

Examining the Impact of Social Media Advertisements and Consumers' Perceptions on Consumers' Trust: Evidence from Egyptian public healthcare campaigns

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Abstract

This paper examines the effect of social media marketing and consumer perceptions on consumer trust, with respect to the demographics as a moderator variable. The social media advertisements in this study are evaluated based on their legitimacy and informational value. Despite the changeable nature of customer views, it is assessed by selective awareness and selective retention changing to demographics; the moderating factor (age, gender, income, and education). The dependent variable in this research is consumer trust which is proxied by sincerity and prior experience. Due to the scarcity in addressing the impact of social media marketing and customer perceptions on consumer trust in Egypt, particularly in the public sectors, this research would contribute to the existing literature by providing a deeper understanding of social media commercials. Furthermore, the findings of this research would assist in the development of valuable guidelines for online platforms to improve advertisements introduced to the Egyptian market. The current research is based on qualitative data acquired from in-depth interviews with select doctors who participated in the "100 Million Health" campaign, and quantitative data derived from an online survey distributed to Egyptian members of the general public. In this respect, this research would cement the identification of major issues and the formulation of essential conclusions. The research results revealed a considerable relationship between social media advertising and customer views and consumer trust.

Keywords

Social Media Advertisements, Consumer Perception, Consumer Trust.

Article history

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1. Introduction

Internet accessibility increased the popularity of social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. Globally, most internet users today rely on social media. When social media originally became popular, it was commonly used for socializing and communicating with individuals from all over the world, and businesses began to recognize the financial possibilities of social media. Moreover, social media marketing looked to be more appropriate and cost-effective than traditional media marketing (Sriram et al., 2021).

Before utilizing a service, social media consumers examine commercials and read online service reviews to learn more about the service and to gauge the campaign's reliability, reputation, and history. In addition, social media facilitates the exchange of knowledge and skills, which accelerates the innovation process and leads to the creation of new services and campaigns based on user feedback and suggestions. (Misra et al., 2022).

The Egyptian government is currently implementing a range of initiatives as part of its ICT 2030 strategy. These initiatives include investments, capacity building and training programs, reforms in digital government services, and enhancements to infrastructure. The proposed strategy entails the implementation of novel measures aimed at optimizing the role of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector in fostering Egypt's economic growth. This would be achieved through a targeted emphasis on enhancing capacity building efforts, fostering electronics design and manufacturing activities, and establishing technology parks. The strategy additionally encompasses a comprehensive framework for the digitalization of fundamental government services in the domains of education, healthcare, and governmental operations (ITA, 2022).

Regarding users of internet in Egypt, there were 80.75 million internet users in Egypt January 2023 this number had increased by 1.2 million (+1.6 %) between 2022 and 2023 according to the Egyptian Ministry of Communications and Information Technology annual report (2023). Whereas the most used social media platforms are Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and Tiktok respectively.

Consequently, some studies have induced us to study digitalizing the essential government services such as the Healthcare sector. Besides, studying how can social media advertisements and customer perception affect customer trust when participating in such campaigns learned as well due to the scare studies that have explored that impact according to (Sriram K V, et al, 2021).

This research framework underpins the social marketing theory, which is being conducted in the Egyptian Healthcare sector. Consequently, a conceptual model argues for precise the impact of social media advertisements, consumer perception, and consumer trust as moderated by demographics (age, gender, and education).

2. Literature Review

This section begins by reviewing the prior literature on the association between bank competition and bank risk-taking to develop the first research hypothesis. Then, it is followed by a discussion on the association between regulatory capital and bank risk-taking to develop the second research hypothesis. Finally, the association among bank competition, regulatory capital, and bank risk-taking is tackled to develop the third research hypothesis.

2.1. Social Media Advertisements

According to the study of (Kostygina et al., 2020), the popularity of social media enables public health organisations to raise the exposure of their media campaigns and extend the reach of traditional media messages quickly and affordably. Social networking, microblogging, image, and video-sharing platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snap Chat, and YouTube, might also increase the efficacy of health promotion interventions by providing access to consumers, as these media are disproportionately utilised by these groups.

