measurement model and structural model have been presented in the table 4.15.1.

Table 4.15.1: Comparison between the Measurement Model Fit Indices and Structural Model Fit Indices

| Fit Indices | Measurement Model | Structural Model | Difference |
|--------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| CFI | .954 | .952 | 0.002 |
| GFI | .930 | .928 | 0.002 |
| AGFI | .912 | .912 | 0.000 |
| TLI | .947 | .946 | 0.001 |
| IFI | .955 | .953 | 0.002 |
| NFI | .932 | .929 | 0.003 |
| RFI | .921 | .920 | 0.001 |
| RMSEA | .048 | .049 | 0.001 |

Note: CFI=Comparative Fit Index, GFI=Goodness-of-Fit Index, AGFI=Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index, TLI=Tucker-Lewis Index, IFI=Incremental Fit Index, NFI=Normed Fit Index, RFI=Relative Fit Index and RMSEA=Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation

It can be observed from the above comparison table that both the models have negligible differences and can be considered as same model fit indices. Hair et al. (2008) suggested that the model fit indices of the structural model should have to equal or more in comparison to the model fit indices of the measurement model. Therefore, it is evident

from the above comparison table that the validity of structural theory has established because both the models have equal fit indices.

4.16 Result of Hypotheses Testing

From the structural model, eight hypotheses have been formed. The structural model includes all the eight hypothesized relationships among the latent factors or constructs. Out of eight hypotheses, three hypotheses have been related to the relationship between electronic word-of-mouth and trust in company generated contents (eWoM and TC), between electronic word-of-mouth and trust in user generated contents (eWoM and TU), and between electronic word-of-mouth and decision making (eWoM and DM). Two hypotheses have been related to the relationship between peer communications and trust in company generated contents (PC and TC), and peer communications and trust in user generated contents (PC and TU). One hypothesis has been related to the relationship between tie strength and peer communication (TS and PC), trust in company generated contents and decision making (TC and DM), trust in user generated contents and decision making (TU and DM) respectively. Table 4.16.1 presents the regression weights and significance level, which have been used in testing the hypotheses regarding the relationship among the constructs.

Table 4.16.1: Regression Weights and the Significance of Relationship between Constructs

| | Estimate | S.E. | C.R | P-value |
|-----------|-----------------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| TS → PC | 0.378 | 0.036 | 10.426 | *** |
| eWoM → TU | 0.667 | 0.040 | 16.626 | *** |
| PC → TC | -0.030 | 0.037 | -0.805 | 0.421 |
| eWoM → TC | 0.065 | 0.049 | 1.309 | 0.190 |
| PC → TU | 0.222 | 0.053 | 4.201 | *** |

| | | | | |
|-----------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
| TC → DM | -0.028 | 0.021 | -1.306 | 0.192 |
| TU → DM | 0.263 | 0.038 | 6.843 | *** |
| eWoM → DM | 0.382 | 0.041 | 9.201 | *** |

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Electronic word-of-mouth (eWoM) has a significant effect on the trust in company generated contents (TC) among social media users.

The result of structural model has been shown in table 4.16.1. The hypothesized path from electronic word-of-mouth (eWoM) to trust in company generated contents (TC) is insignificant and the standardized coefficient is 0.065. Therefore, the hypothesis that eWoM has a significant effect on the trust in company generated contents among social media users not supported.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Electronic word-of-mouth (eWoM) has a significant effect on the trust in user generated contents (TU) among social media users.

As shown in Table 4.16.1, the path between electronic word-of-mouth (eWoM) and trust in user generated contents (TU) has obtained standard coefficient 0.667 which is found to be significant at 0.001 level. Hence, the hypothesis that eWoM has a significant effect on the trust in user generated contents among social media users has been supported.

Hypothesis 3 (H3) Electronic word-of-mouth (eWoM) has a significant effect on the consumer decision making (DM) among social media users.

From the table 4.16.1, it has been found that the path between electronic word-of-mouth (eWoM) and decision making (DM) is found to be significant ($p < 0.001$) and standardized coefficient is 0.382. Hence, the hypothesis that eWoM has a significant effect on the consumer decision making among social media users has been supported.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Tie strength (TS) has a significant effect on the peer communication (PC) among social media users.

As results shown from the table 4.16.1, it has been found that the path between tie strength (TS) and peer communication (PC) is found to be significant at $p=0.001$ level and the standardized coefficient is 0.378. Hence, the hypothesis that tie strength has a significant effect on the peer communication among social media users has been supported.

Hypothesis 5 (H5): Peer communication (PC) has a significant effect on the trust in company generated contents (TC) among social media users.

From the table 4.16.1, it has been found that the path between peer communication (PC) and trust in company generated contents (TC) is insignificant and standardized coefficient is -0.030. Therefore, the hypothesis that peer communication has a significant effect on the trust in company generated contents among social media users not supported.

Hypothesis 6 (H6): Peer communication (PC) has a significant effect on the trust in user generated contents (TU) among social media users.

From the table 4.16.1, it has been evident that the path between peer communication (PC) and trust in user generated contents (TU) is found to be significant ($p<0.001$) and standardized coefficient is 0.222. Therefore, the hypothesis that peer communication has a significant effect on the trust in user generated contents among social media users has been supported.

Hypothesis 7 (H7): Trust in company generated contents (TC) has a significant effect on the consumer decision making (DM) among social media users.

The result of structural model has been shown in table 4.16.1. The hypothesized path from trust in company generated contents (TC) to decision making (DM) is found to be insignificant and the standardized coefficient is -0.028. Hence, the hypothesis that trust in company generated contents has a significant effect on the consumer decision making among social media users not supported.

Hypothesis 8 (H8): Trust in user generated content (TU) has a significant effect on the consumer decision making (DM) among social media users.

As results shown from the table 4.16.1, it has been found that the path between trust in user generated content (TU) and decision making (DM) is found to be significant ($p < 0.001$) and the standardized coefficient is 0.263. Therefore, the hypothesis that trust in user generated content has a significant effect on the consumer decision making among social media users has been supported.

Table 4.16.2: Summary of Hypotheses Testing of Social Media for Decision Making

| Hypotheses | Relationship | Sig. | Decision |
|---|--------------|-------|---------------|
| H1: Electronic word-of-mouth (eWoM) has a significant effect on the trust in company generated contents (TC) among social media users. | eWoM → TC | 0.190 | Not Supported |
| H2: Electronic word-of-mouth (eWoM) has a significant effect on the trust in user generated contents (TU) among social media users. | eWoM → TU | *** | Supported |
| H3: Electronic word-of-mouth (eWoM) has a significant effect on the consumer decision making | eWoM → DM | *** | Supported |

(DM) among social media users.

