

The Social Media Advertising Model (SMAM): A Theoretical Framework

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Abstract

Social media has not remained a phenomenon, it has reshaped into an approach, an attitude. It is just not a fad but a process that is here to stay, empowering the daily lives of the global individuals belonging to various castes & religions. Over the period of time, the strategies used for interacting with the customers have changed drastically. Social media now serves as a vital component of any company's Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) program and acts as a hybrid element of its promotional mix. The research paper aims to enhance the theoretical body of knowledge and provide a conceptual social media advertising model (SMAM). The model is backed and supported by two popular theories of consumer behavior known as Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and Uses and Gratification Theory (U&G). Moreover, the proposed model conceptualizes a series of consumer beliefs and motivational constructs that have an impact on consumer attitudes and their underlying behavioral intentions. The paper concludes with pragmatic insights for both the researchers and policy makers in making their promotional strategies more engaging and appealing through the use of social media.

Keywords: Social Media Advertising Model (SMAM), Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), Uses and Gratification Theory (U&G), Consumer Attitudes, Behavioral Intentions.

Introduction

The recent developments in the field of internet based technologies have poised a far reaching impact on the socio-economic nature of businesses, the content being generated and the participants being engaged. The evolution of internet has provided massive opportunities for the dynamic businesses of today to collaborate and develop strong connections with their target customers. It is the fastest growing communication medium experiencing a global annual growth rate of 14% since 2014 (ZenithOptimedia, 2015). Moreover, it reflects one of the most successful and sustained investment in information infrastructure. The internet has converted the organizations into networks and the systems into vast substructures.

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The role of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) has been the guiding principle that organizations use to communicate and connect with their target markets. It not only controls advertising but also personal selling, sales promotions, public relations and direct marketing. The main aim of these promotional tools is to provide a concrete, consistent and a coherent message to the end customers in order to achieve business objectives (Belch & Belch, 2008; Boone & Kurtz, 2007). Over the course of time, the strategies that appealed and influenced the customers have been plagued. The appearance of the phenomena known as the 'Social Media' is the new jargon and is also referred to as Consumer Generated Content (CGC).

Social Media

Social media defines “*new foundations of information that is effectively created, originated, disseminated and applied by consumer’s intent on educating each other about products, services, brands, personalities and issues*” (Blackshaw & Nazzaro, 2006; Mangold & Faulds, 2009). An updated definition categorizes social media as “*a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content (UGC)*” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Ngai, Tao, & Moon, 2015; Zolkepli & Kamarulzaman, 2015). Web 1.0 refers to the embryonic stage of the World Wide Web (www) and comprised of static websites that lacked an interactive content. On the other hand, Web2.0 allows the creation, collaboration, interoperability, sharing and linking of UGC, through which social media has taken birth. Social media itself is a holistic terminology and can be categorized into three subheads based on the theoretical taxonomy proposed by Vanden Bergh, Lee, Quilliam & Hove (2011). This division is based on its inherent characteristics and specific features, namely: Social Networking Sites (SNS), Content Community Sites (CCS) and Social Media Platform (SMP). The SNS provides opportunities for the consumers to develop their profiles, start networking with their group of friends and share reviews on important issues. This includes Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, providing opportunities for online and professional networking. Secondly, the CCS is specialized and a designated content generating and sharing platform in the form of videos and photos. Popular examples include YouTube, Vimeo and Dailymotion for videos, Instagram & Flickr for photos. The digital consumers can post their comments, forward the links and share the videos through other social networks. Unlike other social networking sites, the main focus of the CCS is content rather than the user itself. Lastly the SMP basically

allows the developers to formulate, generate and post applications for enhanced distribution (Bureau, 2008; Bergh et al., 2011).

The leading social media platform is Facebook with more than a billion monthly active users. YouTube also estimates a billion monthly active users with over 4 billion video views/day. Twitter has a customer base of 320 million monthly active users with around 500 million Tweets sent per day. WhatsApp and Instagram taken over by Facebook have an active user base of 900 million and 400 million respectively. Instagram's active consumer base has crossed both Twitter and Pinterest, recording more than 80 million photos and 3.5 billion posts per day. Moreover, LinkedIn (100 million), Snap Chat (200 million) and Google+ (400 million) active users are also well recognized social media platforms (SocialBakers, 2016; Statista, 2016)[‡].