There are several social media tools, guidelines, and best practices that can be utilised to communicate health messages to a large number of consumers, such as new kinds of social media that are frequently accessed by the intended audience. A written social media strategy addressing pertinent themes such as hashtag usage, tagging, communication, and content updating can prevent posts that negatively impact online communities. In addition, policy implementation allows constructive involvement that acknowledges the diversity of user demographics, cultural backgrounds, and perspectives. Try to keep your social media activities current and engaging. Competent social media moderators are vital for maintaining social media accounts and boosting engagement by scheduling messages and swiftly responding to user postings concerning current public health concerns. Moderators can provide crucial social assistance that clinicians are frequently unable to provide, such as advice on how to communicate effectively with healthcare professionals. (Stellefson et al., 2020)

Given the potential to disseminate information, health institutions can use social media to disseminate health-related information and facilitate knowledge sharing rapidly and broadly among the general public. Health institutions have the capacity to disseminate information to the public regarding prevalent health issues, including but not limited to promoting healthy lifestyles, advocating for vaccination, and discouraging smoking. Additionally, they can effectively communicate the potential risks associated with disease outbreaks, promptly deliver instructions on preventive measures to a wide audience during such outbreaks, and keep the public informed about the latest developments and the government's response to these outbreaks (Chen & Wang, 2021).

Additionally, Chen & Wang (2021) stated that social media has been extensively integrated into the success of public health programmes and can serve multiple purposes. Social media advertisements act as a means to provide health resources, encompassing the promotion of health information to consumers, fostering

engagement in health-related activities, and guiding consumers towards more health-related outlets. Social media platforms are utilised to facilitate contact with consumers, encompassing interactive engagement between campaign consumers and organisations as well as health experts, while also serving as forums for peer support group discussions.

Social media was utilised to motivate health behaviour change; consumers used social media to document and share their own progress of health behaviour change. Social media was also used to reach larger and more diverse audiences, including hard-to-reach populations, while crafting advertisements.

When a user has a high level of confidence in a social media platform, she or he feels more at ease articulating her or his preferences and forming relationships with others by participating in conversations and advertising activities. In relationship marketing efforts, platform trust increases social media engagement among consumers (Geng et al., 2021).

From the previous the researchers can conclude the following hypothesis:

H1: There is a significant impact of social media advertisements on consumer trust.

2.2. Consumers' Perceptions

According to Raji et al. (2019), the link between social media advertising and consumers is one of the most important forms of marketing communication used to profile customers' perceptions and capture their attitudes about businesses. Social media advertising is well-known from other forms of marketing strategy as any sort of brand-related messaging that influences and encourages consumers to make positive decisions.

The functional theory of attitudes is a theoretical framework that explains the role of attitudes in consumer perceptions. It offers insights into how attitudes contribute to the development of an individual's personality and how they serve as indicators of an individual's value. The level of satisfaction with which consumers' psychological needs are fulfilled has an impact on the formation of their attitudes. Consumer behaviour is driven by the fulfilment of demands. Previous studies have demonstrated that the value expressive and utilitarian functions play a substantial role in shaping customers' perceptions towards marketing pertaining to non-certified coffee establishments. The utilisation of a value expressive strategy in advertising will exert a substantial influence on consumer attitudes, since it drives consumers to develop an opinion based not on the advantages of the product, but rather on the implications of the product for their personal identity (Ariffin et al., 2021). According to the literature on consumer psychology published by Sarkar et al. (2022), the two components of social perception are friendliness and competence. Competence encompasses characteristics such as intelligence, power, skill, and efficacy, whereas warmth encompasses characteristics such as friendliness, trustworthiness, compassion, and helpfulness. Warmth represents

the degree to which customers trust others' intentions, whereas competence encompasses evaluations of others' capacity to properly carry out their plans. Warmth and competence are not only psychometric oddities, but rather persistent, essential, and (arguably) developed features of social perception. According to (Teng et al., 2022), consumers' reactions to the ad type are their cognitive and affective impressions of advertising. Particularly, cognitive reactions refer to the mental processes that individuals engage in while encountering stimuli, encompassing the assessment of informativeness and credibility. Affective reactions refer to the emotional responses experienced by individuals when they engage with incentives, encompassing perceptions of enjoyment and aggravation. While the significance of these four perceptions in affecting advertising effectiveness has been established, there is a limited body of research that investigates their indirect impact on consumer responses in the context of advertising stimuli (Aznan et al., 2023).

