# Social Media Marketing and Advertising

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**Abstract**

Social media has recently gained tremendous fame as a highly impactful channel of communication in these modern times of digitized living. It has been put on a pedestal across varied streams for facilitating participatory interaction amongst businesses, groups, societies, organizations, consumers, communities, forums, and the like. This subject has received increased attention in the literature with many of its practical applications including social media marketing (SMM) being elaborated, analysed, and recorded by many studies. This study is aimed at collating the existing research on SMM to present a review of seventy one articles that will bring together the many facets of this rapidly blooming media marketing form. The surfacing limitations in the literature on social media have also been identified and potential research directions have been offered.

**Keywords** Social media, social media advertising, social media marketing, SMM, literature review

## 1. Introduction

Over recent years, social media has grown to gain recognition as a pronounced and paramount marketing factor guiding the success of a product/service/business (Hawkins and Vel, 2013). Durkin (2013) claims that people in the early 1990s had begun forming opinions that the internet would become the next futuristic tool of relationship marketing. When referring to social media, three aspects often come to mind, the web 2.0, websites that facilitate networking and marketing (Gurney et al., 2004; Vila & Kuster, 2004), and the huge load of information propagation (Willi et al., 2013). Tabloids on the formation of the phrase 'social media' suggest names such as Tina Sharkey (Babycentre.com, CEO), Ted Leonsis (Entrepreneur, Ex AOL Exec), Steve Case (Founder, AOL), Darrell Berry (Writer/Researcher), and Chris Shipley (Cofounder, Guidewire Group), as claiming to have been the first people to have used the aforementioned phrase. Reinhard et al (2012) and Weber (2007) support claims that put Chris Shipley in the limelight for having used the phrase *social media* for the first time. All these claims travel back to the first usage of this in the early 1990s.

Most people regard social media as a mere platform available for sharing their daily updates and pictures on social networking sites as Facebook and Twitter (Papasolomou and Melanthiou, 2012). In a more informed light, social media has proved itself to be a low cost information exchange platform available for one and all, be it consumers, businesses, organizations, governments, or any other entity, to learn, educate, share, build, market, advertise, and improvise on the central idea being circulated. Since recently *Social Media Marketing* (SMM) has branched out of social media to become tech strategists' highly favoured platform for marketing purposes over conventional marketing. The electronic word of mouth forms the basis of this form of marketing. Weinberg (2009) defines SMM as an integrative process aimed at promoting goods and services over platforms of social media,

which has the potential to target a far wider consumer base in comparison to the traditional forms of marketing.

There is huge body of literature emerging on SMM, which is widely scattered across various categories. Being a fairly recent branch of literature, it lacks the deserved synthesis, and thus, this paper is aimed at collating the diverse extant literature on SMM to synthesize and present succinct understandings into the dynamics of social media marketing. The remaining part of this paper has been structured as follows – the paper will begin with defining SMM followed by synthesizing the literature available on SMM. The section after, will briefly discuss the synthesized literature and collate research directions for the future. The last section will bring out the key conclusions and list out the limitations in this body of literature, if any.

## 2. Defining Social Media Marketing

The literature showcases the different emerging definitions for social media marketing (SMM). According to Pentina and Koh (2012), SMM triggers viral communications amongst consumers across online communities, brand and fan pages, and promotion-related content generated by the companies/organizations on popular networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, and many others. Jara et al (2014) define SMM as a new generation marketing tool encouraging higher attention and participation from the consumers through the use of social networks. Kim and Ko (2012) describe SMM as an empathy driven communication for young consumers with efforts also being targeted at consumers belonging to higher age bands. Richter and Schafermeyer (2011), on the other hand, regard SMM as a marketing strategy engaging with social platforms to facilitate a two way communication with the consumers. In amalgamating understandings from the available literature (Jara et al., 2014; Kim and Ko, 2012; Pentina and Koh, 2012; Richter and Schafermeyer, 2011), SMM can rather be defined as *a dialogue often triggered by consumers/audiences, or a business/product/service that*

