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CONSEQUENCES OF MOBILE PHONE USERS' BRAND ENGAGEMENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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Abstract

The study "Consequences of Mobile Phone Users' Brand Engagement on Social Media" investigates the multifaceted dynamics of consumer-brand interactions within the realm of mobile phones on social media platforms in Karnataka, India. With the digital landscape continually evolving, understanding how brand engagement influences consumer behavior and brand-consumer relationships becomes crucial. This research delves into the impact of brand interactions on consumer behavior, brand perception, market strategies and user experiences. The study, conducted using a descriptive research design with a sample size of 110 in Karnataka, includes primary and secondary data sources. The need to explore the consequences of brand engagement arises from the significant role of social media in shaping consumer choices, enhancing brand loyalty, influencing brand perception and offering insights into the dynamic market of mobile phones. The regional specificity of Karnataka, known for its active social media presence, provides a unique context for understanding brand engagement in the mobile phone industry. This research aims to deliver valuable insights into consumer-brand relationships in the digital age, particularly focusing on the consequences of mobile phone users' brand engagement on social media within the distinctive cultural milieu of Karnataka.

Keywords: Mobile Phones, Brand Engagement, Social Media and Consumer Behavior.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years the surge in mobile phone usage and the omnipresence of social media platforms have transformed the way individuals interact, communicate and engage with brands. Karnataka, known for its high literacy rates and tech-savvy population, has become a hotbed for social media interactions, especially concerning brand engagement. The influence of mobile phones on shaping consumer behavior and brand relationships in this region has become a subject of significant interest and investigation. This study investigates into the consequences of mobile phone users' brand engagement on social media within the context of Karnataka, aiming to dissect the impact on consumer behavior, brand loyalty and overall market dynamics. The proliferation of social media and its integration into the daily lives of Karnatians has led to a substantial paradigm shift in marketing strategies and consumer-brand interactions. By exploring the multifaceted dimensions of this relationship, this research endeavour to shed light on the repercussions and outcomes of such brand engagements. It aims to scrutinise how consumer engagement on social media platforms through mobile devices influences purchasing decisions, shapes brand perceptions and affects consumer loyalty in the context of Karnataka.

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Brand Engagement on Social Media

In the age of digital communication, brand engagement on social media has emerged as a pivotal element in the marketing strategies of businesses worldwide. The interconnectedness of the modern world, facilitated by social media platforms, has provided an unprecedented opportunity for brands to connect with their target audiences in ways that were previously unimaginable. Brand engagement on social media encompasses the interactions, conversations and relationships that individuals have with brands through platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. It extends far beyond traditional marketing tactics, moving towards a more interactive and user-driven approach. Brands can no longer rely solely on one-way communication; instead, they must actively engage with their audience, forging meaningful connections. The ability to engage with a brand on social media fosters a sense of community and identity. Customers want to feel like they are part of something larger and social media offers a platform for brands to create a loyal following. This engagement translates into increased brand loyalty, customer retention and advocacy. When done effectively, brand engagement becomes a powerful tool for brand recognition and competitive advantage. Brand engagement on social media has a profound influence on consumer behavior. When consumers are engaged with a brand on social media, they are more likely to make informed decisions, as they have access to a wealth of information and peer opinions. The influence of user-generated content, reviews and recommendations can significantly affect purchase decisions. Additionally, engagement can humanise a brand, making it more relatable and trustworthy. User-generated content, such as reviews and testimonials, carries a level of authenticity that traditional advertising cannot match. The impact of this authenticity on consumer behavior is considerable. Consumers are more likely to trust the recommendations of their peers over marketing messages. This highlights the importance of fostering a community of engaged customers who share their experiences and insights on social media platforms.

