

AMITY MEDIA & JOURNALISM REVIEW

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DIGITAL INDIA: CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEDIA.

- Synergy between Industry & Academics
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- Mobile & e-Applications in Hospitality & Tourism
- A Study on Consumer Shift from Print to Online Media with Special Reference to Newspapers
- Social Media: Varying ways in which English Language is Used or Killing its Essence?



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AMITY MEDIA & JOURNALISM REVIEW

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Synergy between Industry & Academics

Prof (Dr) Sanjay M Johri*

These are glimpses of typical entrance interview sessions at any school of journalism and mass communication:

“Why do you want to join a Mass Communication course?”

“Sir, I want to become like Barkha Dutt.”

“What about you?” the interviewer asks another candidate.

“I want to be an RJ.”

“Any specific reason to join this course? Another candidate is asked.

“Sir, I want to interview political leaders and be part of this glamour world,” pat comes the reply from another candidate.

While these candidates have towering ambitions, most of them leave much to be desired on the academic front. While many of them show poor writing skill in the essay writing test, some are almost blank on the current affairs front and were not in habit of reading newspapers. Their narration and appearance before camera was shaky.

These glamour-struck young ones, idolising a Rajdeep Sardesai or an Anurag Kashyap come to a mass communication school virtually with no preparation. Worst, they don't consider it necessary to be prepared for it as they would have for a civil services examination, or even an IIT test. This is the irony of media studies.

Majority of aspirants don't look into the struggle their idols have gone through. They just want to be like them without following their path. For them, shortcuts are ideal routes.

So, how to produce quality students out of this disparate gathering? This the biggest challenge before an academic.

Irrespective of the fact that the in-born and inherent qualities a journalist should have, I tried to find whether we are producing right kind of students who can perform well when they enter the industry.

Incidentally, the problem lies not just with the students. Majority of teachers in our journalism school are from pure academic background with little exposure to the industry. They lay all emphasis on theory that serves little purpose beyond a point for students.

Academics hardly focus on hands-on experience and prefer dictating notes, knowing fully well that students find practical classes more interesting for the simple fact there is no learning for them to prepare for the industry. With little practical training, students find themselves clueless when they enter the field.

On the technology front, new ICT innovations have transformed industries like newspaper publishing, but many media departments' curricula are lagging on this front. And those which do have good media labs face other challenges in servicing and maintenance facilities.

The induction of new technology like computers and the Internet in the media sector suggests that familiarity and working knowledge of related ICT skills should be part of any curriculum in the training institutions.

Are school of journalism well-equipped to teach new courses in fields like Print, New Media, Advertising, Public Relations, Event Management & Corporate Communication and development communication? The growing media industry today needs young journos and hope they are taught well so they do well in the industry at the entry level.

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Can the media industry and the education sector in India cooperate to meet the needs of students and media organizations? What should their long-term and short-term strategies be, and how is this affected by the increasing commercialization and digitalization of media? These are important questions for media education academics and policymakers in India, and their answers will shape the health of our media sector and society as a whole.

On the other hand - Do we have competent media faculty to deliver in their respective subjects well in school of journalism?

I, personally, feel in most of the journalism school, 70 per cent faculty have academic background having almost no exposure to industry and this directly affects their delivery and content. I have no hesitation in saying a faculty teaching Print hardly knows the nuances of a newspaper's print production. PR or advertising faculty have never worked in the industry and what they teach is theory irrelevant for the students because they don't learn anything.

Print faculty need to know working on Quark or In-Design software so that they are able to demonstrate the page making art and inculcate a sense of layout among the students. Development Communication shouldn't be taught from theory books but students need to be taken to NGOs, see their projects in field and understand how they work for the transformation of people's life. Doing a case story is a better approach of learning for students rather than taking notes on Development Communication.

Schools of Journalisms need to involve as many experts from the industry in their Board of Studies so that they suggest improvement in syllabus and make it purely industry oriented.

Compared to foreign media and the training, Indian Media Schools and industry continue to have complete mismatch and they need to reduce the gap and ensure what we produce today are industry ready and take forward what they have learnt during media studies.

Many Journalism Schools have gone for a tie-up with industry and they prefer half day theory teaching and second half of the day learning in the industry as a kind of practical exposure or hands-on training.

Facebook, Privacy & Advertising: A Study with Special Reference to Perception of Indian University Students

Dr. Mahendra Kumar Padhy*

This research paper is an attempt to study Facebook users and their perception of advertising on the social network sites. Characteristics such as privacy, micro targeting, Facebook use, awareness, and reactions, were all important factors that influenced these responses. The objective of this study is to see how postgraduate students from four universities across the country view Facebook and its advertisers. The results indicated that student reactions did not overwhelmingly lean in a particular direction: Individual users perceive the site differently, and this determination directly correlates with the uses and gratification theory.

Keywords: Privacy, Facebook, corporate advertising, perception of ads, effective advertising.

Introduction

Facebook is a social networking site (SNS), which provides users with a platform to create a personal profile page, add 'friends', and send messages. Since the company was founded in 2004, it has become the top ranked social networking site (Kazeniak, 2009). According to Facebook Statistics (2009), there are over 300 million current active users (i.e. users that have logged-on in the past 30 days). Facebook users have claimed the site a "necessity, along the lines of oxygen, water, and food" (Verna, 2009). For many people, visiting Facebook has become an integral part of their daily lives, and has even caused some to have an unhealthy obsession with the site. Facebook continues to add new features and developments on a consistent basis. Since it is free to create an account, Facebook has to generate its revenue elsewhere, through a venue such as advertising. Companies can utilize Facebook's features to reach their audiences in different ways. Gangadharbatla (2009) states that SNS are changing the way advertisers reach consumers, and that these changes are transforming.

There are a variety of ways to use Facebook, and the different features allow creativity and experimentation in advertising. For instance, when users log-on, they are taken to a homepage called a "News Feed" which highlights recent activities from other users. Each Facebook account also includes a personal profile page, a "Wall" to write public messages to other users, Facebook-generated applications (photos, events, groups, video, notes, and links), and an inbox to write private messages to other users. The site also allows users to add optional features called Platform applications to connect in new ways. According to Facebook's statistics (2013), more than 80% of Facebook users utilize Platform applications on a monthly basis. Since these Platforms are optional, it is significant that users are seeking out additional Facebook features and uses for the site. The purpose of Facebook has shifted, as the continued popularity of added features proves that its users are looking for more than just casual networking with friends. Advertisers also have the option to create a free fan page, where companies and individuals can invite users to become a "fan" of a product, service, person, company, brand, etc. The page is set up similarly to a profile page, with the option to add status updates, photos, announcements, etc. According to Facebook's statistics (2013), over 15 million users become fans of pages on a daily basis, which provides growing possibilities to reach consumers without any financial risk. There is also a chance to buy birthday gifts, as Facebook has expanded its 'gift shop' to include real gifts alongside virtual ones (Klaassen, 2009). This type of online shopping connects cyber space with the real

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world, so that what happens online does not necessarily stay online.

Another benefit to Facebook advertisers is the site's growth. "Traffic to Facebook is up almost 200% over the last year. Social media is no longer just for techies or younger generations it has become a mainstream phenomenon" (Swedowsky, 2013). Not only traffic to Facebook increasing, but users are also spending more and more time on the site. This growth in figures shows how technology has revolutionized the lives of people around the world, and advertisers need to recognize and react to these changes. Klaassen (2009) reports a recent study, where 43% of online purchasers named social-network surfing as the reason they decided to make their purchase. This statistic shows the potential power that advertisers have to reach a willing and active audience. However, to fully understand the effect of Facebook advertising, it is important to understand how consumers perceive Facebook and its advertisers. This study will show how advertising can affect Facebook users, and provide further suggestions for a more effective means to reach a target audience through social networking.

