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INFLUENCE OF MSME CLASSIFICATION ON THE ANTECEDENTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE – AN EMPIRICAL STUDY CONDUCTED ON SELECT MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES OF HYDERABAD, TELANGANA

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ABSTRACT

Indian Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (henceforth called MSME) have emerged as one of the fastest growing and dynamic sectors in the Indian economy. MSME sector is the backbone of Indian economy. The emergence of social media gave a new dimension to the way MSMEs operate their business especially in the marketing of their products and services. Few MSMEs have embraced this new medium, but still there is a majority who are yet to adopt. These MSMEs are classified as micro, small and medium based on their investment in their business. The purpose of this paper is to understand whether there is any influence of MSME classification on the antecedents of social media usage like interactivity, compatibility, cost-effectiveness and perceived usefulness. The study investigated the perceived impact of the antecedents on the usage of social media among the MSME owners. It is essential to study the factors that are influencing and driving social media as a promotional tool among the MSME owners and the significant role social media is going to play while planning their overall marketing strategy.

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INTRODUCTION

Indian MSME sector has emerged as one of the fastest growing and dynamic sectors in Indian economy. MSME sector is the backbone of India economy. MSME plays a vital role in promoting entrepreneurship with low capital cost and generating significant employment. The government of India's Twelfth Five Year Plan's vision was to increase annual GDP growth to 8 percent and to create jobs to 50 million people in the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME). Skill development and internet connectivity are identified as the enablers to achieve the targeted growth. The 2015-16 Annual report published by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises reports that India has 51 million MSMEs which contribute 37.5 percent of the Indian GDP in which 7 per cent is contributed by the manufacturing sector and 30 percent by the service sector. The share of MSME in manufacturing output is around 37 percent and adding 46 percent to exports. Most importantly MSME sector employes seventeen million workforce which is 14 percent of India's working population. (KPMG Report, 2017).

Fast changing global economics are creating challenges for the MSMEs. MSMEs have to produce world-class quality products

at a viable cost and also have to focus on marketing efforts simultaneously. MSMEs don't have similar resources that are available to the large corporates. According to Ministry of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises, marketing is very it is a significant challenge the MSMEs face apart from credit availability and technological upgradation. Just like there is darkness under a bright lamp, even though MSME's are the shining stars of the Indian economy, their lack of expertise in promoting their products are becoming detrimental to their survival. Romano and Ratnatunga (1995) noted that "small firms face marketing challenges which can and will ultimately determine their future."(pp.9-30).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Large organisations have enough financial resources to undertake aggressive marketing plans to promote their products. MSMEs have neither the workforce nor financial resources to promote their products. Traditional media like newspapers, television or radio, are costly and thus are out of reach for most of the MSME's. MSME differ from large organisations regarding characteristics (McCartan-Quinn and Carson, 2003) and have greater flexibility, innovation and low costs as advantages (Walsh and Lipinski, 2009). Marketing

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power, capital and managerial resources are significant disadvantages of small businesses (Motwani *et al.*, 1998).

MSMEs are classified as Micro, Small and Medium based on their capital investment.

Table 1 MSMEs classification based on Capital invested

MSME Classification	Manufacturing	Service
Micro	Investment ≤ 25 lakhs rupees	Investment ≤ 10 lakhs rupees
Small	Investment >25 lakhs but < 5 crores rupees	Investment >10 lakhs but < 2 crores rupees
Medium	Investment > 5 crores but < 10 crores rupees	Investment > 2 crores but <5 crores rupees

Source: <https://msme.gov.in/faq>

The development of ICT (Information, Communication and Technology), especially in the Internet and social networks, has ushered in new market dynamics (Alves, Fernandez and Rapso 2016) and is threatening the competitive positions of firms (Porter, 2001) and places the small businesses at par with large organizations with respect to market advantage (Gourdreau, 2012). These innovations in communication technologies are creating level playing field for MSMEs as well.

Small businesses can derive global position by engaging in innovative marketing practices which is a critical component in small business's profitability, long-term growth and survival (Gilmore, A., Carson, D. and Grant, K, 2001). Amy Martin, the author of "Renegades Write the Rules," opines that "entrepreneurs are especially poised to gain from social media because it provides easy access to potential customers and partners, facilitating free marketing and market research and efficient customer service." (Gourdreau, 2012).

