

Social Media Entrepreneurship: An Analytical Study Based on Diffusion Innovation Theory in a Selected Population from Vithura Village

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A b s t r a c t

The study was conducted to analyze the scope of social media entrepreneurship in the present scenario on the basis of the Diffusion Innovation Theory. The randomly selected samples are the social media users belonging to the age group between 18 to 60 years old. Survey method was used to collect sixty responses through an online survey tool that was to say through a well-prepared questionnaire. The collected data were analyzed and interpreted through percentage distribution. The study was proposed to identify the socio-economic background of the respondents, to find out the possibility of people being an entrepreneur in online media and the purchase behaviour of the people through online media. The study results revealed that the respondent's online behaviour and their instantaneous tendency to adopt the technological possibility open up a novel online business culture and thus expand the scope of social media entrepreneurship which ensures the application of diffusion theory in the study area.

Keywords: Social Media, Entrepreneurship, Diffusion Innovation Theory, Business

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1. INTRODUCTION

Human intelligence develops many innovations to please their day-to-day activities, and world interconnection happens through the internet. The development of internet technologies, like many other areas, has transformed the way businesses do business (Cicek 2018). The invention of the internet expands mobile communication, social shaping, intrinsic affordances and network evolution (John Naughton, 2016). The internet tool makes different ideas into the society like it makes consumers more accessible. It has created a completely new form of communication device that makes the process of exchanging information much faster than earlier, and due to this invention, firms and companies are compelled to rethink how they could communicate with their customers (Jaokar, Jacobs, Moore and Ahvenainen, 2009). The digital revolution started with the use of social media. According to Andreas Kaplan (2015), social media were an application built by the internet with the ideological and technological help of web 2.0, and the user could create their own content. Social media communication easily shares the information to users or customers without delay and reserves time by providing a provision to communicate through video calls, pictures, text messages, free calls, etc., and social networking allows businesses to gain access to resources (Jagongo, Kinyua 2013). Online behaviour of users not only provides knowledge and entertainment but also it has wide scope in entrepreneurship.

Social media fashioned a new trend in entrepreneurship. The Schwab foundation defines social entrepreneurship as a practical, innovative and sustainable approach to benefit society in general, emphasizing those who are marginalized (Georges Abi-Aad, 2015). People spend their major portion of the day on social media sites. One could promote young entrepreneurs and reduce unemployment with the help of social media since it helps the entrepreneur interact with customers directly. Online businesses yield profit returns through buying and selling goods.

Entrepreneurial success is the level to which the entrepreneur's enterprise converges with the

owner's view and the community's expectations (Kakish and Haddad S, 2018). Nowadays, researchers have attempted to explain the tool of the internet revolution in the commercialization of products and the creation of new firms and different types of services (Angelides, 1997; Lancioni et al., 2000; Batjargal, 2007).

Gunelius (2011) suggests five ways to boost business by using social media for relationship building, brand building, publicity, promotions, and market research. These five ways can be helpful in different perspectives like building a customer-friendly relationship between the customers and influencers, the conversation that the company gets a chance to make awareness about their brand, sharing the information and modifying the negative perceptions, providing discounts and other opportunities and finally to get information about the demographic data, future trends and competitors information to expand their market and thereby increase the market share.

Entrepreneurs are in the position of being one of the most important driving forces of economies (Dutta et al., 2009). Oxford Dictionary defined an "entrepreneur as a person who undertakes the responsibility of business or businesses, together with the possibility of profit or loss" (Oxford Dictionaries English (2018). Normally entrepreneurs go with local business strategies and find it difficult to popularize their brand. But social media helps their brand reach all over the world through advertisement, posting information related to the product to a public profile, sharing content from one person to another, branding through a satisfactory survey, to promote online and offline business. The possibility of entrepreneurship success depends on the application of diffusion innovation theory in the field of business.

DIFFUSION INNOVATION MODEL

Diffusion is a method or system of transmission of ideas, technologies and commodities through modern communication channels during a particular period. This system was a special form of communication which focused on delivering information about the new ideas, technologies, services, commodities etc. It was important in the sense that this could help to promote progress and tries to address the burning

issues concerned with the society, and make the society address the unemployment and other social issues, especially in a country like India. Nowadays, the diffusion principles and delivery of various processes have been gaining wide importance since the emergence of different social media platforms and during the time of advancement of internet technologies in the 21st century (Cizek, 2018). Now many researchers conducted the studies on diffusion process in the last decades, particularly after the publication of Everett M. Roger's book titled 'The Diffusion of Innovations' in 1962 as its first edition. Later it came to be known as the Diffusion of Innovations (DOI) model, often referred to as the Diffusion of Innovations theory. This theory explained how a communication channel could influence the adoption of new ideas, technologies and processes (Kreps Gary 2017). Nowadays, research in this field has reached different perspectives on various issues like "agriculture, engineering, sales, education, architecture, technology, public policy, and health care, and was applied to a range of different issues, such as the adoption of new technologies, consumer purchasing behaviours, and public support for political issues and candidates" (Kreps Gary 2017). Roger (2010) maintains that a sound system can only communicate new innovations over time.