Overview of Literature

Uses and Gratification Theory

The "uses and gratification" theory (Katz, et al., 1974) provides important insight into why Facebook is so widely used. As an audience-based theory, uses and gratification hypothesizes that different consumers use the same media messages for different purposes, depending on their individual needs and goals (Sheldon, 2007, p. 40). According to Katz et al. (1974), the uses and gratifications theory is based on the assumption that

1. The audience is active,
2. The media choice lies with the audience member,
3. All mediums compete with other sources of need/goal fulfillment,
4. Mass media goals can be found in the message of the source, and
5. Cultural value judgments should not be taken into consideration as the audience explore their own opinions.

By directly applying these assumptions to mass media in terms of the social networking sites (specifically Facebook), a few customized observations can be made. First, the average

Facebook user is active, as he or she has willingly created an account, and is a member of the site. Next, the user chose Facebook as a means to fulfill his or her wants and goals over other sources. Essentially, the Facebook user came to the site for a unique purpose. This can include the need to connect interpersonally as well as the want to promote a business or product (i.e. advertising). In order to understand the perspective of a potential consumer, it is essential to study why Facebook users visit the site in the first place. The uses and gratification theory is a reminder that these needs are customized for each person, and therefore cannot be generalized to an entire population. However, meaningful information can be developed covering smaller populations with common characteristics. For the purpose of this study, our subjects are university students who are already Facebook users, having joined the site for their own specific reasons.

Advertising and Social Networking Sites

With individualized motives comes an individualized need for advertising. Social networking sites provide unique opportunities for companies that simply don't exist elsewhere. Among the advantages are increased interaction between the business and customer, a more targeted means for reaching an audience, and a direct way for customers to connect to each other (as well as potential customers). Learmonth (2009) states that Facebook is an effective marketing platform because networking and communication are already taking place. This allows companies to be directly woven into conversations simply by appearing on the site. Facebook presents an entirely new way of scrutinizing a product or brand: "It has not only transformed the research and purchase consideration phase, but it also provides shoppers with a platform to advocate for the products and stores they love" (Swedowsky, 2009). For example, product raves and reviews could appear on a fan page, or in an application.

Not only does interactivity increase, but Facebook also allows for a complete customization of advertisements by the ad creators. For the traditional website advertiser, Facebook advertisements are relatively easy to generate, and allow the creator a variety of choices when making an ad. The site lets advertisers select the exact demographic that sees the ad, which helps them not waste time or energy on people outside of their chosen market. The advertiser can view the results of who is clicking their ad, and modify it

accordingly. Facebook ads are extremely relevant to users because they are so highly targeted.

Privacy and Perceptions

While the aforementioned story does show a highly effective means in reaching a target audience, it also brings up the question of the accessibility of private information. Although users put up all personal information willingly, they may or may not know that their information can be shared with a third party. Facebook's partnership with Nielsen in September 2013 is just beginning to change the advertising front of the site; so very little research currently exists in terms of consumer response to nano-targeted ads. However, the online privacy debate has existed since the creation of the Internet, with private information becoming increasingly available to companies and individuals alike.

For a variety of reasons, Facebook privacy settings are not always fully utilized. Users can change the way others see their private information, and Lange (2008) hypothesized that privacy settings may not be adjusted due to ignorance or the "it won't happen to me" assumption. Lange's study also points out that when users click the "Accept Terms and Conditions" button when joining a site or adding an Application, they tend not to read the fine print, which may say that the user is (unknowingly) agreeing to sell or give away his/ her personal information. Sherman (2008) adds that a term such as "Privacy Policy" on a website may make users automatically assume that their information is safe when that may not actually be the case. Schrage (2013), the vice president of communications and public policy for Facebook, admitted that one of the goals of the site was for the ads to be "relevant and interesting" for viewers. Facebook is also assuring that the information shared is "anonymized," meaning that advertisers receive demographic information, but no individual information that could be traced back to one person (Schrage, 2013). Although Facebook is improving communication with its users through blog announcements, it does not make it clear as to exactly what information is shared, and to whom the information is given. Therefore, Facebook is not necessarily guaranteeing that certain information will be kept private, and this may be information that the user may not want a third party to have access to. Like Facebook privacy, prior research on SNS in general is limited, as Facebook in particular has only existed for the past five years. Therefore, there has not been a significant amount of research done in the area of social networking sites and advertising's effect on

the users. Since SNS have become such an integral part of our daily lives, it is important for advertisers to understand how customers and potential customers on the site perceive them.

Research Questions

To advance that understanding, three primary research questions were constructed. The first question examines the Facebook users' point of view, which is essential for success and understanding:

- a. How are Facebook and its advertisers scrutinized in the eye of the consumer?

The second question deals with the issue of privacy, as online safety and the control of private information is more difficult to monitor online:

- b. How is privacy perceived on Facebook?

Lastly, the third question yields the opportunity to provide suggestions and ideas for advertisers, which would be beneficial information for advertisers, as well as future research:

- c. What would make Facebook advertising more effective?

Research Methodology

Sample Size

To address these questions, a survey of university students at four universities across the country was conducted using the Facebook site. The respondents were collected from B.B. Ambedkar University (n=120), Lucknow, University of Lucknow (n=68), Amity University (n=105), and Central University of Orissa (n=49). These four universities were chosen because they represent all different geographical regions of the country. According to Gangadharbatla (2008), a student sample is a relevant and significant group, as university students fit the demographic of SNS users.

Research Design

Because the goal was to reach as many students at the four universities as possible, a simple survey was developed. The survey consisted of 12 questions, including three major sections: (1) demographic, (2) Facebook and advertising, and (3) privacy and perception. Participants answered close-ended demographic questions. In the Facebook and advertising section, close-ended questions were asked regarding the number of Facebook "friends" the participant currently has,

how often the participant checks his or her Facebook, and what Facebook "Applications" the participant has used. In terms of advertising, the participant was asked how aware he/she is of advertising on Facebook, and where he/she has seen advertising on Facebook.

In the privacy and perception section, participants were offered a chance to express how they feel about Facebook advertising, and relate this to their personal privacy. Participants were first asked about their current privacy settings on Facebook, in an effort to gauge their interest in protecting their personal information and identity. They were then asked about Facebook ads they have seen for their specific demographic and were asked to share what specific ads they had seen. From this information, they were asked if this type of advertising changes their perception of privacy on Facebook, as well as their perception of the companies that advertise, and to elaborate if they so chose. In closing, the participants answered an open-ended question about how companies can utilize Facebook to advertise more effectively.

Research Findings

The goal of this study was to see how Facebook users perceive the site and its advertisers. Each section of the survey provided information and opportunities for participants to honestly and openly express their perceptions, and give specific examples as to why they feel the way they do.

Table No.1.

Name of the University	Gender	Freshers	Compare Freshman	Juniors	Seniors
B.B. Ambedkar University	70.2% female, 29.8% male	1.6%	15.2%	24.0%	59.2%
Lucknow University	71.1% female, 28.9% male	0.9%	17.6%	9.3%	72.2%
Amity University	60.7% female, 39.3% male	0.0%	4.3%	23.3%	72.5%
Central University of Orissa	80.0% female, 20.0% male	10.6%	23.4%	6.4%	59.6%

Table 2. Logged-on users who were aware of advertising on Facebook

Name of the Universities	100% of the time	75 % of the time	50% of the time	25% of the time	0% of the time
B.B. Ambedkar University	30 %	25%	30%	12.50%	2.50%
Lucknow University	27.80%	20.40%	28.70%	22.20%	0.00%
Amity University	25.40%	17.90%	26.90%	26.90%	3.00%
Central University of Orissa	32.60%	23.90%	21.70%	17.40%	4.30%

Demographic Outlines

Out of the total number of participants: 70.2% were female and 29.8% were male. Individual university demographics were as follows:

Social Network Site: Facebook and Advertising

Collectively, 48.1% of respondents had between 500 and 1,000 Facebook "friends," and only 2 out of the total 349 had less than 100 friends.