Moreover, the study of Wiese & Akareem (2020) stated that all customers appear to hold a judgement or opinion regarding a range of advertising phases. The views and attitudes of customers towards advertising are a significant indicator of the efficacy of advertising. Perceptions and attitudes of consumers about advertising are viewed as markers of the success of advertising in general. Alternatively, some of the earliest studies analysed consumer attitudes towards advertising in general and identified two primary antecedents: economic and social attitudes. Customers profit not just from the messages they can convey, but also from the information advertising provides. In addition, the researchers discovered a positive correlation between product information and views towards online advertising.

Similarly, perceptions of online advertising as informative and entertaining were the strongest predictors of attitudes towards online advertising, while perceptions of social network advertisements as informative and entertaining were the strongest predictors of attitudes towards social network advertisements. Internet advertisements promote messages regarding the social standing of consumers, the portrayal of the ideal consumer, and the social response to purchasing or brands. Besides, it was confirmed that the social role and image depicted in advertisements positively correlate with consumers' attitudes towards internet advertising. In addition, it was discovered that advertising relevance, value, social identity, and group norms are significant antecedents of consumer views according to the study of Wiese & Akareem (2020).

Based on the previous, the research hypotheses can be concluded as follows:

H2: There is a significant impact of consumers' perceptions on consumer trust.

2.3. Consumer Trust

Trust is the belief that a person will keep a promise made verbally or in writing. Trust is value is how the customer thinks a product works based on what they get and what they pay for. Customer attitudes and how they see the value of a product or service can be seen as the basis of all transactions and are usually linked to a customer's desire to buy. When making purchases, people try to get the most for their money. In general,

trust is the willingness to put your faith in a person or group in which you have confidence. The risk of doing business with an online seller goes down the more reliable that vendor seems to be. A recent study also showed that customers' views and plans to buy were better when they have trust in the company. Trust can also be thought of as an opinion, certainty, or expectation that the other person is trustworthy because of their skill, reliability, and goal. (Silva et al., 2019)

Message credibility also indicates the amount to which a recipient perceives the claims made by a brand in an advertisement as credible and true. Additionally, assesses the veracity and acceptability of a message's content. With respect to additional message credibility elements, including informational value and indirect expressions. The advertising model whose other aspects are entertainment value and irritation value provide us with informative value. In marketing operations that satisfy consumers' needs and desires, value is exchanged. Advertising value refers to the subjective evaluation of advertising's relative significance. Advertising value influences users' perceptions of branded posts (Shamim & Islam, 2022).

The context of use influences the majority of trust definitions, and in the context of the present study, it appears that reliability and risk reduction are crucial. Actually, a degree of risk is required for trust to be effective. By minimising perceived risks, trust can minimise non-monetary transaction costs and increase the perceived value of shopping on a seller's website in which the client has more trust. Hence, trust appears to reduce perceived risk and increase perceived value (Silva et al., 2019).

According to Thomas and Jadeja (2021), creativity is characterised as "divine intervention" and is believed to play a key part in overcoming everyday consuming issues. Creativity refers to the cognitive process that generates story ideas/products. Creativity is essential to the subject of management, and marketing academics have recognised creativity as an important element in their studies. Individual creativity is primarily studied at the level of the individual, and individual creativity is determined and goal oriented. Yet, research also reveals the negative effects of creativity in a social environment.

From the previous, the researchers concluded the following hypothesis:

H3: There is a significant impact of social media advertisements, consumer perception on consumer trust behavior moderated by the demographics (age, gender, and education).