Significance of the study: Social media would improve our economic growth and the chance to explore the business through social media entrepreneurship.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To know the socio-economic background of the respondents.
2. To find out the possibility of people becoming an entrepreneur through online media.
3. To access the purchase behaviour of the people through online media.

3. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

• Study Area

The study was carried out in the Vithura village of Thiruvananthapuram, a district in Kerala, at the beginning of 2021. Samples were collected from sixty respondents. Twenty-one males and thirty-nine females have participated in this online survey method.

• Sampling and Experimental Procedure

The samples were collected randomly, taking into consideration their age, gender, religion, educational status, family income per year, number of children, the possibility of respondents being an entrepreneur, and the purchase behaviour of the respondents through the survey method. A well-prepared questionnaire was sent through the respondent's social media account. The collected data was analyzed and interpreted through percentage distribution. Here the study tries to examine how far the diffusion theory was effective for social entrepreneurship in Vithura village, Trivandrum District of Kerala.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An entrepreneur primarily focuses on money and profit. Social media entrepreneurship was a great venture seeking money, profit, and growth for the firm. The profile of the respondents is shown in the below tables:

4.1. Socio-Economic Background of the Respondents

Table - 4.1.1

Sl No	Category	No of Respondents	%
Age (Years)			
1	18-24	18	30
2	24-35	33	55
3	35-60	9	15
Gender			
1	Male	21	35
2	Female	39	65
Religion			
1	Hindu	42	70
2	Christian	14	23.4
3	Muslim	4	6.6
Educational Qualifications			
1	Primary	-	
2	UP	3	5
3	HS	3	5
4	Plus two	9	15
5	UG	30	50
6	PG	15	25
Marital status			
1	Married	33	55
2	Single	27	45

	Widower	-	
Family Income per year (Rs)			
1	<100000	15	25
2	100000-200000	21	35
3	200000-300000	12	20
4	> 300000	12	20
Number of Children			
1	One	14	23.4
2	Two	10	16.6
3	No child	36	60

The above table shows that sixty respondents were collected for the analysis of their socio-economic background of the respondents.

Age: In the above table, out of sixty respondents, the majority (55 per cent) were aged between 24 and 35, and thirty per cent of respondents were between 18 and 24. They were mostly youngsters. Participants from the 35 to 60 age group were very few (15 per cent).

Gender: In this study, sixty respondent's majority of respondents were women (65 per cent), and thirty-five per cent were men. The study indicates that women respondents were very much interested in social media entrepreneurship.

Religion: In the above study of sixty respondents, the majority were from the Hindu religion (70 per cent). Respondents from other religions were very few.

Educational qualifications: In the above table majority of them completed their graduation (50 per cent), and twenty-five per cent of respondents had post-graduation. But the interesting fact is that five per cent of respondents have upper primary qualifications only.

Marital status: In the above table of sixty respondent's majority of the people are married (55 per cent), and forty-five per cent of people are unmarried.

The family income per year: Today's generation takes care of their economic status and is cautious in making every minute productive. The above table denotes that the majority of the respondents (35 per cent) have income between one lakh and two lakh per year. Thirty per cent of the respondents only earn more than three lakh per year. In this instance,

we can infer that social media entrepreneurship is becoming an effective tool for income generation.

The number of children: In the above table, forty-five per cent of the respondents are single. The majority of the respondents (sixty per cent) have no children. It might be observed that financial instability furthers the problem of unreasonable birth control. It is generally perceived that having a child would have a serious financial effect on low-income families, and consequently, a considerable number of couples are disbanding their parental intentions.

4.2. Possibility of People to be an Entrepreneur in Online Media

(Table :4.2.1)

SI No	Category	No of Respondents	%
Hobbies of the Respondents			
1	Yes	60	100
2	No	0	-
Total		60	100

4.2.1. Hobbies of the Respondents

Table: 4.2.2

SI No	Hobbies	Number of Respondents	%
1	Social media	30	50
2	Singing	6	10
3	Dancing	3	5
4	Writing	3	5
5	Video making	6	10
6	Shopping	12	20
Total		60	100

4.2.2. social media usage

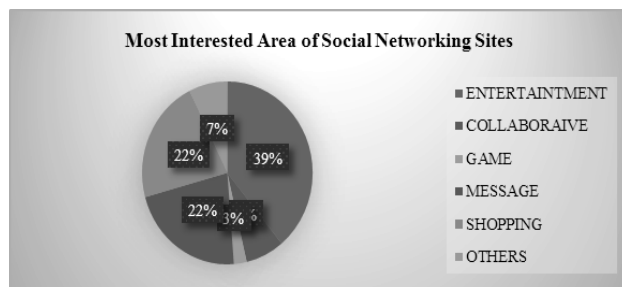
The above table (4.2.1) reveals that the majority of the respondents spent more time on social media, which means fifty per cent of the total respondents spent their leisure time on social media.