Table 1: Global Active Users on Social Media

Social Platform	Active Users (In Millions)
Facebook	1590
YouTube	1000
WhatsApp	900
QQ	860
Facebook Messenger	800
Qzone	653
WeChat	650
Tumblr	555
Instagram	400
Twitter	320
Skype	300
Viber	249
Line	212
Snap Chat	200
Pinterest	100
LinkedIn	100

Source: Adapted From (InternetWorldStats, 2016; Kemp & WeAreSocial, 2016; SocialBakers, 2016)

Social Media Advertising

Social media marketing (SMM) involves methods of direct and indirect marketing to generate consumer awareness, recognition and recall for a product, person or a brand being executed through web tools of social networking, content dissemination and micro blogging (Gunelius, 2011). Specifically, social media advertising (SMA) involves companies using banner ads, embedded videos, animations, brand pages, surveys,

[‡] See Table 1: Global Active Users on Social Media

classified and sponsored ads to promote their products and services over online platforms. It selects target audiences based on their application and use of social networks (Jung, Shim, Jin, & Khang, 2016; L. F. Lin, Li, & Wu, 2015, Irfan et al., 2017). All these set of brand building activities either use Facebook for sales promotion, Twitter for generating a specific trend (use of hashtags), uploading a product launch video on YouTube, engaging through a photo on Instagram, posting a blog on HubSpot and networking with brand managers on LinkedIn.

As social networks provide opportunity for consumers to develop personal and professional links, firms also attain an opportunity to bridge communication gaps. Social media provides them the environment to target advertising based on specific consumer profiles. Kelly, Kerr, & Drennan (2009) proposed six major characteristics that make social networking advertising (SNA) unique and different from standard web based advertising. Firstly, it directly appeals to consumer's beliefs & motivations through a two-way dialogue between companies and consumers for value creation (*social exchange*). Secondly, as SNA occurs in a private space, it could be considered as irritating and intrusive if it is unable to convey the right message to its target audience (*private space*). Thirdly, SNA not only targets a consumer's personal preferences but also the social environment formed by his family and friends (*rituals & shared meanings*). Fourthly, SNA also targets a consumer's self-image and may become a victim of cynicism (*personal branding*). Fifthly, this form of advertising is also perceived with risk and uncertainty if companies interfere in a consumer's personal social space (*perception of risk*). Lastly, SNA may also receive serious criticism if it invades the consumer's social capital which includes his family, friends, colleagues and peers (*place for friends*) (Nevarez & Torres, 2015).

Theoretical Foundation

Advertising over social media is still considered as a new phenomenon and awaits for news insights, propagations and findings (Okazaki & Taylor, 2013). As Knoll (2015) states in his insightful meta analyses that around 45% of the studies conducted on social media advertising in 2013 lacked an explicit theoretical foundation. This figure was dropped down to 22% in the year 2014 which reflects that the later research studies started building a strong theoretical groundwork. As the futuristic studies demand a well-defined theoretical model, the proposed study incorporates the *Uses and Gratifications (U&G) Theory* and the *Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)*.

The combination of two theories into a well-integrated model provides new theoretical insights and adds to the depth of knowledge with respect to social media advertising. The U&G theory identifies the

consumer's gratification seeking beliefs & motives behind social media advertising. On the other hand, the TRA element builds strong foundations for evaluating a consumer's behavioral intentions after being exposed to advertising mediums over the social media. The proposed model in a holistic manner incorporates additional/unexplored consumer beliefs and motivations that provide valuable and practical consumer insights to the practitioners and advertisers when developing their social media campaigns.

The U&G theory identifies the complete process of media consumption and provides recognition to media users by selecting the right media to gratify their emerging needs (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974). This theory applies a *user-centric functionalist* perspective on social media and observes its effects from an individual's viewpoint. The proposed model has specifically employed this theory in not only knowing "how people use media" but also "why people use media". Motivations here need to be understood as gratifications sought i.e. if a specific media behavior becomes a means to attain a specific goal, then that motivation is a means to achieve that goal directed behavior (Pervin, 1989).

The U&G theory lacks in explaining a theoretical linkage/relationship between attitudes and behavioral intentions (Muk, Chung, & Kim, 2014), the role of TRA becomes eminent. Earlier LaRose & Eastin (2004) also propagated that the gratification needs are poor predictors and interpreters of consumer intentions and behaviors. Hence the Theory of Reason Action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) would serve as a behavioral theory for strengthening the relationship amidst consumer beliefs, motives, attitudes and behavioral intentions. It would consider the volitional factors that determine a consumer's behavior of interest backed by a sound cognitive process which strengthens their capability of performing that behavior. On the other hand, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1985, 1991) further incorporates the non-volitional dimension of 'perceived behavioral control' which indirectly influences behavior through external social factors. The proposed study would consider TRA in understanding consumer's behavioral intentions through a personal factor (consumer attitudes) and a social factor (peer influence) explained below.

There have been a series of regular modifications into the Theory of Reasoned Action as elaborated above. TRA was extended to TPB (Ajzen, 1985, 1991) and was modified to into Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1985) for acceptance and adoption of new information technologies. The proposed study would combine TRA with the U&G theory to attain theoretical and practical insights into consumer

attitudes and behavioral intentions towards social media advertising. Earlier Rodgers & Thorson (2000) developed the “Interactive Advertising Model” (IAM) which examined how people approach to internet advertising and in which activities do they indulge in from an information processing perspective. They argued that for the online users to respond to advertising, it is pivotal to understanding their motivations for going online. In the same manner, it is important to evaluate the consumer motivations for using the social media in order to examine their attitudes towards social media advertising. Based on this notion, the proposed study seeks to build an interactive “Social Media Advertising Model” (SMAM) through the combination of TRA & U&G.