H4: Tie strength (TS) has a significant effect on the peer communication (PC) among social media users. TS → PC *** Supported

H5: Peer communication (PC) has a significant effect on the trust in company generated contents (TC) among social media users. PC → TC 0.421 Not Supported

H6: Peer communication (PC) has a significant effect on the trust in user generated content (TU) among social media users. PC → TU *** Supported

H7: Trust in company generated contents (TC) has a significant effect on the consumer decision making (DM) among social media users. TC → DM 0.192 Not Supported

H8: Trust in user generated content (TU) has a significant effect on the consumer decision making (DM) among social media users. TU → DM *** Supported

Note: *** indicates p-value less than 0.001
 The final research model has been drawn below showing results of tested hypotheses and has been illustrated in the figure 4.16.1.

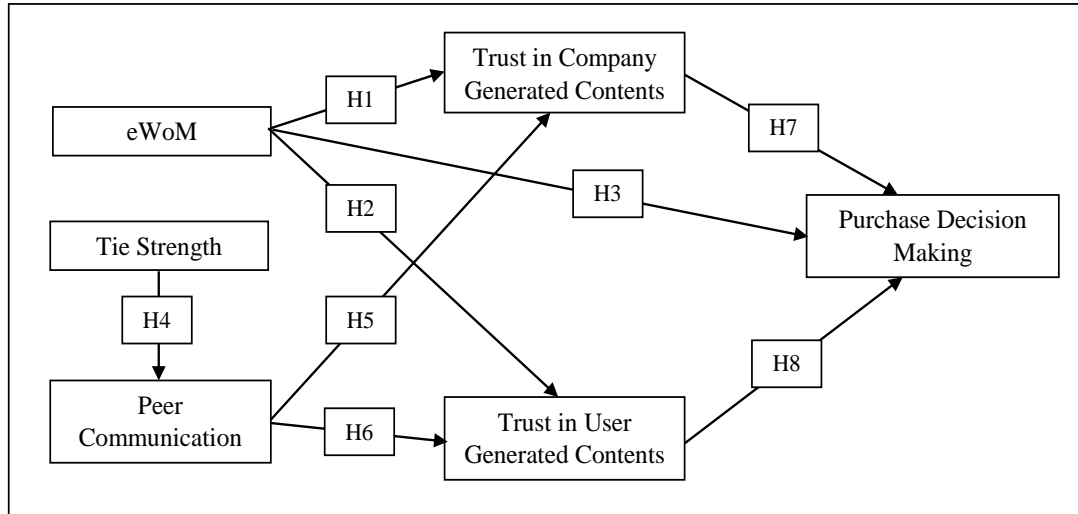


Figure 4.16.1: *Final Research Model tested for Social Media Decision Making*

Conclusion: The usage of social media for purchase decision making has been validated with the help of identified factors viz. trust in company generated contents, trust in user generated contents, peer communication, tie strength, electronic word-of-mouth, and decision making. The formulated hypotheses have been tested through structural equation model (SEM) with analysis of moment structure (AMOS). It has been found that there is a significant relationship among the users of social media between information provided by the users of social media and decision making for the purchase of products and/or services in social media environment.

4.17 Findings related to Social Media for Decision Making regarding the Purchase of Products or Services

The major findings that have been emerged from the analysis are as follows:

- The results indicate that the electronic word-of-mouth on social media as perceived by the users has a significant effect on the decision making regarding the purchase of products and/or services among the social media users with a standardized coefficient value 0.382.

- The results indicate that the electronic word-of-mouth on social media as perceived by the users has a significant effect on the trust in user generated contents regarding the purchase of products and/or services among the social media users with a standardized co-efficient value 0.667.
- The results indicate that the electronic word-of-mouth on social media as perceived by the users has an insignificant effect on the trust in company generated contents regarding the purchase of products and/or services among the social media users.
- The results indicate that the tie strength on social media as perceived by the users has a significant effect on the peer communication regarding the purchase of products and/or services among the social media users with a standardized co-efficient value 0.378.
- The results indicate that the peer communication on social media as perceived by the users has an insignificant effect on the trust in company generated contents regarding the purchase of products and/or services among the social media users.
- The results indicate that the peer communication on social media as perceived by the users has a significant effect on the trust in user generated contents regarding the purchase of products and/or services among the social media users with a standardized co-efficient value 0.222.
- The results indicate that the trust in company generated contents on social media as perceived by the users has an insignificant effect on the decision making regarding the purchase of products and/or services among the social media users.
- The results indicate that the trust in user generated contents on social media as perceived by the users has a significant effect on the decision making regarding the

purchase of products and/or services among the social media users with a standardized co-efficient value 0.263.

4.18 Analysis based on the Demographics in Consumer Decision Making on Social Media

4.18.1 Social Media Decision Making – Gender wise Analysis

Table 4.18.1: Independent Samples t-Test for Gender of the respondents

| SM_DM | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|------|------------------------------|---------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---|-------|
| | F | Sig. | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | | | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| Equal variances assumed | 2.148 | .143 | .810 | 800 | .418 | .054 | .067 | -.077 | .185 |
| Equal variances not assumed | | | .826 | 589.411 | .409 | .054 | .065 | -.074 | .182 |

Interpretation: It has been found that there is no significant difference in consumer decision making based on the gender of the respondents. Hence, the Null hypothesis has been accepted. It can be concluded from the above test that consumer decision making for purchase of products and/or services on social media does not differ by gender of the respondents. In simple terms, decision making does not vary in terms of male and female respondents for purchase of products and/or services on social media.

Inference: Independent samples t-test result shows that the mean difference in consumer decision making on social media between male and female (gender) is statistically insignificant. In other words, decision making does not vary between male and female consumer for the purchase of products and/or services on social media.

4.18.2 Social Media Decision Making – Age wise Analysis

Table 4.18.2: ANOVA for Age of the respondents

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|-------------|
| Between Groups | 10.973 | 4 | 2.743 | 3.453 | 0.008 |
| Within Groups | 633.143 | 797 | 0.794 | | |
| Total | 644.116 | 801 | | | |

Interpretation: It is evident from the above table there is a significant difference in decision making among social media respondents with different age groups. Therefore, the alternate hypothesis has been accepted. It can be concluded that there is significant difference in consumer decision making among respondents among different age groups selected for the study. In simple terms, consumer decision making on social media for products and/or services varies with different age groups.

Inference: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) result shows that the variance in consumer decision making on social media by age is statistically significant. In other words, consumer decision making varies with different age groups of the respondents on social media.

