

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: A STUDY AMONGST WORKING ADULTS IN MALAYSIA

Harianantha Rao Nagaraj

Taylor's University

Email: anantharao80@gmail.com

Kanesh Gopal

Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology

Email: kanesh@tarc.edu.my

Abstract

This study provides vital information on the impact of social media marketing on customer satisfaction focusing on working adults in Malaysia. The three independent variables that have a direct impact on the dependent variable, customer satisfaction, are authentic information, captivating content and responsiveness of marketing tactics. The problem statement reveals the overall issue that shows a need for further study. Working adults are chosen as the respondents for this study as they are known to be actively engaged on social media, as social media is mostly utilized in the workplace and even at home. The research questions drafted in this study have a significant result and are shown to be in coherence with the objectives. The research had a sample size of 119 working adults, and convenience sampling was utilized. The instrument used to measure the construct was a Likert scale questionnaire, with a total of four sections, encompassing the demography of respondents, the independent variables, as well as the dependent variable. The result showed a good relationship between each of the independent variables with the consumer satisfaction of working adults, by using statistical analysis such as the Pearson Correlation analysis and ANOVA. The research concluded the notion that further study may be conducted on the area of interest, as it is seen to have a significant relationship with working adults.

Keywords: *Social Media Marketing, Customer Satisfaction, Customer Buying Behaviour, Working Adults in Malaysia*

1.0 Introduction

In this contemporary world, social media platforms play an integral role in many individuals' day-to-day life. Initially, social media served as a medium of communication between users but as technology continues to develop further, it is also used as a marketing platform for businesses to advance market acquisition. Almost 4.57 billion people around the globe use social media platforms and of those users, 346 million new users have come online within the last 12 months (Hruska & Maresova, 2020). These social media platforms comprise of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Snapchat. The main objective of many companies is customer satisfaction, and strategies are being developed in a progressive matter to improve customer satisfaction. The increase in social media platform traffic has captured the interest of businesses to utilize it as a medium of marketing. As a customer, the main objective is satisfaction and value for money from specific goods or services.

Organizations are using these platforms to strengthen the relationship between customers and businesses, as well as making sure the customers are satisfied (Hanaysha, 2017). Working adults these days are more active on social media platforms as purchasing and gathering relevant information regarding a product or service is hassle-free compared to traditional methods (Lenhart et al., 2010). Older working adults, such as the ones that are above 45 years old have become more tech-savvy because the growth of technology has been exponential and there is no other choice than adapting to the changes and becoming a part of it rather than being left behind. These working adults are more focused on their careers and have no time to purchase or even obtain information regarding products or services face-to-face. Hence, social media has become a go-to platform to carry out such trivial tasks.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Authentic Information

In this digital age, customers are well aware of the marketing strategies of businesses and able to assess whether it is a content that focuses on the brand or the consumers. According to Piękna-Malachowska (2017), 57% of consumers collectively agree that less than half of the content created that focuses on brand are lacking authentic information. In the journal of Social Media Marketing by Alves et al. (2016), the author claimed that 86% of consumers remarked authenticity of information on social media sites, which is agreed to be persuasive, is an important factor when determining the products or services the consumers like and support. Social media marketing strategies are all about establishing trust that will directly lead to future sales from customers and information authenticity is the prime driver of building that trust (Ashley & Tuten, 2014). By practising an authentic approach in social media marketing, companies not only reinforce legitimacy but also display brands' eccentric voice and personality.

On the contrary, authors Beverland et al. (2008) asserted that although online marketing has a greater potential in reaching out to the targeted consumers, a product's authenticity can only be judged accurately through its verifiable information, such as labels of origin, product content and proven certificates, whereby marketers fail to provide this vital information on social media marketing. Such efforts are presumed to be time-consuming and extra cost of advertising, but little did the marketers know that only proof of evidence will enforce the trust of a customer for a product

(Napoli et al., 2014). As the digital landscape advances at a rapid pace, sustaining uniformity in social media marketing is paramount due to the difficulty and time consumption of enhancing every aspect of a company's presence. Focusing on likes and shares through a post on social media only leads to customers being irritated with the approach because, from a customer's point of view, these marketing tactics are considered rigorous and forced upon (Chwialkowska, 2018).

H1: Authentic information from social media marketing has a positive relationship with working adults' satisfaction.

