AN IMPACT STUDY OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON MILLENNIALS IN BENGALURU

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ABSTRACT
The Social Media Marketing has become more imperative than ever before. The internet revolution and the millennial generation being the first in Indian context to be sensitized to the technological developments right from the beginning, has opened avenues for the internet usage. The smartphone becoming very common among the millennial consumers and the easy mechanism to the users has definitely contributed to the broader horizons for the marketers. The User Generated Content and the marketers striking the right chord have made the SM even broader in reaching the masses. The Common interest groups sharing the information in the form of photos, videos, twitter messages and the like has led the organisations to find the leap. The present study is an empirical study of the Social Media Marketing Influences on Millennials in the Bangalore Context.
Keywords: Social Media, Influencers, Internet.

INTRODUCTION

Growing up with the internet and unparalleled access to technology, millennials (individuals born during 1981–1995, also known as Gen Y and Gen Me) extensively use various technologies for non-work-related reasons while at work. Both popular media and scholarly research have portrayed this issue negatively and have supported monitoring and restricting personal use of technology **(Kim, 2018)**. People worldwide are largely engaged and attached with the web 2.0 technology and Social media platforms. By the same token, businesses start looking at such technologies as effective mechanisms to interact more with their customers. Equally, the related issues of social media marketing have been also the focus of attention for academics and researchers to expand the current understanding about such phenomena over the marketing area **(Alalwan, 2017)**.

Social media is shaping the way companies and brands engage and interact with consumers, particularly Millennials **(Dabbous, 2020)**. A better understanding of millennials' loyalty may help e-tailers in the development and implementation of effective marketing campaigns towards retaining them **(Purani, 2019)**. Millennials have heavily influenced social media's evolution into an important source of product information. They are increasingly basing their product evaluations on information gathered from online reviews. Thus, companies targeting Millennials may wish to pay heed to online reviews **(Mangold, 2012).**

CLASSIFICATION OF GENERATIONS

Baby Boomers:	People born from 1944-1964. Currently 55-75 years old.
Generation X (aka Gen-X):	People born from 1965-1979. Currently 40-54 years old. Also known as the "MTV generation."
Generation Y (aka Millennials):	People born from 1980-1994. Currently 25-39 years old. Also known as the "avocado toast" generation.
Generation Z (aka Gen-Z):	The newest generation, and the generation after Millennials. People born from 1995-2015.

GEN X VS MILLENNIALS

> 1965 - 1980
> Entrepreneurial
> Very individualistic
> Government and big business
  mean little to them
> Their shopping habits are being
  influenced by millennials

> 1980 - 2000
> nurtured by omnipresent
  parents, optimistic, and focused
> Prefer digital literacy as they
  grew up in a digital environment
> Envision the world as a 24/7 place; want
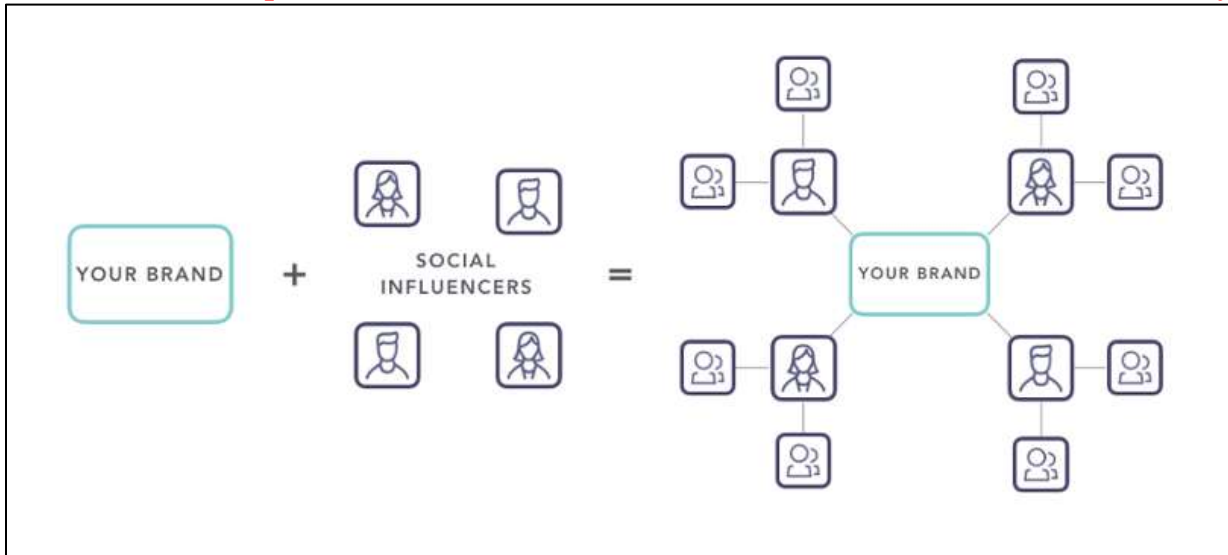 fast and immediate processing/service