Digital technologies have changed the way MSMEs operate. The government of India has started a 'Digital India' campaign to transform India into a digital society. MSMEs are encouraged to register their businesses and to file taxes using the online medium to promote usage of digital platforms. The government of India also launched "Digital MSME" scheme for promotion of Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

Web 2.0 has enabled Digital transformation. "Web 2.0 is a set of economic, social and technology trends that collectively form the basis for the next generation of the Internet, a more mature, distinctive medium characterised by user participation, openness, and network effects" (Musser and O'Reilly, 2005).

According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2009) "Social media is a group of internet based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of the user-generated content."(p.61).

Alves, H., Fernandes, C., & Raposo, M. (2016) maintains that the firms are adopting social media for marketing activities like branding, market research, customer relationship management, service provision and sales promotions.

Odoom, R. *et al.*, (2017) maintain that social media is more suitable for small businesses because of low cost, low barriers to participation, mobility and minimal requirement of IT skills.

They further opined that social media adoption by the small companies enables competitiveness while offering a cost-effective platform for communicating with consumers.

According to the KPMG India and Google Study on Impact of Internet on Small and Medium Business 2017...

- 68 percent of Indian MSMEs are entirely offline with no online presence and are using traditional tools to promote their business.
- 15 percent of the MSMEs are connected, which means they use the internet for general information gathering and communication but don't use the internet for business purposes such as social media, online listing, e-commerce etc.,
- 15 percent of MSMEs are digitally enabled, which means they have their business website, or use social media or maintain corporate email id to engage and understand their customers.
- 2 percent of the MSMEs are engaged, which means that they are using digital technology actively to enable business online by either selling on e-commerce websites or advertising online or listing on 3rd party portals (KPMG, 2017).

Interactivity

Interactivity is the essential feature of any favourite communication medium. According to Steuer, Jonathan (1992) "Interactivity is the extent to which users can participate in modifying the form and content of a mediated environment in real time."(P.14) Liu and Shrum(2002) defined interactivity as "the degree to which two or more communication parties can act on each other, on the communication medium, and on the messages and the degree to which such influences are synchronised" (p.54) Interactivity is the important factor that influences user response to new technologies (Ainin *et al.*, 2015).

Leaver, T. (2017) remarked that "Interactivity involves communication between people and the technology."(p.1) Facebook, one of the famous social networking site is considered as interactive media as it facilitates two-way interaction instead of one-directional communication (Mayfield, 2008). Interactivity bridges the inequalities in time and geographical location thus becoming a critical factor for adoption of social media. (Odoom, R. *et al.*, 2017).

Compatibility

Based on the Diffusion of Innovation theory, compatibility was described as the degree to which innovation fits with the potential adopter's existing values, past practices and current needs. (Rogers, 1983). Any innovation which meets the small business owner's requirement is more likely to be adopted with alacrity. Even though an innovation seems to be technically and financially better, it may not be adopted, as the business owner finds the innovation irrelevant to his line of business (Rogers, 1995).

Firms are more likely to select and use social media based on its compatibility with the organisation's values and goals. (Anin *et al.*, 2015).

On the contrary Ramdani *et al.*, (2009) found that compatibility is not a significant factor while adopting enterprise systems. Similarly, If social media is perceived to be compatible with the firm's business goals, it is more likely to be adopted.

Cost-effectiveness

Fisher (2009) remarks that nowadays marketing managers are facing tremendous pressure while backing their decision to prefer online communications to that of traditional communication tools. The cost of adoption is a critical factor while adoption of web-based technologies (Ernst and young, 2001). For small business owners who run their businesses on tight budget cost is a significant factor while adapting to any new technologies.

Unlike traditional media, social media doesn't entail prohibitive budgets (Hanna *et al.*, 2011). For embracing social media, small businesses need not invest in massive infrastructures like networks, servers, data storage, and other peripheral devices (Wang and Tsai 2002). Alam (2009) maintains that cost-effectiveness is a significant bearing on internet adoption by the small businesses.