The table above table (4.2.2) discusses another prominent hobby among respondents, i.e., shopping. Twenty per cent of respondents have shopping as their hobby. The study shows that traditional

hobbies like singing, dancing and writing are rarely seen among respondents. An interesting finding from the study was that a new generation hobby like video making is becoming prominent among the respondents (10 per cent). The study also indicates that social media developed as a platform that brings together options for different aptitudes like singing, dancing, and writing. A clear indication from the study was that the influence of social media usage has a very negative impact on traditional skills, but still, we can see that many respondents are using social media as a tool to promote their physical skills. Social media was an eminent tool for the diffusion of innovation among the present generation. But still, the diffusion has both positive and negative indexes.

4.2.3. Most Interested Area of Social Networking Sites

Figure: 4.2.1



The above pie chart implies that thirty-nine per cent of respondents are using social media for mere entertainment, which intimates that the majority of respondents see social media as a tool to spend their leisure time. However, a relevant percentage of respondents use social media for functional purposes like shopping (22 per cent). The fact that another 22 per cent were using social media for messaging was an expected outcome. It is a widely accepted fact that a relevant percentage of people use social media for messaging. We can infer that there was a wide scope for entrepreneurship using the advancement of social media. The entrepreneurs can improvise their business based on diffusion theory using social media.

4.2.4. Details of Websites Maintainers.

Table: 4.2.3

SI No	Category	No of Respondents	%
1	Yes	9	15
2	No	51	85
Total		60	100

1	Yes	9	15
2	No	51	85
Total		60	100

The above table shows that out of 60 respondents, most do not maintain websites that are helpful in expanding their business as an entrepreneur. If done, they could improve the possibility of their vast business superior. It would help them to earn income from websites as well they could help reach their products and services through these websites. The study shows the need to create awareness among entrepreneurs about the positive impact of websites. A website was a good communication tool, as described in the diffusion theory.

4.2.5. Respondents' Interest in Online Shopping.

(Table: 4.2.4)

SI No	Category	No of Respondents	%
1	Yes	54	90
2	No	6	10
Total		60	100

A very interesting fact derived from the above table was that ninety per cent of the respondents showed interest in online shopping. It was a good indication and a ray of hope for online entrepreneurship. Through online shopping, entrepreneurs could save advertisement charges and agent commission. Therefore, by maintaining a website of one's own, an entrepreneur can either sell their products at a low price or make an offer sale on their products. In turn, it becomes beneficial to both the entrepreneurs and customers. The trend toward online shopping can be clearly seen in this study. Online shopping sites are the best tool for diffusing new ideas and products.

4.2.6 Online Behavior versus Business Opportunity.

(Table: 4.2.5)

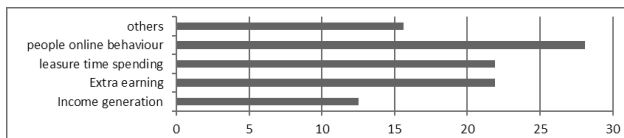
SI No	Category	No of Respondents	%
1	Yes	46	76.6
2	No	14	23.4
Total		60	100

The majority of the respondents believe that spending more time online improves business opportunities.

Being online, they would be notified about updates from gmail and different business applications. This indicates that they could increase their earnings, profit, etc., by spending more time online and reading related articles. As per the diffusion theory, the spread of innovations can be only made through proper channels. Online applications are a good tool in this aspect.

4.2.7. Factors Influencing a Social Media Entrepreneur

Figure: 4.2.2



In the above graph, it was interestingly noted that the majority of the people come under the people online behaviour category. This category includes the people who use social media for purposes other than leisure time and extra earnings. Notably, above twenty per cent of respondents use social media for leisure and extra earning. A very good trend was that 12.5 per cent of respondents use social media for income generation. This indicates a very positive spread of innovations mentioned in the diffusion theory.