2.4. Healthcare Sector in Egypt:

When it comes to the health and wellbeing of the Egyptian people, the Egyptian health care system faces several obstacles. Diseases related with poverty and lack of education are a major challenge for the system, but it has to deal with new diseases and illnesses that are a result of the urban lifestyle. People's expectations for both the quantity and quality of medical care available to them are growing as new forms of global communication and trade become increasingly accessible.

Government health services in Egypt are integrated, meaning that both financing and provider functions fall under the same umbrella, as is the case in many low- and middle-income nations. Government service providers who receive funding from the Ministry of Finance (MOF) must follow the same administrative guidelines as other government agencies.

The Egyptian healthcare system is feeling the strain of a growing population due to the country's high birthrate and greater life expectancy. The annual government expenditure allocated to the health sector increased by 252 percent from 31 billion Egyptian pounds in 2013/2014 to 109 billion Egyptian pounds in 2021/2022 (Egyptian Ministry of Health, 2022). The majority of these funds are allocated to public health services. However, it is commonly believed that the poor are the primary beneficiaries of these subsidies (Rashad & Sharaf, 2015).

3. Conceptual framework of the study:

The suggested conceptual framework is created based on the literature review and is shown in figure (1) below:

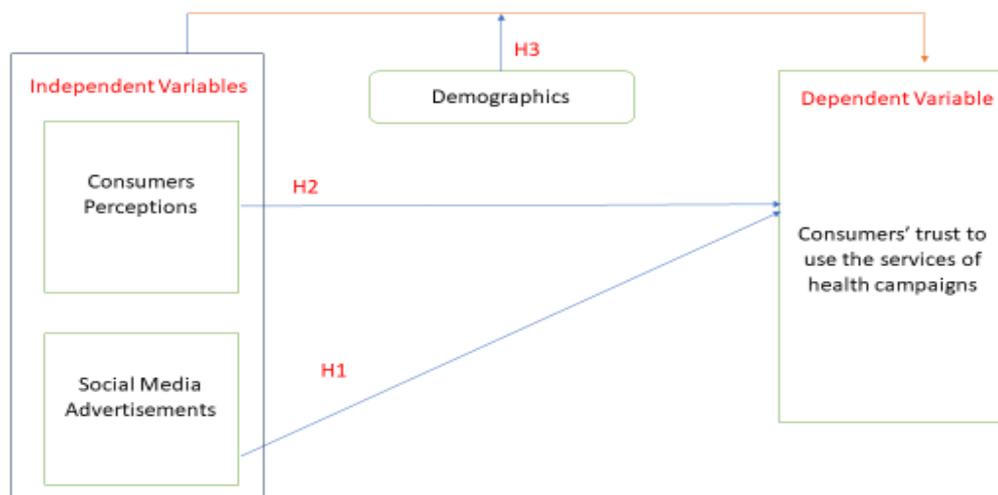


Figure (1) Proposed Research Framework
Source: Developed by the researchers

Using measuring items from prior research, the conceptual model (see Figure 1) with three core constructs is built based on the literature study (see Figure 1). This study analyses how marketing on social media platforms, notably Facebook, influence the perception and intent of customers. The outcomes of this study will expand theoretical understanding of the role of social media in reaching consumers and explain how this new communication channel influences the perception of a product. In terms of the mediating variable, the objective or subjective nature of internet reviews is controlled by demographics (age, gender, and education).

4. Research Methodology and Sampling:

4.1 Sampling plan

The present research is descriptive in nature. Qualitative and quantitative approaches are applied. The study population is as follows:

- a- Doctors and Physicians who participated in the recent Health campaigns all over Egypt.

As for the Doctors and Physicians, an in-depth interview approach is applied where 5 Phone interviews were audio-recorded upon participant consent and later transcribed. Participants were first asked to mention the campaign/s name/s that participated in, beliefs and goals to participate in such campaigns, role for each participant, allocated places of the campaigns, transportation, equipment, issues and concerns, also asking about the effect of social media on consumers, and if there is any suggestion.

