



Impact of Social Media Marketing on Buying Behavior of Young Chinese Population for Textile Commodities

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Abstract:

This research was conducted in order to understand the motivations for buying and its behavior of young Chinese for textile commodities by the social media marketing. A questionnaire was developed in order to get firsthand knowledge from the young Chinese. The study was done among university students by one by one interview with the help of structured questionnaire. Findings suggest that the buying decision is the result of word of mouth of any friend or a large number of Likes and good comments about the product on online websites such as Taobao.com, JD.com, and Qunar.com. The result demonstrated that level of education plays an important role in critical analyzing the textile products, as it was found that all master's degree students through critical analysis of the comments before buying. The data indicates that the young Chinese prefer buying things online to get lot of words of mouth and they trust the comments mostly. This study is very important for textile marketer to assess the impact of social media on the buying decision, as it suggests that not only the quality of the product is important but the word of mouth has also an important role in buying behavior for textile commodities

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1. Introduction

Marketing is very old study; it has been used since ages. In earlier times people used to be appointed to praise the products in front of potential customers. But now that traditional marketing is going to be replaced by digital marketing [1]. Most of the firms now prefer the digital marketing over the traditional marketing. This is so much important as it has been suggested that it should be in companies marketing plan [2]. A Questionnaire approach has already been developed to discover how social media affects the buying decision [3]. The word of mouth has a great influence on any business's return on investment (ROI) [4]. The investigation in the field of social media marketing recommends that social media marketing is quite dissimilar from traditional marketing by ways of its impact on the attainment and withholding of the clientele [5].

The use of textile commodities is obvious and people go through buying of textile commodities either by direct purchasing or online purchasing [6]. Till what extent they go for direct purchasing or online purchasing is topic of interest for the marketers selling their goods online [7]. Moreover, what is the perception of the buyers while going through purchasing [8], or what they keep in their mind or what forces or stops them to go through buying decision [9] is key interesting area for the researchers focusing on online marketing. The internet users are growing to be increased day by day. Particularly the sites of social media are frequently been visited by a large number of audience [10]. This study was done among the students of Textile Engineering Department of Zhejiang Sci-Tech University.

2. Outline of Methodology

2.1. Participants/Sample

There were 43 participants, 21 males and 22 females who filled the questionnaire voluntarily. As in this study the major of the student is less important, thus for the ease of the project they were selected from same major of Textile Engineering Department of Zhejiang Sci-Tech University. There were 10 master's degree student, 6 females and 4 males, whereas 33

were from undergraduate students. Their age was from the minimum of 19 to maximum of 26 years old. They all were Chinese yet all of them were from different parts of China. Moreover, their age has been presented in the following table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of the age of the students

Age of the students in years	Number of the student in that age
19	6
20	2
21	1
22	7
23	12
24	8
25	5
26	2

2.2. Method Choice/Materials

The method that was chosen for this research was conducting interviews with a common questionnaire, or it can be said that a structured interview was conducted for this study. Because conducting survey may require the permission from the head of the department or administration to cover the space to do survey, whereas this approach of conducting a structured interview is an easy process to get firsthand knowledge from the young Chinese. Also in getting structured interview you may do the qualitative analysis, yet it is time consuming thus you may not gather lot of data but it is better to get the exact data on the topic. There were several questions were put in order to get the primary data about topic. Different social Medias that are quiet common in China such as Weixin, Weibo, Qzone, Youku and the comments on some websites such as Taobao.com, JD.com and Qunar.com were discussed and its effect on buying behavior for Textile Commodities was analyzed.

2.3. Process/Procedure

It was really interested to gather data by interviews in the Zhejiang Sci-Tech University, Hangzhou, China. Some teachers were personally

requested to help in getting data by getting permission to do survey in different classes. But unfortunately, it could not be possible. Later, it was planned to go through the option of structured interviews. A questionnaire was designed and one by one student was requested to answer the questionnaire. A nice experience, was found as the students co-operated a lot by giving their valuable time.

2.4. Data Analysis

In order to get the qualitative data, reading of all questions was done by interviewer in order to clarify the meaning and the theme of the question to the respondents. Additionally, an early appointment was asked from each candidate so that while giving the interview the respondent may not be in any hurry and worry. Moreover, seven options were used to get the exact and precised data. Origin Pro 8 was used to draw tables and charts to analyze the data. The maxima and minima values were also kept under critical thinking and discussion. The measure of central tendency was done and their average values were also determined.

3. Presentation of Findings

3.1. Results

There were 43 students in this research, out of them there were 21 males and 22 females. Most of the students like shopping, even the sample was just based on the students, yet over 80% of the students suggested that they like shopping. Then a comparative study was done that how much products have they bought on internet in the last six months and how many things have they bought without internet in the last six months. The number of respondents using internet to buy products and number of respondents do not use internet to buy products are presented in the table 2.