In terms of Facebook usage, 80.1% of participants' log on to their Facebook multiple times daily, and 95% of the respondents check their Facebook at least once a day. At LU, 98.5% of students surveyed check their Facebook daily, and 95% of BBAU students are logging on daily. CUO showed that 95.6% of participants were on Facebook at least once a day, and this number was 92.6% at LU.

Across the board, 100% of participants used Applications on Facebook. All of the students used Facebook-generated Applications, such as events, photos, and groups. The next most popular application was "fan pages," with a combined 66.2% of participants using this application (76.1% for BBAU; 59.3%, LU; 68.2%, Amity; and 54.3%, CUO).

Advertising awareness varied by universities, but 79% of respondents were aware of advertising on Facebook at least half of the times they log-on. Data from the individual universities in terms of advertising awareness is shown in Table No. 1.

Students had seen advertising in a variety of places on the site. As a whole, 39.8% of respondents saw advertising on applications; 82.0% saw advertising on their main page; 34.5% saw advertising when they write on a friend's wall for their birthday; and 83.2% saw advertising on the side bar of other people's profiles.

Privacy and Perception

In an analysis of all participants, the majority at every universities considered their profile settings to be "strict," meaning only their Facebook friends can see all of their information, but they are searchable to other users. Of the total, 88.2% of respondents said that their current privacy settings on Facebook are "strict" or "very strict," meaning they do not appear in search results, and have an extremely limited profile. No respondents admitted that their Facebook pages were "extremely open," meaning that everything on their Facebook page can be seen by everyone. Only 4.7% students of LU, 28.4% of Amity, 13.0% of CUO, and 3.5% of BBAU would consider their profile pages to be considered "open," meaning that friends and networks can access all of their information).

When asked about specific Facebook ads, 88.0% of total respondents have seen ads that directly target their demographic. Among those who saw nano-targeted advertising were 90.5% of LU students and 84.4% of CUO respondents. At Amity, the percentage was 83.9%, and at BBAU it was 87.7%. Some of the ads seen by all of the universities included t-shirts for shows they like, lifestyle advertising, dating services for the newly single, internships in their specific majors, study abroad, merchandise, housing in the area where they live, etc. After describing the highly targeted ads, participants were asked if these ads change their perceptions of privacy on the site. For this question, respondents were split. Collectively, 54.7% of students thought that the ads did not change their perception of privacy, but this majority did not hold up at all schools. At LU, only 40.6% of students said the ads changed their perception of privacy, followed by 45.7% at CUO and 45.6% at BBAU. However, Amity was slightly swayed in the opposite direction, with 52.2% of respondents thinking that the advertising changed their perception of privacy. Respondents at Amity cited the following as reasons for the change invasion of privacy, feeling less secure, or questioning why the

Table No. 3. Common Perceptions of Companies by Facebook Users

Open-Ended Answer	B.B. Ambedkar University	Lucknow University	Amity University	Central University of Orissa	Total
Relevant	1	5	1	2	9
Manipulative	4	1	6	0	11
Smart	4	4	2	3	13
Less credible/legitimate	3	3	1	3	10
Technologically savvy	2	2	2	4	10
Desperate	4	0	3	1	08

Table 4. Suggestions for more Effective Advertising on Facebook (unit response)

Open-Ended Answer	B.B. Ambedkar University	Lucknow University	Amity University	Central University of Orissa	Total
Not advertise at all	8	6	8	5	27
Keep it the way it is	6	12	5	5	28
More targeted ads	5	10	4	2	21
Less targeted ads	5	4	3	3	15
Not sure	4	3	5	2	14
Fan pages	5	3	1	3	12
Incentives	3	4	3	2	12
More creative/exciting	9	7	8	3	27

information is accessible when privacy settings are strict. Each university had respondents that expressed concern over their privacy on Facebook, but the results were not particularly clear either way. When asked how they felt about the companies that create this highly targeted advertising, the majority of respondents at each university answered that the advertising did not change their perception of the company (a total of 66.7% of students). However, each university did have some who disagreed. The number of students who said that they saw the companies in a new light because of advertisements reached 28.3% at LU, 38.8% at Amity, 34.2% at BBAU, and 34.8% at CUO. Their perception of the companies, as described by one exact word they used, is shown below in Table 2.

In the last question, respondents were asked to give constructive criticism, and respond as to how they thought Facebook could be used to advertise more effectively. Table 3 below shows the top eight common responses.

Inferences

On the basis of the results generated from the surveys, a number of inferences can be drawn. First, the average participant had between 500-1,000 Facebook friends. This number is significant, because according to Facebook's Statistics (2013), the average user on the site only has 130 friends. This may indicate that the participants in this survey are more active on the site, and know more fellow "Facebookers" than the average user. Another significant statistic was that only 5% of participants did not log-on to their Facebook account on a daily basis. According to Social Peel (2013), 80% of university students log-on daily, making this particular group of university students even more active on Facebook than the average college student. The fact that all participants used applications was expected, as participants were told about the survey through a Facebook event (which is technically an application). The next most popular application set was the fan page, which over 66% of respondents use or visit. This should be noteworthy to business companies and potential advertisers, as it is a free way to get Facebook users connected to a specific brand or product. The rest of the application types did not get enough respondents from the participants to be as important in the same sense.

The study proved that the majority of students are fully aware of advertising on Facebook, with less than 5% of respondents from each university not noticing it at all (at LU, every student noticed the

advertising). The most common places these ads were seen were on the "news feed" home page, and on the side bar of other people's profiles. These are typically displayed as traditional banner ads, and the fact that students did not notice ads in other places could indicate that they are not fully aware of untraditional advertising on Facebook. In terms of privacy, all students surveyed had taken some precautions and modified their privacy settings on Facebook. All participants knew what their settings were and none classified themselves as having "extremely open" profiles. This indicates that the students are concerned and aware that their information may leak out to third parties. This may also correlate with the fact that the majority of respondents have seen micro-targeted ads, specifically to their demographic. Although participants gave many examples of these nano-targeted ads, it did not necessarily change the way the students thought about Facebook or its advertisers. Participants were split in terms of whether or not it changed their perception, and even when their perception was changed, it was not necessarily for the worse. This indicates that there was not an overall consensus as to the effects of advertising on Facebook users. It may seem obvious that students would prefer the advertising not to exist in the first place; however, less than 30% of all respondents suggested that Facebook stop advertisements all together. For effective advertising, many suggested ideas, such as giveaways, promotions, and more eye-popping advertisements to catch a user's attention. Advertisers should use this information to their advantage when pursuing an advertising campaign on Facebook.

Conclusion

This research study took a critical look at Facebook advertising and how it affects the users of the social networking site. As of now, there is no conclusive data as to a "universal" perception of Facebook advertising. This conclusion directly relates to the uses and gratification theory mentioned in the literature review. This study was limited because it could not be entirely random due to limitations in contacting students at the participating universities. Also, the manner in which the survey was advertised limited the participants to students who checked their Facebooks during the last week of July. Therefore, less frequent Facebook users were not represented in the results. In order to further understand how to effectively advertise on social networking sites, more research should be conducted. It would be beneficial to follow a specific

business company which is advertising on Facebook, and see how the company grows or changes as a result of social network exposure.