MARKETING TO THE NEW MARKET

Marketers should be aware that Millennials are not very trusting of advertising. They're often perceived to be over-planned and misleading. In the world of fashion, this means that magazines and advertising campaigns don't have the influence that they once did — they're now seen as quite distant from the reader, as many are aware of the editing that goes on behind one shot.

Instead, peer recommendations are more valuable and accessible than they once used to be. Of course, we've all heard of the power of word-of-mouth, but with social media and its ability to spread at a rapid speed across countries, it's more important than ever before. Of Instagram's total audience, 200 million users follow at least one fashion account; 45% of Instagram users in Britain say they follow these fashion accounts to gain inspiration for looks they can buy or create themselves. Sharing their own looks is a part of this process too, with #fashion mentioned a huge 13 million times a month and #ootd (outfit of the day) featuring in 140 million posts to date.

Many social media users look for peer validation when they post content. Many of us are used to reading user-generated reviews about an experience or product before making a purchase now. In fact, research found that 71% of people are more likely to make an online purchase if the product or service has been recommended by others. In addition to this, 84% of Millennials are likely to be influenced into making a purchase based on the user-generated content by strangers who have experienced the product or service.

Bearing this in mind, it's not surprising that fashion brands focus on Instagram to reach their market. Even luxury brands that once shunned social media for fear of it cheapening their image are jumping on the digital bandwagon. While 72% of luxury fashion brands' marketing spend is still attributed to print marketing, digital is quickly gaining pace — reaching a total digital ad spend of $100 billion in 2016 **(Louise Richardson 2018)[1].**

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[1] https://retailtouchpoints.com/features/executive-viewpoints/what-impact-has-social-media-had-on-the-fashion-industry

SOCIAL MEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Kaplan and Haenlein (2009) provide one of the most exhaustive definitions of Social Media. According to these authors, SM are those online applications arisen from Web 2.0 that allow users to create and share User Generated Content (UGC). In particular, UGC is considered such if it is available publicly to an entire website or to a group of social platform users, and it was not created within a professional context. Therefore, if Web 2.0 represents the theoretical basis of SM technologies, UGC consists of all the actions that can be done through these platforms.

It is important to highlight how marketing can relate to SM and take advantage of the several benefits provided by these platforms. Kim and Ko (2012) describe Social Media Marketing as a "two-way communication seeking empathy with young users, and even enforcing the familiar emotions associated with existing luxury brands to a higher age group." (p. 1480). This definition explains the importance of SMM activities to improve firms' performances and obtain benefits in terms of brand value and engagement. In fact, with the advent of the Internet more and more people use SM as channels to seek information and opinions about products and brands, so SMM represents a necessary way for companies to monitor brand voicing and avoid prejudice and misunderstandings with customers.

DEFINITIONS
Millennials
The term Millennials is usually considered to apply to individuals who reached adulthood around the turn of the 21st century. Howe and Strauss (1991) define the Millennial cohort as consisting of individuals born between 1982 and 2004.
Digital Natives
Digital Natives are considered the "…native speakers" of the digital language of computers, video games and the internet **(Prensky, 2001, p.1)**
Digital Social Media
Digital technology tools which operate communication of many sources to many receivers, such as websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in virtual social networking **(Obar and Wildman (2015).**

Fast Fashion

Fast fashion can be defined from the perspective of business concept as a strategy which targets to decrease the phases included in buying cycle and lead times. The prior objective of fast fashion is introducing new collections of outfits into stores as soon as possible so as to meet shoppers' demand at its highest point.