*travels in a circle amongst the stated parties to set in motion revealing communications on some promotional information, or to learn from one another's use experiences, eventually benefitting either or all of the involved parties.*

## 3. Synthesizing Literature on Social Media Marketing

As mentioned in section 1, the literature on SMM is vast. To synthesize this literature, it was essential to gain access to the relevant publications. The search engine, *Scopus* was used for extracting publications using either *social media marketing* or *social media advertising* as the two keywords to be present in the title of those publications. The keyword search for the relevant literature on social media marketing fetched seventy one studies, altogether. These studies were grouped under 11 different categories on the basis of the area in which SMM was being explored. These categories were – healthcare and wellbeing, analytics and sentiment analysis, finances, advertising, education, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), brand fans and followers, banking, general marketing, music industry, and mobile marketing. These 71 retrieved articles will be individually discussed for their key issues across the eleven subsections within this section.

### 3.1  SMM in Healthcare and Wellbeing

There were nine studies mainly investing efforts in evaluating the role of SMM in the healthcare and wellbeing industry. Thackeray et al (2008) in their study suggest that SMM will allow the health practitioners to establish a direct relationship with their clients, and such health promotion planners need to put their creative best forward to integrate SMM within their strategies to make full use of its potentials in marketing their products. Taubenheim et al (2008) run a pilot project to redirect traffic to webpage dedicated to a health awareness campaign on heart disease for women. They report that their SMM advertising turned out to be cost efficient and helped create a viral impact in promoting *the heart truth* message to

reach out to a wide base of women, ultimately showing a drop in the death rate of women from heart diseases in 2008 (which is the year when SMM employed the heart truth team) in comparison to 2002 (which is the year when the hearth truth team came into being). Clergy (2012) promote the use of SMM by medical practitioners to help them attract new patients. They present SMM as a highly impactful networking tool to make a practice visible in a network for encouraging and propagating referrals through known and trusted people to ensure effective message communication.

Frandsen et al (2013) investigated the viability of employing social media for appointing a community sample of smokers for participating in clinical trials. They used both traditional media (flyers, newspapers) and social media (Facebook) to recruit treatment seeking smokers. The participant-samples were compared for their demographics, smoking characteristics, and associated costs; they concluded that both forms of media fared equally well, with a special mention on social media being more advantageous than the traditional forms of recruitment. Gupta et al (2013) in reviewing the literature on SMM in healthcare mention that fewer studies explored the role of this media form in healthcare. They recognize social media to be a boon when it comes to communicating issues related to public health in general and in times of crisis, and declare it to be the most fitting option for making the general public literate and aware of health related concerns.

A 2013 report by Dr. Williams presses on the topic of behavioral marketing, whereby a critical need for preventing social media from directly marketing unhealthy foods to adolescents is expressed. The study instead proposes a rightful and conscious use of social media, whereby measures should be put in place to promote healthier eating habits especially amongst the youth (Williams, 2013). Moving onto the wellbeing part, Orsini (2010) looks at SMM in homecare. Whilst many other studies raise the point that one of the problems with

social media is it being mostly used by the youth, Orsini (2010) interestingly claim that senior citizens are one of the largest user groups on Facebook. They identify blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn as the four most used SMM platforms. They recommend readers to use these platforms to access and give out home healthcare related information. Lagrosen and Grunden (2014) investigate the role of SMM across seven spa hotels, and report that these hotels under utilize SMM as only a business to consumer communication medium, as opposed to a consumer to business interaction tool.