There is still a need of significant research on social media advertising (Muk et al., 2014) and little is known about consumer attitudes that develop towards it (Knoll, 2015; Nevarez & Torres, 2015). The SMAM model would seek to enhance the value of social media advertising from a South Asian perspective (Pakistan), which is highly lacking and demands additional academic research (Dao, Le, Cheng, & Chen, 2014). Further, it would also add strong theoretical rigor and foundation to the conceptual framework on social media advertising which is lacking in approximately 45% of the renowned academic journals (Knoll, 2015). Last but not the least, the amalgamation of the two theories would serve as a guiding path into dynamic consumer insights for the marketers and advertisers of the current and the future operating in the Pakistani industry.

Conceptual & Hypothesis Development

Consumer Beliefs

The proposed conceptual framework initially evaluates the three constructs of consumer beliefs that formulate consumer perceptions towards the value of social media advertising. This would be referred to as perceived social media advertising value (PSMAV). Beliefs are a measure of a consumer’s cognitions and attributes about a specific entity or a brand (Solomon, 2013). There has been a series of divergent viewpoints with reference to the beliefs and attitudes towards advertising.

Currently there exist two popular views about the formations of consumer beliefs and their general attitudes towards advertising. The first one regards both beliefs and attitudes as equal and highly interchangeable both operationally and conceptually (Mehta, 2000; Schlosser, Shavitt, & Kanfer, 1999). On the other hand, the second view postulates that beliefs and attitudes are inherently different. Beliefs describe the specific attributes of various objects and attitudes on the other hand are summative evaluations of objects. The attitudes emerge

from beliefs and they exist at different cognitive levels. In this manner, a consumer's belief about advertising is an antecedent of his attitude towards advertising (Brackett & Carr, 2001; Ducoffe, 1996; Ducoffe & Curlo, 2000; Pollay & Mittal, 1993). On the basis of the second school of thought, this research study treats consumer beliefs and attitudes as separate concepts. The three major consumer belief dimensions proposed by the research study are as follows:

Infotainment

Product Information describes the role of advertising as an information reflector and a significant indicator in portraying market efficiencies (Wang & Sun, 2010b). Earlier Norris (1984) highlighted the significance of advertising as an information source and to the potential of consumers being able to relate their needs and wants against various product offerings. It plays a pivotal role in effecting the attitudes of the consumers towards advertising further strengthening their evaluative criteria. In simple terms, product information is a personal belief factor which shapes consumer opinions about the instructive, educational and informative character of advertising (Pollay & Mittal, 1993; Wang & Sun, 2010a). The higher degree of product information depicted through advertising in general also results in enriched and effective decision making (Alwitt & Prabhaker, 1992; Pyun & James, 2011). Additionally most of the other researchers also validated advertising as a valuable source of product information and found it as a major predictor of forming attitudes towards advertising (Korgaonkar, Karson, & Akaah, 1997; Pollay & Mittal, 1993; Schlosser et al., 1999). It was also considered as a significant consumer value, motive and a belief construct when evaluating consumer attitudes towards online and social media advertising (Dao et al., 2014; Jung, Shim, & Jin, 2015; Taylor, Lewin, & Strutton, 2011; Wolin, Korgaonkar, & Lund, 2002). In a nutshell, U&G theory considers the role of Information as a need-satisfying function and it strongly adds to the perceived value of advertising (Ducoffe & Curlo, 2000; Ducoffe, 1996; Liu et al., 2012).

The second portion of Infotainment referred to as Entertainment states advertising becoming a source of pleasure or joy upon exposure. Also referred to as hedonism, there is no doubt that advertisements can touch our emotions, look quite appealing, portray funny events, fosters likeability and be amusing and nostalgic by nature (Greysen & Bauer, 1966; Pollay & Mittal, 1993; Pyun & James, 2011). Entertainment has been studied as a belief construct in evaluating consumer attitudes towards advertising in general (Greysen & Bauer, 1966; Shavitt, Lowrey, & Haefner, 1998), television advertising (Alwitt & Prabhaker, 1992; Mittal, 1994), sports advertising (Pyun & James, 2011) and online

advertising (Wang & Sun, 2010c; Wolin et al., 2002). Moreover, it has also been tested as a significant belief, motive and a value construct when examining consumer attitudes towards social networking advertising (Dao et al., 2014; Jung et al., 2015; Taylor et al., 2011).

