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## *A Study to Measure the Perceived Benefits of Social Media by Small Scale Enterprises of Haryana State*

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**Abstract:** *The study aims to measure the perceived benefits of the social media by small scale enterprises in Haryana state. The study was based on the perceptions of the owners of small-scale enterprises, recorded using a scale of five point. The sample size of the study was 416 and frequency analysis was used for the analysis purpose. It can be concluded from the study that social media marketing is very beneficial for the small-scale enterprises. In the digital era, when everything is shifting from offline to online mode, marketing has also shifted from offline to online mode. People get more attracted towards the online advertisements. The major benefits of social media marketing, is that one can reach to larger markets and can increase the geographical or business reach at less cost. It helps in getting connect with the customers instantly, and having a direct conversation with the customers. The real view points of the customers can help in making changes into the business strategies, and earning huge profits. Small scale enterprises are now opting to the social media marketing, to save the cost and in hope to reach to vast customer base.*

**Keywords:** *Small scale enterprises, customer services, social media marketing, social websites, networking, online advertisement etc.*

### I. INTRODUCTION

In today's era of instant connectivity and technology available, the prevalence of social media is more widespread than ever. A report by social media management organization HootSuite and 'We are Social' reveals the length and breadth of the vast social media scope worldwide. As per the report [1], there are nearly 3.5 billion active social media users in the world today, out of a total world population of 7.6 billion people. This implies that nearly one in two people on the planet are involved in social media. This makes social media a massive presence in our world, and thus needs to be more research about its impact and contribution to society.

According to insights by Statista 2019, the country-wise percentage penetration of social media in the world was the highest in the United Arab Emirates, followed by Taiwan and South Korea [2]. In the United States, as per a survey conducted by Pew Research in 2018, the social media networks that dominate the American landscape, in particular, were Facebook and YouTube. The report<sup>3</sup> also states that above two-thirds (68%) of Americans are reportedly Facebook account holders, a majority of whom access it daily. The reports by CIRA [4] show that social media use is the third most popular online activity among Canadians, who show preferences for Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. According to Pew Global Research, [5] Middle Eastern countries show a surprising level of engagement (68%) on social media, considering their lesser advanced economic

<sup>1</sup> Available at: <https://hootsuite.com/research/social-trends>

<sup>2</sup> Available at: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/282846/regular-social-networking-usage-penetration-worldwide-by-country/>

<sup>3</sup> Available at: <https://www.pewinternet.org/2018/03/01/social-media-use-in-2018/>

<sup>4</sup> Available at: <https://cira.ca/factbook/canada%E2%80%99s-internet-factbook-2018>

<sup>5</sup> Available at: <https://www.pewglobal.org/2018/06/19/3-social-network-adoption-varies-widely-by-country/>

status. The report also showed that even the advanced economies such as Japan and Germany have relatively lower levels of social media usage- at only 39% and 40% of their adult populations respectively. Hence, a brief look at the global perspective of social media usage from various data sources shows that the spread of social media is not dependent upon the economic status of the country in the world. This makes the use of social media and its impact on society and the economy a dynamic field of study. It also strengthens the need to understand the use of social media in the Indian context, for a better understanding of its influences in Indian society.

India has the second-largest population in the world. Thus, with the mass availability of speedy internet and growing tech literacy in the country, the past few years have brought a social media revolution in the country. According to an information network analysis report by Ahmed & Diesner (2012), social media gained momentum in India due to the development of two major factors: support of local languages by social media websites like Facebook, and the availability of cell phones to the average Indian. Since China practices several cyber constraints on popular social media networks, India is viewed as the biggest potential market for the growth of social media networking. As per the Global Digital 2019 report [6], India has seen the largest absolute growth (at a rate of 21%) in the total number of internet users in 2019. The report also states that India saw more than 60 million users signing up on social media in the year 2018. According to a study by investment firm Omidyar Network, it is claimed that Indians spend more than 70 percent of their time on social and entertainment purposes- a major chunk of which is limited to Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp (Times of India, 2017) [7]. However, it seems that the rapid evolution of social media in India is largely occurring among the younger community since a report by Pew Research Global claimed that only 20 percent of adults in India use social media networking sites. [8] Vardhan (2017) further points out that over 60 percent of the social media users in India are the youth of the country, which means that Indian social media usage is modern and young. Moreover, there exists a great gender gap in the use of social media in the Indian context. It was found that while 28% of men in India use social media, the percentage of women is only 11% (Business Today, 2018) [9].