Businesses can reach and engage customers in numerous ways without spending on expensive media. Small firms which run on thin budgets should take benefit of their media owned by them which include their websites and also should receive the advantage of social media platforms that are free. Social media is all about being connected to the customer (Hanna *et al.*, 2011).

With more than 241 million active social media users in India, it does not necessitate the MSME owners to spend on expensive traditional media. Social media allows small businesses to have direct communication with the consumers with low cost and more efficiency (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010), it is imperative for the MSME owners to adopt social media.

Perceived Usefulness

Davis (1989) defined Perceived Usefulness (PU) as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance." He further defined on the term 'useful' which is "capable of being used advantageously. (p.320)".

Perceived usefulness was considered as an influential forecaster of technology usage or adoption (Siamagka, N.K *et al.*, 2015).

Several empirical tests of Technological Adoption Model (TAM) have demonstrated that Perceived Usefulness (PU) is continuously a substantial determining factor of usage intention. (Venkatesh & Davis 2002).

In this context, the study will examine the influence of MSME Classification on the antecedents like interactivity, compatibility, cost-effectiveness and perceived usefulness of social media usage by the MSME Owners.

Research Objective

Indian Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises have emerged as one of the fastest growing and dynamic sectors in the Indian economy. MSME sector is the backbone of Indian economy.

The emergence of social media gave a new dimension to the way MSMEs operate their business especially in the marketing of their products and services. The study will examine the influence of MSME Classification namely Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises on the antecedents of social media usage namely Interactivity, Compatibility, Cost- Effectiveness and Perceived Usefulness by the MSME Owners.

Research Methodology

An empirical study was conducted to test the mentioned research framework and hypotheses. Based on the past research and literature review interactivity, compatibility, cost-effectiveness and perceived usefulness are chosen as antecedents for the social media usage by the MSME owners. To understand the influence of MSME Classification (Micro, Small and Medium) on the antecedents of social media usage of the MSME owners, the data collected on these antecedents was subjected to computation for descriptive statistics, F-values, ANOVA and Post Hoc tests.

Reliability Statistics

The measuring instruments that were used in the research were drawn from the literature review. Interactivity, Compatibility, and Cost-effectiveness were adopted from Odoom, R *et al.*(2017). Perceived Usefulness was adopted from Siamagka, N. *et al.* (2015), Social media usage was adopted from Ainin, S. *et al.* (2015). The responses were obtained on a five-point Likert scale (5 = strongly agree and 1= strongly disagree).

To test the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach α coefficients were calculated.

Cronbach's alpha coefficients were evaluated using the guidelines suggested by George and Mallery (2016) where $> .9$ is excellent, $> .8$ is good, $> .7$ is acceptable, $> .6$ is questionable, $> .5$ is poor, and $\leq .5$ is unacceptable. This process has yielded a value of 0.98 which indicates that the scale to measure antecedents of social media as highly reliable. The items for Cronbach had a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.98, indicating excellent reliability.

Population and Sample

The study was related to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) owners located in the city of Hyderabad in Telangana State.

The sample was from the members of the MSME world, MSME expos (large exhibitions) conducted by National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) and MSME – Development Institute, Balanagar, Hyderabad, Telangana. Owners of the respective MSMEs were contacted in person, and the questionnaire was administered.

Data Collection

A total of 240 MSME owners were met for administering the questionnaire, and 210 MSME owners responded by filling the questionnaire with a response rate of 87.5 percent. Among them, 171 respondents are using social media which is 81 percent of the total respondents. The respondent were business owners. The researcher personally met the business owners and sought the responses.

The entire survey took three months to complete that is it lasted from December 2017 to February 2018.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Summary statistics were calculated for each demographic variable. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine whether there were significant differences in interactivity, compatibility, cost effectiveness and perceived usefulness by MSME Classification. Some of the important findings are given below.

Table 2 Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Men	172	81.9
Women	38	18.1
Total	210	100.0

8 out of 10 respondents were Men.

