

Liquid Consumption on Social Media: A Research on the Motivations to Continue Using Instagram Stories

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Abstract:

Liquid consumption which can be defined as sharing and consuming media content in a short period has recently become a popular habit in social media tools. Reflection of consumers' self on digital platforms, expressing their own identity through digital channels and satisfaction through these social media experiences are important subjects for social media studies. In this study, consumers' intention to continue Instagram Stories which is a service provided by Instagram and makes it possible to share content that is available for 24 hours only are explored. Regression analyses were conducted to analyse the relationships, and Kruskal-Wallis and Mann-Whitney tests are applied to determine the differences in this study. As a result, it is found that perceived ephemerality, reliance on graphics and social presence have a positive relationship with intention to continue using Instagram Stories. This study also includes academic and managerial suggestions.

Keywords: Social Media, Liquid Consumption, Consumer Motivation

Track: Digital Marketing & Social Media

1. Introduction

The fact that consumers reflect their self in their consumption behaviour is as old as the history of humanity. Together with this, choosing media channels and consuming in digital channels have become crucial subjects in marketing in the last century. In the beginning, media channels were used to be informed and receive news. Then digital channels became widespread, and Web 2.0 turned media channels into bilateral communication structure in which consumers play a more active role. Social media is one of the most important media channels of the 21st century. Consumers not only stay informed about other consumers and brands on social media but also share notifications and information about themselves. In this context, it creates a potential for marketing research to investigate their reflection of themselves through their daily sharings rather than just focusing on what they directly share with brands on social media. Nowadays social media is an essential part of consumers' daily life and investigating Instagram which is one of the most prominent social media channels helps brands to gain insights about consumers. Studies focused on social media and specifically Instagram often investigate the subject from company and brands' side. In social media literature, there are points to be scrutinized from the point of consumer motivations and intention to continue using. This study examines the motivations and the intention to post social media content that is restricted by time from a consumer behaviour-centered approach.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Social Media

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 user-generated content” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Independence of time and space, ease of use, interactivity, containing user content, the connection between platforms, and measurability are some features of social media (Kırcova & Enginkaya, 2015). Social media completely changed the way of communication with consumers. In the 21st century, messages delivered through social media increased ever so much. Social media affects consumer behaviour regarding awareness, gathering information, ideas, attitude, purchase behaviour, post-purchase communication and appraisal (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Kietzmann et al. (2011) claim that social media opens a new communication era with its highly interactive platforms in which consumers can share, co-create, deliberate and they made a honeycomb shaped classification about the social media functionality. According to this classification, social media functionality comprises seven titles, namely presence, sharing, relationships,

conversations, groups, reputation and identity in the centre. These titles generally involve features of all social media users. In this study, especially identity, conversations, sharing, and relationships are leading since they are mostly related to expressing self and interaction with others. Identity expresses how users reveal themselves, conversation states user's communication with other users, sharing comprises users' exchange, distribute and receive the subject and relationship includes users' connection with each other.

Killian and McManus (2015) found that managers categorize social media into four categories which are relationship management, news gathering, creativity, and entertainment. The model of this study is coherent with these categories. The constructs used the research namely reliance on graphics is related to creativity; ubiquitous connectivity is related relationship management and news gathering. Consumer behaviour in online platforms is rapidly changing. They play different roles ranging from consuming content, joining discussions, sharing information, contributing to other users' activities (Heinonen, 2011). Shao (2009) proposed a framework which explains how and why people use user-generated content. According to this framework, people use user-generated content for consuming, participating and producing. Consuming occurs when a user watches or views contents. Participating happens when there is interaction whereas production comprises sharing and creating content. In this study, sharing Instagram Stories will be examined from the point of consumer generated content.

2.2. Ephemeral Content and Liquid Consumption on Social Media

Ephemeral social media includes sharing content that is only available for limited time. Ephemeral social interaction has been popular in the world firstly with the launch Snapchat application in September 2011 (Bayer, Ellison, Schoenebeck, & Falk, 2016). Time is very important in Snapchat whose essence is its ephemeral nature (Verstraete, 2016) The term "Snap" started to be used in everyday life. This also supports the idea that social media changes everything; including the language and has the power to add new words to the vocabulary of people. Bayer et al. (2016) use the term "Snap" as a "deliberative, shared experience that is temporally bounded." Users of Snapchat can share their memories by taking, editing photos and sending them as "snap" using their mobile phones (Morlok, Schneider, Matt, & Hess, 2017).