In a nutshell, the entertainment value disseminated through advertising information is significantly related to a consumer's perceived value of traditional advertising mediums (Chowdhury, Parvin, Weitenberner, & Becker, 2006; Ducoffe, 1995a). This can not only add to brand loyalty but also has an impact on the general perceptions that enhance advertising value in general. Both Information and Entertainment have been used as a single construct; "Infotainment" by Liu et al (2012) in their study on evaluating consumer's positive perceptions towards mobile advertising. As an extension to Ducoffe's model on advertising value, the proposed research would study this belief factor in examining consumer's perceived social media advertising value (PSMAV) in a positive manner. Therefore, we propose that:

P1: *There is a positive relationship between infotainment and consumer's perceived social media advertising value (PSMAV)*

Invasiveness

This belief dimension was referred to as annoyance/irritation (Bauer & Greyser, 1968). They classically defined annoying ads as "...ads that irritate you. They may be annoying because of what they say or how they say it. They may annoy you because they are around so much, or because of when and where they appear. They may be other reasons for ads to be annoying – the main thing is that they bother or irritate you" (p. 182). Both Bauer and Greyser (1968) observed that one of the major reasons that advertising became a source of criticism and disapproval was due to the presence of annoyance/irritation in it. Aaker & Bruzzone (1981) also pointed out that most of the commercials running on television networks during prime time have become highly intrusive. Most of these ads annoy consumers to the extent that their attitudes are negatively influenced which leads to ignoring the ads by changing of channels. Later Aaker & Bruzzone, (1985) indicated that the effectiveness of advertising is compromised if the irritation level is enhanced. They considered invasiveness as an important variable which creates an impact on the potential efficiency of a commercial/campaign. Bogart (1985) also examined the negative function of advertising as an irritation medium and thus resulting in consumer rejection of ads.

The past literature also supports the negative impact of invasiveness not only on consumer attitudes but also on the value and effectiveness of advertising (Ducoffe, 1996; Ducoffe & Curlo, 2000). Based on Ducoffe's model of advertising value, Liu et al (2012)

observed a negative relationship of irritation on the value of mobile advertising in Japan. Consumers developed negative perceptions towards mobile advertising messages which were incomprehensible and unwanted. In the context of social media advertising, many of the young consumers/millennials of today do not click or view ads if they believe that the message is irrelevant, expect a negative experience or are cynical towards the medium being promoted (Kelly, Kerr, & Drennan, 2010).

Keeping this in mind, Kelly et al., (2010) proposes that additional research needs to be incorporated in diverse international settings accompanied by varying demographic profiles in order to attain improved insights on advertising avoidance behaviors of the consumers on social networking sites (SNS). In the concrete research studies conducted by Jung et al (2015) & Taylor et al (2011) on social networking advertising (SNA), an add was considered invasive when it interfered with their goal oriented behavior and resulted in negative attitudes and perceptions. Under the light of the academic literature discussed above, the proposed study postulates that the presence of invasiveness has a significant negative impact on the perceived social media advertising value (PSMAV). Therefore, we propose that:

P2:*There is a negative relationship between invasiveness and consumer's perceived social media advertising value (PSMAV).*

Integrity

Advertising in general can also be perceived to be intentionally misleading, confusing, trivial or lacking adequate information. This belief dimension has been derived as *Falsity/No Sense* (Pollay & Mittal, 1993; Pyun & James, 2011) and *Credibility* (Wang & Sun, 2010) in the renowned research literature. It has personal consequences as an information source but it also replicates societal costs through deception and cynicism of the mass consumers (Pollay & Mittal, 1993; Pyun & James, 2011). The reliance of the consumers on traditional sources, including political trust and convenience were found to be the finest predictors of credibility portrayed online (Johnson & Kaye, 1998). Their findings acknowledged that despite the internet being regarded as credible, there is an unregulated flow of information, which often lacks adequate quality. On the other hand, the internet was also regarded as portraying falsity, lacking credibility accompanied by the highest share of skepticism. Later Moore & Rodgers (2005) attested that most of the college students despite shopping online, did not find social media advertising as trustworthy. They turned out to be highly hesitant when asked to provide their credit card details and only purchased from websites they personally knew and trusted.

The element of relevance and credibility in an advertisement is considered vital when consumers have to make decisions on the basis of uncertain information (Okazaki, Katsukura, & Nishiyama, 2007). Many of the transitional economies in Southeast Asia are still immature (Wang & Sun, 2010b) and attainment of product information in order to avoid uncertainty emerges out to be a major concern (Khanh & Hau, 2007). With respect to social media advertising (SMA), the content is considered to be more trustworthy when comments from existing social affiliations are posted (Chu & Kim, 2011). In the study conducted in Vietnam by (Dao et al., 2014), advertising credibility had a significant positive impact on the perceived value of social media advertising (PSMAV). The prior studies also depict that the construct of credibility had a significant positive impact on both Web 1.0 internet advertising (Lin & Hung, 2009) and mobile advertising (Liu et al., 2012) within an Asian context. Based on the extant scholarly findings, the proposed study would examine the impact of Integrity/Credibility on strengthening the perceived social media advertising value (PSMAV) within an emerging South Asian transitional economy named Pakistan. Therefore, we propose that:

P3: *There is a positive relationship between credibility and consumer's perceived social media advertising value (PSMAV).*

Perceived Social Media Advertising Value (PSMAV)

Values are defined as the combination of actions, perceptions, attitudes, beliefs and judgments that define a consumer's social spectrum and also his relation towards advertising mediums (Kahle, Beatty, & Homer, 1986). Further value can also be defined as a belief about some specific and desirable end state that illustrates specific situations and describes the selection of human behavior (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987). The term "advertising value" measures the extent to which a specific consumer considers a category of advertising or advertising in general to be valuable and cherished. The perceived value of advertising measures the utility of advertising from a subjective criterion.