Social media Influencer or influencer

A person with a sizeable following on social media who has the power to affect their followers' consumer behaviour through product promotion (Influencer Marketing Hub, 2019).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Author, Year, Title and Journal	Constructs analysed	Analysis	Main contributions
Guthrie, M. F., and Kim, H. (2009). The relationship between consumer involvement and brand perceptions of female cosmetic consumers. *Journal of Brand Management*, *17*(2), 114–133.	Consumer involvement dimensions from Kapferer and Laurent (1986) are tested to group cosmetics consumers to compare their brand perception towards three Beauty brands. Main constructs associated to this analysis were: consumer involvement, brand personality, brand attitude and brand loyalty.	Confirmatory analysis was used to validate the items regarding the consumer involvement dimensions. Cluster analysis to identify consumer types and multiple regression analysis to determine the relationship between brand personality and brand attitude within each consumer type for the three examined American cosmetic brands.	Literature review and findings about brand personality are fitting with Tuškej and Podnar (2018) theories about anthropomorphism. Consumer involvement is found to be correlated with brand loyalty. The identification of different consumer groups inside the Beauty industry is helpful to describe and define the market targeted in my thesis. Interesting details regarding the cosmetics industry are also provided.
Kim, A. J. & Ko, E. (2012). Do social media marketing activities enhance customer equity? An empirical study of luxury fashion brand. *Journal of Business Research*, *65*(10), 1480–1486.	Explanation of the five SMM dimensions (see: Godey et al.; 2016); contribution of perceived SMM activities on customer equity drivers.	Confirmatory factor analysis to prove the validity of each item. Structural equation modeling was used to test hypotheses	This paper has been a fundamental source of inspiration for both the works of Godey et al. (2016) and Stokinger and Ozuem (2014), which represent an important basis for this thesis in terms of SMM. Although the above-mentioned papers were found to be more suitable for this work, Kim and Ko provide

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.10.014			interesting statements that help to interpret what these authors developed after them. Plus, through this paper it is possible to retrieve the origins of the scale used by Godey et al. (2016) that will also be a basis for my research framework.
Bolton, R. N., Parasuraman, A., Hoefnagels, A., Migchels, N., Kabadayi, S., & Gruber, T. et al. (2013) Understanding Generation Y and their use of social media: A review and	Definition and characteristics of Generation Y and its attitude towards technology and SM use.	None.	This work provided fundamental basis for the development of Stokinger and Ozuem, (2014) and integrates constructs about SM with a deep literature review about Generation Y and its relationship with SM. Eventually this paper was used in this paper as an additional source to integrate Stokinger and Ozuem's findings about SM and cosmetics. Moreover, their encouragement to explore Generation Y and SM outside the US supports this research.
Cho, J., Park, D. J., & Ordonez, Z. (2013) Communication-Oriented Person-Organization Fit as a Key Factor of Job-Seeking Behaviors: Millennials' Social Media Use and Attitudes Toward Organizational Social Media Policies. *CyberPsychology, Behavior & Social Networking*, *16*(11), 794–799.	Millennials' perception and value towards SM. The other constructs based on a workplace context were not considered for this analysis.	Structural equation modelling.	A relevant literature review about Millennials' use of social media in contemporary life was provided. Findings related to the variability of Millennials' behaviour relatively to SM use and policies can enrich this analysis.
Shen, B., & Bissell, K. (2013) Social Media, Social Me: A Content Analysis of Beauty Companies' Use of Facebook in Marketing and Branding. *Journal of*	Definition and nature of Social Media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p.61); Six categories of social media	Descriptive analyses, ANOVA, and chi-square tests were	Findings about the use of SM activities by the six beauty brands reveals details about their SMM strategies. Facebook has become a hybrid mix to

Promotion Management, *19*, 629–651.	(among which communities and blogs), elaborated by Kaplan et al. (2010). Theoretical implications of Viral Marketing (Rayport, 1996).	employed to test the research questions.	maximize the level of interactions between the beauty brands and their customers. Implementation of eWOM branding strategies in terms of brand image and values has become a vital element of beauty corporate strategy.
Eastman, J. K., Iyer, R., Liao-Troth, S., Williams, D. F., & Griffin, M. (2014) The Role of Involvement on Millennials' Mobile Technology Behaviors: The Moderating Impact of Status Consumption, Innovation, and Opinion Leadership. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, *22*, 455–470	Definitions and explanations of the social comparison theory, Millennials' attitude towards mobile devices, status consumption, consumer innovativeness, opinion leadership.	Confirmatory factor analysis to analyse constructs validity and to test whether the data fit the measurement model.	Findings concerning the impression-relevant orientation of Millennials match with the implications given by Soh, C. Q. Y., Rezaei, S., & Gu, M.-L. (2017) concerning traits of vanity and social influences. Indeed, "Millennials with a high level of impression-relevant involvement may be receptive to messaging where the product is depicted as increasing their attractiveness and others' opinions of them.". In addition, findings revealing the high brand loyalty from opinion leaders represent an excellent connection with papers such as the one by Machado, Cant and Seaborne, (2014). All the information related to mobile technology and innovativeness are well connectable with other topics mentioned.
Hollebeek, L.D., Glynn, M.S. and Brodie, R.J. (2014), "Consumer brand engagement in social media: conceptualization, scale development and validation", Journal of Interactive Marketing,	Consumer brand engagement, Social Media.	Confirmatory factor analysis (CFAs) followed by structural equation modelling.	The main contribution is given by the scale used to measure the three dimensions of online engagement, which will inspire the scale used for the questionnaire in this thesis.