Abrahams (2012) research was focused on examining how social media such as Facebook and YouTube are being used to promote the use of infant formula against those promoting the use of breast milk. They identify 11 formula brands available in the US to be present on social media. They identify some code violations that have remained unmonitored in the process. Mackey and Liang (2013) explore the darker side of unregulated SMM by posting fake adverts on Facebook, Google+, Twitter, and MySpace on illicitly selling no prescription drugs online over a period of 10 months. The results reveals that this direct to consumer advertising strategy attracted a traffic of over 2500 visitors from all over the world with no social media authorities questioning or doubting the presence of such illicit ads and web links. Along a parallel plane, Miller (2014) accuse social media websites like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to be guilty of miscommunication, or in other words, communicating and propagating poorly moderated or wrong information on health related issues.

*3.2  Social Media Analytics and Sentiment Analysis*

According to Cvijikj and Michahelles (2011), capturing consumer feelings associated with a brand/product is a key element for monitoring social media. Bruner (2011) look into what a 'like' on a social media site really indicates. They question Facebook's metric system and address its lack of ability to point at the site that redirects traffic to a fan page, eventually

leading to the likes for posts and pictures on that page. Chan and Guillet (2011) use secondary data from 23 social media sites to investigate the spread of SMM across 67 Hong Kong hotels. They make suggestions along the lines of the importance of understanding SMM and its roles at different levels, involvement of the hotel staff in managing SMM, opting for the right social media, generating content of interest to the guests on such media, sustainable strategies, and quick access to the hotel's media page; all of these to be followed through for effective SMM.

Saravanakumar and SuganthaLakshmi (2012) divide social media and its forms across eight different categories to emphasize its utilization by different types of businesses to promote their brands and interact with their customers to achieve maximum exposure and visibility. They rank social media highly as an impactful marketing media. Cambria et al (2012) offer an SMM tool in their study that uses artificial intelligence and semantic techniques to capture and manage user opinions and sentiments over the web. They propose for it to be useful for marketers as well as the users themselves for effectively managing information on brands and products available via social media.

Li et al (2013) employ an integrated framework for examining the sentiments of Chinese social media users. They use the elastic net model and support vector machine to undertake two experimental studies. The ability to interpret offered by the elastic net is revealed to be promising when it comes to sentiment analysis in social media. Podobnik (2013) carry out a case study of premier league brands to analyze the performance indicators of SMM via Facebook. The study proposes and tests varied hypotheses, and concludes that these sport brands should invest dedicated efforts in widening their fan base, whilst the managers of these brands should protect the brands against any fraudulent activities pursued in the name of the brand by pretentious fans on social media. Vorvoreanu et al (2013) employ social

media analytics via Twitter, Facebook, and blogs using keyword and hashtag search for assessing the people perceptions of Indianapolis hosting super bowl XLVI. They associate the credibility of social media for allowing a real-time sentiment monitoring of the public, with social media faring higher than the traditional media for successful marketing.

*3.3   SMM and Return on Investments*

Hoffman and Fodor (2010) list and talk about the importance of many social metrics across brand awareness and engagements that typically capture the brand-specific behaviours (posts/tweets) on social media; they link the use of such social metrics with the marketers becoming capable of putting desirable cost-effective strategies sufficient to attract handsome returns on their investments. Lugmayr (2012) discuss the general role of social media in advertising and promotion, narrowing it down to its application as a financial product, particularly for share trading in the stock exchange market. They place special emphasis on the timely distribution of information being the remarkable quality of social media in comparison to the other traditional forms. In an alternate type of study, Kumar and Mirchandani (2012) propose a seven steps method for SMM to increase the returns on investment. They developed metrics such as customer influence effect and customer influence value to assist effective SMM that can reveal important information at organization and consumer levels. Kumar and Sundaram (2012) evaluate and recommend regulated SMM where an encouraging environment is created, where users feel motivated to share information on businesses within their social networks. They suggest for this type of SMM to be fitting where flexible marketing and higher returns on investments are desired. Similarly, Kumar et al. (2013) demonstrated use of social media for generating growth in sales, return on investments, and positive word of mouth.

