

A Study on Impact of Social Media Communication on Purchasing Behaviour of Consumers Towards Pharmaceutical Products in Chennai

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Abstract:

Currently, social media is an efficient marketing mechanism for pharmaceutical companies to communicate their messages in an appropriate ways in which they are capable to give superior care through effective monitoring and diagnosis. Consumers are gathering and analyzing information available in social media critically and communication in social media is playing a significant role in purchasing of pharmaceutical products among consumers. The results explicate that significant difference is there between social media communications on pharmaceutical products and demographics of consumers. Full details on use of pharmaceutical products, trustable information on pharmaceutical products, experience of others on pharmaceutical products, information on availability of pharmaceutical products, location of pharmaceutical shops, user generated contents on pharmaceutical products and review of pharmaceutical products have positive impact on purchasing behaviour of consumers towards pharmaceutical products. To enhance purchasing behaviour of consumers towards pharmaceutical products, social media should display picture of pharmaceutical products clearly and it must provide full details on use of pharmaceutical products, Further, social media should give effectiveness of pharmaceutical products.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Social media is a stylish system of online instruments that make a shift in the mean consumers generate, share and utilize contents, and also change firms from broadcast machinery to a many-many model, transforming connections among engaged parties. Over the past three decades, social media are witnessing incredible growth and credit and are transformed with technology as a part of conventional culture, society and business activities and social media is an enveloping and major portion of how consumers communicate, stay in online, remain

on top of modern developments and attach across the world (Habibi et al 2014b).

The concept of social media distinguishes various key features which have predictable effect on the digital marketing and its practices in common. Social media is an important constituent of the Web 2.0 is noted as a gathering of interactive, open source and user generated online applications enlarging knowledge, experiences and market command of users as actors in social and business activities (Constantinides and Fountain, 2008).

Social media are open and transparent platforms through which consumers participate,

generate, discuss, elaborate and evaluate product and service ideas, suggesting solutions, sharing personal experiences and testing modern features of services and products in electronic making environment (Fuller et al 2009). Hence, social media is a very important element of the entire digital marketing atmosphere affecting online brand image and giving a main source for innovation and modification of products.

Presently, consumers are highly informative and involved in searching various aspects of services and products thorough online platforms before making decision. Thus, marketing through social media has a vital role in giving information to consumers and making their preferences and alternatives of purchase. Currently, social media is an efficient marketing mechanism for pharmaceutical companies to communicate their messages in an appropriate ways in which they are capable to give superior care through effective monitoring and diagnosis. Consumers are gathering and analyzing information available in social media critically (Gupta and Udupa, 2011) and communication in social media is playing a significant role in purchasing of pharmaceutical products among consumers (Agrawal and Kaur, 2015). Thus, it is necessary to study impact of social media communication on purchasing behaviour of consumers towards pharmaceutical products.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Mangold and Faulds (2009) found that reviews, messages and user generated contents and pictures were influencing purchasing of consumers in social media platforms.

Miller and Lammas (2010) concluded that user generated information, comments, experience and messages were significantly affecting purchasing behaviour of consumers.

Kietzmann et al (2011) revealed that comment, messages, images, videos and

information sharing in social media were influencing purchasing of consumers significantly.

Rose et al (2012) indicated that contents, messages, comments, information and experiences of others in social media were significantly affecting purchasing of consumers.

Hajli (2013) stated that usefulness, social support and trust were significantly and positively influencing purchasing intention among consumers in social media platforms.

Ioanas and Stoica (2014) showed that messages, information from others, reviews and experiences of other consumers in social media were significantly influencing purchasing behaviour of consumers.

Harshini (2015) found that informative, interactive, entertainment and creditability were specific attributes of social media and they were significantly influencing purchasing intention of consumers.

Suki and Suki (2016) concluded that messages, discussions, contents and advertisements in social media platforms were significantly affecting purchase of consumers.