Table 3 Age groups

Age Group in years	Frequency	Percent
18-24	2	1.0
25-34	61	29.0
35-44	81	38.6
45-54	46	21.9
55-64	17	8.1
65-74	3	1.4
Total	210	100.0

9 out of 10 respondents are among the age groups 25 to 54 years. And nearly 70 percent are between 25-44 years age group.

Table 4 Educational Qualifications

Educational qualifications	Frequency	Percent
Post-Graduation	117	55.7
Graduation	79	37.6
10th standard	5	2.4
Intermediate	5	2.4
PhD	4	1.9
Total	210	100.0

93 percent of the respondents are either graduates or post-graduates.

Table 5 Type of Firm

Type of Firm	Frequency	Percent
Manufacturing	107	51.0
Service	103	49.0
Total	210	100.0

Respondents are more or less equally distributed between manufacturing and service sectors.

Table 6 MSME Classification

Classification of MSME	Frequency	Percent
Micro	93	44.3
Small	91	43.3
Medium	26	12.4
Total	210	100.0

88 percent of the respondents fall into the category of Micro and Small Enterprises.

Table 7 Type of Ownership

Type of Ownership	Frequency	Percent
Sole Proprietary	100	47.6
Private Ltd	68	32.4
Partnership	37	17.6
Others	5	2.4
Total	210	100.0

80 percent of the respondents fall into the category of either Sole proprietor ship or a Private Limited Company.

Table 8 Years in Business Operation

Years in Business Operation	Frequency	Percent
0 to 5 years	82	39.0
6 to 10 years	54	25.7
Above 20 years	33	15.7
11 to 15 years	26	12.4
16 to 20 years	15	7.1
Total	210	100.0

65 percent of the companies fall in either 0-5 years category or 6-10 years of operation of the business.

Table 9 Availability of website

Firm's Website	Frequency	Percent
Yes	150	71.4
No	60	28.6
Total	210	100.0

Nearly 30 percent of the companies do not have websites for their business.

Table 10 Presence of Marketing Department

Marketing Department	Frequency	Percent
Yes	145	69.0
No	65	31.0
Total	210	100.0

Nearly 30 percent of the companies do not have marketing department.

Hypotheses

An empirical study was conducted to test the mentioned research framework and hypotheses. Based on the past research and literature review, interactivity, compatibility, cost-effectiveness and perceived usefulness were chosen as the antecedents for the social media usage by the MSME owners, therefore the following hypotheses were formulated for the study.

Hypothesis 1

H₀: There were no significant differences in Interactivity of social media by MSME classification levels.

H₁: There are significant differences in Interactivity of social media by MSME classification levels.

Hypothesis 2

H₀: There were no significant differences in Compatibility by MSME classification levels.

H₁: There are significant differences in Compatibility by MSME classification levels.

Hypothesis 3

H₀: There were no significant differences in Cost-Effectiveness by MSME classification levels.

H₁: There are significant differences in Cost-Effectiveness by MSME classification levels.

Hypothesis 4

H₀: There were no significant differences in Perceived Usefulness by MSME classification levels.

H₁: There are significant differences in Perceived Usefulness by MSME classification levels.

ANOVA

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine whether there were significant differences in interactivity, compatibility, cost effectiveness and perceived usefulness by MSME Classification. Before the analysis, ANOVA assumptions were examined. Before conducting the analysis, the assumptions of univariate normality of residuals, homoscedasticity of residuals, and the lack of outliers were assessed. To test the above hypothesis Anova was conducted to determine whether there were significant differences in interactivity by MSME classification.

Table 11 Mean, Standard Deviations and Analysis of Variance

Variables	Micro		Small		Medium		F	df	P
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
1 Interactivity	4.4	0.68	4.32	0.7	4.19	0.79	0.74	2, 168	0.477
2 Compatibility	4.5	0.58	4.43	0.63	4.17	0.91	1.98	2, 168	0.141
3 Cost-Effectiveness	4.53	0.64	4.39	0.66	4.07	0.88	3.58**	2, 168	0.03
4 Perceived Usage	4.37	0.68	4.26	0.71	4.08	0.78	1.34	2, 168	0.264

Note: Significance level at 0.05 level

With regard to Interactivity it is quite clear from the table 11 that the owners of Micro enterprises have scored better (mean = 4.4) those from Small enterprises (mean = 4.32) and those in the medium enterprise (mean = 4.19).