Based on the same "being temporary available" principle, Instagram has "Instagram stories" feature that was introduced in August 2016. Launched in October 2010 as a free mobile photo-sharing application, Instagram was chosen as the best iPhone application in 2011 and

was acquired by Facebook in 2012 (Instagram, 2016). Lee et al. (2015) argue that Instagram has created visual oriented culture by being a photo-based network. Instagram always developed itself and added new features since its launch and “Instagram stories is one of them and may be the most striking update that changed the game of social media. One of the differences between Snapchat stories and Instagram stories is Snapchat lets users know if his/her shared content is screenshotted whereas Instagram does not. However, in both applications, the user can see how many people have seen their “stories” and who they are.

The trend toward these “ephemeral timelines” which encourages permissive presentation of self means the opening of a distinctive era for social media marketing (McRoberts, Ma, Hall, & Yarosh, 2017) because ephemerality may counterbalance privacy concerns (Morlok et al., 2017). Digitalization lowered the cost to obtain information, and therefore privacy issues and how much of the shared data is protected have become a big question mark for people using the internet. Self-destructing data, therefore, has become a way to gain the control back as a temporary tool in naturally persistent digital communications (Kotfila, 2014).

The ephemeral social media phenomenon not only changed the nature of social relationships and but also drew the attention of academic studies (Utz et al., 2015; Bayer et al., 2016). In their research (Bayer et al., 2016) investigated the relationship between ephemerality and experiences of Snapchat users to see whether Snapchat is associated with social and emotional experiences with its ephemeral nature. The results advocate that Snapchat interactions be considered more enjoyable and create a more positive mood but the interactions are seen as less supportive. Snapchat provides its users a significant level of privacy since it erases messages after the receiver sees it (at that time Instagram has not introduced the stories) (Utz, et al., 2015). In their research, they compared Snapchat and Facebook regarding usage and psychological effects on romantic jealousy. Results indicate that people use Snapchat more for flirting whereas Facebook is mostly used for interacting with friends. Another finding shows that Snapchat evokes more jealousy than Facebook. Study of Morlok et al., (2017) demonstrates that perceived ephemerality lowers privacy concerns, increases perceived enjoyment and therefore causes ephemeral social network sites usage intention. Kofoed & Larsen (2016) claims that Snapchat and Instastories facilitate closeness and intimacy because of their distinctive features such as sending short, self-destructing content and that is why these applications become popular among young people. In their study, Coa & Setiawan (2017) examined factors that may have a relationship with the intention to use Snapchat and Instagram Stories by forming a research model based on technology acceptance model. They

proved that perceived enjoyment on these social networks has the biggest influence on attitude and attitude leads intention to use them.

3. Research on Liquid Consumption Related to Instagram Stories

3.1. Objectives of Research

The primary objective of the research is evaluating motivations of liquid consumption on social media by Instagram Stories service. Three variables related to the intention of continuing to use Instagram Stories are evaluated. The second objective includes differences related to participants regarding perceived ephemerality perceptions of participants. Difference tests are employed for this objective.

3.2. Scope and Sample of Study

The scope of the study contains the existing users of Instagram Stories service. The using behaviour is related to liquid consumption in this study; therefore a question about confirming the using behaviour is placed at the beginning of the survey. 164 participants responded questions about Instagram Stories. According to the Instagram users' world statistics, %61 of Instagram users are aged between 18-34 (we are social, 2018). The sample of this study is consistent with this insight with 78.7% ratio of 18-34 age group participants.

3.3. Methodology

The first part of the research objective is related to motivations of liquid consumptions and the relationships between motivations and consumption is examined by employing multiple linear regression methodology. The second part of research objective is related to differences among participants for perceived ephemerality variable, therefore difference tests for non-parametric distribution are employed for this purpose. SPSS software is used for the methodology part of this study.

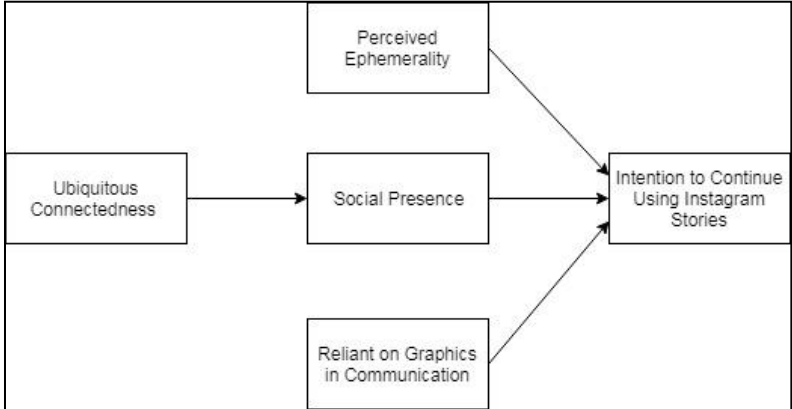


Figure 1. Research Model

Five variables are evaluated in model regarding liquid consumption. Ubiquitous connectedness variable has three items (Lee et al., 2012; Yoon and Choo, 2011), social presence has five items (Animesh et al., 2011), reliant on graphics in communication has five items (Teo, 2013), intention to continue using variable has five items (Agarwal and Karahanna, 2000; Bhattacharjee, 2001) and lastly perceived ephemerality variable has five items (Ajzen, 2002; Morlok, 2017). All variables are in Likert scale form while perceived ephemerality in dichotomous form. Perceived ephemerality values differ from -5 to +5 from five items summing process; therefore three different states (negative, neutral and positive) are formed.