Social media is no longer limited to building a platform for individual personalities. Due to its immense popularity and outreach, social media networks have become an easy way for businesses to stay connected with both their existing clients as well as potential target base. The basic requirements that motivate businesses to have a social media presence are the need to stay advanced in their field and in tune with the nerve of their customers. Customers are able to express their opinions about a company or brand. LaDuque (2010) and Hyllegard et al. (2011) also discovered that companies use social media sites to communicate directly with the customer, as companies are able to increase brand loyalty, create sales leads, and increase publicity through this medium. Also, social media sites are being used for marketing research by both companies and customers (Casteleyn et al.2009); in addition, customers obtain investigate companies and brands on social media websites (Barnes, 2008). The study by Hyllegard et al. (2011) also found that youngsters particularly “followed” companies and brands to become market mavens who could receive and disseminate information about brands. Another need for social media for brands and companies, especially start-ups and upcoming ventures, is the advertisement possibilities offered by these networks. Social media avenues are a cost-effective way to distribute content and promote business. Popular social networks like Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram provide effective content distribution options for target markets. Thus, for businesses, the uses of social media have far-reaching gains, which make it indispensable in maximizing profits and other benefits. It can thus be said that the requirements for the client- interaction, market survey, and regular advertising become the requirements behind the increased participation of a brand or business over social media.

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<sup>6</sup> Available at: <https://wearesocial.com/blog/2019/01/digital-2019-global-internet-use-accelerates>

<sup>7</sup> Available at: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/indians-spend-70-of-mobile-internet-time-on-social-entertainment/articleshow/62125840.cms>

<sup>8</sup> Available at: <https://www.pewglobal.org/2018/06/19/3-social-network-adoption-varies-widely-by-country/>

<sup>9</sup> Available at: <https://www.businesstoday.in/current/economy-politics/only-25-percent-indian-adults-use-internet-80-percent-dont-use-social-media-pew-research/story/279358.html>

