

# Role Of Social Media As A Marketing Tool In Rural Market Of Punjab

Jagmeet Singh

Roopika Malhotra

Asst. Professor, Chandigarh Business School of Administration

*Abstract: Social media is developing at a very fast rate throughout the world. With number of social media platforms coming up in few years it has become easier to socialize with people who are from different culture, society, religion and from different aspects of life. If we look upon marketing strategies one of the strategies is that advertize at a place where you find maximum population and this strategy fits to social media. Social media is a place where you find a large number of people and can be used as a tool for marketing. With this research paper I want to bring in notice that with the strengthening of cellular network in the rural areas more people has started using mobile internet and a large number from this population is active on social media. So social media can be used as a tool for marketing in rural market.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Social media is a platform where we can interact with large population or it is a medium of transferring message from one person to another or to share the message with number of people. Social media is accessed with the help of internet via computers or mobile phones. In the past 15 years the growth of social media is remarkable various platforms has developed and become part of social media and had a large user base in our country and abroad. Virtual communication and networks are used to share ideas, information and thoughts. Social media has gained a particular space in the life of people and started affecting the people. The spread of social media at a fast rate is because of fast development of telecom sector in India and rest of world. The number of users of internet in India has reached to 462 million and it is the second largest internet usage in the world. In the age of internet and social media the best platform for marketing is social media. Through this paper I want to bring in notice that social media can be very useful platform for marketing of products and services in rural market. In rural market using other methods is bit difficult and reaching each and every customer becomes a challenge. For a state like Punjab which is considered to be more developed than other states except a few districts and having good literacy level social media can become a effective tool for marketing. In Punjab internet users in rural area are

4.62 million till 2016 and they must have increased by now. Easy and cheap access to internet has made things simple for everyone. If any information is required it is readily available through internet.

With the help of social media business houses can directly connect to customers and find out their needs, preferences etc. It will be easier for them to prepare products which are suitable for rural market. Social media can also help in farming sector by providing updates on weather, new technology, seeds, pesticides; fertilizers etc. Social media can guide farmers towards other allied businesses which are dependent on agriculture. Farmers can directly sell their produce with the help of social media and will not require mediators who generally eat out a big portion of their profits. Precise information reaching the farmer in time can save them from big losses which occur due to non availability of information. There are 12581 inhabited villages in Punjab with population of 17,344,192 people.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

GUPTA ANMOL RAI, ZAFAR SHAHILA - Social media networks have no doubt affected the lives of rural people. As far as agriculture is concerned, these have provided many opportunities to the farmers and eased the process of selling

the crop through online schemes which has resulted in elimination of middlemen. There are innumerable success stories in field of health care as well. Rural politics is the area where social media networks haven't achieved to the required extent. As far as IT is concerned by making the resources like unregulated supply of electricity, subsidies in purchase of computers etc, available in villages, information centers can alleviate the asymmetry between urban and rural environments. In order to accelerate rural growth, it is essential that we learn new ways of integrating social and human infrastructure development into the installation of basic information and communications infrastructure.

Also, it is true that if we want to penetrate the message of development among the rural masses we would have to opt for the folk forms of this country in more planned manner. Villagers comprise the core of Indian society and also represent the real India. And it is for these villagers that social media networks must realize their power as well as responsibility towards rural development. History has shown how nations have been „built“ by social media. Now it's India's turn to grow with its 637,000 villages! Rural development will pave the path to India Vision 2020.

*ELISABETA IOANAS, IVONA STOCIA* - As per their research most of the customer who buy online are young between 25-29 years working in a company with salary over 2001 lei monthly. Most of them are female and had at least one account on social media network. The main reason people prefer online transaction are convenience and fact that the product is readily delivered at home. Most consumers are not exactly secretive regarding information posted by other clients who had bought the same product which they wish to purchase, yet they are fairly indifferent, they only consider them to be relevant, they don't influence their purchasing habits and they read them in a hurry. Most consumers are not exactly secretive regarding information posted by other clients who had bought the same product which they wish to purchase, yet they are fairly indifferent, they only consider them to be relevant, they don't influence their purchasing habits and they read them in a hurry. The most purchased products online by the subjects are electronic products, followed by clothing. we can say that social networks have a role in influencing the behavior of consumers in the virtual environment, particularly when the degree of exposure of messages and the relation created between the variety of information given and the consumer who is about to make a purchase.

*PREETI PATEL, RAKESH PATEL* – Social media can be utilized to forecast future outcomes. Specially using the rate of chatter from almost 3 million tweets from popular site twitter. They constructed a linear regression model for predicting box office revenues of movies in advance of their release. They also analyzed the sentiments present in tweets and demonstrated their efficacy at improving prediction after a movie released.

**RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

To study the role of social media as a marketing tool in rural market.