Toor et al (2017) revealed that communication through social networking was significantly and positively related with purchasing intention among consumers. Engagement of consumers had mediating effect between social networking and their purchasing intentions.

Voramontri and Klieb (2018) indicated that information, content, message and postings in social media were significantly influencing purchasing behaviour of consumers.

Poturak and Softic (2019) stated messages, user generated information, reviews and rating of products in social media were affecting purchase intention of consumers significantly.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

i) To study social media communications on pharmaceutical products.

- ii) To find difference in social media communications on pharmaceutical products between demographics of consumers.
- iii) To evaluate impact of social media communication on purchasing behaviour of consumers towards pharmaceutical products.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The existing research is carried out in Chennai. Convenience sampling method is used to choose consumers and data are gathered from 320 consumers through questionnaire. Demographics of consumers are examined through percentage analysis and social media communications on pharmaceutical products are studied by using mean and standard deviation. ANOVA and t-tests are applied to find difference in social media communications on pharmaceutical products between demographics of consumers. The impact of social media communication on purchasing behaviour of consumers towards pharmaceutical products is evaluated through regression analysis.

5. RESULTS

5.1 DEMOGRAPHICS OF CONSUMERS

The demographics of consumers are depicted in Table-1. The result illustrates that male is dominant respondents (62.19 per cent) and most of them are in age of 31 – 40 years (35.94 per cent). The result clarifies that highest portion of them are educated up to under graduation (32.50 per cent) and maximum proportion of them get monthly income of Rs.30,001 – Rs.40,000 (33.12 per cent). The results disclose that largest proportion of them have married (79.06 per cent) and majority of them own nuclear family (69.06 per cent).

Table-1. Demographics of Consumers

Demographics	Number	%
Gender		
Male	199	62.19
Female	121	37.81
Age		

21 – 30 Years	50	15.62
31 – 40 Years	115	35.94
41 – 50 Years	100	31.25
51 – 60 Years	55	17.19
Education		
Higher Secondary	52	16.25
Diploma	69	21.56
Under Graduation	104	32.50
Post Graduation	95	29.69
Monthly Income		
Below Rs.20,000	49	15.31
Rs.20,001 – Rs.30,000	86	26.88
Rs.30,001 – Rs.40,000	106	33.12
Rs.40,001 – Rs.50,000	47	14.69
Above Rs.50,000	32	10.00
Marital Status		
Married	253	79.06
Unmarried	67	20.94
Type of Family		
Joint	99	30.94
Nuclear	221	69.06

5.2. SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS ON PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS

The social media communications on pharmaceutical products is depicted in Table-2.

Table-2. Social Media Communications on Pharmaceutical Products

Communications	Mean	Standard Deviation
Information on Availability of Pharmaceutical Products	3.94	0.79

Picture of Pharmaceutical Products	3.36	1.01
Review of Pharmaceutical Products	3.90	0.86
User Generated Contents on Pharmaceutical Products	3.95	0.77
Experience of Others on Pharmaceutical Products	3.86	0.93
Full Details on Use of Pharmaceutical Products	3.34	1.04
Trustable Information on Pharmaceutical Products	3.82	0.97
Location of Pharmaceutical Shops	3.88	0.89
Effectiveness of Pharmaceutical Products	3.31	1.08
Different Brands of Pharmaceutical Products	3.92	0.82

The consumers are agreed with social media give information on availability of pharmaceutical products, review of pharmaceutical products, user generated contents on pharmaceutical products, experience of others on pharmaceutical products, trustable information on pharmaceutical products, location of pharmaceutical shops and different brands of pharmaceutical products, while, they are unsure with picture of pharmaceutical products, full details on use of pharmaceutical products and effectiveness of pharmaceutical products.

5.3. SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS ON PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS AND DEMOGRAPHICS OF CONSUMERS

The connection between social media communications on pharmaceutical products and demographics of consumers is depicted as below.

5.3.1. Gender and Social Media Communications on Pharmaceutical Products

The connection between gender of consumers and social media communications on pharmaceutical products is depicted in Table-3.