2.2 Captivating Content

In the report of Järvinen and Taiminen (2016), the authors clarify that among many marketing tactics that are available in this digital advanced era, content marketing has been proven to resonate resounding success of a product, service or even a company. By far known as the most effective method of improving audience engagement, increasing brand awareness, and escalating consumer satisfaction, content marketing is a vital growth method for encapsulating business growth as well as attaining consumers' interest (Christodoulides et al., 2019).

Customers have limitless expectations over the advertising and marketing strategies of businesses and seek in obtaining answers pertaining to questions raised on products or brands. Content marketing does not only build trust with the audience but also improves conversions of those trust into sales as in today's age, customers expect captivating and consistent content from preferred brands (Pikuła-Małachowska, 2017). With the immense potential of social media platforms, creativity in content marketing has to be used effectively as youths and even adults are active on social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook, to break through the competitive noise, and build a strong business relationships with customers (Balan, 2017). Social media users are active on such platforms to entertain themselves with exciting content such as memes, videos or even pictures. Customers are easily bored with similar content every time a company comes up with an advertisement on social media platforms. According to Wu (2016), most marketers are on social media platforms just for the sake of being on it, not taking into consideration what the customers prefer to see or listen to on the marketing content.

In accordance with that, Lee et al. (2017) convince that the human brain perceives visual cues better than any other medium of communication, thus consumers are more elated towards content with a video or fun imagery than mere wordings, and marketers should focus on creating contents that adhere to the said specifications. Colours and designs that are eye-catching tend to convert social media users into potential customers (Juntunen et al., 2020). Poor captivating content will lead customers to ignore the brand permanently, even if better content is projected in future.

H2: Captivating content of social media marketing shows a positive relationship with the satisfaction of working adults.

2.3 Responsiveness of Marketing Tactics

Being in the peak of the digital age, businesses have handpicked social media platforms as a medium of marketing but having a great page with gratifying graphics and adequate content does not always mean the marketing tactics have succeeded in acquiring target audiences' responsiveness (Akyol, 2013). This is due to the lack of consistency among marketers in their marketing effort (Bernhardt et al., 2012). Responsiveness of brands towards their consumers is an important factor to escalate consumer satisfaction and bonding with the brand. Responsiveness is referred to the degree to what is being done by a business through social media marketing to collect feedback, and how customers perceive those marketing tactics. Authors Shahzad et al. (2019) studied that 72% of Millennials on social media platforms portrayed loyalty and satisfaction towards brands due to the speed of response they receive on feedback given regarding a brand's adverts and marketing tactics.

Sony's PlayStation has considered the responsiveness of customers on new game trailers, streaming events and gaming footage elated as feedback given by customers through the comment section on social media platforms such as Twitter, encouraged the company to make amends to the games as preferred by customers (Kim & Chandler, 2018). In the research conducted by Sheng (2019), the author claimed, although most businesses are present on social media, only the ones that are responsive towards the feedback given by consumers have high purchase tendencies. Apart from that, the author also stresses the fact businesses have more chances of succeeding with social media marketing strategies when they communicate efficiently and effectively with consumers to develop a sense of being heard.

H3: Responsiveness of Marketing Tactics from social media marketing has a positive relationship with the satisfaction of working adults.

2.4 Customer Satisfaction

According to the study done by Henning-Thurau and Hansen (2000), customer satisfaction is achieved when an offering meets his or her expectations, and there are two critical ways to improve customer satisfaction, which is establishing expectations in the minds of customers and delivering on those expectations. Customer satisfaction is not only about customers but also is a key factor in understanding if a business can offer the highest brand value (He & Calder, 2020). Karadeniz (2014) has further explained the two critical ways in attaining customer satisfaction whereby establishing relevant expectations in the minds of customers is a function of pre-sales communications the marketers have with customers and setting a balanced expectation to create enthusiasm in customers. The impact of word-of-mouth is immense in which, satisfied customers will indirectly share adverts or promotions among networks of people on respective social media platforms (Alvandi & Shaykhzade, 2019), enabling brands or businesses to connect with a larger target pool (Mitić, 2020).