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Mobile & e-Applications in Hospitality & Tourism

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Today planning a holiday is at finger tips. The mobile application has made a revolution in terms of accessibility. The consumption, production and distribution of services for travellers who dwell in some place other than their domiciles or workplace for at least 24 hours. Shorter sojourns are regarded as mere excursions. The mobile app & portal based booking of air tickets, packages, transportation, rail tickets, bus and hotel bookings on home page have revolutionized and customized travel plans a great deal. The online payment and instant confirmation with reference, booking ID No. via SMS, mail act as virtual ticket during air travel. This paperless transaction is eco-friendly.

Key Words: Mobile App, Tourism, Hotels, E-commerce

Introduction

In Electronic Check-in a guests is registered as Preferred/Privileged customers are sent key cards equipped with the latest of identification technology that uses radio frequencies. On the day of guests' confirmed arrival, a text message is sent on his mobile device, carrying basic details like room number, timing, etc. Upon his actual arrival, the guest doesn't need to confirm his stay at the front desk... He simply moves to his room and uses the key-card.

Most of these hospitality sector trends are rather encouraging for hoteliers. The booking / reservations volumes are on-the-rise. With increased reservations and more business intelligence technologies, like Hotel PMS systems, being offered, the 2015 Hotel Industry Outlook seems encouraging.

As a hospitality sector business entrepreneur one would like to stay in-sync with the latest trends in the global hospitality industry. This is rather important since trends that are increasingly engaging attention soon can become a standard demand for hotel guests. Following are some of the new hotel trends that are making their presence felt across the globe.

Hotel Operations

More Emphasis on Hotel "Lobbying"

Customer loyalty or guests are seeking more, inside-the-hotel time either way, the hotel lobby is fast making a comeback as an important section of the hotel environment. Mobile recharging consoles are on the rise. Vibrantly-coloured interiors along with free Wi-Fi checking is being offered. While bigger hotels can afford to offer docking stations for iPhones too, smaller hotels are attempting to ensure that eat-as-you-move kind of snacks/drinks offered in their lobbies.

Mobile-Enabled Front Desk Management

Hotel-owners, irrespective of their scale of operations, are using Hospitality Management Systems to fast-track their operations as per a standard industry feature.

Many of the Hotel PMS Systems offer restrictive features.

Many hotel-owners and hotel managers are upgrading. This includes searching for better vendors, checking-out new locations, attending industry seminars, finalizing deals with travel agents or supervising their marketing efforts.

Arising trend in the hospitality business is through more robust Hotel Property Management Systems that maximizes ROI and offers a bigger range of features.

Increasing Surcharges Becoming a Norm

This might bring an instant smile to ones face. Amenity fee has almost become a norm across many

US hotels. Now, housekeeping surcharges and luggage storage surcharges are also being levied.

Welcome to the Age of Pump Dispensers

Pump dispensers in bathrooms might not be the best news for folks who like those tiny, carry-away bottles of hair conditioners, lotions and shampoos. For hotel-owners, the growing trend of pump dispensers essentially means lesser expenditure and manpower for replacements/refills.

Guests are likely to waste lesser with dispensers. One might not want to jump on to this trend though it does offer the lure of some immediate savings. Some of your guests might love the neatly-wrapped soaps on the counter top that lends a personalized touch to services. Most clients are online, building relationships with them while they are glued to their Computer screens. With the rise of social media, connecting with your clients through these mediums makes sense. Building social profiles on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Face book. The majority of clients have active profiles on at least one of these websites.

Social media is changing the playing field by providing a venue for the one-to-one connections that create unbreakable bonds. Connecting with customers and building communities take more effort and time than typical social media acquisition strategies.

To get started following actions are helpful:

- First, set up a LinkedIn group, a Twitter profile, and a Facebook page.
- Include links to your profiles in all future communications with clients.
- Now use these channels to aggressively communicate with your customers. Start linking out to valuable and relevant content, share company or hotel updates on topics, and engage with clients who leave comments and feedback.

For companies struggling to find topics to post on their social media channels:

- Product news updates
- Short pieces on key news, such as virus outbreaks or high-profile system outages
- Case studies featuring your clients
- Reviews of new software
- Details of new services you offer
- Then a traveller (either from India or outside)

visits a new place in India, either he needs to rely on his own research about the place or takes help from tour operators who can misguide him for their personal profits. Often the traveller is left in the lurch, forced to spend way more than he initially estimated, making the whole idea of tourism seem unviable.

- But travelling is fun, and it needs encouragement from the Government.
 - Taking in the cues from practical problems faced by tourists in India, Ministry of Tourism has launched the official Android application for Incredible India's unique tour planning and destination discovery platform: Tripigator.com. The app, currently available in the Google Play store, offering schemes of redeem points on repeat transactions, gives volume discount
 - And ensures customers patronage.
 - This mobile app is an extension of Tripigator.com, which was launched in May this year by Ministry of Tourism as an online platform for trip planning and destination managements and new itineraries.
 - The developers of this app have taken into consideration the aesthetic aspects, as designing and User Experience (UX) is impeccable to say the least. The colour combinations and user interface has been optimally chosen to support the Incredible India's branding and marketing plans. The overall look and feel of the mobile app, along with usability is consistent with the official website: Tripigator.com and the users who are used to this online platform will not feel out of place while using the mobile app. Operating Tripigator.com
 - After signing up, the user can choose from two options: Plan a Trip or Discover Places.
 - If one chooses 'Plan a Trip' to start with, the app will ask the following information: Starting location, destination, interests, date of journey and budget expectations. Based on the preference, the app's algorithm will showcase the suggested trips, with costs involved (airfare/taxi/hotel) and the time required.
 - Choosing interests like adventure, culture, family, friends, hideaway, lifestyle, nature, romantic, spiritual and wildlife.
- Once the trip has been planned, one can save it and collaborate with friends by sharing it on Face book or via emails. Users can also invite their friends from the app itself, and then edit the tour planning at the same time, thereby,

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creating a small eco-system of those who love travelling and venturing out.

- With Google Maps Street view, and other technological innovations, this application can provide any user with a 360 degree view of famous tourist spots in any of these cities. The user can scroll through the architecture and view the places as if they are really walking on the street.
- Tourists who face language barriers while visiting a new location will find this application immensely beneficial as they can now scan the place on their apps before visiting, and seek out directions without asking anyone.
- Last year, the ministry had launched the same application on their website, and was available to download for Blackberry mobiles. But with the Android launch, the application can have a broader reach and popularity.
- The application has identified several important locations within a city, which are deemed popular as per the feedback from tourists, and created a heritage walk with 360 degree view of the place. For example, say a person is visiting Lucknow for the first time, and wants to have a virtual walk around the city on his mobile. He can simply enter the search terms or go directly to the Lucknow section and select the location to visit.
- Here an actual image of Bara Imambara emerges giving the virtual view of the monument.
- By clicking and dragging the mouse over the image, the user can have a complete multi-dimensional 360 degree view of the place. The app also assists in providing directions to reach the site, popular eateries around the place and more such tourist-friendly information.
- These walking tours have been curated by renowned travel experts from the locations.
- What really heartening to see is that the app does not appear as a Government app, but something that has been designed and

developed by a private firm to ensure user experience and functionality.

- Now the platform is developed and mobile app launched as well, the success of this initiative by Ministry of Tourism shall depend on how updated and relevant is the information present in their servers.
- Considering that tourism industry is very dynamic, and always changing, tourists will expect that Government posts information based on real human reviews, without any bias or prejudice, and keeps on adding latest informative articles, feedback and insights from other travellers.

Destination Branding

Implement a monthly email marketing campaign by linking travel and hotel articles as a way to drive your customers to your blog.

Starting a Blog

One can write a weekly article on something interesting accomplished that week, an accomplishment one feels customers would value. Offering a product that can help save ones clients. A few minutes a week or released a whitepaper that provides great insight into employee management. Theblog should be consistent by using it as a way to build relationships with customers.