Table 4.18.3: Post Hoc test result for Age regarding Social Media Decision Making

| Age | N | Subset for alpha = 0.05 |
|----------------|-----|-------------------------|
| | | 1 |
| 32-38 years | 90 | 3.19 |
| 24-31 years | 307 | 3.32 |
| 39-45 years | 39 | 3.36 |
| 18-24 years | 358 | 3.51 |
| Above 45 years | 8 | 3.03 |
| Sig. | | .093 |

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 29.797.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

Inference: There is a significant difference in consumer decision making among social media respondents of different age groups. The age group 18-24 years have high score which signifies that they are influencing more in decision making on social media for the purchase of products and/or services compared to the other age groups.

4.18.3 Social Media Decision Making – Education wise Analysis

Table 4.18.4: ANOVA for Education of the respondents

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Between Groups | 18.793 | 4 | 4.698 | 3.712 | .005 |
| Within Groups | 1008.824 | 797 | 1.266 | | |
| Total | 1027.617 | 801 | | | |

Interpretation: It is found from the above table there is a significant difference in decision making among social media respondents with different educational background. Therefore, the alternate hypothesis has been accepted. It can be concluded that there is significant difference in consumer decision making among respondents of different educational background. In simple terms, consumer decision making on social media for products and/or services varies with different educational background.

Inference: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) result shows that the variance in consumer decision making on social media by education is statistically significant. In other words, consumer decision making varies with different educational background of the respondents on social media.

Table 4.18.5: Post Hoc test result for Education regarding Social Media Decision Making

| Education | N | Subset for alpha = 0.05 | |
|-----------------|-----|-------------------------|------|
| | | 1 | 2 |
| Other(s) | 11 | 2.18 | |
| 10th | 20 | | 3.05 |
| Post-Graduation | 215 | | 3.14 |
| 12th | 46 | | 3.30 |
| Graduation | 510 | | 3.33 |
| Sig. | | 1.000 | .399 |

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 29.540.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

Inference: There is a significant difference in consumer decision making among social media respondents of different educational background. The graduate and 12th education

background respondents have scored high which signifies that these educational background respondents have more influence in decision making on social media for the purchase of products and/or services.

4.18.4 Social Media Decision Making – Profession wise Analysis

Table 4.18.6: ANOVA for Profession of the respondents

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Between Groups | 23.437 | 4 | 5.859 | 3.699 | .005 |
| Within Groups | 1262.549 | 797 | 1.584 | | |
| Total | 1285.986 | 801 | | | |

Interpretation: It is identified from the above table there is a significant difference in decision making among social media respondents with different profession. Hence, the alternate hypothesis has been accepted. It can be concluded that there is significant difference in consumer decision making among respondents of different profession. In simple terms, consumer decision making on social media for products and/or services varies with profession.

Inference: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) result shows that the variance in consumer decision making on social media by profession is statistically significant. In other words, consumer decision making varies with different profession of the respondents on social media.

Table 4.18.7: Post Hoc test result for Profession regarding Social Media Decision

Making

| Profession | N | Subset for alpha = 0.05 | |
|----------------|-----|-------------------------|------|
| | | 1 | 2 |
| Other(s) | 10 | 2.50 | |
| Student | 306 | 2.92 | 2.92 |
| Self Employed | 39 | 2.92 | 2.92 |
| Govt. Employee | 175 | | 3.21 |
| Pvt. Employee | 272 | | 3.26 |
| Sig. | | .179 | .308 |

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 36.153.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

Inference: There is a significant difference in consumer decision making among social media respondents of different profession. The private employees have higher score which signifies that this professional background respondent which signifies that these professional background respondents have more influence in decision making on social media for the purchase of products and/or services.

4.18.5 Social Media Decision Making – Income wise Analysis

Table 4.18.8: ANOVA for Income of the respondents

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Between Groups | 22.577 | 5 | 4.515 | 2.353 | .039 |
| Within Groups | 1527.468 | 796 | 1.919 | | |
| Total | 1550.045 | 801 | | | |

Interpretation: It is identified from the above table there is a significant difference in decision making among social media respondents with different income levels. Therefore, the alternate hypothesis has been accepted. It can be concluded that there is significant difference in consumer decision making among respondents of different income levels. In simple terms, consumer decision making on social media for products and/or services varies with different income levels.

Inference: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) result shows that the variance in consumer decision making on social media by income is statistically significant. In other words, consumer decision making varies with different income levels of the respondents on social media.

Table 4.18.9: Post Hoc test result for Income regarding Social Media Decision

| Income | N | Making | |
|--------------------|-----|-------------------------|------|
| | | Subset for alpha = 0.05 | |
| | | 1 | 2 |
| Above Rs 50,000 | 81 | 2.43 | |
| Below Rs 10,000 | 58 | 2.67 | 2.67 |
| Rs 10,001 - 20,000 | 151 | 2.82 | 2.82 |
| Rs 30,001 - 40,000 | 181 | | 2.87 |
| Rs 40,001 - 50,000 | 92 | | 2.96 |
| Rs 20,001 - 30,000 | 239 | | 3.00 |
| Sig. | | .053 | .128 |

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 105.656.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

Inference: There is a significant difference in consumer decision making among social media respondents of different income levels. The income bracket of Rs 20,000-30,000 respondents have higher score which signifies that these income bracket respondents have more influence in decision making on social media for the purchase of products and/or services. It is also evident from the Post Hoc test that with the increase in income level the score of the social media respondents decrease, it signifies that the significance of income levels in consumer decision making decreases with the increase in the income levels of the respondents of social media for the purchase of products and/or services.

Table 4.18.10: Summary of Test of Hypotheses based on Demographics in Social Media Decision Making

| Independent Samples T-test | Sig. | Decision |
|---|-------------|-----------------|
| H9.a: The use of social media for decision making regarding the purchase of products or services significantly different based on the gender of the respondents. | 0.143 | Not Supported |
| ANOVA with Post Hoc (Duncan) | Sig. | Decision |
| H9.b: The use of social media for decision making regarding the purchase of products or services is significantly different based on the age of the respondents. | .008 | Supported |
| H9.c: The use of social media for decision making regarding the purchase of products or services is significantly different based on the education of the | .005 | Supported |

respondents.

H9.d: The use of social media for decision making regarding the purchase of products or services is significantly different based on the profession of the respondents. .005 Supported

H9.e: The use of social media for decision making regarding the purchase of products or services is significantly different based on the income of the respondents. .039 Supported

4.19 Demographics Profile Analysis Findings of Social Media for Decision Making

The findings of the analysis based on the demographics of the social media respondents in decision making for purchase of products and/or services are as follows:

- The result shows that variance in social media for decision making between male and female is statistically in significant.
- The result indicates that variance in social media by age is statistically significant. The use of social media in decision making varies with different age groups. It is also found from the Post Hoc (Duncan) test that the age group 18-24 years has a high score which influences the decision making among the respondents of social media.
- The result shows that variance in social media by education is statistically significant. The use of social media in decision making varies with different educational background. It is also evident from the Post Hoc (Duncan) test that the educational

background graduate and 12th respondents have high score which influences the decision making among the respondents of social media.