## 3.4  Social Media Advertising

Hensel and Deis (2010) bring to the fore the pluses and minuses of using social media. They suggest for businesses and entrepreneurs to be fully informed by being up to date with their presence over social media. They also suggest for businesses to be constantly monitoring the same to learn from consumer feedback, and at the same time to ensure that no third party is attempting to bring them defamation. Ramsay (2012), on the other hand, picks on the etiquettes to be followed on social media. They suggest the general dos and don'ts for the active users of social media and lay out custom specific etiquettes for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn users. Carmichael and Cleave (2012) advertised on Facebook and monitored two advertisements to capture the user-advert interaction and its effectiveness for small businesses. For the amount a small business would invest in such social media advertising, they found that this form of advertising could substantially improve the visibility of such businesses and easily redirect consumer traffic to the advertised business page.

Gu and Wang (2012) study the data from 100 enterprises to identify the problems that arise from the use of microblogging for marketing. They use *comment* and *forwarding* statistics for their analysis, which they also recognize are the two significant indicators utilized by enterprises to measure the SMM outputs. They elaborate on the apparent flaw, whereby the enterprises register in haste, but fail to attract substantial attention from their target users; they conclude that SMM can produce potential results, provided there is sufficient customer interaction, feedback, and efficient moderation of the content posted on social media. Powers et al (2012) present an excerpt from an extensive research on the role of social media in consumer purchase behaviour. Involving some big names as General Motors, Google, and others, a qualitative and quantitative research in combination was pursued by them. The results show that consumer empowerment has achieved a new high with social media, and

has opened platforms for brands and their consumers to openly communicate and connect, adding value for both parties, overall.

Minton et al (2012) engage in gathering data from US, Germany, and South Korea on motives behind using Facebook and Twitter in the sustainable marketing context using philosophies of psychology. The study concludes for South Korea to lead with the social media initiatives involving sustainable behaviours, with Germany taking a lead specifically on recycling initiatives. Khang et al (2012) review the literature available on social media and find out that most SMM related studies are mostly directed at the users and uses of social media, and that the numbers of such studies have only increased since the introduction of Facebook and Twitter in 2004 and 2006, respectively. Okazaki and Taylor (2013) study the existing literature on social media in international advertising and identify network capability, image transferability, and personal extensibility to be the three important theoretical paradigms offering substantial insights into the pluses and minuses of social media advertising.

### 3.5  SMM in Education

In the education field, Richter and Schafermeyer (2011) examine the SMM of an organization ran by students, whilst placing specific attention in the related activities on Facebook and Twitter. They conclude that SMM complements traditional marketing strategies in conveying timely information, and maintaining interaction and transparency. Reinhard et al (2012) show student involvement in developing a marketing strategy to transform a non-profit community into a profit yielding healthcare company assisting people seeking to quit smoking. They show how devising an SMM strategy was an enriching learning experience for the students, and justify its inclusion in the curriculum, and mark it highly for its practical experience in comparison to the traditional educational methods.

In another type of study (Palmer, 2012), SMM via Facebook is used to advertise an academic program. Contrary to its expectations, Facebook advertising did not fetch any student applications for the advertised program. The study concludes that it is not sufficient to just advertise on a social networking site; to reap the benefits of SMM, it is important to dedicate time for monitoring user responses, and interacting with the individual users. Zehrer and Grabmuller (2012) investigates an Austrian educational institution's SMM strategy in using social networking sites to actively engage with students interested in tourism education. Facebook emerged a winner with it being most used by students. They emphasize on the importance of effective management of a social networking page and mostly present the pluses and minuses of such SMM in higher education. Luo et al (2013) examine perception of students on a China-based academic library's online video marketing campaign. Their study reveals that the posted content, the humour induced within that content, use of social media, and partnering engagements with the students were the success factors of the campaign being investigated.

