

Engagement of online shoppers on social media: Do we get enticed to shop online?

Compromiso de los compradores en línea en las redes sociales: ¿Nos atrae comprar en línea?

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Abstract

Online shopping has become the new normal in Indian scenario. Social media is playing an important role in shaping the choices of consumers consciously and at subconscious levels. -. Based on the impact and proximity to social media six factors were identified as passive participation, advocacy, need for recreation, seeking interaction, socialising and gullibility. These factors were then taken for hypothesis testing using one-way ANOVA and independent sample t-test.

Key words: social media, online shopping, reference group

Resumen

Las compras en línea se han convertido en la nueva normalidad en el escenario indio. Las redes sociales juegan un papel importante en la configuración de las elecciones de los consumidores de manera consciente y en niveles subconscientes. -. En función del impacto y la proximidad a las redes sociales, se identificaron seis factores como participación pasiva, defensa, necesidad de recreación, búsqueda de interacción, socialización y credulidad. Luego se tomaron estos factores para la prueba de hipótesis utilizando ANOVA unidireccional y una prueba t de muestra independiente.

Palabras clave: redes sociales, compras en línea, grupo de referencia

1. Introduction

Social media is the baby of web 2.0, wherein the people are expressing their views on the web for public consumption, and this phenomenon has resulted in people looking up for user reviews about products/services before making any purchase, taking expert views about high involvement products. Now companies are looking at how social media fits into the life of their consumers and how their brand should utilize social media to enhance customer experience. With consumers being the co-producers of branding message, companies have to have a perspective of the consumer's journey from the consumer's point of view. Social media is the buzzword in today's time. Social media are computer-mediated tools that allow people or companies to create, share, or exchange information, career interests, ideas, and pictures/videos in virtual communities and networks. Social media allows increased exposure through viral messages and recommendations from friends and acquaintances, operating on the principle of building a "snowball", step by step. In Indian context social media for major part of

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population is limited to the popular platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp and Youtube. During 1990s companies started having websites; but mostly they were telling audience just about the company, there was no interaction with the consumers and then came Web 2.0 in 2005. Constantinides and Fountain (2008) define Web 2.0 as "a collection of open-source, interactive and user-controlled online applications expanding the experiences, knowledge and market power of the users as participants in business and social processes. Web 2.0 applications support the creation of informal user networks, facilitating the flow of ideas and knowledge by allowing efficient generation, dissemination, sharing and editing/refining of the informational content." Social media is basically one of the most important reference group in present society. Reference groups are broadly defined as "actual or imaginary institutions, individuals, or groups conceived of having significant relevance upon an individual's evaluations, aspirations, or behaviour". Kelley (1947) identified two types of reference group influence: normative referents (e.g. parents, teachers, and peers) provide the individual with norms, attitudes, and values, and comparative referents (e.g. sports heroes and entertainment figures) provide standards of achievement. Reference groups have had a significant amount of role to play in consumer decision making. Even before online shopping became a rage, consumer's decision to buy or not to buy was impacted by reference groups. The bigger the group, the more the number of influencers; this is true for social networks as well. As per Metcalf's law, the total value of the network (community value), is the summation of the individual values of the members in the networked community (Ward & Kirthi, 2007). It simply means that total value of any network is directly proportional to the square of the number of connected users of the network. With 3 people, there are 2 people to communicate and with 6 people, there are 5 people to communicate with.

Forrester's social technographic ladder classifies people according to how they use technologies. Taken together, the Creators, Critics, Collectors, Joiners, Spectators and Inactives form an ecosystem that creates the groundswell. Book authors Josh Bernoff and Charlene Li define *groundswell* as "a social trend in which people use technologies to get the things they need from each other instead of from companies." Individuals interact with many social network members characterized by different interests, purposes and social identities. At the same time, they perceive shared consciousness of kind and a distinct social identity with certain peers; sub-group members share their enthusiasm for the same brand and interact regarding their object of interest. Individuals satisfy several needs by participating in specialized, embedded communities; thereby, the social network offers its members additional benefits and consequently, users' loyalty towards the social network rises (Fombelle, Jarvis, Ward, & Ostrom, 2012).