Implement Anticipatory Service

Anticipatory service is a proactive approach to customer service. Instead of waiting for problems to occur, a company that implements anticipatory service can eliminate problems even before they occur.

Research Methodology

Exhaustive study on online travel and hospitality portals; Interaction with leading web designers.

Analysis

On use of Mobile applications in travel industry in terms of turnover with a comparative study of other leading industries.

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Travel	1a	\$12,000.0000	.	.
Million US\$	1a	\$35,000.0000	.	.
Million US\$	1a	\$11,000.0000	.	.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Personalization	1	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.0000	.
Entertainment	1	\$11,000.00	\$11,000.00	\$11,000.0000	.
Travel	1	\$12,000.00	12000.0	12000.0000	.
Valid N (list wise)	1	(In Millions)			

Nonparametric Tests

Hypothesis Test Summary

Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
The distributions of Personalization, Entertainment and Travel are the same.	Related-Samples Friedman's Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks	.368	Retain the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Conclusion

Globally the travel mobile applications have turnovers of over US\$12,000 million.

Mobile App is a trend fast catching up.

Evaluation

Globally mobile application is very effective tool for getting instant hotel and travel bookings done.

With major hotels & travel agents with mobile applications like hotel.com, makemytrip.com,

Hyatt, Westin have made booking very easy even while on move.

The percentage of bookings via mobile apps is increasing day by day.

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A Study on Consumer Shift from Print to Online Media with Special Reference to Newspapers

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Consumer shift in media means the change in preference of the readers in terms of medium used for gathering information. This shift occurs due to the change in way the viewers or readers perceive content and the change in the availability and accessibility of content due to the arrival of the new media. The world is changing culturally, economically and technologically. The slow growth of print media industry in most parts of the world and predictions about the death of the print industry due to the new wave of online media, it's quite necessary to see whether the scenario in India is similar to what's going on world-wide. These changes have even impacted the media industry a great deal which has resulted in a paradigm shift of consumer's preference from print to online media. The advent and widespread availability of the new web 2.0 has generated need to get information at a click of a button. There are a lot of new variations that have effected the consumer shift. The change in lifestyle, needs, waning interests in news and a lot more that has formed a backdrop for this transition from print to online media channels. This study is an attempt to analyse this shift among the consumers vis a vis two perspectives – culturally and story content or presentation. The study finds that though online media is the new age media and grabs more audience still the print (newspapers) has a wide reader base and leads in terms of accuracy. It even helps the readers as well as the researchers to understand the shift and the reasons that have accelerated it.

Key Words: Consumer Shift, Media, Web 2.0, new wave, online media.

Introduction

We generally avoid media that does not agree with our values, attitudes, beliefs, or pocketbooks, Schramm (1963) argued in his Users and Gratification theory that we make media choices according to how gratified we will be from consuming a particular media. The uses and gratification theory suggests that “audience members actively pursue particular media to satisfy their own needs.” Is it easier to read a newspaper on the internet or would you rather watch television or listen to the radio? Even with all the information online, there are still many people who consider it too time consuming and complex to use.

Online Media

“Change starts at the edge” that's where readers and viewers probe new practices and also where the emerging culture is generating. It is a culture in which viewers look at media from different perspective.

The term 'Online media' or the internet is on demand access to content, anytime, anywhere and on any digital device. This has led to the evolution of the term 'new media. It has allowed the individuals to be much more active in content creation. Anyone who has an access to computers and an internet connection can participate in social media, can contribute their own write-ups, arts, videos, images and comments as well as do business online.

Birth of New Media

It is the media of the new age and said to be the future of the media industry as it leads in creating more users, and even sustaining them through its interactivity and instant access to all what is happening across the globe. Online media was born with the evolution of the internet in 1990s which laid the base and grew with the changing of the web 1.0 to web 2.0 which is more user friendly, versatile and dynamic than the previous version. It is all about openness, organisation and community. Online media creates the platform rather than just the content.

How and why newspapers shift to online?

Arrival of internet brought all magazines, newspapers, contents to be viewed on a single platform, just a click away the consumption changed from usual clearly defined platforms. The

web editions of the Indian newspapers began in 1995 with The Hindu since then many newspapers likes Times of India, Indian Express, Hindustan Times etc. have come out with their online editions and website to display news at a click. The main reasons for this shift has been the changing behaviour of the readers who now want news and information at a click of the mouse, the arrival of the new media and the competition that it has created in the market, the need to create an interaction with the readers to understand and fulfil their needs, to continue to flourish in the market, the newspapers have tried to integrate with the online media. (Source: M. Flourish Klink, Online migration of newspapers)

Though the traditional media is directed by new media, the stories, user-generated content, change in language, packaging of news have changed but it is believe traditional media won't die out but many changes would be incorporated in the times to come.

Project Design

Research Questions

The objectives of the internship are as follows-

RQ 1: What are the reasons for consumer shift from print to online media?

RQ 2: Which is the most preferable medium within the target audience?

RQ 3: What are the major changes in story content and presentation from print to online media?

Literature Review

The researchers through a study came to conclusion that there was a phenomenal increase in the readership of newspapers both English as well as regional with 77% respondents preferring collecting news and information via newspaper followed by television 12%, online 7% and radio 4%. Development of consumer loyalty and retaining readers has been suggested as a major challenge for the managers of publishing business (Dr Shaukat Ali). In 26 GWI's countries, people are spending more time each day online rather than on traditional forms of media. Traditional media still leads in the consumption rate only at Australia, Germany, Poland, UK, France and Netherlands among the 40,000 online users taken from various countries (Jason Mander, 2014). Globally, internet users now spend a daily average of 6.09 hours on online media, up from 5.55 hours in 2012. People of all age groups except those who fall in the bracket of 55-64 like reading print press online rather than in its

traditional form. Further the user habits have not yet geared up towards online news consumption and the internet users visiting newspaper websites still comprise of a very less proportion (GirishMenon, 2014). With growing broadband and mobile internet user base, shifting demographics in favour of younger population and growing smartphone penetration, it is inevitable that over time more readers will gravitate towards digital news and information consumption. But for now though the online internet user base in India has increased still regular users comprise of only half of the total base. Interestingly, the Indian media presents a complimentary scenario when it comes to comparison between the new and old media. The figures of print media vis-à-vis the online media shows a unique Asian phenomenon, where, in spite of access to online news, the Indian population still attaches importance to reading the hard copy of the newspaper. What so ever be the penetration of digital media, it should be understood that the traditional print newspapers may never lose their importance and continue to play a significant role in the news consumer market in near future (Dr. C. Pichandy, V. Ashok Kumar, R. Jayaseelan and V. Palaniappan, 2014). In any case, whether this decline in news readership is because readers aren't interested or don't have the time, the same outcome emerges fewer people are reading the news. The pressing problem is that the news is not having a strong enough appeal to readers. Just 41% of respondents say they read a paper the previous day, compared with 47% in 2000 and 48% in 1998. Much of this decline occurred amongst those 35-49 years old (PEW Research Centre for the People and the Press study, 2002). There has long been a sizable “generation gap” in newspaper readership. Yet the decline in newspaper readership cannot just be attributed to the fact that youngest cohorts are less likely to read newspapers rather newspapers are also suffering from loss of readers within the older age cohorts. Over the past decade, it has shown a drastic decline in newspaper readership among the groups that have been the most faithful to newspapers --- the silent/greatest Generations (PEW Research Centre, 2009).

Method

A survey was conducted to examine the views, preferences and activities of the readers who are reading newspapers or using any other media for gathering information. To analyse the opinions and tastes of readers, an online survey was conducted for a wider coverage. The sample size of 30 respondents was drawn through random sampling.

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The questionnaire consisted of 13 closed ended questions dealing with all aspects that focused on gauging the outlook and likings of the consumers on the study.