- b- Egyptians who participated in recent Health campaigns hold by the Egyptian Ministry of Health.

The research sample is a convenience sample of Cairo residents between the ages of 15 and 60 who were chosen at random. Due to the absence of a framework within this group, the researchers present a sample of 384 respondents with a coefficient of confidence of 95% and error limits of 5%.

4.2. Questionnaire design

A questionnaire is constructed to collect primary data for the current study. The questionnaire consists of four questions intended to determine the relationship between consumers' Perceptions, Intentions, and Trust regarding social media marketing for the Egyptian Ministry of Health & Population services. The questionnaire for this investigation is formatted in Arabic and English. The desired sample size was 385 in August 2022, and 400 responses were received.

4.3. Testing the Hypotheses

4.3.1. Exploratory qualitative research analysis

The five participants engaged in 4 of the campaigns organised by the Ministry of Health & Population, Polio vaccines – Covid 19 vaccines – Virus C treatment and non-communicable diseases. Only one member participated in these campaigns voluntarily, while the other 4 participated merely for ministry assignment. Their main roles included Patient data entry, taking samples from patients to check virus C negativity and positivity, blood pressure, diabetes, weight, and height, polio vaccine distribution in schools and homes, and treatment distribution for patients who took their treatments abroad. Moreover, the main results of the depth interviews showed that low engagement level of doctors towards organizing the campaigns which impacted their

overall performance and satisfaction. Additionally, low financial return and delaying in receiving it affected satisfaction and the intention to participate in further campaigns.

4.4. Questionnaire analysis

4.4.1. Exploratory Reliability and intrinsic validity for research dimensions

The researchers relied on Cronbach Alpha Coefficient and factor analysis for measuring reliability and validity of the independent variable (Social media advertisements, consumers' perceptions, and demographics) dimensions & the dependent variable (Consumers trust).

The results showed that total reliability coefficient and intrinsic validity for the whole research constructs are (0.829), (0.91); highly internal consistency based on the average inter-item correlation. Likewise, all communalities' values for all components are greater than 0.5 which indicate the high validity of these items, in addition all values of loadings are greater than 0.5 indicates a high correlation between the survey questions.

4.4.2. Testing the Research Hypotheses

The researchers tested the conceptual framework using Multiple Regression Coefficient.

Table (1): Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.741 ^a	.549	.538	.55507

Predictors: (Constant), Edu5SC, FemaleSC, age3SC, Edu1SC, Edu2SC, age5SC, Edu4SC, age2SC, age1SC, age4SC

Table (1) shows that the independent variables (consumers perceptions and Social media advertisements) and moderator variables (Age, Gender, and Education) explain (54.9%) of the total variation in the dependent variable Consumer Trust. While the unexplained residuals might be due to random error in the equation, or perhaps the lack of inclusion of others independent variables. This reflects how Egyptian consumers perceive the social media advertisements and accordingly to what extent this perception affects the Egyptian consumer trust and participation in public health campaigns when it comes to public medical services or campaigns.

Since, it is commonly believed that the poor are the primary beneficiaries of healthcare services (Rashad & Sharaf, 2015), thus, this can directly explain the moderation effect of demographics (54.9% of the total variation), given that Egyptian poor consumers have limited education levels and weak income accordingly limited access to social media. In other words, not all targeted consumers have the capability to properly exhibit social media advertisements; this explains the average effect of these advertisements.

5. Conclusion

The results of the paper revealed that the independent variable (Social media advertisements) explains (23.4%) of the total change in the dependent variable (Consumers trust). This weak explanation may refer to need of the Egyptian consumers to trust in the social media advertisements of Ministry of Health and Population.

Furthermore, the independent variable (Consumers' perceptions) explains (44.8%) of the total change in the dependent variable (Consumers trust). Besides, the independent variable (Demographics) explains (54.9%) of the total change in the dependent variable (Consumers trust).