Table 2: Comparison between the numbers of products bought online and not online

Number of Products Bought	Number of respondents using internet to buy products	Number of respondents do not use internet to buy products
1-2	7	14
3-5	8	12
6-10	13	10
11 or more	15	7

For this research, it was essential to determine that how many products respondents bought because of their friend's recommendation, the data revealed that nearly 75% of the products were bought by the friends' recommendation. The bought products were generally categorized, they includes curtains, knitted goods, beddings, mufflers and kerchiefs, uppers and jackets, paints and trousers. Mostly the young Chinese under our survey prefer to buy uppers and jackets making the total of 34% of their total buying as shown in Figure 1.

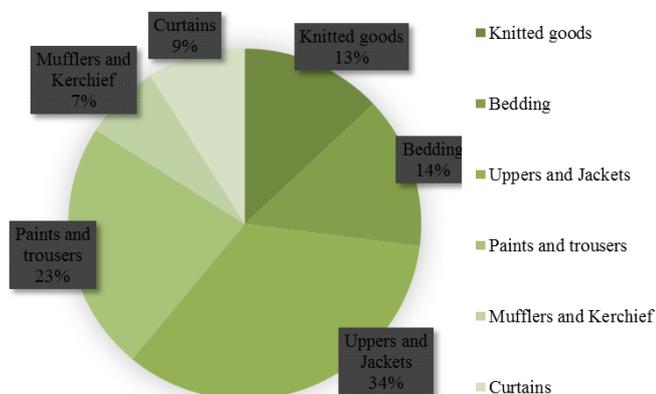


Figure 1: Buying Distribution of the product

A most general question was asked from that whether the social media impact on your choice of buying any product, the most of the response was

in affirmation. Supporting this question one another question was asked about the trust on the comments of others, before one buy; its answer was also in affirmation mostly. Then till what extent does the social media impact was analyzed and it was found that it has very large impact on the buying behavior of the young Chinese for Textile Commodities.

One novel result came in doing this research that the respondents mostly recommend others by social media, if they are satisfied; they give their true comments if anyone asks to respondents about the product. A good number of respondents as 26 out of 43 expressed that they prefer to buy online, only because they can get comments about the product. The young Chinese use a large variety of channels to get knowledge about any product, such as Wechat, Weibo, Qzone and they feel to comment on online websites such as Taobao.com, JD.com, Qunar.com, etc. as their responsibility to suggest others to buy. The most common response for sharing their ideas about the products to convince others to buy the same product was commenting on the websites, it makes 67% of the total their comments over all. The distribution of the use of the social media is given as under in Figure 2.

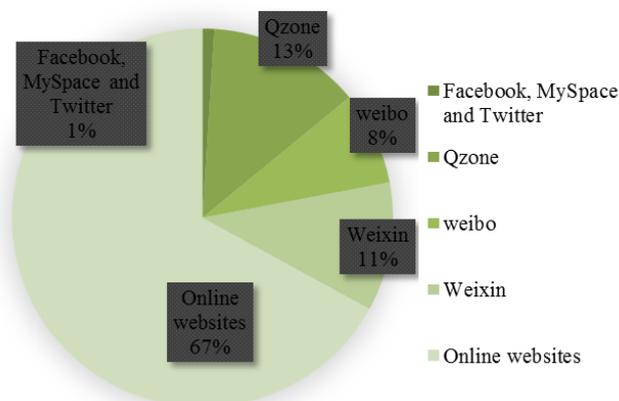


Figure 2: Buying distribution of social media

Only about 50% of the respondents stated that they like to read all comments, all master degree students stated that they read all comments. Mostly of the Chinese up to 69% of young Chinese trust the comments of others, before they buy. Mostly they trust if there are many good comments. Often they have been satisfied from the product, if they have used social media before buying was the answer of 34 respondents out of 43. They believe that the comments on such websites cannot ever be wrong, and 23 respondents agree to this point out of 43.

3.2. Discussion

It was analyzed that there is significant effect of social media on the buying behavior of young Chinese for Textile Commodities. The table 2 shows that when the young Chinese go through the buying through internet, they have bought lot of products as compare to buy without the use of internet. As mentioned above that this is due to the most Chinese prefer buying online because they can go through the different comments of the different people related to the products. The data revealed that more than 60% of people agree to this statement that they prefer online purchasing just because they are ready to get different comments. The other possible reason may be also that some of their friend might have shared his or her experience on any social media and the other friend while visiting his profile found good remarks by his friend, and got the inspiration about the product and made a decision of purchase.

