

## **Consumer Beliefs towards Social Media Marketing**

Brindha. N and R. Parameswaran\*

**Abstract:** *Social media is an important tool to connect other people or organisation. The social media environment is very easy way to reach the customers. The purpose of the study is to identify the difference in belief towards social media marketing more specifically about social media advertising. It was analysed from the perspectives of age, gender, education and income status of consumers in Coimbatore city. Now-a-days, for the marketers it is the best way to market their products to the consumers at their door step. Future forecast will be easy to the marketers through social media advertising. This research provides practical insights to social media advertisers to approach the consumers.*

**Keyword:** Social media, Beliefs.

### **Introduction**

Social media advertising has become a focal point in recent years in the field of marketing. Social media is an important tool to connect other people or organization. People use social media to share their experiences, reviews, information, tips etc., with their friends. This social media environment is very easy way to reach the customer. People believe in what their friends recommend. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as, “ 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. Social media includes difference of applications such as business networking, Social networking, Micro blogging, Music sharing, Video sharing, scheduling and meeting tools (Nicholas & Rowland, 2011; Mangold and faults 2009).

Social media is related with various indicators fix within the advertisement that helps to assess their benefits. These signals include like comments (Boulaire et al, 2010), clicks (Richardson et al, 2007; Regelson & Fain, 2006) etc. Numerous studies have recognised the value of beliefs such as important predecessor to consumer attitude both in offline (Pollay and Mittal, 1993, Andrew, 1989) and online (Wang et al, 2009; Wolein et al, 2002, Ducoffe, 1996) environments. In US and Western countries many studies have been conducted but only a few studies have been carried out in Asian Countries.

Different people follow different beliefs, values etc. The particulars concept of advertising cannot be carried out in other countries because of different culture. The way the Asian consumers understand the advertisement is different from the US Consumers. According to Nielsen (2012) report, Asian Consumers are influenced by social media advertisements to a greater potential than their Western counterparts. According to recent reports conducted by IMAI

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\* Ph.D. Research Scholar and Associate Professor, respectively, Department of Commerce T.S.A.A.S.T College, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

**Corresponding Author:** Brindha. N can be contacted at: [brindha.venkat@yahoo.in](mailto:brindha.venkat@yahoo.in)  
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2015, India has currently has 243 million Internet users in India out of which 80% users are actively engage in social media websites.

### Beliefs about Social Media Advertising

Beliefs play an important role in consumer deciding attitude (Ducoffe, 1996; Wolin et al, 2002; Wang and Sun, 2010, Wang et al, 2009). According to Business dictionary belief is “the assumptions and convictions that are held to be true by an individual or a group, regarding contents, events, people and things. Kotler & Keller (2006) defines beliefs as “Descriptive thought that a person holds about something.” Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975 describe belief as “an association of object with some attribute.” Basically, two belief factors Social and Economic factors which was introduced by Bauer at all (1968) in a broad perspective in their study on social media. Later Pollay & Mittal (1993) extended seven factors, product information, social image, economy, materialism, falsity and corruption for their study on social media advertisement. Belief in general has strong dimension on Consumer characteristics (Andrews, 1989).

### Research Question

Today Social media advertisements have got an increasing growth rate. It provides a global platform for the marketers throughout the world. In India it is an emerging trend. After the inception of various service providers, the social media reaches the consumers destination in their leisure time as per their convenience. But in our country the marketers who are following traditional methods are not keen in following the new trend.

The marketing strategy can become a revolutionary concept if these marketers are ready to accept the evolution trend. Social media is not pushing the advertisement like traditional media. Social media is a promising platform for the new innovative products because most social media users are well educated consumers. For new entrepreneur it provides an economical start up. Since it is the new trend, the success depends on the beliefs of the consumers towards social media advertising. But it is not fully realised in India. On this background the present study “Consumer Beliefs towards Social Media Advertising” has been undertaken. For the study the following aspects of belief statements are considered.

**Table 1: Belief Factors**

Sl. No	BELIEF FACTORS	SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	Social media advertising is entertaining					
2	Social media advertising is pleasing					
3	Social media advertising is interesting					
4	Social media advertising is enjoyable					
5	Social media advertising is fun to use					
6	Social media advertising is exciting					
7	Social media advertising are stimulating					
8	Social media advertising is delightful					
9	Social media advertising promotes undesirable values in our society					
10	Social media advertising distorts the value of youth					
11	There is too much vulgarity in social media advertising					
12	Some products/services promoted in social media advertising are bad for society					

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13	Social media advertising isolates children from their parents					
14	Social media advertisement make me buy things that i don't really need					
15	Social media advertising sometimes make people live in a world of fantasy					
16	Social media advertising tells me which brand have the features i am looking for					
17	Social media advertising helps me to keep up to date about products/services available in the market placed					
18	Social media advertising is a convenient source of product information					
19	I can collect useful information about a product through social media advertisement					
20	Social media provide a great platform in order to exchange information with my friends regarding products					
21	I agree that information regarding products and services have a higher credibility on social media					
22	Social media advertising has positive effects on the economy					
23	Social media advertising raises our standard of living					
24	Social media advertising results in better products for the public					
25	Social media advertisement supports the employment opportunities in the economy					
26	It supports entrepreneurs in the economy					
27	It widens the market for domestic product					

### Objectives of the Study

In this regard, the following objectives are finalized:

1. To find the relationship between Age and Beliefs towards social media advertising
2. To find the relationship between Gender and Belief towards social media advertising
3. To find the relationship between Educational qualification and Belief towards social media advertising
4. To find the relationship between Income and Belief towards social media advertising

### Methodology

For belief towards social media, the beliefs of the consumers on the Facebook advertisement were taken in to account. Because Facebook is the popular social media in Coimbatore, in which majority of the consumers are actively participating. To collect the data on social media advertising a suitable questionnaire was constructed and tested before administering. For the study, the data was collected from 800 respondents who have experience in social media-Facebook. The consumers were chosen from Coimbatore city. Pearson Chi-square was used to find the relationship between consumer demographics and beliefs towards social media advertising.