The approach of analyzing the worth and value of advertising in traditional media was formulated by (Ducoffe, 1995b). He postulated that any form of advertising that lacks value would result in unfavorable consumer responses and weakening consumer attitudes. On the other hand, advertising that is perceived to be of high value resulted in favorable consumer responses and positive evaluations. His scholarly work was later extended to the digital world i.e. The World Wide Web (Ducoffe, 1996; Schlosser et al., 1999) and other forms of advertising mediums like mobile (Liu et al., 2012) and social media advertising (Dao et al., 2014; Jung et al., 2015) to examine its effectiveness. In the study

of consumer perceptions towards mobile advertising, Liu et al., (2012) concluded that the perceived value of mobile advertising had a significant positive impact on consumer attitudes and it mediates the relationship between consumer values/beliefs and their attitudes. Their positive perceptions lead to favorable attitudes towards advertising and it was consistent with earlier studies conducted by (Petrovici & Marinov, 2010; Tsang, Ho, & Liang, 2004). As an extension to the advertising literature, the study proposed to test a positive and a mediating impact of perceived social media advertising value (PSMAV) on consumer attitudes towards social media advertising (CATSMA) and their emerging beliefs/values within a Pakistani context.

P4: *Perceived social media advertising value (PSMAV) has a positive impact on young consumer's attitude towards social media advertising (CATSMA).*

P5: *Perceived social media advertising value (PSMAV) mediates the relationship between beliefs and consumer attitudes towards social media advertising (CATSMA).*

Consumer Motives

A motive is basically defined as an inner desire to keenly fulfill an arising need or want (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000; Rodgers & Thorson, 2000). They could also be categorized as general dispositions that define a consumer's action to accomplish his targeted need or want. One of the finest and original theories identifying the factors fundamental to motivation have been earlier developed by Maslow (1954), Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman (1959) and Alderfer (1972). Motivation is a true reflection of a goal directed arousal. In the context of consumer behavior, there is an on-going need/desire for an upcoming product, service or a momentary experience.

As identified in the theoretical foundations, a classical approach for identifying the motivations for online use has been the Uses & Gratifications (U&G) model (Eighmey, 1997, 2000; M. R. Stafford & Stafford, 2000; T. F. Stafford & Stafford, 1998) applied in the perspective of mass communication. Based on the *user-centric functionalist* approach, this theory not only identifies "how people use media" but also "why people use media". Motivations here need to be understood as gratifications sought i.e. if a specific media behavior becomes a means to attain a specific goal, then that motivation is a means to achieve that goal directed behavior (Pervin, 1989). Muntinga et al., (2011) has utilized the U&G theory in identifying a series of motivations that have an impact on consumer's online brand related activities (COBRAs) through Instant Messaging (IM) interviews. Based on the motivations identified by Muntinga et al., (2011), the proposed

study conceptualizes the importance of '*Remuneration*' in impacting consumer attitudes towards social media advertising.

Remuneration

Remuneration as a variable has now been considered as a vital social media motivation which not only enhances consumer's engagement towards online platforms but also accelerates their inner desire to reap out some future rewards (Muntinga et al., 2011). This future reward could be a by-product of some valuable economic incentives comprising of money, sweepstakes, contests and prizes (Muralidharan & Men, 2015; Wang & Fesenmaier, 2003). They identified the motivational construct of 'expectancy' having a significant impact on an individual's contribution to an online community through future reciprocation. Wang & Fesenmaier (2003) concluded that online communities need to have financial rewards in order to attain a consumer's active participation and engagement. The element of remuneration could also be in the form of job related benefits like advancement in the career ladder through better promotional opportunities accompanied by well executed training/skill set programs (Nov, 2007). Earlier Hars & Ou (2002) also identified that that extrinsic rewards in the form of compensation and financial rewards outweigh all other intrinsic motivational constructs when evaluating the reasons behind participation in open source projects.