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

With the rapidly growing influence of social media in the world, the ripples of its effects are being witnessed in community development as well. As per Niven (2011), social networks build communities by catalyzing neighborhood co-operation and social action [10]. Ukomadu (2018) chooses to view social media in the light of community, and defines social media as ‘a collective of online communication channels dedicated to input, content-sharing, interaction and collaboration among the community.’ Social networking sites are also viewed as virtual communities in themselves- serving as online discussion forums, chat rooms, websites and other social spaces in an online space. These perspectives match the definition of ‘community’ by Wilkinson (1972), Osborne and Meer (Olewe, 2002), and McMillan and Chavis (1986). According to the shared root of these definitions, a community could refer to a group of people who exist within a common culture or social framework, and who can then act jointly. Ukomadu (2018) calls these networks as ‘hybrids’- since they offer a combination of various services to the benefit of the community. He highlights the significant role played by social media in the community development of Nigeria, where heavy infrastructural deficits were suffered by both federal and state governments. Social media sites like WhatsApp led to a tremendous community mobilization, which succeeded in finding solutions without the wait for government intervention. According to Stern and Dillman (2006), internet usage results in active community participation levels, while also supports networks outside the local areas. This implies that the use of social media networks not only builds communities from inside but also expands their influence outside its confines. This broadens the scope of the community itself and makes it more embracing and welcoming to outsiders. However, some researchers argue that using the internet and social media takes a person away from reality and into the virtual world; thus, weakening social and community ties the individual has (Kraut et al., 21998). The newer research contradicts this position and states that social media and internet has become an ally in securing local interests (Hampton and Wellman, 2003). The most interesting spin on the relationship between social media networks and community development is provided by Stanoevska-Slabeva (2014), who argues that social media networks must themselves be based on the structures of a social community. The researcher states that social media networks must emulate community development practices for greater success in design and functioning. This approach emphasizes the mirroring between community development and the use of social media networks. Social media has presented another noteworthy aspect of the development of community relations; it has provided a new way of obtaining mass data for research purposes. As per Bright (2014), social media are increasingly embedded in the fabric of life; it is increasingly difficult to ignore the potential they present for social research which can inform policy-making and service delivery, providing data in both quantities and richness that would be prohibitively expensive to duplicate with traditional survey research. The richness of data and the breadth of scope from social media research regarding community relations is increasing every day. Several private organizations exploit the tools provided by social media networks to gather more relevant data than before at a much lower cost and manpower, and this model has been noted by government organizations as well. Further, social media has also changed such aspects as media relations and the journalist-public relations professional relationship. This affects the community relationships by changing the ways of information and awareness among members of the community. Waters et al. (2010) said social media has opened the door for journalists to start making public relations professionals compete with others for the attention of journalists. Plus, with crowdsourcing and the tremendous growth of citizen journalism, the relationship and interaction with journalists have somewhat changed (McCorkindale, 2014). As has been observed increasingly in the past decade, social networking sites are used to spread information faster than traditional news outlets or any other form of media. Everyday examples of social media sharing for the benefit of the community are seen in the emergency amber alerts, voting reminders, and occasional notices regarding public security and precautions by the police or government. Examples of rapid social media sharing to help the community occurred in events such as the Kerala floods in 2018 [11] and the very recent Cyclone Fani in Odisha [12]. In these cases, social media

<sup>10</sup> Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/voluntary-sector-network/community-action-blog/2011/dec/08/facebook-social-media-community-development>

<sup>11</sup> Available at: <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2018/08/22/640879582/how-social-media-came-to-the-rescue-after-keralas-flood>

<sup>12</sup> Available at: <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/after-cyclone-fani-destruction-odisha-appeals-for-help-to-rebuild-2033321>

caught the word quicker than even local news outlets and created awareness giving a voice to the victims of these tragedies. Social media was also used to form groups in which people posted photos and information about the crisis. Thus, social media has emerged as an effective tool for community-building and development; from providing channels of communication to disaster- prevention and aid. Benea (2014) has examined the influence of social media on the tourism and hospitality industry. Social media has proven to be a boon for the tourism sector. The paper discusses that social media has brought the world closer and increased connectivity across geographical limitations. Social media usage has helped in the promotion and marketing of tourist services and places, including giving birth to niche tourism such as medical tourism, gastronomic tourism, adventure tourism etc. Hotels, restaurants and cafes use social media for targeting potential clients and for spreading information about their tour packages. Use of social networking sites has also proven to be beneficial in discovering fraudulent service providers and avoiding conmen. Siddiqui (2016) has assessed the positive and negative impacts that arise from the use of social media. The paper includes a broad analysis of the effects of social media usage in fields like education, business and youth in society. According to the author, the positive impacts for social media on society include sharing of ideas, uniting people for common cause, and providing awareness in society through promotional articles and campaigns. On the other hand, the study also mentions the negative consequences of usage of social media on society including rising cyber-addiction, psychological impact on kids, and invasion of privacy. Overall, the author concludes that use of social media is beneficial but must be limited to avoid addiction. Mukolwe and Korir (2016) have examined the relationship between social media and entrepreneurship through a case study. The case study was based on the observation of women online entrepreneurs on Kilimani Mums Marketplace- a group on Facebook based in Kenya. The findings of the study revealed that a considerable number of women had accepted Facebook commerce as a viable tool. Facebook's advantages for business were described in the study; practical and efficient interface, free of charge, Business-to-business communication. The study also threw light on challenges of using social media for business; delayed customer feedback, poor internet access and plagiarism. The study suggested that women online entrepreneurs should utilize the full potential of the media by actively learning and adapting their business strategy based on customer feedback.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data was collected from 416 small scale enterprises operating their business in Haryana state with the help of a customized research instrument specially developed for the study. The reliability of the instrument was measured using alpha method, which came out as 0.760, which is acceptable. The study was descriptive in nature, which explains that how SSEs have perceived the social media marketing for their business growth and development. data was analyzed using frequency method.

### IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The responses of the SSEs towards the perceived benefits and challenges related to usage of social media in their business, have been analysed using frequency method, and shown using frequency tables in this section along with detailed interpretation of each of the table.

It is easy to juggle social media activity with demands of business					
Groups		SSEs	Percent	Exact %	Collective %
	Strongly Disagree	82	19.7	19.7	19.7
	Disagree	111	26.7	26.7	46.4
	Neutral	124	29.8	29.8	76.2
	Agree	77	18.5	18.5	94.7
	Strongly Agree	22	5.3	5.3	100 %
	Total	416	100 %	100 %	

26.7 percent of owners of SSEs disagreed with the statement that "It is easy to juggle social media activity with the demand of business", while 18.5 percent of owners of SSEs were agreed to the same. 29.8 percent of owners have given a neutral opinion to the same. Social media activities can be manipulated, to attract customers, to increase the demand of the

business, and social media activities help in providing the information to the customers, which can help them in taking a positive call to buy the products. Hence, social media helps in developing the customer database and demand by juggling facilities.

<b>I can manage my time effectively with social media</b>					
		SSEs	Percent	Exact %	Collective %
Groups	Strongly Disagree	38	9.1	9.1	9.1
	Disagree	147	35.3	35.3	44.5
	Neutral	108	26.0	26.0	70.4
	Agree	44	10.6	10.6	81.0
	Strongly Agree	79	19.0	19.0	100 %
	Total	416	100 %	100 %	

35.3 percent of owners of SSEs disagreed with the statement that “I can manage my time effectively with social media”, while 10.6 percent of owners of SSEs agreed to the same. 26 percent of owners have given a neutral opinion to the same. Social media helps in creating awareness of the brand, increasing the customer base, and also creating and connecting with current customers. This leads to a rapid increase in customers thus helping the owners to manage their time effectively.

<b>I can easily understand the features of various apps and social media platforms</b>					
		SSEs	Percent	Exact %	Collective %
Groups	Strongly Disagree	69	16.6	16.6	16.6
	Disagree	126	30.3	30.3	46.9
	Neutral	112	26.9	26.9	73.8
	Agree	109	26.2	26.2	100 %
	Total	416	100 %	100 %	

30.3 percent of owners of SSEs disagree with the statement that “I can easily understand the features of various apps and social media platforms”, while 26.2 percent of owners of SSEs agreed to the same. 26.9 percent of owners have given a neutral opinion to the same. Most business owners qualify up to the secondary level education only, which makes them inefficient to understand features of social media platforms.

<b>I can use my existing infrastructure like phone or laptop to do social media marketing for my business</b>					
		SSEs	Percent	Exact %	Collective %
Groups	Strongly Disagree	78	18.8	18.8	18.8
	Disagree	119	28.6	28.6	47.4
	Neutral	101	24.3	24.3	71.6
	Agree	118	28.4	28.4	100 %
	Total	416	100 %	100 %	

28.6 percent of owners of SSEs disagree with the statement that “I can use my existing infrastructure like phone or laptop to do social media marketing for my business”, while 28.4 percent of owners of SSEs agreed to the same. 24.3 percent of owners have given a neutral opinion to the same. Social media can be accessed from anywhere, anytime. This makes it easier for business owners to carry out their businesses from any space with devices such as mobile phones or laptops.