**III. DATA COLLECTION METHOD AND RESEARCH DESIGN**

A descriptive research design is used for this research. Questionnaire is used to collect data from the population with the help of convenience sampling method. Sample size is of 100 respondents and the area selected was villages which come under Rupnagar district in Punjab state. The questionnaires were filled by meeting people personally and some telephonically.

**IV. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

**A. GENDER**

From the below table it is clear that there are 60% male respondents and 40% female respondents.

Gender	No of Respondents	%
Male	60	60
Female	40	40
Total	100	

Table 1

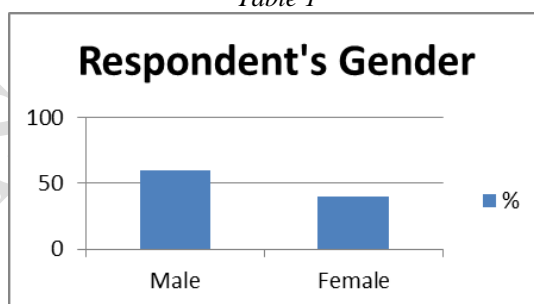


Figure 1

**B. AGE GROUP**

From the below table it is clear that the maximum no of respondents are of age group of 18 to 25 and from other age groups respondents are comparatively less.

AGE Group	No of Respondents	%
Below 18	20	20
18-25	30	30
26-35	25	25
36-50	15	15
50 and above	10	10

Table 2

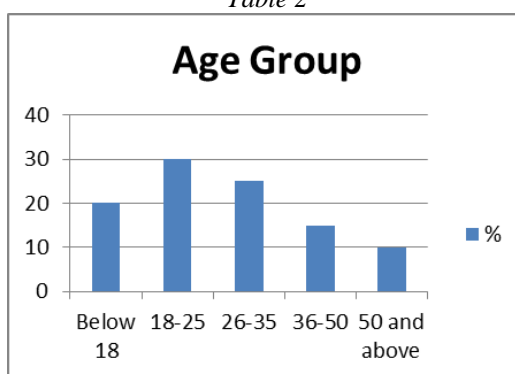


Figure 2

C. QUALIFICATION

From the below table it is clear that maximum respondents are qualified up to secondary level or below, no of graduates and post graduates are very less and doctorates are a few.

Qualification	No of respondents	Percentage
Below Metric	10	10
Metric	20	20
Senior secondary	35	35
graduate	21	21
post graduate	12	12
PHD	2	2

Table 3

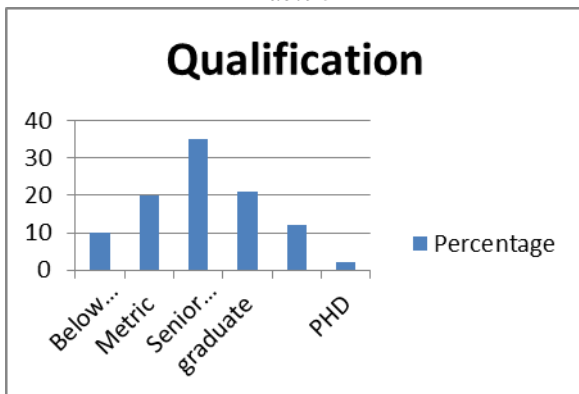


Figure 3

D. INCOME LEVEL

From the below table it is clear that maximum respondents or their family members are having income less than Rs100000 per annum as maximum people are having agriculture as their main source of income.

Income Level	No. of Respondents	Percentage
less than 100000	40	40
100000-250000	35	35
250001 - 500000	20	20
More than 500000	5	5

Table 4

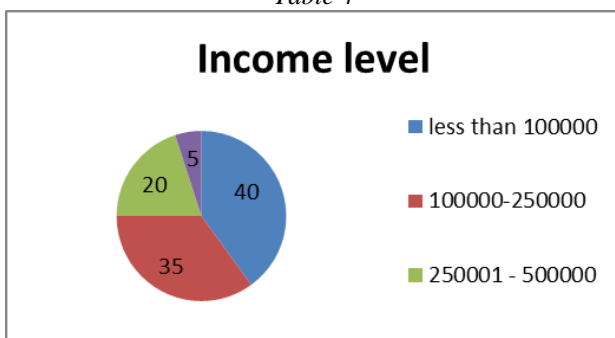


Figure 4

E. USAGE OF INTERNET

Around 70% respondents are having access to internet either through mobile phone or broadband and rest are not

using internet because of various reasons like illiteracy, not having smart phone, poor internet connectivity, etc.

usage of Internet	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Through Moblie	60	60
Through broadband	10	10
Not using Internet	30	30