Interestingly the ‘F’ value presented in the table suggests that the variations in their mean scores are not statistically significant. In other words, Interactivity is uniform across all the three categories.

Thus, null hypothesis is accepted and alternative is rejected. There were no significant differences in Interactivity of social media by MSME classification levels. In conclusion the concept of Interactivity is uniform and practiced by all of the enterprises irrespective of their classifications.

With regard to **Compatibility** it is quite clear from the table that the owners of Micro enterprises have scored better (mean = 4.5) those from Small enterprises (mean = 4.43) and those in the medium enterprise (mean = 4.17).

Interestingly the ‘F’ value presented in the table 11 suggests that the variations in their mean scores is not statistically significant. In other words, Compatibility is uniform across all the three categories.

Thus, null hypothesis is accepted and alternative is rejected. There were no significant differences in compatibility by MSME classification levels. In conclusion the concept of Compatibility is uniform and practiced by all of the enterprises irrespective of their types.

With regard to **Cost-Effectiveness** it is quite clear from the table 11 that the owners of Micro enterprises have scored better (mean = 4.53) those from Small enterprises (mean = 4.39) and those in the medium enterprise (mean = 4.07).

The ‘F’ value presented in the table 11 suggests that the variations in their mean scores is statistically significant. In other words, Cost Effectiveness is not uniform across all the three categories.

Thus, null hypothesis is rejected and alternative is accepted. There are significant differences in cost-effectiveness by MSME classification levels.

In conclusion the concept of Cost Effectiveness is not uniformly accepted as an antecedent by all of the enterprises.

To further examine the differences among the variables, *t*-tests were calculated between each pair of measurements.

Table 12 Tukey post-hoc test results

Dependent Variable (I) MSME Classification	MSME Classification (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval		
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Cost Effectiveness	Micro	Small	.13597	.11034	.436	-.1249	.3969
		Medium	-.46018*	.17422	.024	-.0482	.8722
	Small	Micro	-.13597	.11034	.436	-.3969	.1249
		Medium	.32421	.17468	.155	-.0888	.7373
	Medium	Micro	-.46018*	.17422	.024	-.8722	-.0482
		Small	-.32421	.17468	.155	-.7373	.0888

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Tukey pairwise comparisons (Table 12) were conducted for all significant effects. For the main effect of MSME classification, the mean of cost-effectiveness for Medium (mean = 4.07, SD = 0.88) was significantly smaller than for Micro (mean = 4.53, SD = 0.64). No other significant effects were found. There is a significant difference between the Micro and Medium enterprises with respect to Cost-Effectiveness.

With regard to **Perceived Usefulness** it is quite clear from the table that the owners of Micro enterprises have scored better than (mean = 4.37) those from Small enterprises (mean = 4.26) and those in the medium enterprise (mean = 4.08).

Interestingly the ‘F’ value presented in the table suggests that the variations in their mean scores is not statistically significant. In other words, Perceived Usefulness is uniform across all the three categories.

Thus, null hypothesis is accepted and alternative is rejected. There were no significant differences in perceived usefulness by MSME classification levels. In conclusion the concept of Perceived Usefulness is uniform and practiced by all of the enterprises irrespective of their types.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper is to examine the influence of MSME classification namely Micro, Small and Medium on the antecedents of social media like Interactivity, Compatibility, Cost Effectiveness and Perceived Usefulness.

From the research findings we can conclude that there is no influence of MSME classification on the antecedents of social media usage namely Interactivity, Compatibility and Perceived Usefulness, except for Cost-Effectiveness. Entrepreneurs belonging to MSME Classification of Micro and Medium

enterprises segments perceive that there is significant difference with respect to Cost-Effectiveness. Entrepreneurs belonging to Micro and Medium classification feel that social media is not very cost effective. They also feel that social media does not significantly cut down costs of marketing communications. They prefer to opt for those social media that offers free postings without making any payments. The reason for their apprehension could emerge from the point that they are not very convinced about social media as an enabler of marketing communication.

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