Table-3. Gender and Social Media Communications on Pharmaceutical Products

Sl. No.	Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-Value	Sig.
1.	Male	199	39.30	5.58	4.025**	.000
2.	Female	121	37.28	5.66		

** Significant in 1 % level

Mean value of social media communications on pharmaceutical products for male and female consumers are 39.30 and 37.28 correspondingly and it clarifies social media communications on pharmaceutical products is higher for male than female consumers.

The t-value is 4.025 and it discloses significant difference is there between social media communications on pharmaceutical products and gender of consumers.

5.3.2. Age and Social Media Communications on Pharmaceutical Products

The connection between age of consumers and social media communications on pharmaceutical products is depicted in Table-4.

Table-4. Age and Social Media Communications on Pharmaceutical Products

Sl. No.	Age	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F-Value	Sig.
1.	21 – 30 Years	50	39.14	5.28	4.597*	.000
2.	31 – 40 Year	115	38.31	5.56		

	s					
3.	41 – 50 Year s	10 0	37.4 3	6.13		
4.	51 – 60 Year s	55	36.1 6	4.54		

** Significant in 1 % level

Mean value of social media communications on pharmaceutical products for consumers in 21 – 30 years, 31 – 40 years, 41 – 50 years and 51 – 60 years of age are 39.14, 38.31, 37.43 and 36.16 correspondingly and it clarifies social media communications on pharmaceutical products is higher for consumers in 21 – 30 years of age than others.

The F-value is 4.597 and it discloses significant difference is there between social media communications on pharmaceutical products and age of consumers.

5.3.3. Education and Social Media Communications on Pharmaceutical Products

The connection between education of consumers and social media communications on pharmaceutical products is depicted in Table-5.

Table-5. Education and Social Media Communications on Pharmaceutical Products

Sl. No .	Education	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F-Value	Sig .
1.	Higher Secondary	52	37.12	5.60	4.771**	.000
2.	Diploma	69	36.80	6.08		
3.	Under Graduation	104	38.26	5.90		
4.	Post Graduation	95	39.13	4.44		

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** Significant in 1 % level

Mean value of social media communications on pharmaceutical products for consumers possessing higher secondary, diploma, under graduation and post graduation are 37.12, 36.80, 38.26 and 39.13 correspondingly and it clarifies social media communications on pharmaceutical products is higher for consumers possessing post graduation than others.

The F-value is 4.771 and it discloses significant difference is there between social media communications on pharmaceutical products and education of consumers.

5.3.4. Monthly Income and Social Media Communications on Pharmaceutical Products

The connection between monthly income of consumers and social media communications on pharmaceutical products is depicted in Table-6.

Table-6. Monthly Income and Social Media Communications on Pharmaceutical Products

Sl. No .	Monthly Income	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F-Value	Sig.
1.	Below Rs.20,000	49	36.39	5.99	4.932*	.000
2.	Rs.20,001 – Rs.30,000	86	36.48	5.19		
3.	Rs.30,001 – Rs.40,000	106	36.15	6.02		
4.	Rs.40,001 – Rs.50,000	47	40.56	5.49		
5.	Above Rs.50,000	32	38.31	5.26		

** Significant in 1 % level

Mean value of social media communications on pharmaceutical products for consumers obtaining income of below Rs.20,000, Rs.20,001 – Rs.30,000, Rs.30,001 – Rs.40,000, Rs.40,001 – Rs.50,000 and above Rs.50,000 monthly are 36.39, 36.48, 36.15, 40.56 and 38.31 correspondingly and it clarifies social media communications on pharmaceutical products is higher for consumers obtaining income of Rs.40,001 – Rs.50,000 than others.

The F-value is 4.932 and it discloses significant difference is there between social media communications on pharmaceutical products and monthly income of consumers.

5.3.5. Marital Status and Social Media Communications on Pharmaceutical Products

The connection between marital status of consumers and social media communications on pharmaceutical products is depicted in Table-7.