1.1 Background

The new trend that Facebook is witnessing since its inception is that for the first-time people are sharing less personal information on Facebook. The social networking/ friendship platform that Facebook was has been replaced by a company interested in selling the user interaction and data to advertisers who can use it to target consumers with content and information based on behaviour patterns. To serve its advertisers in a better way Facebook started privileging "verified" information and continued integration with third party vendors who pull and push information into the social world. Now Facebook is full of more and more external content like news, links, listicles, videos etc. than personal statuses. Facebook was the place where digital friendships and networks of millennials were housed, but with its own transitions it has now collapsed that context and lead people to think of it as a content aggregator. A report by consulting firm Zinnov says as many as two million women homemakers are reselling various lifestyle and clothing products using Facebook & WhatsApp. Homemakers, using basic internet tools, are clocking business worth about \$8-9 billion in gross sales, which are projected to grow to anywhere between \$48-60 billion in size by 2022. The re-sellers, then make 15-20% of order value as commission for selling these products. This is just a glimpse of how social media has changed our shopping habits. The traditional approach of WOM marketing (WOMM henceforth) was identification and targeting the 'opinion leaders'. These opinion leaders would transmit the company's marketing message without substantially altering

them. But in the recent research developments it has been found that information flow in WOMM is not unidirectional and straight as was assumed previously. Now consumers are not just vessels for passing communication but have become the coproduces of meaning. Ho & Dempsey (2008) examined the online user's motivation for passing along online content and came up with four potential needs as cause of motivation – to be part of a group, being individualistic, be altruistic and personal growth. Results also revealed that users, who are more individualistic and/or more altruistic, tend to forward more online content than others. As per a IBM survey, for nearly two thirds of consumers (64 percent), passion for a brand or business is a prerequisite for engaging with the company via social media. This means the majority of consumers are inclined to interact only with brands they already know and love. In exchange for their time, endorsement and personal data, consumers expect something tangible. Consumers are willing to interact with businesses if they believe it is to their benefit, feel they can trust the company and decide social media is the right channel to use to get the value they seek. That value could be in the form of a coupon or specific information. Whether its offline or online shopping, consumers rely heavily on the brand experience of fellow consumers; better still if they are part of the trusted circle. The online environment facilitates and multiplies opportunities for sharing and retrieving brand experience. Brand- or market-related messages originating from an experienced consumer inherently are considered more believable and trustworthy than marketer-initiated messages (Kozinets et al.2010). Pentina et al(2008)used social identity theory (Tajfel 1978, Ellemers, Kortekaas and Ouwerkerk 1999), normative influence research (Postmes, Spears and Lea 2000), and concept of susceptibility to reference group influences (Bearden and Etzel 1982) to suggest that virtual communities influence their members shopping preferences through the mechanism of social identification and internalization of group norms; the degree of social identification and norms internalization, in turn, is determined by members dominant motivations to join a community. Wu et al (2010) investigated the underlying driving forces that cultivate both the trust and returning behaviour of virtual community members. The findings suggested that the shared values of virtual community members have a positive impact on both trust and relationship commitment; satisfaction with previous interactions not only increases the level of trust in virtual community members, but also enhances relationship commitment and member stickiness and website privacy policies enhance the level of trust significantly. While studying the customer churn in online marketing, Keaveney & Parthasarthy (2001) profiled the online service switcher. And it came out that word of mouth exerted maximum influence on individuals who were online service switchers.

2. Methodology

To investigate the influence social media has on online shopping we used a structured, non-disguised questionnaire as research instrument to collect data. The items on questionnaire were based on literature review and personal interviews with 22 adult males and females based in Lucknow. The items which were taken from literature review were adapted to the context of the research. The questionnaire with 20 items was written in English and pilot test was done on 30 respondents from the universe from which the respondents of main study were to be drawn. After the pilot study item analysis was done and 3 items were dropped. The final questionnaire had 17 items related to social media influence on online shopping on 5-point Likert scale and 7 items in biographical inventory. The final questionnaire was converted into an online survey, using Google Forms and an offline paper questionnaire. A message on top of questionnaire explained the purpose and nature of the study, the time required for completing the survey, the researcher's affiliations and anonymity assurances. Simple random sampling was used to collect the data. After validating the questionnaires for redundancies an effective sample of 288 online forms and 290 offline, was selected for analysis.