The belief of the consumers is tested from the age, gender education, and income perspectives.

**Table 2: Sample Profile**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>AGE</b>		
18-24	401	50.1
26-35	194	24.3
36-50	145	18.1
Above 50	60	7.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>GENDER</b>		
Male	468	58.5
Female	332	41.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>EDUCATION</b>		
Upto school level	111	13.9
Degree/diploma	240	30.0
Post graduate	227	28.4
Professional	222	27.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
Upto Rs.10000	300	37.5
Rs.10001 – Rs.25000	257	32.1
Rs.25001- Rs.50000	167	20.9
Above Rs.50000	76	9.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>100.00</b>

## Results and Discussion

### Age and Beliefs towards Social Media Advertising

Social media usage often varies with consumer age. As age varies the exposure and the knowledge towards the product or object will also differ. The young age people use the social media advertisement for entertainment purpose, as the age gradually increases the purpose of using social media advertisement also become matured and it provides information to the user. Therefore the consumer can get information about the product and the usage knowledge of the products from the other users of social media. This creates belief towards the product. So the marketers have found age to be a particularly useful demographic variable for market segmentation. Many marketers have carved themselves a niche in the market place by concentrating on a specific age segment.

Hence, in this study, the relationship between age and belief towards social media advertising was examined.

**Null Hypothesis (H01):** There is no relationship between age and beliefs towards social media advertising.

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**Table 3: Age and Belief towards social media advertising**  
**Chi-square test**

	Value	Df	Asymp.
Pearson Chi-square	14.037 <sup>a</sup>	6	.029
Likelihood Ratio	17.902	6	.006
Linear-by-Linear Association	12.420	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	800		

a.2 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum Expected count is 3.15

Since p value is less than 0.05, we can conclude that there is relationship between age and beliefs towards social media advertising.

### **Gender and Belief towards Social Media Advertising**

In this competitive era marketer must be fully aware about the customer needs distinctly and separately as two groups males and females as regards what are they expecting, how they differ in their buying behavior, factors push them to purchase in a particular platform like Facebook etc to attain a competitive edge. This information can help the companies to formulate the strategies as per customer needs and deliver them the products which consumer wants from the company which will be a profitable for the company embedding gender perspective. Retailers and marketers should understand the immense diversity among consumers if they are to advertise in the social media like face book.

Hence, in this study, the relationship between gender and belief towards social media advertising was examined. The results of the study are given below:

**Null Hypothesis (H02):** There is no relationship between Gender and Belief towards social media advertising.

**Table 4: Chi-square Test**

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig.(2-sided)
Pearson Chi-square	1.336 <sup>a</sup>	2	.505
Likelihood Ratio	1.348	2	.510
Linear-by-Linear Association	.045	1	.831
N of Valid Cases	800		

A.0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected Count is 17.43.

Since p value is more than 0.05, we can conclude that there is no relationship between gender and beliefs towards social media advertising.

### **Educational Qualification and Belief towards Social Media Advertising**

Consumer beliefs and attitudes may change during the learning process. Since, education is directly involved in learning, it is possible that they may change their beliefs and attitudes towards the products or objects or even concepts. Hence, in the present study an attempt was made in this regard and the results of the analysis are given below.

**Null Hypothesis (H03):** There is no relationship between Educational qualification and Belief towards social media advertising.

**Table 5: Chi-square Test**

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig.(2-sided)
Pearson Chi-square	36.216 <sup>a</sup>	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	32.720	6	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	16.461	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	800		

A.0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected Count is 5.8

Since p value is less than 0.05, we can conclude that there is relationship between educational qualification and beliefs towards social media advertising.

**Income and Beliefs towards Social Media Advertising:**

Income has long been an important variable for distinguishing between market segments. Marketers commonly segment markets on the basis of income they feel that it is a strong indicator of the ability (or inability) to pay for a product or a specific model of the product. Income is often combined with other demographic variables to more accurately define the target markets. It is expected that the consumers’ beliefs and attitude change with income level.

**Null Hypothesis (H04):** There is no relationship between income and belief towards social media advertising.

**Table 6: Chi-square Test**

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig.(2-sided)
Pearson Chi-square	27.793 <sup>a</sup>	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	28.712	6	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.986	1	.046
N of Valid Cases	800		

A.1 cells (8.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum Expected count is 3.99

Since p value is less than 0.05, we can conclude that there is relationship between Income and beliefs towards social media advertising.

**Conclusion**

In the recent years Social media has shown enormous growth. The advertisements published in these sites have attracted all the users of social media. Now-a-days for marketers it is the best way to promote their products to their consumers at their place. The study gives opportunities of insights on Indian consumers’ beliefs towards social media advertisements. These insights are useful to both marketers and academic research. The Marketers has to develop their future strategies taking beliefs as guidance. It will help the marketers to understand better about the beliefs consumers towards the advertisements placed in social media platform. This valid

information will help the marketers to market their products and services more efficiently and effectively. In this platform, the consumers are given wide information regarding the latest innovative products of the marketers. And today's marketers concentrating on social media is inevitable.

### Authors' Note

This manuscript is the authors' original work, has not been published and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

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