Brand Engagement on Social Media Vs Traditional Media

Table 1: Brand Engagement on Social Media Vs Traditional Media

Aspect	Social Media	Traditional Media
Interaction and Engagement	Two-way communication, real-time interactions, comments, shares, likes, direct messaging	Mostly one-way communication, limited direct interaction
Reach and Targeting	Highly targeted, specific audience targeting based on demographics, interests, behaviors	Challenging to reach specific niches, less accurate targeting
Cost and ROI	Cost-effective, precise ROI metrics, cost-efficient advertising options	Higher cost, more challenging to measure ROI accurately
Content and Format	Diverse content formats (videos, images, live streams, interactive posts)	Limited content formats, fixed structures, ad lengths
User Control and Experience	User-controlled engagement, follow/unfollow options, personalised experience	Less user control, content exposure timing decided by publishers
Virality and Sharing	Viral potential, easy sharing, quick reach to a large audience	Limited sharing capability, reliant on publisher distribution
Trust and Authenticity	Authentic user-generated content, peer reviews, trust-building	Reputable, may lack the authenticity of direct user experiences
Longevity and Visibility	Continuous visibility, longer content lifespan, potential for resurfacing	Limited lifespan, based on publication/airing schedules

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On social media platforms, engagement is characterised by two-way communication, allowing real-time interactions through comments, shares, likes and direct messaging. Users have the opportunity to actively participate, providing feedback or initiating conversations with brands, fostering a more engaging and interactive environment. In contrast, traditional media primarily offers one-way communication, limiting direct interaction between the brand and its audience. The engagement is more passive, with limited avenues for immediate feedback or interaction, often confined to the audience's observation rather than active participation.

Social media platforms excel in reaching a highly targeted audience. Businesses can leverage specific targeting parameters based on demographics, interests and behaviour. This precision in targeting allows brands to engage with a more defined and niche audience, enhancing the relevance of their content. Traditional media finds it challenging to reach specific niches with the same accuracy. Advertisements on television, radio or print may reach a broad audience, but the targeting is less precise, making it more difficult to engage with particular segments of the market.

Brand engagement on social media tends to be more cost-effective, offering precise return on investment (ROI) metrics. Advertisers have cost-efficient options and can measure the performance of their ads in real-time, allowing for more accurate assessment of the ROI. Conversely, traditional media often comes with a higher cost and can present challenges in accurately measuring ROI. The cost of advertising on TV, radio or print is generally higher and evaluating the effectiveness of the advertisements can be more complex and less immediate.

Social media platforms support diverse content formats, including videos, images, live streams and interactive posts. This flexibility enables brands to create more engaging and creative content, catering to different preferences and effectively capturing the attention of users.

In traditional media, content formats are more limited and structured. Advertisements are often restricted to fixed lengths and structures, which might not provide the same level of creativity and interactivity as social media platforms. Users have a higher level of control over their engagement with brands on social media. They can choose to follow or un-follow, interact with content and create a personalised experience by curating their feed, enabling a more tailored and engaging experience. In traditional media, users have less control over their exposure to content. The timing and exposure of content are largely decided by publishers or broadcasters, offering less individualised experiences.

Social media's inherent capability for content to go viral and be easily shared contributes to quick and expansive reach. Engaging content can be shared rapidly, increasing its visibility and potentially reaching a vast audience in a short period. In contrast, traditional media lacks the same level of sharing capability. Content distribution relies more on the publishers' distribution channels, limiting the potential for rapid and widespread sharing.

Social media platforms often foster authentic user-generated content, peer reviews and personal experiences, building trust and credibility. Consumers tend to trust recommendations and experiences shared by peers, contributing to a sense of authenticity. While reputable, traditional media may sometimes lack the authenticity derived from direct user experiences. Content

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might not carry the same level of authenticity as user-generated content and personal testimonials seen on social media.