An intensive interview of experts from the field of print and online media, professors of journalism and communication at research universities, and industry professionals have also been integrated.

Study Design

To determine the consumer shift from print to online media with special reference to newspapers 13 measures were employed in this research study

- Newspaper subscription
- Availability of internet connection
- Preferable medium for gathering information
- Content and presentation of media vehicle
- Frequency of newspaper reading
- Liking towards newspaper reading
- Dislike towards newspaper reading
- Medium-accurate information
- Media interactivity
- Time spent on medium
- Media vehicle preference-online/print
- Activities online
- Importance of print medium in comparison to online medium.

These measures will contribute to the topic 'A study on consumer shift from print to online media with special reference to newspapers.'

The first stage involved doing a focus group discussion among the respondents. Based on the focussed group discussion, a questionnaire was developed. The data collected were summarised using descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and mode.

In total 30 respondents participated in the study. The mean age of the respondents was 26. The participants belonged to Lucknow and they were the students pursuing bachelors' courses in various fields from Law, Medical, Commerce Mass Communication etc.

Results & Discussion

Newspaper subscription

The responses for this measure have a mean of 15

(SD= 11). The mode for this statement is 1. This question was designed to test whether the audience have subscribed to a newspaper or not. The results showed that 87 % respondents actually subscribed to a newspaper at home.

Availability of internet connection

The responses for this measure have a mean of 15 (SD= 14). The mode for this statement is 1. This question was designed to test whether the audience have an internet connection at home or in their mobile phones. The results showed that 97% of the respondents use an internet connection.

Preferable medium for gathering information

The responses for this measure have a mean of 6 (SD= 5.51). The mode for this statement is 2. This question was designed to find out the most preferred medium that is used by audience to acquire knowledge or information. The results showed that 53% of the respondents most preferred medium is online while print (newspaper) is the second most preferred medium with 23%.

Content and presentation of media vehicle

The responses for this measure have a mean of 6 (SD= 4.77). The mode for this statement is 2. This question was designed to find out the story and content of which medium is liked mostly by the audience. The results showed that 40% of the respondents most preferred online while print (newspaper) is the second most preferred medium with 33%.

Frequency of newspaper reading

The responses for this measure have a mean of 6 (SD= 5.62). The mode for this statement is 1. This question was designed to find out the story and content of which medium is mostly liked by the audience. The results showed that 50% of the respondents read newspaper daily while 7% said they do not read newspaper, 33% read sometimes and rest 10% responded as they do not read it often.

Liking towards newspaper reading

The responses for this measure have a mean of 10 (SD= 9.93). The mode for this statement is 1. This question was designed to find out the liking of the audience for newspaper reading. The results showed that 80% of the respondents actually liked reading a newspaper.

Dislike towards newspaper reading

The responses for this measure have a mean of 3.75

(SD= 5.06). The mode for this statement is 8. This question was designed to find out the reasons for the disliking of the audience for newspaper reading. The results showed that 53% of the respondents had reasons not matching the options while 23% read online.

Medium-accurate information

The responses for this measure have a mean of 6 (SD= 4.33). The mode for this statement is 1. This question was designed to find out the views of the audience regarding the medium which according to them delivers the most accurate and correct information. The results showed that 43% of the respondents believed print (newspaper) to be the most accurate and 27% considered online.

Media interactivity

The responses for this measure have a mean of 6 (SD= 5.93). The mode for this statement is 2. This question was designed to find out the most interactive medium in views of the audience preference. The results showed that 56% of the respondents chose online to be most interactive medium while only 11% considered print (newspaper).

Time spent on medium

The responses for this measure have a mean of 6 (SD= 6.72). The mode for this statement is 1. This question was designed to find out the number of hours the audience spent on a medium for gathering information. The results showed that 63% of the respondents spent more time on online while only 13% of the respondents said that they spent more time in reading newspaper.

Media vehicle preference-online/print

The responses for this measure have a mean of 5 (SD= 3.78). The mode for this statement is 1. This question was designed to find out the information which audience mostly read or enjoyed reading online/print. The results showed that 40% of the respondents read news.

Activities online

The responses for this measure have a mean of 4 (SD= 1.78). The mode for this statement is 3. This question was designed to find out the activities the audience were involved in while surfing online. The results showed that 23% of the respondents were social networking while 20% read news, 13% listening and downloading music, 10% blogging, 7% each for chatting and watching online videos and movies and rest 13% did something else.

Importance of print medium in comparison to online medium

The responses for this measure have a mean of 10 (SD= 5.65). The mode for this statement is 1, 2. This question was designed to find whether print medium has lost its importance due to the arrival and increasing popularity of the online medium or not? The results showed that an equal percentage of the respondents i.e. 47% believed it has and even that it has not lost its importance.

The researchers also talked to people from the industry as well as academicians to know what could be the reasons for consumer shift from print to online media.

According to them the shift of consumers from print to online media is mainly due to the cost effective availability of content, easy availability as compared to print media and last the changing preferences in terms of taste of the consumers towards online.

However, there is also a school of academicians who don't agree that there has been a consumer shift from print to online media in India because they think that people who were previously reading a newspaper still have the liking for it as the print copy satiates their urge for information in detail.

Namita Bajpai, Content Manager, Amity School of Communication, Lucknow opines that the consumer shift to online is generally witnessed among the youth who usually lack patience and time and enjoy an easy access to online media through mobile phones, laptops, tablets, which they carry with themselves. This draws them to web and the e-papers. Whereas the aged group of society still follows the old pattern of reading the newspapers to satiate their quest for detailed analysis of the news items especially the politico-social issues. So it is a very clear division between the two age-groups. The shift is not very conspicuous across the board but yes it is limited to certain age slots.

Shewta Gujral, senior sub-editor, Tribune, Chandigarh believes that the consumers are shifting more towards the online media because of its easy, anywhere, anytime and on any platform availability of content, information be it news or any other field. There is availability of content on it for 24/7 hours a week so it's quite flexible for them to access news.

Another question which was put up to the industry experts and academicians was, "Does the story presentation differ online than the print medium?"

A majority of them opined that in print media there is more detailed news as compared to online media. Online media has more focussed on visual as compared to the print. In print story presentation is more stable, crisp whereas in online it is more free in content structure. But when we talk of credibility, newspapers enjoy an edge over the online media. Similarly, while visiting the respective websites of these newspaper, one can find their e-editions which are more or less a replica of the hard printed copy. However, updated stories can always be found posted on these websites. At times, the print editions are ahead of online editions as the late night copies are picked up by those sitting on the desk of the print edition, on the contrary, the person taking care of the website likely to miss it due to his/her fixed working hours. Thus newspapers are considered to be more credible than online media.

Namita Bajpai, Content Manager, Amity School of Communication, Lucknow is of the view that there is not much difference between the newspapers and the websites as far as the story content and presentation is concerned. In view of the evolving concept of web journalism, the newspapers have drastically changed their approach towards the presentation and content of news. Even the newspapers have started focussing on taking crisply written stories with catchy headlines and a lot of pictorial elements supported by infographics. All the newspapers have their e-editions also and those staffs who are working for print are even working for the online edition. More or less the content in same, even the layout and headline is also same.

Meanwhile, as per Shweta Gujral, senior sub-editor, Tribune, Chandigarh, the story presentation differs drastically from print. On one hand online media gives more brief reports with more stickers, visuals, pictures. They have more easy to grasp information as they are short and crisp, while the print is more detailed and one needs to go through the entire report to analyse it.