- The result indicates that variance in social media by profession is statistically significant. The use of social media in decision making varies with different profession. It is also found from the Post Hoc (Duncan) test that the private employees has a high score which influences the decision making among the respondents of social media.
- The result shows that variance in social media by income is statistically significant. The use of social media in decision making varies with different income levels. It is also evident from the Post Hoc (Duncan) test that the income level of Rs 20,000-30,000 respondents has high score which influences the decision making among the respondents of social media. It is also noticed that the score decreases with the increase in income levels. It can be concluded that the significance of income levels in consumer decision making decreases with the increase in the income levels of the respondents of social media for the purchase of products and/or services.

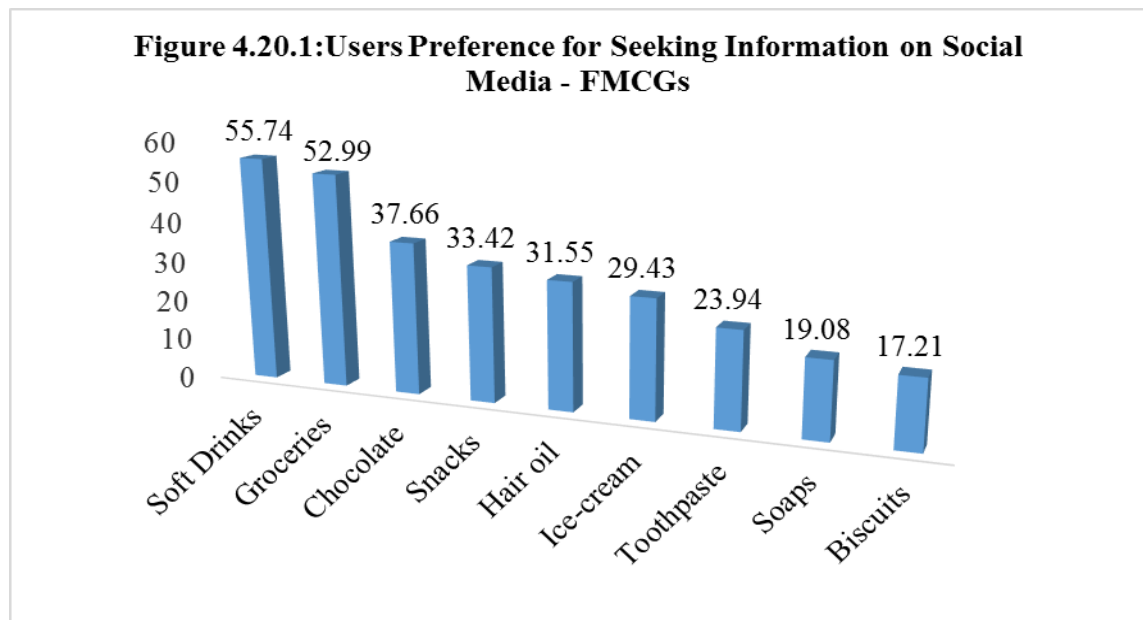
4.20 Preference of Seeking Information on Social Media related to Products and Services

The data analysis has been performed for preference of seeking information on social media related to products and services have been presented. Three categories viz. fast moving consumer goods (FMCG), consumer durable and services have been considered for the analysis.

4.20.1 Users Preference for Seeking Information on Social Media - FMCG

Table 4.20.1: Users preference for seeking information on social media - FMCG

| Items | Frequency (Total 802) | Percentage |
|-------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Soft Drinks | 447 | 55.74 |
| Groceries | 425 | 52.99 |
| Chocolate | 302 | 37.66 |
| Snacks | 268 | 33.42 |
| Hair oil | 253 | 31.55 |
| Ice-cream | 236 | 29.43 |
| Toothpaste | 192 | 23.94 |
| Soaps | 153 | 19.08 |
| Biscuits | 138 | 17.21 |

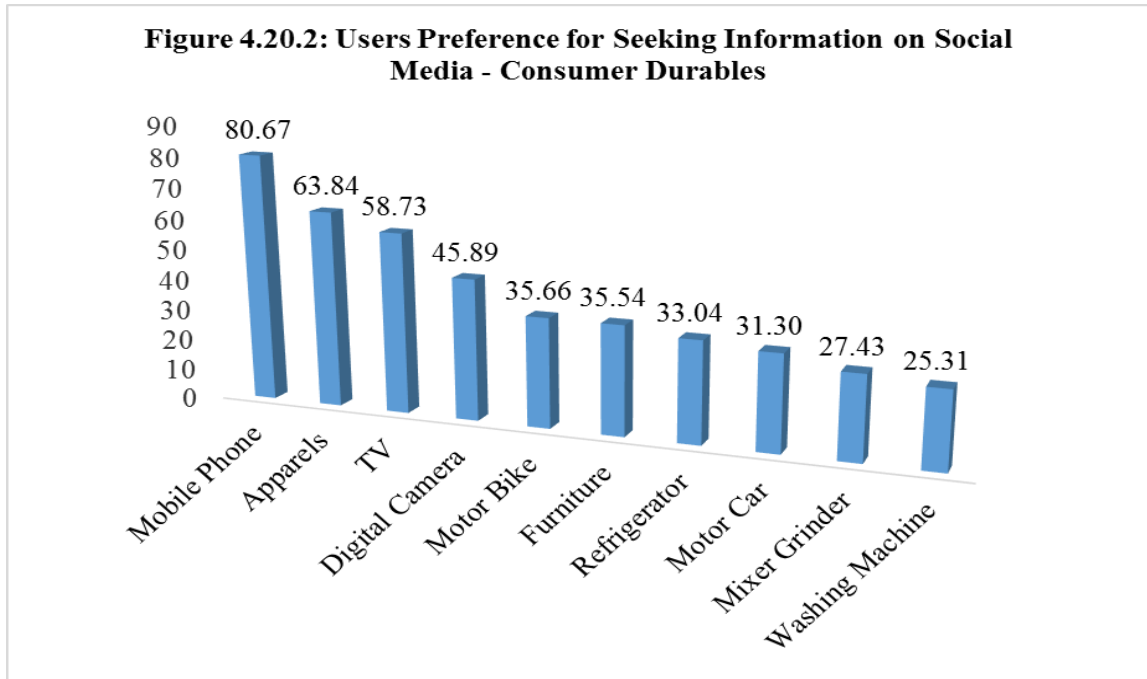


The above table 4.20.1 shows the preferences of social media users in seeking information related to fast moving consumer goods (FMCG). The majority of the users seek information for soft drinks (55.74%) followed by groceries (52.99%) and chocolate (37.66%). The other items which have been sought include snacks (33.42%), hair oil (31.55%), ice-cream (29.43%), toothpaste (23.94%), soaps (19.08%), biscuits (17.21%) and others (01.50%).