Content on social media platforms benefits from continuous visibility, allowing for a longer lifespan. Engaging content can resurface over time due to shares, comments and algorithmic exposure, ensuring prolonged visibility. In traditional media, content visibility has a limited lifespan, dictated by publication or airing schedules. Once an ad or content has been published or aired, its visibility is constrained by the timing and reach of the specific media channel.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of Literature

Doorn, et al. (2010) extensively examined the notion of customer engagement behaviour (CEB), which encapsulate the behavioral interactions customers undertake with a brand or firm, extending beyond mere purchases. These behaviour are prompted by motivational drivers and encompass a wide array of actions, including word-of-mouth activities, making recommendations, aiding other customers, blogging, writing reviews, and participating in advocacy programs. The authors formulated a comprehensive conceptual model that outlines the factors preceding and resulting from customer engagement behaviour, categorizing them into customer-centric, firm-centric, and societal outcomes. The study importantly distinguishes these behaviour from customer attitudes like trust, satisfaction, and commitment, offering a unique perspective on the multifaceted nature of customer engagement behaviour within the marketing landscape.

Wei et al. (2013) centered their research on a specific form of customer engagement behaviour: user-generated hotel reviews. Their study scrutinized the perceptions of potential customers regarding these behaviour and how hotels' management responded to them. Through an exploratory investigation, the analysis revealed that customers' apparent motivational drivers for engaging in these behaviour varied based on their objectives, and positive customer engagement behaviour received more favorable appraisals than negative ones. In terms of managerial responses to these behaviour, the perceived motivation behind these responses was influenced by the specificity of the reactions and the sentiment (positive or negative) of the customer engagement behaviours. Specific management responses were deemed more effective than generic ones, particularly in handling negative customer engagement behaviour. The study suggested that hospitality firms should establish more direct channels to encourage customer engagement activities.

Enginkaya and Esen (2014) directed their attention toward delineating and gauging online customer engagement, employing data collected from internet users involved in online shopping activities. In their study, an online customer engagement scale was devised and applied. The research revealed that a customer's engagement online could be expounded through dimensions of trust, commitment, and reputation. The analysis conducted a detailed examination, encompassing the evaluation and various other facets associated with online client engagement.

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Greve (2014) conducted research to evaluate the moderating impact of customer engagement on the relationship between brand image and brand loyalty. In this study, the researcher developed a model aimed at measuring the precursors of customer engagement, delineating customer engagement behavior on Facebook fan pages, and examining the influence of customer engagement on the relationship between brand image and brand loyalty.

The study's findings suggested that brand image is negatively moderated by engagement activity. This indicated that a higher level of engagement could potentially diminish the impact of brand image on brand loyalty.

The implication of this result is that it could guide administrators in deciding how to best allocate limited marketing budgets, especially in relation to engaging consumers through various channels to maintain brand loyalty.

Need for the study

The need for the study focusing on the "Consequences of Mobile Phone Users' Brand Engagement on Social Media" is driven by the transformative role that social media plays in shaping consumer behavior, preferences and brand-consumer interactions in the mobile phone industry. In recent years, mobile phones have become an integral part of people's lives, with social media platforms being key spaces for brand engagement. The study aims to address several crucial aspects:

The interaction between mobile phone users and brands on social media is becoming increasingly influential in determining consumer behavior. This study aims to comprehend how users engage with mobile phone brands on social media platforms, including the nature of interactions, factors impacting their choices and the consequences of these interactions on their preferences and purchasing decisions.

Consumer-brand engagement on social media significantly impacts brand perception. By examining this engagement, the study seeks to analyse how brand interactions influence user perceptions, brand loyalty, advocacy and brand trust. Understanding these aspects is critical for brands seeking to cultivate a positive brand image and long-term relationships with consumers.

Exploring the consequences of brand engagement on social media offers valuable market insights. The study can help brands discern changing consumer preferences, understand market trends and adapt their marketing strategies to resonate better with their target audience in the ever-evolving landscape of mobile technology and social media.

Conducting this study in Karnataka provides a region-specific analysis, considering the unique social, cultural and behavioral dynamics prevalent in this area. This study is particularly relevant in Karnataka, known for its high digital literacy and active social media participation, offering insights into the specific context of brand engagement among mobile phone users in this region.

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the research study focusing on the "Consequences of Mobile Phone Users' Brand Engagement on Social Media," a descriptive research design was adopted, intending to explore and interpret the various factors influencing users' interactions with mobile phone brands on social media platforms. The research aimed to describe and analyse the consequences arising from these interactions, thereby understanding their implications.