Conclusion

The results of the study show how the respondents perceive effectiveness, interactivity, credibility, content and presentation of different types of media for information collection and overall perception of consumers about the various media with special reference to print and online media. The outcomes also highlight the reasons for consumer shift from print (newspaper) to online media, importance of print media in comparison to online media, time spent on both print and online media, activities done online, information read, likes and dislikes

and frequency for newspaper reading and whether or not the consumers have a newspaper subscription and online connection availability. It has been concluded that-

- 87 % respondents actually subscribed to a newspaper at home.
- 97% of the respondents use an internet connection.
- Most preferred medium for gathering information is online media
- Respondents believe that online is the best medium in terms of story content and presentation in comparison to others including newspaper
- More than half of the respondents read newspaper on a daily basis.
- 80% of the respondents liked reading newspaper.
- Less consumers read the online copy of the newspapers
- In terms of interactivity, online is the most effective medium
- More than half of the respondents spend more time online
- Social networking dominates online media activities
- Equal number of respondents believe that newspapers have lost relevance.
- In terms of accuracy still print has edge over online media.

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Social Media: Varying Ways in which English Language is Used or Killing its Essence?

Smrity*

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With 80 per cent of teenaged Internet users frequenting social media sites, no wonder our social life is seeing huge changes. Though parents often express concern about the increasing use of poor grammar and verbal textspeak, the indications point at a different reality. Social media use requires some unique adaptations, but it also provides us with a whole new way of communication.

In a way, we're learning altogether a new language as per the needs of social media sites like Twitter which Twitter that impose a character limit on the user forcing him/her to condense the thoughts. For many, this results in excessive use of textspeak.

The current study aims to examine one of the most significant Internet tools, Social Networking Sites (SNS) or online community specifically aimed at encouraging communication among young people. It also analyses how social media is changing the identities and language of youngsters. The particular aspects explored in this study include the online written languages, SMS language, and its impact on learning language and identity.

Key Words: English, language, social network, internet

Introduction

English is a language which is considered to be the richest in the world. When we speak of its richness, there are two things we mainly discuss - the diverse vocabulary associated with the language and its innate flexibility which allows institutional changes to creep in, and has allowed the language to remain contextual through the ages.

Social networking has emerged as a force to reckon with right from the beginning' of this year of this century. It has altered the way information earlier flowed in a one-to-many pattern. Information now flows multi-dimensionally through social networking. It also has had a multi-pronged effect on the way language is used, particularly English language. This is chiefly because nearly every social networking site is English language oriented, and also because English is seen as a tool of upward

mobility within the vertical social hierarchy. The researchers were interested in finding out the alleged impact that the proliferation of social media has had on the way English language is used as a medium of communication, and the changes it has undergone since the inception of social networking.

Where writing was once a solitary activity, it has now become a very social way to communicate. Before the Internet, most people wrote to communicate with one other. Now we reach hundreds or thousands of people with a single post. We search for laptop deals with an eye to wireless connectivity in order to stay connected and communicate with a global audience at a moment's notice. Rather than eroding our writing skills, this has sharpened them. Blogging, in particular, is a powerful way for people to improve their writing.

We have to discern between textspeak and proper grammar to a larger extent as there are many different types of communications in the world of social media. Textspeak and overuse of abbreviations or slang is not appropriate for every setting. Social media users have to learn the proper time and place for different types of writing. While Twitter is for giving textspeak, Facebook's longer text limits encourage proper grammar. While shorthand does slip into Facebook, emails, blogs, and even some written papers, most writers are still aware of how to write properly, and do so often.

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Another side effect of Twitter's text limit is the ability to get to the point faster. Gone is small talk. Kiss goodbye to lengthy intros. The sweeping prose of earlier generations is giving way to a new way of writing that's more concise, jumping right to the point. Blogging has contributed to this as well, since most successful bloggers know they only have a few seconds to draw a reader in before he clicks away. Short punchy sentences and the active voice are taking over as the most popular way to communicate in writing.

Social media is definitely changing the way we communicate, but in many ways it's for the better as we expand our social circles and explore new horizons through our online connections.

Popular Social Networking Sites

Bebo, <http://bebo.com/>
 FaceBook, <http://www.facebook.com/>
 Friendster, <http://www.friendster.com/index.php>
 LinkedIn, <http://www.linkedin.com/>
 Match.com, <http://www.match.com/>
 MySpace, <http://myspace.com/>
 OurStory, <http://ourstory.com/>
 Tabblo, <http://www.tabblo.com/studio/>

Impact of Social Networking on Language

Social networking has a great impact on the language as it is used by the people worldwide and has considerably affected the linguistic communications particularly used by the youngsters. It is considered both a threat and a benefiting tool for the language. With the coming in of social networking and instant message services, the generation's interest and ability to communicate efficiently with their peers have increased. Hence this development has given rise to the notion that social networking is not at all destroying the language on the contrary, it is popularizing and benefiting the language as many people are using it. As the years have passed social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace & Twitter etc. have become a rage due to which a new wave of communication is sweeping across the world. Social networks play an important role in determining the dynamics and outcome of language change.

Aims and Objectives

Aim: The aim of the study is to find out the possible impact the proliferation of social networking sites have had on the usage of English language by the people in their daily communication.

Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

- To map out the perception of people about the proliferation of social media;
- To find out the possible impact on the way people use and communicate in English.

Methodology

Research Design

The method used to carry out the study was survey design. Simple random sampling was done

Sample Size

The study was carried out among 50 students at Banaras Hindu University, who are smart phone users. We presumed that smart phone users must be using internet as well, as a logical corollary. The Sample size was kept small owing to dearth of time and to keep the scope of the study limited and precise. The survey included a questionnaire comprising of 10 questions, both open as well as closed ended. The questions were designed to study the language use (e.g., Do you think that you have come in the era of SMS and the social web?) Recipients were also asked to include voluntary examples of any e-mail messages or online chats that illustrated the points covered in the survey.

Findings

The data was collected and analyzed for the sample population. English the most common form of writing in India, was seldom used by any of the 50 participants in their online and SMS chatting. Some people say social media is killing our language. Their arguments are innumerable, but they mostly cite the excessive usage of indecipherable initialise, incorrect abbreviations, and cutesy emoticons. Others believe (a much smaller population, to be sure) that social media is not ruining language rather simply changing the ways in which we use language to express ourselves. And, to be clear, it really shouldn't be compared to other forms of written language because it's not actually written. Rather, online communications featured a new and unusual mix and match of regional languages, English, and several forms of Hindi. This might confuse the learner to a great extent.

It was found that proper structuring of sentences was conspicuously missing in those cases where English language was used. Punctuation, which makes the sentence meaningful, was fast losing its

importance and was being supplanted at a phenomenal rate by a mixture of illegible words. It was also found that non-English users felt compelled to use English on social networking sites like Facebook, even while being incapable and uncomfortable in using it.

Given below is a graph of the data collected from a survey explaining the purported effect social media has had on the usage of English language.