4.20.2 Users Preference for Seeking Information on Social Media - Consumer Durables

Table 4.20.2: Users Preference for Seeking Information on Social Media - Consumer

| Durables | | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Items | Frequency (Total 802) | Percentage |
| Mobile Phone | 647 | 80.67 |
| Apparels | 512 | 63.84 |
| TV | 471 | 58.73 |
| Digital Camera | 368 | 45.89 |
| Motor Bike | 286 | 35.66 |
| Furniture | 285 | 35.54 |
| Refrigerator | 265 | 33.04 |
| Motor Car | 251 | 31.3 |
| Mixer Grinder | 220 | 27.43 |
| Washing Machine | 203 | 25.31 |



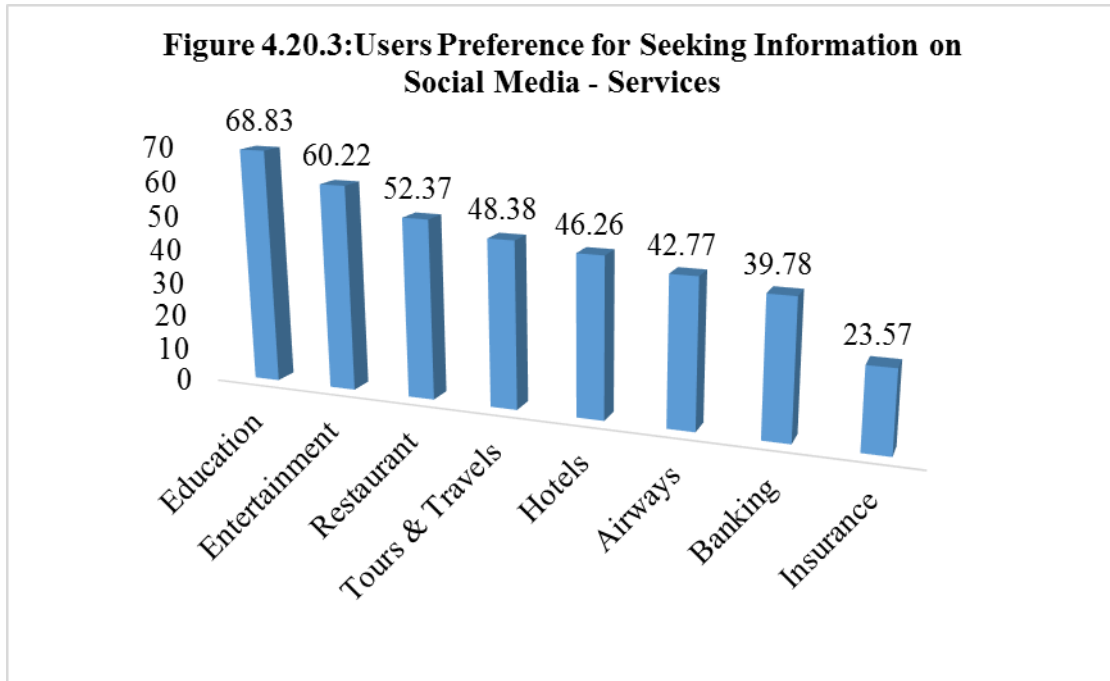
The above table 4.20.2 depicts the preferences of social media users in seeking information related to consumer durables. The majority of the users seek information for mobile phones (80.67%) followed by apparels (63.84%) and TV (58.73%). The other items which have been sought include digital camera (45.89%), motor bike (35.66%), furniture (35.54%), refrigerator (33.04%), motor car (31.30%), mixer grinder (27.43%) and washing machine (25.31%).

4.20.3 Users Preference for Seeking Information on Social Media - Services

Table 4.20.3: Users Preference for Seeking Information on Social Media - Services

| Items | Frequency (Total 802) | Percentage |
|-----------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Education | 552 | 68.83 |
| Entertainment | 483 | 60.22 |
| Restaurant | 420 | 52.37 |
| Tours & Travels | 388 | 48.38 |

| | | |
|-----------|-----|-------|
| Hotels | 371 | 46.26 |
| Airways | 343 | 42.77 |
| Banking | 319 | 39.78 |
| Insurance | 189 | 23.57 |



The above table 4.20.3 provides the preferences of social media users in seeking information related to services. The majority of the users seek information for education (68.83%) followed by entertainment (60.22%) and restaurant (52.37%). The other items which have been sought include tours and travels (48.38%), hotels (46.26%), airways (42.77%), banking (39.78%) and insurance (23.57%).

4.21 Gender wise Information Seeking on Social Media for Different Categories

4.21.1 Gender wise Information Seeking on Social Media – FMCG

Table 4.21.1: Gender wise Information Seeking on Social Media – FMCG

| Items | Male | Female | Total |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Soft Drinks | 313 | 134 | 447 |
| Groceries | 273 | 152 | 425 |
| Chocolate | 200 | 102 | 302 |
| Snacks | 171 | 97 | 268 |
| Hair Oil | 166 | 87 | 253 |
| Ice-cream | 150 | 86 | 236 |
| Toothpaste | 132 | 60 | 192 |
| Soaps | 94 | 59 | 153 |
| Biscuits | 89 | 49 | 138 |

The above table 4.21.1 shows the preferences of seeking information on social media for fast moving consumer goods based on the gender of the respondents. Chi-square test of independence has been conducted on the observed frequency to know if the use of social media is different based on gender. The p-value found to be 0.518 which has higher than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of social media in information seeking for fast moving consumer goods has not been influenced by the gender of the respondents.

4.21.2 Gender wise Information Seeking on Social Media – Consumer Durables

Table 4.21.2: Gender wise Information Seeking on Social Media – Consumer Durables

| Items | Male | Female | Total |
|-----------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Mobile Phone | 426 | 221 | 647 |
| Apparels | 312 | 200 | 512 |
| TV | 320 | 151 | 471 |
| Digital Camera | 240 | 128 | 368 |
| Motor Bike | 217 | 69 | 286 |
| Furniture | 185 | 100 | 285 |
| Refrigerator | 171 | 94 | 265 |
| Motor Car | 187 | 64 | 251 |
| Mixer Grinder | 139 | 81 | 220 |
| Washing Machine | 126 | 77 | 203 |

The above table 4.21.2 depicts the preferences of seeking information on social media for consumer durables based on the gender of the respondents. Chi-square test of independence has been conducted on the observed frequency to know if the use of social media is different based on gender. The p-value found to be less than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of social media in information seeking for consumer durable has influenced by the gender of the respondents.