A post-marketing strategy such as clarifying customers' feedback helps in maintaining consistency in customers' satisfaction because businesses are present on every social media platform, thus communicating with customers regarding presented marketing on social media is made easier (Bhatia, 2019), and businesses just have to do one simple thing which is enforce the communication effectively to ensure customers have the highest comprehension of what is being presented by a

business (Amegbe et al., 2017). Budiman (2020) argues, although customers show dissatisfaction towards a company's poor marketing effort in the service industry, it is important to acknowledge every customer's opinion even if there is a disagreement and turn the negative experience into a positive one. Letting the customers perceive the company is putting in utmost effort into improving marketing efforts according to negative or positive feedback given is also a key factor in achieving customer satisfaction (Kartika & Rudianto, 2020).

2.5 Research Objectives

The main purpose of this research is to disclose recommendations to improve the impact of social media marketing on customer satisfaction amongst working adults in Malaysia.

The objective of this research can be outlined as follows:

1. To determine the impact of the authenticity of information through social media marketing towards customer satisfaction.
2. To determine the impact of captivating content in social media marketing towards the customer satisfaction of working adults in Malaysia.
3. To determine the impact of the responsiveness of social media marketing tactics on customer satisfaction.

2.6 Research Questions

The motive of this study is to improve the understanding of the factors of social media marketing's impacts on customer satisfaction. It focuses on working adults in Malaysia and is analyzed in two dimensions, social media marketing and customer satisfaction. The research questions are as seen below:

1. Does authenticity of information from social media marketing impact working adults' satisfaction?
2. Does captivating content in social media marketing impact customer satisfaction of working adults in Malaysia?
3. Does responsiveness of marketing tactics in social media marketing impact customer satisfaction of working adults in Malaysia?

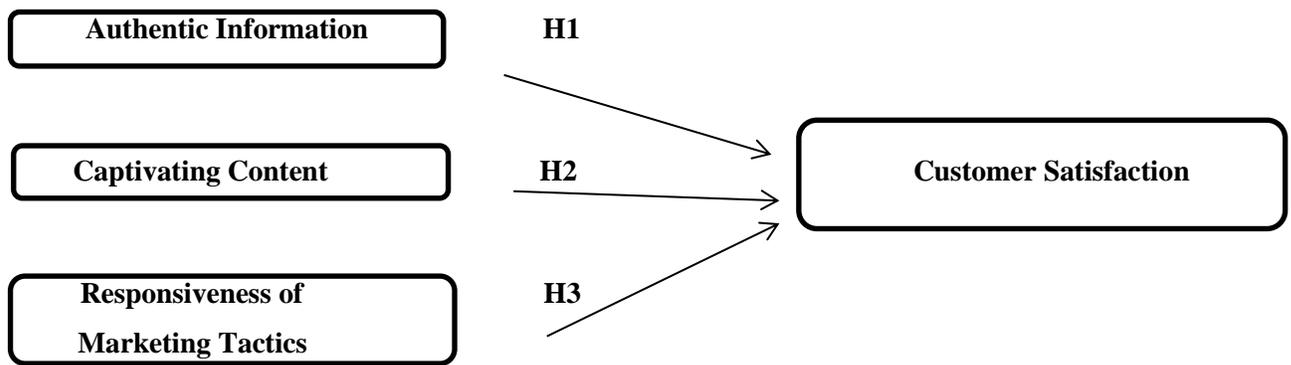


Figure 1: Research Framework

3.0 Methodology

The research conceptual framework is constructed to depict the relationship between the independent variables (authenticity of information, captivating content and responsiveness of marketing tactics) and the dependent variable (customer satisfaction). The next sections depict the design and procedures of the research.

3.1 Research Design

Research design is the pivotal part of the research as it evaluates the strategy, and conceptual framework, distinguishing who is related to the research study, and the tools, as well as procedures, wield for gathering and assessing data. In this study, primary data collection of quantitative research is used. The reason for adopting quantitative research is to attain the objective of this research using quantifiable data which is a well-constructed survey. Through a quantitative approach, collected data could be analysed using the numbers to outline the criteria of the variables in research (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

3.2 Procedure

According to Statista (2020), social media platforms are most widely used among internet users in Malaysia, and it is projected to reach about 24 million in 2023. Taking a cue from this, respondents were found through social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter because these platforms have high traffic, and most businesses are actively carrying out online marketing on these said social media platforms. There were no specific criteria while choosing respondents as most of the users commonly come across at least one marketing product of the many businesses present online. It was significantly difficult getting older adults of age above 45 as respondents because this age group of respondents are either unavailable on any social media platform or are inactive users. These respondents will be given a Google Form survey that comprises questions based on the independent and dependent variables of the study. The reason behind choosing the Google Forms

survey is that a set of straightforward questions can be created easily, as well as the diverse type of information can be collected in a manageable way. Using the information gathered, a graph will be created to have the percentage of projection on the impact of social media marketing on customer satisfaction.