## 3.6 SMM and SMEs

A UK based study by Michaelidou et al (2011) investigates the barriers and benefits of using SMM by the SMEs. Whilst they insist on confirming the relevance of business with the social networking site that is being chosen for implementing the SMM strategies, they identify the prior mindsets and lack of familiarity and training to be the obvious barriers to the acceptance of SMM by SMEs. They however do mention the rising awareness of the SMM benefits, such as customer interaction and stronger identity creation, amongst the same SMEs. Pentina and Koh (2012) invest efforts in developing a typology of SMM strategies generally employed by the SMEs, which are basically governed by the nature and objectives of those SMEs. They recommend employing a strategic mix of SMM and other communication forms

to achieve best results. A Macedonian study by Fetaji and Demiri (2012) empirically evaluate the acceptance of SMM by SMEs and show that perceived usefulness significantly influences the intention to use social media. The surfacing revelation is that most SMEs in Macedonia are inclined towards the traditional approaches and see SMM as a threat, a view that is soon expected to diminish for SMM to eventually emerge as a winner.

*3.7   SMM and Brand Fans and Followers*

Kim and Ko (2011) empirically examine the influence of SMM on 362 luxury fashion brand users' intentions. Their findings show that SMM have a dramatic positive influence where the brand-consumer interaction enhances the unique brand value, which the traditional marketing often fails to offer. Cvijikj and Michahelles (2011) monitored a Facebook brand page for over a year to analyse the consumer comments. For the authors suggest marketers have an understanding of the content that people share and their motivation behind it. They identify requests and suggestions from the people to be the common intention behind the people participation for the analysed brand page. de Vries et al (2012) consider 11 international brands and the impact they make on their customers through their presence on social networking sites. They find that creating a brand page does increase brand popularity, and insist on the importance of lending an ear to what the brand users have to say to address and interact with them efficiently to reap the full benefits of using SMM.

Lipsman et al (2012) place special interest in Facebook and similar social media as common platforms shared by brands and their consumers. They propose the use of a measurement approach that offers a deeper insight into the types of audience to enable marketers better align their strategies via SMM. An article on long term effects of SMM by Mccluskey (2012) has one of the field experts strongly suggesting that it is not just to increase the number of fans/followers that the brand pages on SMM should be aiming at, instead they should be

focusing on engaging with those fans in an active manner in different ways to earn their loyalty and to establish a strong customer-brand connection, overall. They strongly recommend using a social media site/platform that closely resonates with the product/service being marketed.

Petty (2012) discusses some social media attacks that some brands have encountered. They suggest for brands to be mindful of – monitoring the social media content of relevance to them, imposters, and carefully regulating any negative threads running across the social media. They mostly press on judicious use of the available legal tools to combat the negativities related to them circulating over the social media sites. Shen and Bissell (2013) investigate the use of Facebook by top beauty brands to make an impact by establishing communications with their customers using social media. They study different beauty brands by analysing the Facebook pages and the content posted on those pages by these brands. The study concluded that engaging in the electronic word of mouth as an important part of the branding strategies to enhance brand image has become a ruling strategy with most of the beauty brands.

*3.8  SMM and Banking*

Ramirez (2010) offer tips for integrating social media in recruiting bank employees alongside cost savings. The author begins with stressing on the importance of clarity of strategy, and then lists and details the available social networking sites (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and Google) for attracting prospective quality candidates. Mitic and Kapoulas (2012) carry out three case studies to explore relationship marketing in retail banking in South East Europe. Their study revealed that owing to security issues and poorly aligned relationship management strategies, customers did not prefer social media to interact with banks with their choices. Chikandiwa et al (2013) examine the SMM models used by South

African banks to create an online presence. While at one end the use of SMM is encouraged, there at the other, some legal factors surface up as the barriers to its acceptance. Although slowly diffusing, presently these banks are pursuing SMM mostly via Facebook and Twitter.