Table 5

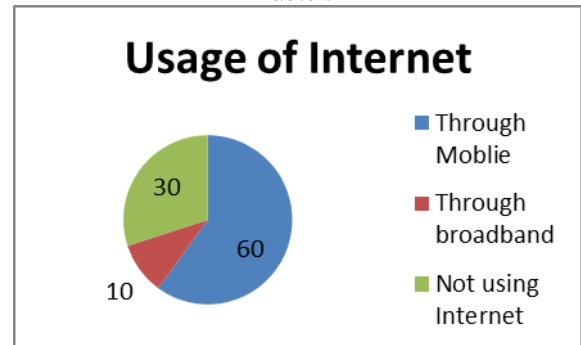


Figure 5

F. SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM

There are many social media platforms which are used by people but in this research we have enquired about the usage of four social media platforms, whatsapp, facebook, Instagram, twitter and analyzed that maximum respondents(45.7%) are active on facebook and whatsapp and those who are using only whats app or facebook are(28.5%). All four platforms are used by a few respondents and apart from these any other media platform is used by only(2.8%) respondents. It is clear from this analysis that those who are using internet are active on social media through any platform one or another in rural areas also.

Social media platform	No. of Respondents	Percentage
All four	6	8.57
Any three	10	14.28
Any two	32	45.70
Any one	20	28.5
Any other	2	2.8

Table 6

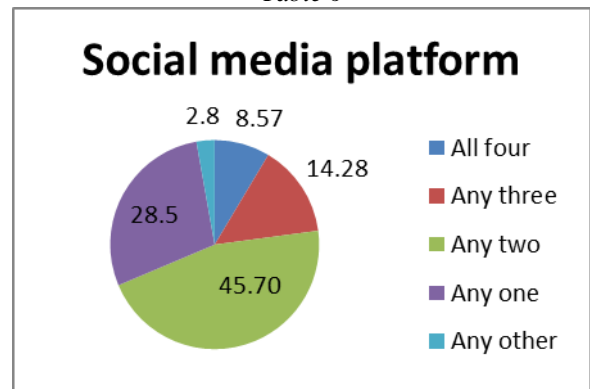


Figure 6

G. INFORMATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA

From the following table we can conclude that 50% respondents found that information which passed on social

media through advertisements, video messages or text messages is relevant or genuine and 50% said that the information is not of any relevance they have to search for information through various search engines available.

Information on social media is Relevant or not	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	35	50
No	35	50

Table 7

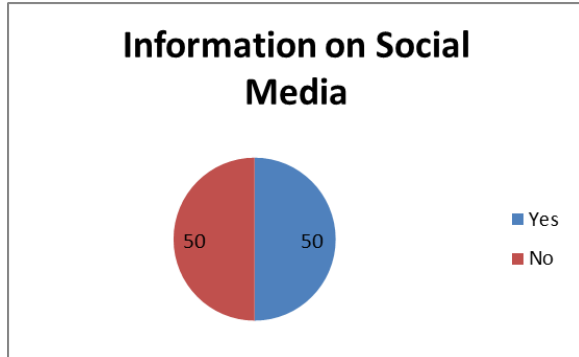


Figure 7

## V. CONCLUSION

From the above analysis it is clear that majority people in rural areas are aware about internet, social media and the information which is available through these platforms. Further analysis of above information brought us to a conclusion that people who are not using internet is because of age (above 50 years – difficult to learn new technology at this age as per their responses) illiteracy, affordability of smart

phone, poor internet connectivity in some areas. People in rural area are gaining access to information through social media and fifty percent found it relevant. From this analysis we can conclude that social media can be used as a tool for marketing purpose. This research can be extended further by taking sample from more districts of various states to get more relevant conclusion.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Gupta Anmol Rai, Zafar Shahila, "Rural India : The Next Frontier for Social Media Networks" (Vol 2 Issue 1 January 2013.)
- [2] B.V.N.G. ChandraSekhar, "Consumer Buying Behaviour and Brand Loyalty in Rural Markets: FMCG" (vol 3, Issue 2, July-Aug 2012)
- [3] Preeti Patel\*, Rakesh Patel, Ekta Agrawal, "Impact of Social Media Marketing in Rural India". (Vol 3, Issue 10, october 2014.)
- [4] Elisabeta Ioanas, Ivona Stocia, "Social Media and its Impact on Consumers Behavior" (vol 4, No.2 2014)
- [5] Jain MR, Anand N, Gupta P (2012) Impact of social networking sites in the changing mindset of youth on social issues- A study of Delhi-NCR youth. Journal of Arts, Science & Commerce 3: 36-43.
- [6] Khan S (2011) Impact of social networking websites on students. Abasyn Journal of Social Sciences 5: 56-77.
- [7] Pramod patil, "A comparative study of brand awareness among rural and urban consumers of latur district". International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research Review 7(7):16-24, July 2017.