3.3 Sample Group

The sample respondents for this study are specifically Malaysians and working adults aged from 18 to 45 years old. Respondents for this study are made very specific because the motive of this study is to understand the impact of social media marketing on customer satisfaction amongst working adults in Malaysia. Moreover, adults aged from 18 to 45 years old are chosen because they are massively engaged in social media in their daily life (Lenhart et al., 2010). Besides that, adults aged 18 to 45 years old is preferred because these people are active users of social media platform. Combining both these factors, it will be easier to find how working adults aged from 18 to 45 years old perceive social media marketing and if the marketing tactics satisfy them as customers.

3.4 Sampling Technique

The sampling technique used is convenience sampling. The reason behind choosing convenience sampling is that since the study depends purely on the information collected from the respondents, convenience sampling is most suitable to be used. Through convenience sampling, the primary data source is sufficient enough to be used for the research without the need for additional requirements (Sedgwick, 2013). Convenience sampling typically means, respondents can be gathered from wherever that is convenient whereby in this study, it is the social media platforms. Moreover, it is only relevant if the sample group are from the social media platforms itself since this study focuses on the impact of social media marketing on customer satisfaction. For example, the Google Forms survey can be sent to friends or followers on my own social media account, and these people can share it with their friends or followers as well. The reach of convenience sampling for this study will be great with the availability of social media platforms itself.

4.0 Results and Findings

Through a well-structured survey, a quantitative method was chosen with the use of quantifiable data to obtain the objective of this research. Data from 119 respondents will be tested. Methods that will be used to test the data obtained are Descriptive Statistics, Reliability Test, Pearson's Correlation and Multiple Regression. Intending to measure the variables stated in this research, a 5-point Likert scale (1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree) is used to understand to what extent respondents agree or disagree with a particular statement in the survey. Each test is separated into separate subsections to provide a better understanding of the results obtained.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The purpose of using descriptive statistical analysis in a study is to describe the basic features of the data through mean, standard deviation, frequency, percentage and cumulative percentage (Guo, 2012). Questions used to obtain data for this section are Age, Gender, Frequency of visiting social media platforms in a day and Have you come across any social media marketing?

Table 1: Demographic Data

		Age	Gender	Frequency of visiting social media platforms in a day	Have you come across any social media marketing?
N	Valid	119	119	119	119
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.0336	1.5378	1.521	1.0672
Std. Deviation		1.04096	0.50068	0.67458	0.25147

4.2 Reliability Test

The reliability test, commonly known as Cronbach's alpha, is used to measure the reliability of the Likert scale questions in research, and how closely related the factors are as a group (Barbera & Naibert, 2020). The reliability test for this research was carried out by testing each of the independent variables with the dependent variable.

Table 2: Reliability Test of the Items for Authentic Information

Authentic Information	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.578	4

Table 2 shows the reliability test between customer satisfaction and authentic information, which shows moderately strong reliability with a value of 0.578.

Table 3: Reliability Test for Captivating Content Items

Captivating Content	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.707	4

Table 4: Reliability Test for Marketing Tactics Items

Responsiveness of Marketing Tactics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.717	4

In comparison with the reliability test between customer satisfaction and authentic information, the reliability test of customer satisfaction with captivating content and responsiveness of marketing tactics respectively shows a relatively strong and acceptable range with the value of 0.707 for captivating content and 0.717 for responsiveness of marketing tactics.

4.3 Pearson’s Correlation

Pearson’s correlation test is a method used to evaluate the relationship between each independent variable with the dependent variable, and its results in Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient (r) which measures the strength of the two variables tested (Schober & Boer, 2018).

Table 5: Pearson Correlation

Correlations					
		Authentic Information	Captivating Content	Responsiveness of Marketing Tactics	Customer Satisfaction
Authentic Information	Pearson Correlation	1	.337**	.445**	.525**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	119	119	119	119
Captivating Content	Pearson Correlation	.337**	1	.423**	.511**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	119	119	119	119
Responsiveness of Marketing Tactics	Pearson Correlation	.445**	.423**	1	.553**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	119	119	119	119
Customer Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.525**	.511**	.553**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	

	N	119	119	119	119
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).					