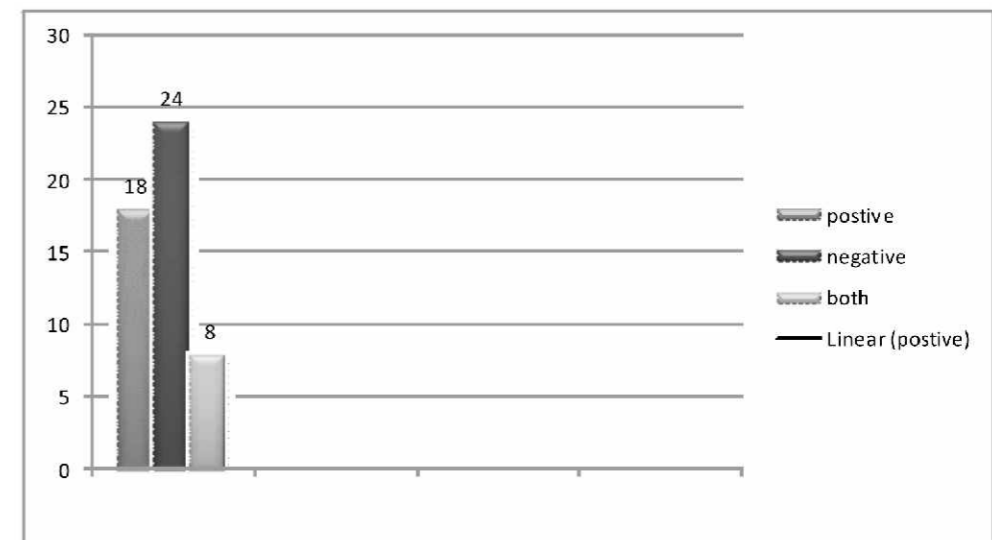
The graph clearly points out that majority of the people surveyed believed that the social media was adversely affecting the English language in general. But the fact is that there is very less difference between positive and negative percentage and undoubtedly we can see that spoken English and written English are different. Spoken English is something that is being used on social media platforms. Language expert John McWhorter states:

"Texting isn't really written language, but rather a form of spoken language. Spoken language is looser, telegraphic, and less reflective than written language." He calls it "fingered speech."

Do you think that the emergence of new dialect is perceived as a threat to teenagers' 'literary wisdom' and therefore, the future of Standard English? The graph itself is self-explanatory.

How social media is changing language continuously?

According to the New York Times, we will begin communicating via images only without including text. This is already happening to a large extent and makes sense based on the popularity of Instagram, Vine, Tumblr, and other image-heavy social channels. Images succinctly deliver a message or express the person's mood. This will continue to



Graph 1.1



Graph 1.2

grow with the adoption of Google Glass and advancement of other technologies.

Some popular terms like LOL (for "laugh out loud") have evolved into unique words which have a meaning greater than the original abbreviation. LOL is now used to add a joking or light hearted inflection to messages almost like a type of punctuation. Rather than meaning "laugh out loud," LOL is now a marker for empathy and accommodation. It's what linguists call a "pragmatic particle," a word or phrase that is not connected semantically to the context of the sentence, but rather indicates the speaker's attitude. Other more familiar pragmatic particles are "uh," "um," "like," and "you know."

This use of LOL can be observed across social networking platforms as seen in the examples below. Nothing in either tweet warrants a guffaw,

especially in the second example. The users are simply adding a pause and expressing their empathy, respectively.

LOL's change from being just initials to pragmatic particle shows the evolutionary nature of language, and the conversational nature of texting and social media. If we choose to deny either of these realities, we will be doing our brand, and worse, our customers a disservice by not adapting to their changing language, which is a major factor of self-concept across all cultures and ethnicities.

Another new language phenomenon is occurring with the ever-so discreet usage of the period. Rather than just signifying the end of a thought or replacing missing letters, the period is now showing anger and aggression, according to an article in The New Republic. When we end a sentence with a period, we may be indicating that we are not happy with the



nikki biersack
@biersackssbride



@TaniaKaur98 hey Tania! Didn't know you had twitter. Was searching for friends lol. What's up and thanks for the Waterstones voucher...

← Reply ↻ Retweet ★ Favorite ⋮ More ➦ Assign To

1:51 PM - 27 Jan 2014

<https://twitter.com/biersackssbride/status/427906729981247488>



Anthony Gonzales
@antwonizzee



@Youngcharl3s oh yeah i forgot you had a shitty night shift lol

← Reply ↻ Retweet ★ Favorite ⋮ More ➦ Assign To

1:51 PM - 27 Jan 2014

<https://twitter.com/antwonizzee/status/427906733147578368>

context of the sentence we just ended, whether we realize this or not.

There could be many explanations for this change. Maybe it's that most punctuation has been replaced by line breaks on social sites. Or maybe it's what the researchers call the best-worst-ever phenomenon (e.g., "Worst. Breakfast. Ever." Or "Best. Party. In. History.") in which each word is separated by a period to indicate the lofty magnitude of the statement. Or it could be related to character limits on Twitter, which make punctuation dispensable. It's likely a combination of these reasons, in addition to McWhorter's theory that people are using social media as if they are speaking. Speakers do not usually end a sentence so abruptly that it would warrant a period.

!?... (No, That's Not a New Band Name or Profanity Bleep)

Other punctuation mark usage is changing, too. Take the exclamation point. It no longer just shows excitement, but is used to indicate that the person really meant what they typed.

Question marks, too, have changed. A question mark no longer merely shows inquisition, but is now often used to indicate self-deprecation or to soften too assertive or self-serving messages (e.g., "He's really into me?").

And who could forget the ubiquitous ellipsis? Once used to indicate an omission of a word or sentence, or indicate a long pause or unfinished thought, ellipses now help to keep a conversation open and light, and solicit the other person to respond.

We may not actually have to use the punctuation and language nuances on social media channels. Several things should go into consideration while determining how we want to structure our language strategy:

- Who is the target audience and what are their demographics? If the audience is 55 plus males, we don't want to use smiley faces and numerous exclamations marks. But if we are trying to reach teenage girls, these may indeed be part of our messages. We want to match the user's language as much as possible.
- What social channels are we using? If one is on Twitter, we may have to use these new usages simply to confine to character limit. If he/she is using LinkedIn, then one may want a more professional and proper language.

An perception of these nuances can help us understand our audience so that we can build meaningful relationships with them (this works for understanding children, too!). Knowing that periods can indicate aggression which can help us interpret a Facebook comment, and allow us to respond appropriately. Understanding that a simple "LOL" response from a follower does not necessarily mean that they are amused rather they are sympathizing with the sentiment thus causing us to change our reply.

Awareness about these changes in the use of language can also help us better understand social media performance and refine practices. For example, if all of our Facebook posts lack engagement and have been adding short sentences that end in a period, our fans may think that our messages are overly harsh or aggressive. Post some messages without periods to see if the engagement rate increases. That's the great thing about social media -- we have the flexibility to test and quickly receive feedback.

Limitations

It is important to point out the limitations of this study. The sample size is small and was selected through the method of non-probability sampling, and as such the results cannot be generalized. The sample population can be considered to be a microcosm of the universe though, as it is predominantly the college going youth who use social media the most. In addition, no systematic attempt was made to assess participants' fluency in English. For these reasons, the results of the study cannot be assumed to be general to other population beyond this group of subjects. Rather, this study should be considered an exploratory investigation that had the goal of identifying possible issues and trends for further research.

Conclusion

Public speakers are noticing a real change in the way they have to communicate with their audiences. Where speakers once saw the eyes of their listeners, they're now seeing the backs of laptops and tops of heads. This is because many attendees take notes or tweet updates throughout the presentation. Speaking to this type of audience is an unsettling experience for some, but it's just one more change that we'll have to adapt to.

With the prevalence of smartphones and popularity of texting, we may be with someone who is there in

the virtual space but not quite there. It's not uncommon to see people glued to their technology even in social settings. Though we're no less social, we are more distracted.

This paper has highlighted the impact of social networking and SMS lingo on the language proficiency of learners. These language does not conform to grammatical or syntactic rules of English language, nor does it conform to spelling rules. It has been indicated that the English language proficiency of the learners is negatively affected by learners' exposure to social networking and SMS both through the print and the electronic media.

Technology plays a very important role in communication today. The cellphone is one of the most effective, convenient and widely used technological instruments used for communication globally. It uses a communication facility known as the Short Message Service (SMS) which is relatively cheaper both in terms of time and money spent during the process of communication. One uses

fewer and shorter words compared to direct communication over the cellphone.

The SMS has been found to be of detrimental effect on the language proficiency of learners. Learners use it as if it is an officially accepted and standard language. They mix it with the standard language they learn at school, especially the English language and consequently commit numerous errors ranging from incorrect spelling to wrong sentence formation.

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