Remuneration has been earlier considered as a vital motivational construct that persuades the online users to consume content over the social media (Goldsmith & Horowitz, 2006; Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004; Hennig-Thurau & Walsh, 2003). Moreover, Muntinga et al., (2011) considered Remuneration as a significant motivational dimension during consumer's online brand related activities (COBRAS). Through Instant Messaging (IM) interviews, they observed that consumers were consuming brand related content as they expected some financial reward/ remuneration like a cash prize, a bonus pack or a pair of their favorite sneakers. Muralidharan & Men (2015) considered Remuneration as the most important social media motivation behind visiting a Facebook page. It was considered as an 'Individualistic' motivation and triggered electronic word of mouth (eWOM) amidst peers who visited social media platforms to yield economic benefits like coupons and samples (Muralidharan & Men, 2015). Further the use of incentives has been effective in raising brand recognition, generating more clicks and strengthening consumer attitudes towards advertisements (Krishnamurthy, 2000; Nevarez & Torres, 2015; Robinson, A.Wysocka, & Hand., 2007). Based on the theoretical justifications, the following hypothesis is proposed:

P6: *Remuneration has a positive impact on young consumer attitudes towards social media advertising (CATSMA).*

Consumer Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertising (CATSMA)

In general, the consumer beliefs and attitudes have been termed as vital indicators of advertising effectiveness (Mehta, 2000). Redefining it, “*A belief is a descriptive thought that a person holds about something. An attitude is a person’s enduring favorable or unfavorable emotional feeling, evaluation and action tendencies*” (Kotler & Keller, 2009). Furthermore, a set of values discussed in the proposed research are a set of beliefs that shapes specific situations and guides human behavior (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987). Reviewing it, the beliefs that are generated about social media advertising highlight its attributes like social media advertising is informative. Adding on to it, attitudes towards social media advertising are evaluations that reflect its perceived benefits (e.g. In general, I consider social media advertising to be a good thing). This viewpoint has also been effectively applied by Chi (2011); Jung et al., (2015); Wang & Sun, (2010); Wolin et al., (2002) for online and social media advertising.

Technology has revolutionized the practice of advertising from the traditional print media to broad cast media and then to the internet. Adding on to it, telemarketing, public relations, direct/personal marketing and social media have become the advertising norms. When advertising as a holistic medium comprises of various promotional tools, evaluating “*what is or is not advertising*”, is highly vital in generalizing consumer attitudes towards it. The presence or absence of specific types of advertising broadly affects and influences the formation of consumer attitudes (Jin & Lutz, 2013). Based on this notion, various popular researchers have tested consumer attitudes towards different types of advertising. Exemplifying it, Pyun & James, (2011) tested consumer attitudes on Sports Advertising, (Liu et al., 2012; Tsang et al., 2004) on Mobile Advertising, Mahmoud (2012), on SMS (Short Message Service) Advertising and Jung et al., (2015) & Taylor et al., (2011) on Social Networking Advertising (SNA)

In relation to advertising, attitude towards the ad has also been considered as an important mediator of advertising effectiveness (MacKenzie, Lutz, Belch, 1986) and brand choice (Shimp, 1981). Popular cross cultural studies in the context of online advertising, second the mediating effects of consumer attitudes. Earlier Drèze & Zufryden (1998) & Wang & Sun (2010) testified that attitude towards online advertising (ATOA) mediates the relationship between consumer’s advertising beliefs and his behavioral responses. Jung et al., (2015) also successfully tested the mediating effect of consumer’s attitude and

behavioral intentions that develop towards social networking advertising (SNA) of the Facebook users in South Korea. Muk et al., (2014) further proposed that the mediating effects of attitudes need to be further tested under different cultural settings in order to attain better insights into direct/indirect relationships between constructs. As an extension to the advertising literature, the proposed study would test the mediating impact of consumer attitudes towards social media advertising (CATSMA) between its antecedents (beliefs through PSMAN & motivations) and his behavioral intentions/responses. Hence the following hypothesis are proposed:

P7: *Consumer attitudes towards social media advertising (CATSMA) mediates the relationship between perceived social media advertising value (PSMAN) and Behavioral Intentions.*

P8: *Consumer attitudes towards social media advertising (CATSMA) mediates the relationship between Remuneration and Behavioral Intentions.*

Behavioral Intentions

In relation to a consumer's attitude which reflects his evaluative criteria, a behavioral intention defines an individual's willingness to undertake a specific behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). As an example, an individual's attitude could be in favor/disfavor of buying an organic produce while his behavioral response could be his intention to buy that produce. From the earlier studies conducted on consumer behavior, the relationship between attitudes and behavioral intentions/responses has been an area of explorative study, emerging significance and major apprehension (Jung et al., 2015; Wicker, 1969). The advertising literature suggests that consumer attitudes share a positive relationship with behavioral intentions that develop through advertising. Favorable consumer attitudes were linked with higher ad recalls and greater buying interest (Bauer & Greyser, 1968; Mehta & Purvis, 2006). Mehta (2000) evaluated that consumer's positive intentions of recalling the brand were directly linked with their positive attitudes towards advertising. To further strengthen the argument, the consistency and uniformity between consumer attitudes and behavioral intentions/responses has also been well established by the past and recent literature on consumer behavior (Boateng & Okoe, 2015; Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010).

The proposed study examines behavioral intentions as a by-product of two major dimensions i.e. *intention to engage in electronic word of mouth (eWOM) and intention to purchase*. They have been earlier considered as the resulting online behaviors and consequences of

positive consumer attitudes that develop towards social networking advertising (SNA) (Nevarez & Torres, 2015).