4.2.8 Response to be An Entrepreneur.

Table: 4.2.6

SI No	Category	No of Respondents	%
Interested in being an entrepreneur			
1	Yes	60	100
2	No	-	-
Total		60	100
Interested mostly in			
1	Offline	21	35
2	Online	36	60
3	Both	3	5
Total		60	100

The above table revealed that a cent per cent of the respondents wish to see themselves as an entrepreneur, but interestingly sixty per cent wish to do business through an online channel. Whereas

thirty-five per cent still believe in traditional business techniques, a small portion of the respondents use both techniques in their business and using both techniques simultaneously will be more helpful for the businessman. However, most of the respondents are not aware of this. In this instance, entrepreneurs using offline techniques should be made aware of the benefits of online techniques. Diffusion theory would apply only when more entrepreneurs use both techniques alternately.

4.2.9. Respondents' Response in Proper Awareness in Doing in Online Entrepreneurship.

(Table: 4.2.7)

SI No	Category	No of Respondents	%
1	Yes	6	10
2	No	54	90
Total		60	100

In this table, early we discussed that a good number of respondents like to do entrepreneurship through online media. However, a more detailed study shows that even though they like to do online business, they do not have proper knowledge about the applications to use and the techniques to earn money. This means that entrepreneurs should be given more awareness and training rather than vague ideas. Then the only proper application of diffusion theory becomes more successful.

4.3 Purchase Behavior of the People through an Online Media

People's interest in businesses allows them to flourish. As a reason, it is essential to be able to make purchasing decisions.

4.3.1. Details of Respondent's Social Media Purchase

Table: 4.3.1

SI No	Category	No of Respondents	%
Purchase done in			
1	Weekly	24	40
2	Monthly	21.6	36

3	Yearly	4.8	8
4	Whenever I need	7.2	12
5	Not interested	2.4	4
Total		60	100
Purchased from			
1	Flipkart	19.5	32.5
2	Amazon	-	-
3	club factory	12.2	20.33
4	Myntra	17.1	28.5
5	Based on advertisement	4.89	8.15
6	Others	6.1	10.1
Total		60	100

The above table describes new trends in respondents' shopping frequency. Notably, most of the respondents do the shopping weekly, indicating a bigger change in the shopping habits of society. Weekly shopping started to replace conventional monthly shopping. The arrival of new shopping applications plays a bigger role in this prospect. Twelve per cent of respondents put no time bound for shopping. They do shop whenever they need it.

4.3.2. Level of Satisfaction among Respondents for Online Shopping

Table: 4.3.2

SI No	Category	No of Respondents	%
Genuineness of online products			
1	Yes	51	85
2	No	9	15
Total		60	100
Satisfied with online shopping			
1	Yes	45	75
2	No	15	25
Total		60	100

In table 4.3.2, the majority of the respondents (85 per cent) believed that they were getting the same product displayed on online sites. Also, it is notable that seventy-five per cent of respondents are satisfied with online shopping. This study ensures the genuity of the path (social media) of the diffusion of innovations.

4.3.3. Respondents' Interest to Maintain an Online Shop

Table: 4.3.3

SI No	Category	No of Respondents	%
Interested respondents to maintain online shop			
1	Yes	54	90
2	No	6	10
Total		60	100
Interested area for online Shop			
1	Cosmetic	28.9	48.3
2	Electronic	6.2	10.4
3	Household things	2	3.4
4	All products focused	4.13	6.9
5	Textiles	2	3.4
6	No idea	16.5	27.6
Total		60	100

In the above table, it was very interesting to see that majority of the people are interested in maintaining online shops. Among these majority of respondents prefer cosmetics shops (48.3 per cent). Also, we could see that 27.6 per cent of respondents like to maintain an online shop. However, they do not have an idea about the areas they could opt. Such people should be given proper guidance to bring them to the entrepreneur's level.

5. CONCLUSION

The above study analyzes the changing attitude of different categories of society towards social media entrepreneurship and how it would influence the diffusion innovation model. Social media users in Vithura are progressing towards social media entrepreneurship. The study observed that respondents do not consider social media as a primary income source or as a trusted source of income, but they consider it as an extra earning source. The study found that cent per cent of the respondents like to be an entrepreneur. Thirty-five per cent of respondents trusted traditional business only. In this particular study, the author analyzed how the interest of society in shopping could be utilized to promote social media entrepreneurship. Ninety per cent of respondents are interested in maintaining an online shop.

As described by diffusion innovation theory, diffusion of innovation and ideas become strong when new powerful media of communication are involved in society. Social media has a high hand in bringing a revolution in the present society. It gives a good direction to a positive perspective of society toward social media entrepreneurship.

Future Implication of the Study: The trend of people spending more time on social media could be utilized to make society benefit economically. People cannot think about the business without social media and change the trend in business. The easy way to attract the customers is that they can be educated to spare a part of their time spent on entertainment for entrepreneurship. Also, the attitude of spending more time online can be diverted to purchase behaviour. Thus, developing people to earn primary income online with offline business is indispensable for the future.

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