3.3. Data Analysis

In preparation step of the study, exploratory factor analysis and reliability analyses are employed for variables in the model. The major aim of the study is the examining motivations of liquid consumption through Instagram stories. So, the first part of research questions which include H₁ and H₂ hypotheses are related to this aim. The second part of research questions (H₃) is related to a specific variable, perceived ephemerality as it is the reflection of liquidity for consumption. Therefore; the hypotheses are:

H₁: Perceived ephemerality, social presence and reliant on graphics for communications variables have significant effects on intention to continue liquid consumption (by Instagram stories).

H₂: Ubiquitous connectedness has significant effect on social presence.

H₃: There are significant differences for intention to use among perceived ephemerality of participants.

Multiple regression is employed for testing H₁ which includes perceived ephemerality, social presence and reliant on graphics for communication as independent variables and intention to continue using Instagram stories as dependent variable. Results concluded that 26.7% of variance for dependent variable can be explained by independent variables. The regression equation which includes coefficients for independent variables is;

$$\text{Intention To Continue Using IS} = 1.505 + .301 \text{ Reliant on Graphics} + .205 \text{ Social Presence} + .201 \text{ Perceived Ephemerality}$$

Simple linear regression is employed for testing H₂ which includes ubiquitous connectedness as independent variable and social presence as dependent variable. Results

implied that 26.1% of variance for social presence can be explained by ubiquitous connectedness. Regression equation for this hypothesis is;

$$\text{Social Presence} = 1.954 + .444 \text{ Ubiquitous Connectedness}$$

Kruskal-Wallis and Mann-Whitney tests are employed for evaluating differences among perceived ephemerality levels regarding intention to continue using Instagram Stories (H₃). Kruskal-Wallis test is used for detecting statistically significant difference between three different groups for perceived ephemerality (negative, neutral and positive). It is found that there is a significant difference between groups (p=0.007). After that Mann-Whitney test is employed to detect which groups are different in terms of intention to continue using Instagram stories. It is found that there is a significant difference among negative and positive perception groups regarding intention to continue using Instagram stories. According to results, it is concluded that positively perceived ephemerality has higher values for intention to use IS than negative values (3.71 and 3.14), while neutral 2 participants have 2.40 mean value for intention.

Group	N	Percentage	Mean
Negative	30	18.3	3.14
Neutral	2	1.2	2.40
Positive	132	80.5	3.71

Table 2. Intention to Continue Using IS Values for Perceived Ephemerality Groups

4. Results and Implications

The study examines the liquid consumption concept through Instagram stories with antecedents/motivations. It is concluded that perceived ephemerality, social presence and reliant on graphics are the antecedents of intention to continue liquid consumption. Perceived ephemerality is the reflection of liquid consumption in this study which implies the ideas of participants related to daily messages/disappearing media contents. The second motivation of liquid consumption is related to the social nature of internet users. Social presence is affecting liquid consumption intention, consistent with social media phenomenon. Third motivation related to liquid consumption is reliant on graphics. This variable is mostly related to the specific nature of media/platform as Instagram Stories and Snaps (from Snapchat) includes graphical elements. The rankings of coefficients show that the most contributing motivation for liquid consumption is reliant on graphics for communication. Social Presence and

Perceived Ephemerality follow first motivation. Once for all, the study contributes to current social media and consumption knowledge by examining the motivations of liquid consumption holistically. The next research questions can arise from focusing on specific motivations and extending the context with alternative variables like personality traits, internet usage patterns/attributes.

The second conclusion of the study is related to differences of intention to liquid consumption regarding to perceived ephemerality. Since liquid consumption and ephemerality are related concepts, it is important to evaluate different perceptions about ephemerality and liquid consumption behaviour. It is concluded that positive ephemerality is related to higher liquid consumption. This contribution can be used for assessing ephemerality with other concepts for further research. The second conclusion also reflects the user side of liquid consumption. As the users perceive ephemerality and related liquid consumption differently, there can be research gaps about profiling and segmenting user groups. Personas of user groups for liquid consumption, their internet or social media usage patterns and other traits can be research opportunities for further studies.

For the managerial side of marketing, insights about consumers of liquid consumption and experience of this phenomenon contribute to marketing decision making. The information related to liquid consumption can be useful for digital advertising campaigns, content marketing and online brand communication.

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