4.21.3 Gender wise Information Seeking on Social Media – Services

Table 4.21.3: Gender wise Information Seeking on Social Media – Services

| Items | Male | Female | Total |
|-----------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Education | 346 | 206 | 552 |
| Entertainment | 329 | 154 | 483 |
| Restaurant | 265 | 155 | 420 |
| Tours & Travels | 262 | 126 | 388 |

| | | | |
|-----------|-----|-----|------------|
| Hotels | 248 | 123 | 371 |
| Airways | 236 | 107 | 343 |
| Banking | 188 | 131 | 319 |
| Insurance | 136 | 53 | 189 |

The above table 4.21.3 indicates the preferences of seeking information on social media for services based on the gender of the respondents. Chi-square test of independence has been conducted on the observed frequency to know if the use of social media is different based on gender. The p-value found to be less than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of social media in information seeking for services has influenced by the gender of the respondents.

4.22 Chapter Conclusion

The data analysis chapter has started with data tabulation, coding, analysis and interpretation. The uses of social media among the respondents for various purpose have been categorized identified from the previous studies. The demographics profiles of the respondents have been analyzed with the help of descriptive statistics. The hypotheses formulated to verify the effect of identified factors and the influence of demographics on social media decision making for the purchase of products and/or services have been examined the help of exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation model, independent sample t-test, chi-square test of independence, ANOVA test and Post Hoc test with Duncan Multiple Range Test.

CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE
RESEARCH

5.1 Introduction

Social media has become an important tool for organizations (Curran et al., 2011) in various aspects in performing business activities such as advertising (Wright et al. 2010; Akar & Topçu, 2011; Tan et al. 2013; Hanaysha, 2016), branding (Miller & Lammas, 2010; Yan, 2011; Hill and Langan, 2014, Soewandi, 2015; Hanaysha, 2016) and sales promotion (Mullin and Cummins, 2010; Biswas et al., 2013; Andreti et al., 2013; Zoellner and Schaefers, 2015). Marketing strategies on social media focused on disseminating information about products and services to the customers and mainly focuses on increasing the sales (Agnihotri et al., 2012; Cui et al., 2016) and tend to focus on selling products and services from the perspective of organizations and not the customer. There is a need to understand the factors influencing customer decision making to help marketers to make better use of the social media platforms from the customer perspective. This need and importance for a better understanding of social media in decision making for purchase of products and/or services has motivated the researcher to initiate the study. The study evaluates the use of social media for decision making and examines the relationship among the identified factors influencing the decision making. This chapter presents the discussion on results and conclusions based on the objectives of the study. Further, theoretical and practical contributions, limitation of the study and direction for future research have been discussed.

5.2 Discussion on Research Findings

This segment discusses the findings of the study corresponding to the objectives in details.

Objective I: To analyze the effect of identified factors in consumer decision making on social media.

The first objective of the study has been probed by conducting both qualitative and quantitative research approach. The qualitative research has been carried out with the previous literature review which includes conceptual research review in identifying the factors to analyze the effect in consumer decision making on social media for the purchase of products and/or services. The result identified 31 variables (or items) which have been used for the measuring the effect on social media decision making. The pretest which includes the discussion with experts and pilot study has been helped to finalize the questionnaire. A sample of 802 social media respondents have been collected from the six cities.

The exploratory factor analysis has been conducted to identify the important factors which measure the social media decision making for the purchase of products and/or services. Finally, six factors have been merged out of the EFA. The six important factors were Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWoM), Trust in Company Generated Contents (TC), Decision Making (DM), Trust in User Generated Contents (TU), Peer Communication (PC) and Tie Strength (TS). The effect of these identified factors in decision making on social media have been discussed below.

- The effect of eWoM on trust in company generated contents among social media users is insignificant. It can be concluded that the information provided by the

company on social media through electronic word-of-mouth is not perceived as trustworthy among the social media users. (Blackshaw & Nazzaro, 2006; Foux, 2006; Trusov, Bucklin & Pauwels, 2009; Akar, 2010)

- The effect of eWoM on trust in user generated contents among social media users is significant. It is found that the information provided by the users of social media through electronic word-of-mouth is perceived as trustworthy among the users of social media. (Blackshaw & Nazzaro, 2006; Foux, 2006; Akar, 2010)
- The effect of eWoM on decision-making among social media users is significant. It can be concluded that the information available on social media through electronic word of mouth has a significant effect on the decision-making among social media users (Clemons, 2009; Huiju, 2012; Balakrishnan et. al, 2014).
- The effect of tie strength on the peer communication among social media users is significant. It can be concluded that the information available on social media through tie strength has a significant effect on the peer communication among social media users (Bradner & Mark 2002; Wang et al., 2012).
- The effect of peer communication on trust in company generated contents among social media users is insignificant. It can be concluded that peer communication has not a significant effect on trust in company generated contents among social media users.
- The effect of peer communication on trust in user generated contents among social media users is significant. It is found that peer communication has significant effect on trust in user generated contents among the social media users.

- The effect of trust in company generated contents on decision-making among social media users is insignificant. It can be concluded that the information available on social media through the company generated content has not significant effect on the decision-making among the social media users.
- The effect of trust in user generated contents in decision-making among social media users is significant. It can be concluded that the information available on social media through the user generated contents has a significant effect on the decision-making among the social media users.

Objective II: To examine the role of demographic in consumer decision making on social media.

The second objective of the study has been examined with the of help social media respondents' demographics profile such as gender, age, education, profession and income. For this purpose, independent t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) with post hoc Duncan test have been used. The effect demographics in consumer decision making on social media have been discussed below.

- The result shows that the mean in the use of social media for decision making by gender is statistically insignificant. There is no difference in the way social media is used for decision making based on the gender of the respondents.
- The result shows that the variance in the use of social media for decision making by age is statistically significant. The use of social media for decision making varies with different age groups. The Post Hoc Duncan Test indicates that the age group of 18-24 years respondents is majority group in using social media for decision making.

- The result shows that the variance in the use of social media for decision making by education is statistically significant. The use of social media for decision making varies with different educational levels. The Post Hoc Duncan test shows that 12th and graduates respondents are the majority users of social media for their decision making purpose.
- The result shows that the variance in the use of social media for decision making by profession is statistically significant. The use of social media for decision making varies with profession of the respondents. The private employees are the major user followed by the government employees of social media for the decision making.
- The result shows that the variance in the use of social media for decision making by income is statistically significant. The use of social media for decision making varies with different income levels. The income bracket of Rs 20,000-30,000 are the major user in using the social media for decision making.