Table-7. Marital Status and Social Media Communications on Pharmaceutical Products

Sl. No.	Marital Status	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-Value	Sig.
1.	Married	253	36.76	5.76	4.862**	.000
2.	Unmarried	67	39.43	5.59		

** Significant in 1 % level

Mean value of social media communications on pharmaceutical products for married and unmarried consumers are 36.76 and 39.43 correspondingly and it clarifies social media communications on pharmaceutical products is higher for unmarried than married consumers.

The t-value is 4.862 and it discloses significant difference is there between social media communications on pharmaceutical products and marital status of consumers.

5.3.6. Type of Family and Social Media Communications on Pharmaceutical Products

The connection between type of family of consumers and social media communications on pharmaceutical products is depicted in Table-8.

Table-8. Type of Family and Social Media Communications on Pharmaceutical Products

Sl. No.	Type of Family	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-Value	Sig.
1.	Joint	99	36.45	5.44	5.078**	.000
2.	Nuclear	221	39.66	4.67		

** Significant in 1 % level

Mean value of social media communications on pharmaceutical products for consumers having joint and nuclear families is 36.45 and 39.66 correspondingly and it clarifies social media communications on pharmaceutical products is higher for consumers having nuclear than joint family.

The t-value is 5.078 and it discloses significant difference is there between social media communications on pharmaceutical products and type of family of consumers.

5.4. IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATION ON PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR OF CONSUMERS TOWARDS PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS

Regression analysis is employed to evaluate impact of social media communication on purchasing behaviour of consumers towards pharmaceutical products and result is depicted in Table-9. R^2 is 0.72 and adjusted R^2 is 0.70 as they reveal the regression model is in good fit. F-value is 57.282 showing the model is in significant.

Table-9. Impact of Social Media Communication on Purchasing Behaviour of Consumers towards Pharmaceutical Products

Social Media Communications	Regression Co-efficients	t-Value	Sig.
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Intercept	2.547**	6.908	.000
Information on Availability of Pharmaceutical Products (X ₁)	.345**	3.299	.001
Picture of Pharmaceutical Products (X ₂)	.017	.233	.816
Review of Pharmaceutical Products (X ₃)	.123**	2.750	.006
User Generated Contents on Pharmaceutical Products (X ₄)	.129**	2.562	.011
Experience of Others on Pharmaceutical Products (X ₅)	.380**	3.273	.001
Full Details on Use of Pharmaceutical Products (X ₆)	.598**	4.329	.000
Trustable Information on Pharmaceutical Products (X ₇)	.408**	3.559	.000
Location of Pharmaceutical Shops (X ₈)	.244**	3.353	.001
Effectiveness of Pharmaceutical Products (X ₉)	.023	.646	.519
Different Brands of Pharmaceutical Products (X ₁₀)	.044	1.333	.183
R ²	0.72	-	-
Adjusted R ²	0.70	-	-
F	57.282**	-	.000

** Significant in 1 % level

The results explicate that full details on use of pharmaceutical products, trustable information on pharmaceutical products, experience of others on pharmaceutical products,

information on availability of pharmaceutical products, location of pharmaceutical shops, user generated contents on pharmaceutical products and review of pharmaceutical products have positive impact on purchasing behaviour of consumers towards pharmaceutical products.

6. CONCLUSION

The above analysis demonstrates that significant difference is there between social media communications on pharmaceutical products and demographics of consumers. Full details on use of pharmaceutical products, trustable information on pharmaceutical products, experience of others on pharmaceutical products, information on availability of pharmaceutical products, location of pharmaceutical shops, user generated contents on pharmaceutical products and review of pharmaceutical products have positive impact on purchasing behaviour of consumers towards pharmaceutical products. To enhance purchasing behaviour of consumers towards pharmaceutical products, social media should display picture of pharmaceutical products clearly and it must provide full details on use of pharmaceutical products, Further, social media should give effectiveness of pharmaceutical products.

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