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Machado, R., C. Cant, M., & Seaborne, H. (2014) Experiential Marketing On Brand Advocacy: A Mixed-Method Approach On Global Apple Product Users. *International Business & Economics Research Journal (IBER), 13*.	Definitions of experiential marketing, brand experience. Connection between brand loyalty, brand advocacy and experiential marketing.	Structural equation modelling to determine how the measured variables (i.e., the four elements of experiential marketing) represent the constructs (i.e., experiential marketing, brand loyalty, and brand advocacy) and how the constructs are interrelated to one another	Confirmation of the positive and strong correlation between brand loyalty and brand advocacy. The framework created by the author offered me a basis to establish the connection between these two constructs and formulate my hypothesis structure accordingly.

INSIGHTS ABOUT THE MILLENNIALS

There are Millennial parents who are constantly seeking new ideas to improve, simplify, and help define their parenting style. Trying to find the commonalities may be difficult, but there are some underlying insights that can be leveraged:

1. **Value**

   Quality is important to the Millennial, but the price must still be fair. The catch, of course, is defining "fair." Something that is expensive to one person may be cheap to another, and it may have no correlation to income. This reflects the value an individual puts on the item and how it fits into his or her lifestyle.

   In truth, most consumers think this way, and the concept of affordable luxury stems from it. A pair of shoes may be overpriced for one person, while another may see them as a necessary accessory. People who don't see value in the shoes may put their money into a piece of technology, priced similarly to the shoes, but more targeted toward their needs. It is not a revolutionary thought, but with a generation that is very conscientious about how it spends money, it is critical for brands to make sure their products and services speak to their quality and relevancy. Brands that have a robust backstory or a unique proposition that gives credibility to their products and services should promote that information to this audience.

2. **Relevancy**

   Making it "their own" is another trait of Millennial consumers. The information Millennials pull from to make choices is vast; they are constantly exposed to and influenced by diverse experiences. The global connections created by the Web have developed a larger market of choices, and new

products and services are being invented so rapidly that part of the fun for this generation is discovering them. Once they find these items, they quickly share them with like-minded friends and recommend them to the world, building a following.

An example is how this generation makes parenting choices. Other generations would rely mostly on their parents to provide insight on how to care for children. They might talk to a friend to get more thoughts, but even so, advice was almost always limited to people they knew.

Millennials still get advice from parents and friends, but they are also influenced by people all over the world. Access to global ideas, knowledge, and personal experiences help give them different perspectives. They pick and choose from the information available to them to create the style of parenting that suits their needs and reflects their values. Millennials know they have a breadth of available choices, and they rely on feedback from others to help them make their choices. Brands don't have to be progressive or retro to be adopted, they just have to be relevant and prove their effectiveness to the Millennial audience.

3. **Authenticity**

The last insight, critical to marketing to this generation, is accepting that it has more choices than any other. The volume of media thrown into today's market creates a tremendous amount of noise for this generation to contend with—noise that is easily dismissed as differentiation becomes more difficult.

As William Irwin Thompson sees it, "In this world of information overload, the benumbed citizen no longer reads or thinks; he watches and feels." This is not, however, the whole truth. The Millennials do watch and feel, but they still read and think; combining all these experiences allows them to make thoughtful choices. They have been taught to expect more and challenge the ideas that are presented to them. To break through the noise, marketing efforts (as well as the products and services they represent) must have substance and authenticity to be respected by the Millennial. If something doesn't resonate or is oversold, chances are they won't adopt it. Understand their spirit, respect their intelligence, and give them something to be inspired about, and your brand has a fighting chance.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Table 1 :Profiling of Sample Millennial Consumers