<b>I am able to find guidance regarding using social media promotion tools easily</b>					
		SSEs	Percent	Exact %	Collective %
Groups	Strongly Disagree	169	40.6	40.6	40.6
	Disagree	89	21.4	21.4	62.0
	Neutral	78	18.8	18.8	80.8
	Agree	56	13.5	13.5	94.2
	Strongly Agree	24	5.8	5.8	100 %
	Total	416	100 %	100 %	

21.4 percent of owners of SSEs disagree with the statement that “I am able to find guidance regarding using social media promotion tools easily”, while 13.5 percent of owners of SSEs agreed to the same. 18.8 percent of owners have given a neutral

opinion to the same. By communicating with customers online via social media, firms can establish a strong media presence. By expressing key principles to a larger audience, social media technologies can also serve to boost brand perception. As a result, new opportunities to start dialogues, build business alliances and expand the online community to gain new followers and potential clients present themselves.

<b>I use social media marketing to stay ahead of the competition</b>					
		SSEs	Percent	Exact %	Collective %
Groups	Strongly Disagree	65	15.6	15.6	15.6
	Disagree	128	30.8	30.8	46.4
	Neutral	103	24.8	24.8	71.2
	Agree	76	18.3	18.3	89.4
	Strongly Agree	44	10.6	10.6	100 %
	Total	416	100 %	100 %	

30.8 percent of owners of SSEs disagree with the statement that “I use social media marketing to stay ahead of the competition”, while 18.3 percent of owners of SSEs agreed to the same. 24.8 percent of owners have given a neutral opinion to the same. Businesses may wish to consider conducting a competitive analysis regularly to stay one step ahead of the competition for which social media is very helpful.

<b>I understand how to separate personal and professional content on social media</b>					
		SSEs	Percent	Exact %	Collective %
Groups	Strongly Disagree	61	14.7	14.7	14.7
	Disagree	137	32.9	32.9	47.6
	Neutral	140	33.7	33.7	81.3
	Agree	55	13.2	13.2	94.5
	Strongly Agree	23	5.5	5.5	100 %
	Total	416	100 %	100 %	

32.9 percent of owners of SSEs disagree with the statement that “I understand how to separate personal and professional content on social media”, while 13.2 percent of owners of SSEs agreed to the same. 33.7 percent of owners have given a neutral opinion to the same. Sometimes social media becomes a huge task to manage. Without experience, a business owner cannot easily understand which content will be relevant for a professional or personal account.

<b>I can identify the most suitable social media network for promoting my business</b>					
		SSEs	Percent	Exact %	Collective %
Groups	Strongly Disagree	20	4.8	4.8	4.8
	Disagree	106	25.5	25.5	30.3
	Neutral	176	42.3	42.3	72.6
	Agree	88	21.2	21.2	93.8
	Strongly Agree	26	6.3	6.3	100 %
	Total	416	100 %	100 %	

25.5 percent of owners of SSEs disagree with the statement that “I can identify the most suitable social media network for promoting my business”, while 21.2 percent of owners of SSEs agreed to the same. 42.3 percent of owners have given a neutral opinion to the same. One of the company's most successful marketing platforms is social networking. It's a great method to raise brand awareness, communicate with current customers and generate new leads to fill the sales funnel.

## V. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from the study that social media marketing is very beneficial for the small-scale enterprises. In the digital era, when everything is shifting from offline to online mode, marketing has also shifted from offline to online mode. People get more attracted towards the online advertisements. The major benefits of social media marketing, is that one can reach to larger markets and can increase the geographical or business reach at less cost. It helps in getting connect with the customers instantly, and having a direct conversation with the customers. The real view points of the customers, can help in making

changes into the business strategies, and earning huge profits. Small scale enterprises are now opting to the social media marketing, to save the cost and in hope to reach to vast customer base.

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