The sample comprised of 578 respondents including males (51.4%) and females (48.6%). 39.1% of them were single, whereas 10.9% were married but didn't have children and 50% had a family including children. Majority of respondents (55.2%) came from big cities followed by small cities (25.4%) and remaining from metropolitan

cities (19.4%). 50.5 per cent of the respondents were young (less than 31 years), 26.5 per cent were middle aged (31-50 years) and 23 per cent were elderly who were more than 50 years. Further, 46.5 per cent were in service, 7.8 per cent in business, 31.8 per cent were students and 13.8 per cent home makers. 29.9 per cent respondents had education up to senior secondary level, 30.1 per cent had graduation as highest degree in formal education and 40 per cent were post graduates or higher degree holders. The income groups were categorised into three based on the family's total monthly income and majority fell in the more than one lakh (71.8 per cent), followed by 25.6 per cent in INR 50,000 – 1,00,000 and a miniscule 2.6 per cent with less than fifty thousand. These were subjected to principal component analysis using Varimax rotation method with Kaiser normalisation in order to reduce the multiplicity of variables into selected factors. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy showed a score of 0.686, which is greater than 0.5 which suggests that the data is adequate for factor analysis.

3. Results

The factors were extracted on the criterion that Eigen value should not be less than one and the factors must have acceptable reliability (alpha coefficient >.60). Only those statements having the loading of .30 or more on a particular factor were retained on the factors. Ultimately 17 items yielded six factors respectively. The factors of perception of people were feeling of superiority, sense of insecurity (both having expedient in nature), opportunism and social comparison (both were negatively tuned). The factor structures along with high loading items (>.30) and variance explained by the factors have been shown in Table 1. These 6 factors that account for most variance (70.289 per cent) in online shopper who are actively engaged on social media platforms were then named.

Table 1
Total Variance Explained (Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.)

Component	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.934	23.143	23.143	3.934	23.143	23.143	2.367	13.922	13.922
2	2.381	14.006	37.149	2.381	14.006	37.149	2.289	13.462	27.384
3	1.837	10.804	47.953	1.837	10.804	47.953	2.272	13.362	40.747
4	1.511	8.886	56.839	1.511	8.886	56.839	1.826	10.740	51.486
5	1.267	7.455	64.294	1.267	7.455	64.294	1.650	9.706	61.192
6	1.019	5.995	70.289	1.019	5.995	70.289	1.546	9.097	70.289
7	.931	5.478	75.767						
8	.736	4.332	80.099						
9	.586	3.448	83.547						
10	.571	3.361	86.908						
11	.468	2.755	89.663						
12	.402	2.362	92.025						
13	.343	2.017	94.043						
14	.314	1.850	95.893						
15	.287	1.690	97.582						
16	.213	1.253	98.836						
17	.198	1.164	100.000						

Source: Developed by authors using SPSS 20.0

Table 2 shows the factors along with their names and the items that are under them with the respective loadings. Three items with positive loadings were chosen which indicate that these variables share most of their variances between them and thereby co-vary with each other. The factor identified is 'Passive Participation' which means that respondents are using social media as a tool for shopping, but don't actively participate on social media platforms. They don't post and mostly just read content. They like to use the social media platforms for shopping benefits but refrain from giving their opinions. In most of the communities the 90-9-1 rule applies, which says that 1 per generate content, 9 per cent share that content and 90 per cent just consume that content. The passive participants lie in that 90 per cent category. The second factor combines four statements, which can be clubbed under 'Influencer'. This factor brings together respondents who like to share their opinions regarding product/service online. They like to narrate personal storyline related to the product. They are generators and propagators of content in groups. These respondents use social media as platform to voice their viewpoints as consumers. They have a philanthropic streak as well and like to share any shopping benefit that are available for generic consumption. The third factor has been named 'Event participation'. It segregates the respondents who are part of online interaction platforms because of the online events, contests etc. Most of the shopping communities keep organising contests time and again and participating in them brings fun element and acts as recreational event. It could be a destressing factor also for the respondents. The next factor extracted is named as 'Seeking Interaction'. It talks about one of the most ancient need of Human beings, Interaction. We like to connect to people around us. When one consumer writes a review on a shopping portal, he/she is putting his/her ideas on a public forum and is ready for discussion. This group will respond to the queries based on their review, which is essentially a communication between two individuals with similar interest (the product). Factor 5 or 'Lone Wolf' talks about the use of social media only as a tool to connect with friends & family. The commercial aspect of social media is non-existent here. Here social media doesn't act as an antecedent to shopping online products/services. The last factor combines together four statements and is named 'Gullibility'. It consists of respondents who are easily susceptible to the charms of online shopping portals, when they see some signs on social media. The online portals keep nudging them about the products they had searched earlier, by flashing advertisements on their social media. They latch on to the links on their networking groups if they like something and keep moving ahead in that direction. Most of their online shopping decisions are influenced by the online sources they go through on regular basis. Social media acts as an antecedent of online shopping for them.