Objective III: To determine the social media users' preferences in seeking information related to fast moving consumer goods, consumer durables and services.

The third objective of the study has been examined with the help of descriptive statistics such as graphs, percentage and frequency tables. The items or products that have been considered for this analysis has been categorized as fast moving consumer goods (includes soft drinks, groceries, chocolate, snacks, hair oil, ice-cream, toothpaste, soaps and biscuits), consumer durables (includes mobile phones, apparels, TV, digital camera, motor bike, furniture, refrigerator, motor car, mixer grinder and washing machine) and services (includes education, entertainment, restaurant, tours and travels, hotel, airways, banking and insurance). The results of analysis have been discussed below.

- The social media users are seeking information mostly for the soft drinks (55.74%) followed by the groceries (52.99%) and chocolate (37.66) on social media in FMCGs category.
- More than 80% of the users are seeking information for mobile phone followed by apparels (63.84%) and TV (58.73%) in consumer durables category.
- The information regarding Education (68.83%) is mostly sought sector followed by entertainment (60.22%) and restaurant (52.37%) in the services category.

Objective IV: To examine if there is any digital divide among male and female social media users' preferences in seeking information for the three categories (viz. FMCG, consumer durables and services).

The fourth objective of the study has been investigated with the help of chi-square test of independence on the observed frequency to know if the use of social media differs based on the gender (i.e. male and female) in seeking information related to FMCG, consumer durables and services on social media. The results of the chi-square test have been discussed below.

- In FMCG category, there is no difference in the use of social media based on the gender of the respondents in seeking information on social media as p-value (0.518) is greater than 0.05 which is insignificant.
- In consumer durables category, there is a difference in the use of social media based on the gender of the respondent in seeking information on social media as p-value is less than 0.05 which is significant. In simple words it can be concluded that the use of social media differs based on the gender of the respondent.

- In services category, there is a difference in the use of social media based on the gender of the respondent in seeking information on social media as p-value is less than 0.05 which is significant. In simple words it can be concluded that the use of social media varies based on the gender of the respondent.

5.3 Theoretical Contribution and Practical Implication

5.3.1 Theoretical Contribution

- The study addressed the gap identified by Constantinides and Fountain on factors influencing the consumer decision-making in an information based environment i.e. user generated content on social media.
- The present study has identified and validated the factors influencing the consumer decision-making based on the user generated contents on social media.
- The present study used the empirical research to identify the uses of social media and tested for variance in the use of social media by different groups of respondents for decision-making.

5.3.2 Practical Implication

- The user generated contents on the social media has to be perceived as useful among the users for their decision making reflecting the importance of user generated content on the social media.
- The contents created by the user of social media have to be perceived as trustworthy rather than the company generated contents among the social media users. The marketers have to implement the strategies by which trust among the users of social media can be built.

- The study has identified the product categories which have higher preference among the consumers on social media. The marketers can focus on the preferences of the consumers and make the strategy accordingly to convey their marketing messages more precisely and effectively.

5.4 Limitations of the Study and Direction for Future Research

The study is conducted with cross-sectional design, samples have been collected from the six metro cities, and hence a larger sample from the semi-urban or tier II cities would strengthen and support the research findings. This study had been conducted in single time due to cost and time constraints. A longitudinal study would provide better scope to understand the behavior of social media user for decision-making. Thus, future study can adopt longitudinal approach. This study has identified only the preferences of product categories with respect to FMCGs, consumer durables and services. The future study can be considered by taking single category to have a better understanding of the behavior of the user of social media for decision-making.

5.5 Chapter Conclusion

The present study highlights the importance of social media and particularly user generated contents in the form of electronic word-of-mouth in an informational based environment that influences the consumer decision making for purchase of products and/or services. The six factors identified and validated through EFA, CFA and SEM. The result shows that eWoM has an effect on trust in user generated contents but not in company generated contents on social media. It is also found that eWoM effects the consumer decision making for purchase of products and/or services on social media. It is evident from the analysis that the trust in user generated contents has an effect on

consumer decision making but not the company generated contents for the purchase of products and/or services on social media environment.

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Research Scholar



Under the Supervision of
Dr. D V S Kumar
Assistant Professor
University of Hyderabad

**Questionnaire on
Role of Social Media in Consumer Purchase Decision Making - A Study in the
Indian Context**

- The purpose of this survey is to study the Users' opinion regarding the use of social media in general and specific to the role of social media in the purchase decision regarding the products or services.
- This survey is anonymous and strictly confidential. There is no right or wrong answer. The only purpose is to find out your perspective regarding the use of social media in purchase decision.
- All responses will be kept confidential and will be used only for purposes of academic research.
- Your cooperation in providing this information will be greatly appreciated.

Section – A

User's Behavior on Social Media

Please select the below item(s) for which you have asked for/advised to others on Social Media. (You can mark **Multiple** '✓' options)

| I. FMCG | II. Consumer Durables | III. Services |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| a) Soft drinks [] | a) Television [] | a) Banking [] |
| b) Soaps [] | b) Mobile Phones [] | b) Entertainment [] |
| c) Biscuits [] | c) Apparels [] | c) Education [] |
| d) Chocolates [] | d) Digital Camera [] | d) Restaurant [] |
| e) Ice-creams [] | e) Motor Bike [] | e) Tours & Travels [] |
| f) Hair oil [] | f) Motor Car [] | f) Airways [] |
| g) Toothpaste [] | g) Refrigerator [] | g) Hotels [] |
| h) Snacks [] | h) Washing Machine [] | h) Insurance [] |
| i) Groceries [] | i) Furniture [] | |
| | j) Mixer Grinders [] | |

Please select the appropriate scale for following statements. (Please '✓' option)