Variables	N	%
Born Year		
1980-84	11	27.5
1984-88	6	15
1988-92	12	30
1992 and above	11	27.5
Social Media Active in		
Facebook	28	70
Youtube	31	77.5
Instagram	20	50
Twitter	26	65
Snapchat	14	35

LinkedIn	33	82.5
Social Media Usage		
More than once a day	36	90
Once a day	2	5
A few times a week	1	2.5
Once or never in a week	1	2.5
Personal Characteristics		
Perceived Compatibility	20	50
Innovativeness	8	20
Peer Influence	12	30

The study surveyed 40 respondents representing the millennial group who are born between 1980 and 1994. 27.5% of the respondents are born between the age group of 1980-84 and 1992-94 each. 3/10th of the respondents are in the age limit of 1988 and 1992. The exposure to Information Technology and Internet has been very evident during the late 808. The millennials who are born in the early 90s are also sensitized towards the technological imperatives.

Data of the respondents who are active in various social media are mustered. The responses indicate more than 3/4th of the respondents are active on YouTube. Facebook Active respondents, Account for seven tenth of the total respondents. LinkedIn active respondents are 33 in number.

The fact that the respondents are active in multiple social media indicates the fact that acceptance and indulgence with the social media is more evident today because of the seamless access and also the time that the respondents are willing to spend during the acting working houses in a day. The multiple options available in the form of uploading the photos, videos and comments makes it very engaging user Generated content are very popular where the peer group rend to relate with the data. The influence is to a very great extent.

The millennials generation has grown up with the technology. They exhibit the behoviour to use during the working hours. The smart phones and quick accers to the social media have contributed to the frequency of getting connected to social media. The user friendly apps have been successful in roping in even the moderate digital literate into the SM marketing loop.

The smartphones and the easy operations facilitated through the compatible features have definitely given the needed Philip to the marketing companies. The adoption to 4g through the Internet service providers is just an added advantage. The peer influence content and the like ensure the authenticity of the information provided therein.

Table 2 :Social Media Intervention and Millennials

Variables	N	%
Reasons for the Social Media search		
Research prices	22	55
Read reviews	33	82.5
To get the best price for an item	19	47.5
Buy based on recommendations	31	77.5
Crave the experience of shopping more than the purchase	38	95
Millennials and theTechnology		

Use technology like no other generation before them	35	87.5
Have Grown up with the internet	32	80
Unparalleled Access to Technology	34	85
Expectations of On-line Buying		
Click and collect from the store	31	77.5
Delivered at home/ work	29	72.5
Opportunity to the Marketers		
Provides shoppers a voice	8	20
To interact and share their opinion	6	15
Privacy affects consumers' social interaction behavior	9	22.5
Extensively use various technologies for non-work-related reasons while at work	2	5
Buying power of millennial consumers is ever growing.	5	12.5
Sharing all aspects of their experiences on social media	10	25

The data mustered regarding the Social Media Intervention and Millennials. Reasons for the Social Media search reveal that 55% of the respondents look for researching the prices. 82.5% of the respondents look out for the reviews in Social Media. Over 3/4th of the respondents buy the products based on recommendation.   95% of the respondents contend to crave the experience of social media.

As far as the technology is concerned, the Millennial generation is the first generation which passed through and was introduced to the internet. The unprecedented access to internet has been instrumental in the social media to get the milieu it has got today. On-line buying has brought in the purchase enabled at a click of the button. The home delivery is also an added factor leading to the Social media being accepted as a purchase option.

Speaking about the opportunities available to the marketers, 20% of the respondents say that it provides shoppers a voice to induce the buyers. As a platform to interact and share opinion, SM has grown into a community platform. Seamless technology which can be used over the smart phone has been major factor for the SM to boom. Sharing experiences by the group members has been a major factor which leads to the exchange of information and facts.

SUGGESTIONS
Moving forward, the marketers have to keep the following points in mind to ensure the influencer campaign is successful.
- Using social media influencers as a marketing tactic is a popular and effective method to reach a large audience and increase brand awareness.
- Credibility, attractiveness, and relatability are among the key indicators of an influencer's ability to influence. And they can be explained by psychological concepts like social proof, attractiveness bias, and social identity theory.
- Influencer marketing campaigns are especially useful to connect with the millennial crowd.

- Business must not jump into this trend haphazardly — take their time to use meaningful content that matches the brand, is able to deliver an authentic message to the specific target group that they are trying to reach, and be upfront about it.
- Create human-centered design and consumer experiences by providing Omni-channel platforms.
- Provide social media channels to interact and engage with millennials.

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