Table 2
Factor name with loadings

Factor	Item	Loading
Passive Participation	I like being part of online communities because of coupons/deals provided.	.853
	I generally don't comment on social media.	.834
	I check out advertisements/links on my social media.	.834
Influencer	If I am happy with my online purchase, I share it on my social media (comment, tag, tying up with brands, recommend etc)	0.869
	I definitely share any negative shopping experiences, so that others don't fall prey to the same.	0.723
	I like being part of online shopping communities, and actively comment/share/interact in the group.	0.656
	I generally share discount/sale link that I come across on my social media platforms.	0.314
Event participation	I find online events to be fun.	0.628

Factor	Item	Loading
	I like participating in competitions conducted by online communities.	0.613
Seeking Interaction	I respond to any queries or comments based on my feedback.	0.703
	I write feedback about the product/service on the site from where I purchased it.	0.45
Lone Wolf	I use social media platform only for interacting with friend, family & colleagues.	0.86
	I get frustrated by advertisements on social media.	0.402
Gullibility	Advertisements on social media grab my attention.	0.759
	If I like something on social media, I look for it online immediately.	0.735
	I don't buy from sites about whom I have seen negative feedback online.	0.427
	My research before buying any product is based on online sources only.	0.326

Source: Developed by authors using SPSS 20.0

4. Conclusion

Now to study the effect our demographic variables have on these six dimensions, we created seven hypotheses based on our seven demographic variables.

H01: There is no significant difference between respondents of different age groups to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

H11: There is significant difference between respondents of different age groups to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

The mean scores in the table 3 tell us respondents below 30 years of age & senior citizens (more than 60 years) give high importance to passive participation in social media engagement, 31-40 & 51-60 years age-group is predisposed to using social media for social interactions only whereas 41-50 years is the age group where respondents believe in influencing through social media with respect to online shopping. At a significance level of 95 per cent (.05) a sig score of greater than .05 implies that we cannot reject the null hypothesis. The above table shows that for all six dimensions the significance value is less than 0.05 which implies that we cannot accept the null hypothesis and there is a significant difference between respondents of different age groups to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

H02: There is no significant difference between male and female respondents to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

H12: There is significant difference between male and female respondents to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

Table 3
One-way ANOVA Age-group wise importance to social media engagement for online shopping

	< 21 yrs	21 – 30 yrs	31 – 40 yrs	41 – 50 yrs	51 – 60 yrs	> 60 yrs	F	Sig
Passive Participation	4.4167	3.6793	3.4722	3.0808	3.303	3.6964	24.083	0.000
Influencer	3.1844	2.9394	3.5333	3.803	3.5032	3.6027	14.09	0.000
Event Participation	2.65	3.4394	3.175	3.4545	3.2338	2.8929	20.306	0.000
Seeking Interaction	2.6875	2.8788	2.9375	3.3636	3.3766	2.2411	21.158	0.000
Lone Wolf	2.925	3.5644	3.9208	3.6515	3.7662	3.6071	46.372	0.000
Gullibility	3.3031	3.4905	3.3563	3.4318	3.4448	2.3393	33.851	0.000

Source: Developed by authors using SPSS 20.0

Table 4 shows independent sample t-test to test the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the mean of the six dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping between male and female respondents. According to the mean values Passive participation is the most important segment for both male and female online shoppers with respect to the engagement with social media. The p value for Passive Participation (.011), Influencer (.028), and Gullibility (.000) dimension is less than significance level (typically 0.05); meaning that there is difference between the variances for male and female respondents. Now whether the difference is statistically significant or not we look at the p value from t test. Influencer & gullibility dimensions have p value less than 0.05, .000 and .000 respectively. This means that there is significant difference in the Male and Female respondents only for the dimensions – Influencer & Gullibility; for other dimensions there is no significant difference.