**Strongly Disagree (1) Disagree (2) Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) Agree (4)
Strongly Agree (5)**

| SN | Statements | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I talk up about the products or services on SM to my peers, friends, family etc. | | | | | |
| 2 | I use to suggest/advice or recommend products or services to lots of people on SM. | | | | | |
| 3 | I try to spread the good/bad word about products or services on SM. | | | | | |
| 4 | I give lots of positive word-of mouth about products or services on SM. | | | | | |
| 5 | I talk about purchasing the product or services with my peers on SM. | | | | | |
| 6 | I ask my peers for opinion or advice about the product or services on social media. | | | | | |
| 7 | I obtain the product or services information from my peers through social media. | | | | | |
| 8 | My peers on social media encourage me to buy the product or services. | | | | | |
| 9 | Information about the products or services provided on social media by the company is trustworthy. | | | | | |
| 10 | Information about the products or services provided on social media by the company is credible. | | | | | |
| 11 | Information about the products or services provided on social media by the company is reliable. | | | | | |
| 12 | Promises made by the company on social media about the products or services are reliable. | | | | | |
| 13 | The company's communications on social media is sincere about its products or services. | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 14 | The company's communications do not make false claims about the products or services on social media. | | | | | |
| 15 | I trust the information provided by company on social media about the products or services. | | | | | |
| 16 | The companies on social media are genuinely committed to my satisfaction about the products or services. | | | | | |
| 17 | I have a complete faith in the integrity of information about the products or services provided on social media by the company. | | | | | |
| 18 | I think that the product or services information/recommendations provided by the social media users are credible. | | | | | |
| 19 | I trust the product or services information/recommendation from social media users. | | | | | |
| 20 | I believe that product or services information/recommendations from social media users are trustworthy. | | | | | |
| Please select the appropriate scale for following statements. (Please '✓' option)Very Unlikely (1) Unlikely (2) Neutral (3) Likely (4) Very Likely (5) | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21 | How likely would you perform a large favor for your peers on SM related to products or services? | | | | | |
| 22 | How likely are you willing to share your personal experience about the products or services with your SM peers? | | | | | |
| 23 | How likely are you willing to help your SM peers in purchasing or decision making for product or services? | | | | | |

Section – B

Use of Social Media (SM) in Consumer Purchase Decision Making regarding Products or Services

Please select the appropriate scale for following statements. (Please ‘✓’ option)

Strongly Disagree (1) Disagree (2) Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) Agree (4) Strongly Agree (5)

| SN | Statements | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | The use of Social Media (SM) initiates my shopping/buying intention (i.e. I learn about products or services that are not in my mind while surfing SM) | | | | | |
| 2 | I use social media to search information about the product or services to support decision making. | | | | | |
| 3 | I provide information to others about the product or services on social media to support decision making. | | | | | |
| 4 | I use information from social media in evaluation of various options/alternatives/courses of action to take a decision related to products or services. | | | | | |
| 5 | I provide information on social media to help others in evaluation of various options/alternatives/courses of action to take a decision related to products or services. | | | | | |
| 6 | I use information from social media in selection from various options/alternatives to take a decision related to the product or services. | | | | | |
| 7 | I use SM to provide information/feedback to others to get opinion after purchasing a product or services. | | | | | |
| 8 | I use SM to post/share my comments/questions to get opinion after purchasing a product or services. | | | | | |

Section – C
Demographic Details & Social Media Use

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| 1. Name (Optional): _____ | | 2. Mobile No.(Optional): _____ | |
| 3. City: Mumbai [] Delhi [] Kolkata [] Bangalore [] Chennai [] Hyderabad [] | | | |
| 4. Gender: Male [] Female [] | 5. Age: 18 - 24 years [] 25 - 31 years [] 32 - 38 years [] 39 - 45 years [] Above 45 years [] | 6. Education: SSC (10 th) [] HSC (12 th) [] Graduate [] Post Graduate [] Other(s) _____ | |
| 7. Profession Govt. Employee [] Private Employee [] Self Employed [] Student [] Other(s) _____ | 8. Family Income (Per Month) Below Rs 10K [] Rs 10 - 20K [] Rs 20 - 30K [] Rs 30 - 40K [] Rs 40 - 50K [] Above Rs 50K [] | 9. Internet Access: (Multiple '✓') At Home [] At Office [] At College University [] Other(s) _____ | |
| 10. Which of the following device(s) do you use for accessing Internet? (Please Rank from 1 to 4. 1 being the most preferred and 4 being least preferred) Desktop/PC [] Laptop [] Smartphone [] Tablet [] | | | |
| 11. No. of hours (approx.) of Internet Use in a week. (Please '✓' option) Less than 15 hours [] 15 – 30 hours [] 30 – 50 hours [] More than 50 hours [] | | | |
| 12. Which of the following Social Media alternatives are you a user of? (Please '✓' options as many as you are using) Facebook [] Twitter [] LinkedIn [] Google+ [] YouTube [] Instagram [] WhatsApp [] FB Messenger [] | | | |
| 13. How often do you ACCESS social media? I am always logged in to social media [] Several times a day [] Once in a few days [] Once in a week [] About once in a month [] Occasionally [] | | | |

14. Since how long are you using social media (in years)?

| | Below 1 year | 1 - 2 years | 2 - 3 years | 3 - 4 years | 4 - 5 years | Above 5 years |
|--------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Facebook | | | | | | |
| Twitter | | | | | | |
| LinkedIn | | | | | | |
| Google+ | | | | | | |
| YouTube | | | | | | |
| Instagram | | | | | | |
| WhatsApp | | | | | | |
| FB Messenger | | | | | | |

15. What are the purpose(s) for the use of different social media alternatives?

| | Face book | Twitter | Linkd In | Google + | You Tube | Insta gram | Whats App | FB Messenger |
|---------------------------------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|----------|------------|-----------|--------------|
| Entertainment | | | | | | | | |
| Keeping Track of Friends | | | | | | | | |
| Updates about our life | | | | | | | | |
| Information Search | | | | | | | | |
| News and Debates | | | | | | | | |
| Professional Networking | | | | | | | | |
| Job Search | | | | | | | | |

16. How many friends do you have in the following Social Media?

| | Below 100 | 100 – 200 | 200 – 300 | 300 – 400 | 400 – 500 | Above 500 |
|--------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Facebook | | | | | | |
| Twitter | | | | | | |
| LinkedIn | | | | | | |
| Google+ | | | | | | |
| YouTube | | | | | | |
| Instagram | | | | | | |
| WhatsApp | | | | | | |
| FB Messenger | | | | | | |

Publications and Presentations

Publications

- Ahmad, M. F. and Kumar, D. V. S. (2017). “Social Media Research – A Literature Review”, Management Conclave on Business, Innovation and Sustainability, Proceedings of MCBIS, School of Management, National Institute of Technology, NIT Rourkela. ISBN: 978-93-5268-051-1.
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Presentations

- Social Media Research - A Literature Review at National Management Conclave on Business, Innovation and Sustainability conducted by School of Management, National Institute of Technology (NIT) on 7th and 8th January 2017, NIT Rourkela.
- Marketing through Social Media – A Paradigm Shift in Emerging Marketing Practices in National Conference on Marketing in the Digital Era – Strategic issues and Challenges on 11th and 12th March 2016 at Pendenkati Institute of Management, Hyderabad.

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- Usage of Social Media in Healthcare Communication at National Conference on Emerging trends in Healthcare and Hospital Management on 29th October 2013 organized by School of Management Studies, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad.

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