According to the Pearson Correlations test done on the data obtained, all three variables, authentic information, captivating content and responsiveness of marketing tactics have a moderately strong correlation. Authentic information and customer satisfaction have about 52.5%, captivating content and customer satisfaction are at about 51.1%, and the responsiveness of marketing tactics has about 55.3% correlation with customer satisfaction.

4.4 Regression Analysis

From the regression analysis, the R-value depicts that the independent variables have a high degree of correlation with the dependent variable at the value of 0.683. The R square value describes how much of the total variation in the dependent variable, customer satisfaction, can be explained by the independent variables which in this case has a value of 0.467, showing a significant variance in the dependent variable.

Table 6: Model Summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.683 ^a	0.467	0.453	2.68708
a. Predictors: (Constant), Responsiveness of Marketing Tactics, Captivating Content, Authentic Information				

The Anova table of the regression analysis predicts the significance of the dependent variable, and in this scenario, the significance of the regression model is statistically significant due to the value being less than 0.05.

Table 7: ANOVA

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	726.816	3	242.272	33.554	.000 ^b
	Residual	830.343	115	7.22		
	Total	1557.16	118			

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction
b. Predictors: (Constant), Responsiveness of Marketing Tactics, Captivating Content, Authentic Information

5.0 Discussions

Approximately 119 responses were gathered from the survey distributed to gather sufficient data for a better understanding of this research. From the data accumulated, the responses can be separated according to age group which 37.8% of it are from the age group of 18 to 24, 35.3% are from the age group of 25 to 31, 12.6% from the age group of 32 to 38, and 14.3% from the age group of 39 to 45. From the reliability test between the dependent variable and the independent variables done on the data collected, authentic information shows a moderately strong reliability with customer satisfaction at the value of 0.578, whereas captivating content and responsiveness of marketing tactics show a significantly strong and acceptable reliability with customer satisfaction at the value of 0.707 and 0.717 respectively. According to the p-values obtained from the Pearson correlation test, it can be deduced that all the independent variables are statistically significant since the values are below 0.05. Apart from that, the regression analysis of the R-squared has a value of 0.467 which indicates the variance of this model. Meaning to say, 46.7% of the dependent variable is described by the independent variables. A single change in the independent variable causes 0.467 changes to the dependent variable.

According to the results of the outputs, the first hypothesis, authentic information in social media marketing has a positive relationship with customer satisfaction is significant. The particular reason for this circumstance is that Pearson's Correlation analysis done on data collected for authentic information shows a 52.5% correlation with customer satisfaction. Therefore, the hypothesis stated is accepted deducing that authentic information in social media marketing has a positive relationship with customer satisfaction. Meaning to say, the more authentic the information provided in social media marketing, the more satisfied the customers will be.

In accordance with the second hypothesis, which is captivating content of social media marketing, it has a positive relationship with customer satisfaction and is statistically significant. With a correlation of 51.1%, captivating content has a relatively strong correlation, hence, the hypothesis stated is accepted. The more extensive the captivating content is, the higher the impact it has on customer satisfaction. The third hypothesis, responsiveness of marketing tactics, has a positive relationship with customer satisfaction, statistically, it is proven to be significant. The correlation results show that the responsiveness of marketing tactics has a value of 55.3%. In other words, it has a relatively stronger correlation and thus, the hypothesis is accepted. More responsive marketing tactics have a higher tendency on elevating customer satisfaction.

5.1 Limitations of Research

The primary limitation faced while conducting this research is the time constraint to collect sufficient data for output measurement. According to Parida (2020), there are other underlying factors within social media marketing effectiveness on customer satisfaction, therefore minimal time only provides vague results on the most common factors identified. Moderation and mediation

variables can be added to provide a better understanding of the underlying factors that affect customer satisfaction.

5.2 Recommendation for Future Research

Future research could focus on the significance of specific social media platforms for social media marketing in escalating customer satisfaction. Russels (2020) have deduced that the satisfaction index (100 points scale) in accordance with social media platforms shows that Facebook has 68 points, Instagram has 75 points and Twitter has 70 points for user satisfaction. Studying the relevance of each social media platform in the context of social media marketing will help to understand how it affects customer satisfaction. Instagram has proven to hold the highest level of user satisfaction in comparison with Twitter and Facebook, therefore a study on the pertaining social media platforms will list out the factors that hold as a support line in increasing the effectiveness of social media marketing to achieve higher customer satisfaction.

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