H03: There is no significant difference between respondents in different life stages to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

H13: There is significant difference between respondents in different life stages to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

Table 4
Independent Sample t-test

	Female	Male	Sig (Equal Variance)	t	sig (2-tailed) (Difference in Variance)
Passive Participation	3.7177	3.7957	.011	-.890	.375
Influencer	3.5107	3.1380	.028	5.621	.000
Event Participation	2.9164	3.2475	.186	-5.053	.000
Seeking Interaction	2.9644	2.7811	.098	2.818	.005
Lone Wolf	3.3488	3.6380	.350	-5.066	.000
Gullibility	3.4457	3.1423	.000	5.591	.000

The mean scores in the table tell us that for single and married respondents passive participation in social media engagement is the most important dimension, whereas for respondents who are parents social media is a place for socialising with friends & family and not engaging in shopping-oriented feeds. At a significance level of 95 per cent (.05) a sig score of greater than .05 implies that we cannot reject the null hypothesis. The above table shows that for all six dimensions the significance value is less than 0.05 which implies that we cannot accept the null hypothesis and there is statistically significant difference between respondents in different life stages to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

H04: There is no significant difference between respondents in different occupations to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

H14: There is significant difference between respondents in different occupations to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

Table 5
One-way ANOVA for factors and life stage

	Single	Married	Married with kid(s)	F	Sig
Passive Participation	4.2316	3.8201	3.3737	49.2460	0.0000
Influencer	3.0343	3.2619	3.5545	28.2970	0.0000
Event Participation	2.8673	3.4127	3.1869	16.7390	0.0000
Seeking Interaction	2.7323	2.7937	2.9948	7.5490	0.0010
Lone Wolf	3.1106	3.8095	3.7318	70.7360	0.0000
Gullibility	3.3131	3.5556	3.2137	7.1240	0.0010

Source: Developed by authors using SPSS 20.0

The mean scores in the table tell us that students give high importance to passive participation whereas respondents engaged in service, business & home makers prefer using social media for social interactions only. At a significance level of 95 per cent (.05) a sig score of greater than .05 implies that we cannot reject the null hypothesis. The above table shows that for all six dimensions the significance value is less than 0.05 which implies that we cannot accept the null hypothesis and there is a significant difference between respondents in different occupations to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

H05: There is no significant difference between respondents with different education levels to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

H15: There is significant difference between respondents with different education levels to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

Table 6
One-way ANOVA for factors and Education

	10th	12th	Graduate	Post graduate & further	F	Sig
Passive Participation	3.4167	4.2162	3.5096	3.6291	16.2620	0.0000
Influencer	3.1563	3.2015	3.4655	3.2987	3.1880	0.0230
Event Participation	3.3750	2.8303	3.2241	3.1558	8.5410	0.0000
Seeking Interaction	3.0000	2.7121	3.0632	2.8333	6.1000	0.0000
Lone Wolf	3.6875	3.0091	3.6638	3.7143	46.5370	0.0000
Gullibility	3.5625	3.3242	3.5057	3.0931	14.1970	0.0000

Source: Developed by authors using SPSS 20.0

The mean scores in the table tell us respondents with highest degree as Senior Secondary give high importance to passive participation in social media engagement, unlike respondents with only less education than them and respondents who have attained college/higher education who are predisposed to using social media for social interactions only. At a significance level of 95 per cent (.05) a sig score of greater than .05 implies that we cannot

reject the null hypothesis. The above table shows that for all six dimensions the significance value is less than 0.05 which implies that we cannot accept the null hypothesis and there is a significant difference between respondents with different education levels to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

H06: There is no significant difference between respondents belonging to different income groups to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

H16: There is significant difference between respondents belonging to different income groups to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