Intention to Engage in Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)

Word of Mouth (WOM) marketing is defined as the exchange and transmission of marketing information among consumers. It plays a vital role in effecting consumer attitudes and behaviors towards various product offerings and services (Gold, Katz, Lazarsfeld, & Roper, 1956). The importance of WOM in prompting consumer's decision making process has been well recognized in both the advertising and marketing literature (Engel, Blackwell, & Kegerreis, 1969; Gilly, Graham, Wolfinger, & Yale, 1998). On the other hand, Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) is defined as any form of positive or negative declaration prompted by any actual, former or potential customer, about a product, service or company which is rapidly made available to a mass audience through the internet (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). It takes birth through a wide range of online mediums such as social networking sites, virtual consumer societies, emails, blogs, customer generated reports and forums (Dwyer, 2007; Thorson & Rodgers, 2006).

Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) has played a major role in affecting consumer's attitude towards a specific brand, internet & social media websites (Chu, 2011; Lee, Rodgers, & Kim, 2009). The social media platforms enrich consumers with an environment where they can interact and exchange information with friends & peers. They engage in eWOM through different ways which comprise of formulating conversations with firms, liking & commenting on posts and pictures, being a part of permission based advertising, turning out to be advocates of a brand and sharing their product preferences with public. These aforementioned eWOM behaviors are an indicator of a consumer's positive attitude towards social media advertising as these promotional messages provide regular updates of current product offerings and market insights. On the other hand, when consumers receive unsolicited and uninvited messages through popups or banner advertising, it results in negative consumer attitudes and hence prohibits them in engaging in eWOM activities (Nevarez & Torres, 2015). Further Nevarez & Torres (2015) used the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and empirically tested that positive consumer attitudes towards social networking advertising(SNA) had a positive impact on a consumer's intention to engage in eWOM behaviors. Based on the evaluated advertising literature, the proposed study would test a positive relationship between consumer attitudes towards social media advertising (CATSMA) and his behavioral intention to engage in electronic word of mouth (eWOM).

Intention to Purchase

A consumer's intention to purchase online is conceptualized as his intention to make a purchase regardless of his previous purchase history with other related organizations (Schlosser, White, & Lloyd, 2006). As mentioned earlier, a behavioral intention also defines an individual's willingness to undertake a specific behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Purchase Intention is considered to be the most widely and frequently utilized dimension of behavioral intention and is also considered as one of the major indicators of effective e-retailing procedures (Hausman & Siekpe, 2009). In general, a positive relationship between consumer attitudes towards advertising and intentions to purchase the advertised products/brands has been an area of significant and extensive consumer research. The previous scholarly works have concluded that both the attitude towards an advertisement and attitude towards the brand predict purchase intention (Lutz, McKenzie, & Belch, 1983; MacKenzie et al., 1986). With respect to product placements portrayed through video advertising, Nelson, Keum & Yaros (2004) found that positive consumer attitudes towards advertising in general lead to positive attitudes towards product placements which further strengthened their intention to purchase the brand being displayed in the video game. Ko & Cho (2005) suggested that consumer's attitude towards advertising was considered as a vital antecedent of brand attitude which in turn has an impact on purchase intentions.

In the context of web advertising, Choice & Rifon (2002) also determined that positive attitudes towards the brands advertised online lead to positive purchase intentions. Moreover, Dao et al., (2014) applied the Expectancy Value (EV) theory and found that consumer's perceived value of social media advertising(SMA) had a significant positive impact on their online purchase intentions within Vietnam. In the recent study conducted by Nevarez & Torres (2015) on social networking advertising(SNA), the empirical results portrayed that positive attitudes towards advertising convinced the consumer to visit the firm's website and purchase through it. Hence based on the previous findings, the proposed study would test a positive impact of consumer attitudes towards social media advertising (CATSMA) and his behavioral intention to purchase online. Based on the thorough academic literature evaluated above, we hypothesize that:

P9:*There exists a positive relationship between consumer attitudes towards social media advertising (CATSMA) and Behavioral Intentions.*

Research Model

The proposed model shows a series of four independent variables named Infotainment, Invasiveness, Integrity & Remuneration.

They serve as the exogenous variables where Infotainment, invasiveness and integrity exert an impact on the variable named Perceived Social Media Advertising Value (PSMAV). It acts as a mediating variable between the former three belief constructs and Consumer Attitudes Towards Social Media Advertising (CATSMA). Furthermore, the study proposes that Remuneration exerts an impact on CATSMA which also acts as a mediating variable between the former motivational construct and Behavioral Intention. Lastly, Behavioral Intention acts as the study's main endogenous/dependent variable being affected by CATSMA.