The sampling method utilised was convenience sampling, where 110 respondents from Karnataka were selected based on their ease of accessibility and willingness to participate. The study primarily concentrated on mobile phone users within this region to understand their brand engagement behaviour.

The sample size of 110 respondents was deemed appropriate to provide a representative overview of mobile phone users in Karnataka, ensuring a diverse pool of participants with varying demographic, social and behavioral characteristics. These participants were essential in providing a comprehensive understanding of the consequences of brand engagement on social media in the context of mobile phone usage.

RESULTS

Table 2: Socio-Economic Profile of the Respondents for the Study

Age	Less than 18	22
	18-24 Years	39
	25-34 Years	32
	35-44 Years Above 45	13 4
Gender	Female	61
	Male	49
Highest Educational qualification	High school	17
	Diploma	6
	Bachelor's degree Master's degree Professional degree	42 33 12
Current employment status	Self-employed	8
	Private Sector	12
	Public Sector	27
	Student	32
	Housewife	19
	Others	12
Marital Status	Married	60
	Unmarried	50
Type of brand engagement	Liking post Sharing post Commenting on post Participating in contests	22 33 23 20
	Following brand accounts	12

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The table presents the socio-economic profile of the respondents participating in the study on the consequences of mobile phone users' brand engagement on social media. It highlights various demographic and behavioral aspects of the respondents that are crucial in understanding their engagement patterns and preferences. The respondents' age distribution shows a varied representation, with the majority falling within the 18-24 years bracket, constituting 39% of the respondents.

The age group of 25-34 years follows closely behind at 32%, indicating a considerable presence of young adults within the survey. A smaller percentage constitutes those above 45 years, highlighting the dominance of younger age groups in the study. The gender representation is almost balanced, with 61% of respondents being female and 49% male, showing a slightly higher participation from females in the study. The educational qualifications of the respondents vary, with a significant proportion holding a bachelor's degree (42%) and a master's degree (33%). A smaller percentage of respondents have completed high school (17%) or possess professional degrees (12%).

The respondents' employment status covers a diverse range, with students constituting a notable segment at 32%, followed by those in the public sector (27%) and housewives (19%). Self-employed individuals and those in the private sector are represented at 8% and 12%, respectively. The distribution suggests a varied representation of different professional backgrounds and life stages. The respondents' marital status indicates a nearly balanced representation, with 60% married and 50% unmarried, showcasing a diverse pool of participants in different relationship statuses. The engagement behavior among the respondents is diverse, with various activities being observed. The most prevalent activities include liking posts (22%), sharing posts (33%) and commenting on posts (23%). Participating in contests constitutes 20% of the responses, while following brand accounts holds a share of 12%.

Factors Impacting Brand Engagement on Social Media

The consequences of mobile phone users' brand engagement on social media are multifaceted, influencing both consumers and businesses in significant ways. A factor analysis of this engagement reveals several key factors that shape consumer behavior, brand perception and marketing strategies in the digital landscape.

Table 3: Consequences of Mobile Phone Users' Brand Engagement Factors

S. No	Consequences of Mobile Phone Users' Brand Engagement Factors	Number of variables	Eigen value	% of Variance
1.	Influenced Purchase Decisions	9	5.850	16.029
2	Enhanced brand loyalty	5	3.507	9.109
3	Amplified Brand Advocacy	6	2.991	8.974
4	Improved Customer Relationships	6	2.515	7.071
5	Valuable Market Insights	4	1.663	5.024
6.	Impact on Brand Perception	2	1.284	4.996
7	Increased Brand Visibility and Reach	2	1.099	4.091
8	User-Generated Content Influence	1	1.003	3.693
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy : 0.824			Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: Chi –Square : 5934.686	

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The table displays the outcomes of the factor analysis conducted on the consequences of mobile phone users' brand engagement factors. Here are the inferences drawn from the data:

1. **Influenced Purchase Decisions**: This factor appears to have the most number of variables (9) and holds the highest eigen value of 5.850, explaining about 16.029% of the variance. This suggests that various elements significantly impact purchase decisions influenced by brand engagement. The variables within this factor seem to have a considerable collective influence on driving consumer purchase decisions through brand engagement on mobile phones.
2. **Enhanced Brand Loyalty**: With 5 variables and an eigen value of 3.507, accounting for 9.109% of the variance, this factor signifies that factors contributing to increased brand loyalty as a consequence of mobile phone users' brand engagement play a substantial role. These variables have a considerable impact on fostering stronger connections between consumers and brands, leading to enhanced loyalty.
3. **Amplified Brand Advocacy**: Comprising 6 variables with an eigen value of 2.991 (explaining 8.974% of the variance), this factor indicates the importance of variables that result in brand advocacy among mobile phone users. Engaged consumers become active advocates, promoting the brand and these variables seem to contribute significantly to this aspect.
4. **Improved Customer Relationships**: This factor, with 6 variables and an eigen value of 2.515, represents approximately 7.071% of the variance. These variables appear to strongly influence the improvement of customer relationships due to brand engagement on mobile phones, fostering better interactions and communication between the brand and its consumers.
5. **Valuable Market Insights**: Although having fewer variables (4), the eigen value of 1.663 suggests a considerable impact (5.024% of the variance) in terms of obtaining valuable market insights through mobile phone users' brand engagement. These variables might be essential in providing businesses with significant insights into consumer behavior and preferences.
6. **Impact on Brand Perception:** Comprising 2 variables with an eigen value of 1.284 (explaining 4.996% of the variance), this factor indicates the role of specific elements influencing brand perception due to mobile phone users' brand engagement. These elements might significantly shape how consumers perceive and trust a brand based on their engagement experiences.
7. **Increased Brand Visibility and Reach**: This factor with 2 variables and an eigenvalue of 1.099 (explaining 4.091% of the variance) might represent factors that could negatively impact the brand or cause stress related to mobile phone users' brand engagement. These variables might represent challenges or negative consequences arising from brand engagement on mobile phones.

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8. User-Generated Content Influence: While having only 1 variable, this factor holds an eigen value of 1.003, suggesting a significant influence (3.693% of the variance) attributed to user-generated content in impacting brand engagement among mobile phone users. This singular variable appears to have a noteworthy impact on user experiences and perceptions.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy indicates a reasonably good sample adequacy (0.824) and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, with a chi-square value of 5934.686, suggests that the correlations between the variables are sufficiently significant to proceed with the factor analysis.

Managerial Implication

The socio-economic profile of respondents, as depicted in Table 2, unveils essential insights for managerial strategies. Understanding the demographic landscape, such as the dominance of the 18-24 and 25-34 age groups, suggests a need for marketing strategies specifically tailored to these younger age brackets. Diverse engagement activities, including liking, sharing and commenting on posts, indicate that brands should adopt versatile approaches to engage a wider audience. Moreover, the balanced gender representation suggests an opportunity for gender-specific campaigns, targeting female audiences more effectively.

The education-centric approach, considering a substantial proportion of respondents holding bachelors and master's degrees, emphasises the need for more sophisticated and informative content. Additionally, acknowledging the varied employment statuses and marital situations of the respondents highlights the importance of tailored content to resonate with different segments of the audience.

In parallel, the implications drawn from Table 3, focusing on the consequences of mobile phone users' brand engagement, offer crucial managerial insights. The factors significantly influencing purchase decisions highlight the need for strategies that guide and positively impact consumer purchasing behaviour. Acknowledging the importance of brand loyalty suggests reinforcing loyalty programs and personalisation to foster stronger connections.

Understanding the significance of advocacy indicates a need for initiatives that encourage user-generated content and active consumer engagement to transform users into brand advocates. Emphasising the importance of improved customer relationships underlines the need for customer-centric engagement and feedback integration.

Leveraging data-driven insights derived from mobile engagement for marketing strategies can be instrumental in refining approaches, while focusing on positive brand perception and addressing challenges related to brand visibility and reach are equally critical. Encouraging user-generated content and participation through campaigns can significantly influence brand engagement positively.

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