As mentioned above, they prefer to comment on the websites of the products to help others to make decision of buying or no buying. The data showed that only the comments on the websites covers their words of mouth as much as 67%, remaining 32% may be on Wechat, Weibo, Qzone; as only one percent of Chinese was found to express their Ideas often on Facebook, My Space or Twitter. 30 persons out of 43 believe that all comments presented on the websites are true mostly and feel themselves responsible to give comments truly. This show the great trust of young Chinese over the social media, thus for a marketer it is crucial to get the benefit from their trust in order to compete into the market. The study also

revealed that three fourth of the total buying was just because the words of the mouth of the friends. The word of mouth plays an important role in increasing the sales of any firm. This is also one of the important things for any marketer to make better words coming from the mouth of the consumers. More importantly nearly half of the respondents stated that they read all comments and go through the critical analysis of the comments on the websites, whereas the remaining half stated that they just see the number of “Likes” or the number of comments before buying, showing that they just give a quick look on the comments rather than detailed critical analysis. Thus all of these comments and likes for the products have direct relationship in motivating the customers to make buying decision. It was further critical analyzed and it was determined that the respondents who stated that they read all comments were master’s degree students. It shows that the education plays an important role in making buying decision. Luckily, till now most of the young Chinese whenever trusted their friends and consulted with them before making buying decision they have gotten better results mostly. After going through the use of social media before buying the satisfaction level of the consumers is as much as 80%. More than half of the respondents clearly stated that the response in the forms of comments over the social media must be true and can never be faked. This is also an important figure that was achieved during this research. They believe that only the real consumers can comment on these websites and they post a true suggestion and comments about the product.

4. Conclusion

4.1. Summary of Research

Considering above discussion it can be concluded that there is direct impact of social media on the buying behavior of young Chinese for textile commodities. The study revealed that Chinese like shopping too much. They bought uppers and jackets and pants and trousers mostly making a total of 57% of their total purchase. Most of the things bought were on internet and the buying decision was the result of their friends’ recommendation mostly. They believe that social media impact on the choice of buying any product, and they also recommend others by social media, if they are satisfied. All master’s degree students and some bachelor’s degree students read all comments, where as other just give a quick review of them. In general, young Chinese comments on online websites such as Taobao.com, JD.com, Qunar.com, etc. rather than sharing their personal experience on their personal friendship circle area. They suggest others if anyone ask them. Mostly they are satisfied if they have gotten recommendation of their friends before buying.

4.2. Limitations of this Research

As in every research there are some limitations; we agree that my sample was not enough large. We discussed only 43 students; moreover we could not arrange the students of different Universities too. Also as my strategy of doing research was structured questionnaire so there may be some errors, because the respondents may have added my ideas into his answer. Also till last date of starting survey we was worried about question ordering, although we tried my best; but the best is yet to come, so there may be still some pitfalls remaining. Further this research may also be conducted in various parts of the China and later an average value can also be determined from the results.

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Appendix

Survey Questions

1. What is your name?
 - _____
2. What is your gender?
 - Male
 - Female
3. What is your area of study?
 - Textile Spinning
 - Textile Weaving
 - Textile Nonwovens
 - Textile Composites
 - Textile Polymers
4. What is your age?
 - 18
 - 19
 - 20
 - 21
 - 22
 - 23
 - 24
 - 25
 - 26
5. What is level of education?
 - First year (undergraduate)
 - Second year (undergraduate)
 - Third year (undergraduate)
 - Final year (undergraduate)
 - Masters degree
6. Do you like shopping?
 - No
 - Not much
 - Yes
 - Yes, too much
7. How many things have you bought on internet in the last six months?
 - 1-2
 - 3-5
 - 6-10

- 11 or more
8. Of those things, how many you bought because of your friend's recommendation?
 - None
 - Less than a quarter
 - About half
 - More than half
 - All
 9. What kind of products you bought in last six months? (Check all apply)
 - Tickets
 - Electronics
 - Accessories
 - Garments
 - Food items
 10. Do the social media impact on your choice of buying any product?
 - Yes
 - No
 11. Do you trust the number of Likes, before you buy?
 - Yes
 - No
 12. How much social media impact on your choice of buying any product?
 - Not at all
 - A little bit
 - Yes, till some extent
 - Yes, very much
 - I like to get first get comments from my friends before buying
 13. Do you also recommend others by social media, if you are satisfied?
 - Not at all
 - A little bit
 - Yes, if any one ask
 - Yes, till some extent
 - Yes, too much
 14. Do you read the comments of the products on buying products online?
 - Not at all
 - Sometimes
 - Yes, till some extent
 - Yes, I read all
 - I prefer to buy online, only because I can get comments about the product
 15. What channel do you use most to get knowledge about any product?
 - Call on mobile
 - Wechat
 - Weibo
 - QQ
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - Online websites such as Taobao.com, JD.com, Qunar.com, etc
 16. Do you trust the comments of others, before you buy?
 - Not at all
 - A little bit
 - Yes, if there are some good comments
 - Yes, if there are many good comments
 - Yes, too much
 17. Till what degree you have been satisfied from the product, if you have used social media before buying?
 - Never
 - May be sometimes
 - sometimes
 - often
 - always
 18. What are you views on fake comments?
 - They are often fake
 - They are sometimes fake
 - They can be fake
 - They cannot often be fake
 - They cannot ever be fake