As a result, it can be concluded that social media can be used for delivering health messages to large number of consumers if the proper tools, rules were used. The implementation of a comprehensive social media policy that encompasses various aspects like the appropriate use of hashtags, tagging, communication, and content updates has the potential to mitigate the occurrence of harmful posts that have a detrimental effect on virtual communities. In addition, the application of policies promotes effective engagement that acknowledges and values the variety of user demographics, cultural heritages, and viewpoints.

Accordingly, it is contended that by carefully addressing trust issues in these three categories and understanding how the various characteristics impact firm competence, integrity, and benevolence, it is possible to build consumer trust. All the dimensions presented in this paper proved that there is an empirical impact of the social media advertisements on the consumer trust. Therefore, the marketers' attention for designing some tools to increase the consumer trust on the social media advertisements services organized by the Ministry of Health and Population is highly demanded.

Additionally, it is concluded from the depth interviews that social media moderators can provide invaluable social support that clinicians are often unable to offer, such as sharing insight about how to effectively communicate with healthcare providers.

6. Managerial Implications

The results of this research can guide the marketing experts in making decisions and developing strategies. For instance, marketing managers who are responsible for social media advertisements in public organizations should use an appropriate terminology to reach more consumers. Besides, advertisements need to be on Instagram with the other platforms to reach younger population.

Moreover, Egypt possesses a health care system that exhibits a notable degree of pluralism, characterized by the presence of numerous public and private providers and financial entities. Accordingly, marketing managers should consider such plurality when designing the social media campaigns.

The published social media reports on the official pages of ministries and public organizations needs to use more simple (straightforward) expressions to increase the consumer trust in such campaigns. In addition, increasing the awareness of the campaigns through the phone messages will have an impact on the consumers' trust as well.

The focus of healthcare reforms in Egypt should not only be on expanding coverage of healthcare benefits, but also enhancing its distribution equity with respect to the targeted customer financial, educational abilities.

According to this paper results, social media usage can enhance a health care professional's ability to administer optimal care to patients, as its benefits can outweigh its challenges because it can provide the benefits to:

- a) Patients: The ability to connect directly with patients through social media could make a big difference in how patients and the health care field work together.
- b) Younger Patients: since younger people are more likely to look to the Internet than to doctors for medical knowledge.
- c) Health care specialists: The utilisation of social media in the health care sector is beneficial not only for patients but also for the individuals employed in the health care industry. Social media facilitates seamless communication and information exchange among medical professionals, including doctors and primary care workers, owing to its collaborative nature. This communication tool facilitates discussions among medical professionals regarding pharmacological options, policy and regulatory modifications, advancements in biotechnology, effective surgical interventions, as well as inquiries and requirements expressed by patients.

Moreover, Skilled social media moderators are needed to keep social media pages up-to-date and get as many people to interact with them as possible by scheduling messages and responding quickly to user posts about important public health problems. Moderators can offer important social support that clinicians are often unable to give, such as tips on how to talk to healthcare workers in a good way. according to (Stellefson et al, 2020)

6.1. Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research

This study had two main limitations: First, the survey population section should contain the lifestyle and income to be easily divided the needs, perceptions, and intentions of the population to find out the trustful tools that each sector use. Second, the survey population section should contain foreigner population.

Future research may possibly create numerous extensions and expansions to the current research. Accordingly, it is recommended to measure the role of celebrities and influencers in the advertisements of social media for spreading the awareness campaigns and to get more information about its effect on consumers' perceptions, intentions, and trust.

Since R-square for the statistical analysis is 0.55, which is a moderate explanation, the researchers believe that examining the impact of word of mouth, brand image, government trust and customer previous experiences on customer trust will lead to other essential explanations and results.

This paper is focused on one important sector (the healthcare sector), so the researchers suggest that the idea behind this study is worth applying to other public sector.

Moreover, future research needs to add how to use appropriate terminology in the reports of the Ministry of Health and Population to reach out to more people, especially people with low educational level. Additionally, concentrating on the income of the population that used the services of the public health campaigns would add a wider scope in new research stream. As well as, examining the satisfaction of foreigners who lives in Egypt and experience the services of public health campaigns.

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