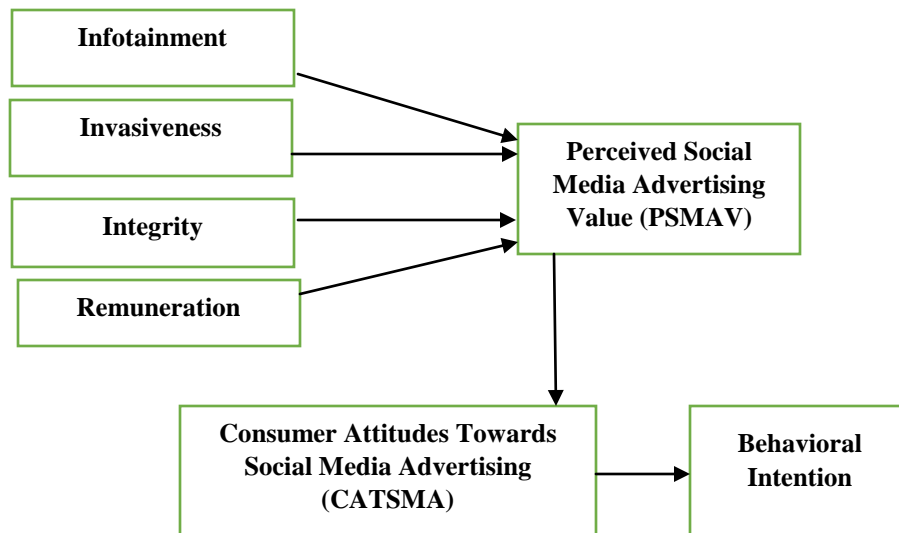


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Implications

On the basis of the literature review, the research study provides a concrete conceptual framework that is theoretically driven and demands a sound empirical investigation. According to Knoll (2015), majority of the recent studies on social media advertising lacked a strong theoretical framework and built their foundation on specific research questions. They were not successful in adding theoretical knowledge on a more abstract level within the digital advertising context. The proposed research provides an integrated social media advertising model (SMAM) which incorporates a consumer's socio-psychological behavior. It combines the Theory of Reasoned Action (personal behavior theory) with Uses and Gratifications Theory (mass communication theory). The U&G theory explores the gratification seeking beliefs and motives of a consumer exposed to social media advertising. Consequently, the TRA evaluates a consumer's behavioral intentions after developing positive

attitudes towards promotional content over the social media. The amalgamation of the two theories creates additional knowledge and extends the advertising literature in terms of identifying the underlying personal, psychological, financial and social factors with respect to the role of social media in Pakistani context.

In the light of practical insights of the proposed study, it would benefit the multinationals which have plans to advertise and sell their products through social media in Pakistan. It would also assist the brand and advertising managers to understand the emerging wants, dynamic desires and volatile expectations of the young consumers which reside within traditional and collectivist cultures. The research would also provide insightful information to the marketing managers in examining the underlying user values, perceptions, motivations and beliefs that strengthen attitudes towards social media advertising. Knowing the consumer responses to advertising on virtual communities will help the practitioners in modifying their product offerings accordingly. Further it would assist in designing an engaging and appealing advertising content that matches the diverse needs and wants of the young consumers in Pakistan and South Asian countries.

Limitations and Future Research

The initial limitation of this paper is that it just provides a conceptual model to be empirically tested. The quantification of the results need to be given due weightage in order to evaluate the impact of the proposed independent variables on value of advertising, consumer attitudes and their underlying behavioral intentions. The First-generation (1G) techniques such as correlations, regressions and difference of means tests offer limited modeling capabilities. This conceptual model needs to extensively tested /through Second-generation techniques including Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) which are more scalable, robust and flexible causal modeling capabilities (Lowry & Gaskin, 2014). Furthermore, if not quantitative, an initial pilot study of at least 35 respondents (qualitative in nature) could also be conducted, to test the propositions brought forward in the conceptual framework. Moving on, the research paper addresses the role of social media advertising in generic terms, without mentioning any specific industry. The future research needs to highlight specific emerging industries like fashion, clothing and electronics which take the majority of the share of Pakistan's e-commerce business (Social Bakers, 2016).

The conceptual model discusses the major antecedents of advertising value and consumer attitudes towards social media advertising. Futuristic studies need to incorporate context based variables such as aesthetics and functionality of virtual communities and user

based variables such as need for creativity, self-efficacy to attain useful insights about an online user's behavioral responses. The proposed study theorizes about the mediating roles of consumer attitudes and perceived value of advertising. An in depth investigation into the moderating roles of 'demographics' (like age & gender) and 'types of social media' could add more fruitful insights to the study. A multi-group analysis across various models would be beneficial in examining whether the purported moderation remains consistent or not.

Furthermore, the literature review draws insights from most of the developed economies like United States, United Kingdom and Canada. There is a dire need of a sound comprehensive analysis of social media in the transitional economies of South Asia including Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Social media is still in an iterative and embryonic stage in these countries (Dao et al., 2014). As the research study proposes an empirical analysis of the proposed model, there is also a need to conduct qualitative studies through ethnographic research (face to face interviews) and focus groups. This would help the researchers and marketers in identifying the reasons behind social media usage and its impact on their personal and communal lives.

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