Table 7
One-way ANOVA for factors and Occupation

	Service	Business	Student	Home maker	F	Sig
Passive Participation	3.5713	3.7630	4.2899	3.1583	31.384	0.000
Influencer	3.4126	3.0944	3.1101	3.6125	10.22	0.000
Event Participation	3.2063	3.3000	2.7418	3.3563	18.982	0.000
Seeking Interaction	2.8885	2.9111	2.7065	3.1625	6.6	0.000
Lone Wolf	3.7565	3.8111	2.9864	3.6250	65.166	0.000
Gullibility	3.1896	3.4111	3.3030	3.5281	6.067	0.000

Source: Developed by authors using SPSS 20.0

The mean scores in the table tell us all the respondents in the income bracket of 25,000-50,000 assign maximum importance to passive participation on social media with respect to online shopping. At a significance level of 95 per cent (.05) a sig score of greater than .05 implies that we cannot reject the null hypothesis. The above table shows that for three dimensions (Event participation, Lone Wolf & Gullibility) the significance value is less than 0.05 which implies that we cannot accept the null hypothesis and there is a significant difference between respondents belonging to different income groups to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping. For the other three dimensions (Passive Participation, Influencer & Seeking Interaction) the p-value is more than 0.05, which means we accept the null hypothesis and there is no significant difference between respondents belonging to different income groups to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

H07: There is no significant difference between respondents residing in different class of city to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

H17: There is significant difference between respondents residing in different class of city to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

Table 8
One-way ANOVA for factors and income

	Less than 25,000	25,001-50,000	50,001-75,000	75,001-1,00,000	1,00,001-1,25,000	More than 1.25 lac	F	Sig
Passive Participation	4.0000	3.4872	3.6078	3.8179	3.8042	3.7055	0.6370	0.6710
Influencer	2.5000	3.2692	3.1569	3.2629	3.3875	3.3031	1.2960	0.2640
Event Participation	3.5000	3.3077	3.2451	3.2938	2.9665	3.0890	3.2570	0.0070
Seeking Interaction	2.5000	2.9615	2.8922	2.9794	2.8941	2.7432	1.3170	0.2550
Lone Wolf	3.5000	3.6538	3.5490	3.5515	3.3941	3.6199	2.3960	0.0360
Gullibility	3.7500	3.7692	3.3922	3.4433	3.2426	3.1901	3.7900	0.0020

Source: Developed by authors using SPSS 20.0

Table 9
One-way ANOVA for factors and city

	Class X	Class Y	Class Z	F	Sig
Passive Participation	3.6280	3.8610	3.6327	3.450	.032
Influencer	3.3527	3.3025	3.3299	.173	.842
Event Participation	3.1964	3.0204	3.1463	2.551	.079
Seeking Interaction	2.7813	2.8966	2.8810	.907	.404
Lone Wolf	3.5670	3.3966	3.6633	8.189	.000
Gullibility	3.3638	3.2445	3.3316	1.708	.182

Source: Developed by authors using SPSS 20.0

The mean scores in the table tell us respondents living in class X & Y cities give high importance to passive participation in social media engagement, whereas respondents living in class Z cities feel social media should be used for socialising only. At a significance level of 95 per cent (.05) a sig score of greater than .05 implies that we cannot reject the null hypothesis. The above table shows that for 4 dimensions (Influencer, Event Participation, Seeking Interaction and Gullibility) the significance value is more than 0.05 which implies that we accept the null hypothesis and there is no significant difference between respondents residing in different class of city to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping. For the remaining two dimensions (Passive Participation & Lone Wolf) the p-value is less than 0.05 which means that we reject the null hypothesis and there is statistically significant difference between respondents residing in different class of city to the importance they assign to various dimensions of social media engagement with respect to online shopping.

4.1. Limitations & future scope

Some limitations of this research, that also provide a basis for future research, should be noted. Online shopping is a relatively new phenomenon. The sample used for the study may be perceived as early adopters in context of online shopping. This means that sample characteristics may change with more penetration of online shopping. Another limitation is that the study was confined to cities and catered to only urban population. As internet connectivity is expanding, Online shopping will have presence in rural areas as well. Future research can be focussed on extending these findings to rural landscape.

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