

Chapter 70

Analyzing the Impact of Social Network Sites and Social Applications on Buying Attitude in Developing Nations: Consumers' Engagement Using Flourishing Digital Platforms

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates the relationships among social network sites (SNSs) and social apps (SAPs) on consumers' online purchase attitude (OPA) with moderating effect of gender (GND). Structural equation modeling using SPSS and supporting tools was employed to represent the correlations among adopted constructs. To this end, the questionnaires were distributed to online shoppers from September 2017 and November 2017. The findings revealed the positive relationships of SNSs, i.e., Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, and Pinterest on consumers' OPA. Second, it is found that SAPs, i.e., Whatsapp, Facebook messenger, Wechat, Instagram, and Snapchat have positive relationships on consumers' OPA. In addition, it is found that GND did not moderate the relationships among SNSs, SAPs, and consumers' OPA. This study furnishes insights how strategic managers can utilize such social media tools in marketing communications to empower consumers' OPA in today's era. Aside, study provides future studies for academicians and professionals.

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INTRODUCTION

The flourishing networks of information communication have transformed the ways of interaction for the organizations and customers due to the widespread acceptability and usability of an Internet. Internet has become a prime element for entire business activities where experts have examined the significance of the Internet in information systems (IS) and information communication technologies (ICT) related studies in unlike contexts, dimensions, and business operations (e.g., Venkatesh & Davis, 2000; Waheed & Jianhua, 2018; Venkatesh, Morris, Davis, & Davis, 2003; Tiago & Verassimo, 2014; Mathews, Bianchi, Perks, Healy, & Wickramasekera, 2016; Constantinides, 2004; Waheed & Yang, 2017). Besides, the individuals are also motivated to adopt Internet-based social platforms to exchange information, ideas, cultural values, and entertainment using SNSs and SAPs in the present digital era (Venkatesh & Bala, 2008; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000; Tiago & Verassimo, 2014; Hwang & Park, 2013). It is one of the prominent changes in individuals' interaction because social networks have shifted habitats and behaviour of the consumers (Tiago & Verassimo, 2014).

The acceptability of advanced communication networks allows several benefits to advertising companies such as provides quick and reliable information within minimum cost (Bayo-Moriones & Lera-Lopez, 2007; De Vries, Gensler, & Leeflang, 2012). Besides, consumers' behaviour has changed where they often prefer to acquire product information using disparate online platforms (El-Gohary, 2012; Tiago & Verassimo, 2014; Ozok & Wei, 2010). It is reported that 51% of the worlds' population is an Internet user and such numbers are rapidly increasing (InternetWorldStats, 2017). It is reported that nearly 55% of the worlds' population lives in the Asia region and 49% of Asians are Internet users (Maddox & Gong, 2005; InternetWorldStats, 2017).

In marketing perspective, such hip produces new opportunities for marketers to motivate the buying intention of such a huge consumer market using SNSs and SAPs (Tiago & Verassimo, 2014). Several SNSs and SAPs are operational though few got more popularity among Internet users, e.g., Facebook (FB), LinkedIn (LD), Twitter (TW), Youtube (YT), and Pinterest (PT) (Levy & Birkner, 2011; Michaelidou, Siamagka, & Christodoulides, 2011; Howard, Mangold, & Johnston, 2014). According to the report, worldwide FB users are 79.6%, LD .21%, TW 5.8%, YT 1.9, PT 9.1% (GlobalStatCounter, 2017). Likewise, several users are using SAPs on their m-devices, but some SAPs are highly acceptable, e.g., Whatsapp, Wechat, Facebook Messenger, Instagram, and Snapchat. It is noted that worldwide the users of the Facebook messenger (FBM) are 102.2 billion, Instagram (IG) 76 billion, Snapchat (SC) 51 billion, Whatsapp (WA) 17.4 billion, and Wechat users are 1 billion (Statista, 2017c). Wechat is one of more progressive Chinese mobile apps which are attaining the widespread attention of the individuals started its operation in 2011 (Statista, 2017b). Wechat is a multifunctional app such as social, business, and commerce (Lien and Cao, 2014; Statista, 2017b).

Such an extensive usage of SNSs and SAPs furnishes a new paradigm for marketers in gaining the massive attention of the individuals across the nations, including developing country such as Bangladesh. Bangladesh is a country of Bangal which is official recognized the People's Republic of Bangladesh with approximately 166 million of the population (World Meters, 2017). The trend to shop a product is moving from conventional to online buying. Most of the Internet users prefer to buy a product online due to ease of usefulness, availability of product variety, and ease of communications (Van der Heijden, Verhagen, & Creemers, 2003; Wong et al., 2014). Nevertheless, several security risks are associated with online shopping, still 1.6 billion consumers desire to purchase a product online across the world (Miyazaki & Fernandez, 2001; Koong et al., 2008; Gefen et al., 2003). Such an attitude represents

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