*3.9   Social Media and Marketing*

Kaun (2010) writes an article for the early SMM enthusiasts giving them a heads up on how only creating a profile on social media sites would be unfruitful unless the employed SMM is manoeuvred in the right direction. They emphasize the importance of interactivity and community building, whilst offering basic sustainable tips for achieving successful SMM. Tenaiji and Cader (2010) explore the extent of SMM usage in the UAE organizations and report that it is still picking up pace in the country and has gained recognition only recently. They list awareness, advertising, and feedback as the top three motives of organizations behind the use of SMM. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Flickr were identified at the most used sites for SMM purposes. They pick on the flaw of SMM underutilization, whereby the organizations focussed more on *communicating to*, rather than *interacting with* the users on social media.

Akar and Topcu (2011) empirically analyse data gathered from an academic university where they developed a consumer based scale to test hypotheses, and found that majority respondents used sites as YouTube and Facebook; their usage of these sites defined their attitude towards SMM. They highlighted that users on social media do not have a positive perception of SMM activities, and the marketers should more actively concentrate on producing relevant content on such sites rather than depending on user activity to propagate the needful. Ralphs (2011) talks about social currency, which in their article, has been recognized as the value a business/individual can yield out of being entertaining. They lay all emphasis on spotting and building one's social currency for achieving successful SMM.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2011) discuss the concept of viral marketing and evaluate the importance of message content, messengers, and environment. They identify and discuss four categories of such viral marketing campaigns and offer suggestions from the managerial perspectives for achieving such successful campaigns. Chen et al (2011) study how the consumer-posted reviews over the social media tend to change with different stages of product maturity. They consider marketing variables and empirically analyse automobile data from 2001 and 2008 to observe evolution of consumer reviews over time.

Ketter and Avraham (2012) discuss place marketing to explore the distinct roles audiences are capable of playing as distributors, and/or content creators showing how SMM can make traditional marketing entirely outdated. Geho and Dangelo (2012) press on the issue of being up-to-date with any business or entrepreneur's presence on social media. They show how social media sites as Twitter offer all sizes of businesses a space to market their business campaigns, which should all be done with a carefully measured amount of caution. Berthon et al (2012) study the managerial perspective on marketing and social media by proposing five axioms, to conclude how critical it is to stay fully informed of the current technology, consumer needs, of establishing a connection with those consumers, training employees with new ways of doing things, and keeping the senior management well informed of the opportunities with which the social media presents itself.

Papasolomou and Melanthiou (2012) contrast social media in public relations marketing against traditional marketing. They state that SMM takes marketing public relations to a higher level by creating increased opportunities where the marketers can establish a direct communication with their audience to propagate the buzz created for a brand/product. Eagleman (2013) conducts an online survey across employees of US-based sport national governing bodies to discover that those employees majorly used Facebook and Twitter

amongst other social media. The study concluded that irrespective of the respondent demographics, these respondents confessed increased use of social media, alongside a revelation on the governing bodies mostly using social media to communicate rather than for marketing purposes. Recine et al (2013) undertake a case study on American Power Conversion (APC), a part of the European firm, Schneider Electric. The study concentrates on how APC as an organization is dealing with the goods and the probable problems of integrating social media with their existing systems. The global social media director of APC is shown to recognize APC's social media presence to still be growing, which is expected to be decentralized in the near future.

A Mauritius-based study by Froget et al (2013) evaluates Facebook use by employing the uses and gratification theory on a sample of 392 respondents. The results reveal that Facebook is majorly used by people for entertainment and discussion purposes, alongside showing how use of Facebook differs across users with different income levels. Thompson (2013) in their article encourage – engaging with the target audience, fully utilizing the freely available web tools, being aware of competition, being aware of one's social impact, identifying which website has the target consumers for your business, keeping a contingency plan ready as the 'dos' of social media. At the same time, they identify – overinvesting, web silence, over-promoting, and considering SMM as only a marketing medium as the 'don'ts' of social media.

Zhou and Wang (2014) discuss the topic of city marketing for three major Chinese cities using SMM within their study, which is basically the promotion of an urban city under the concept of place management. They identify microblogging to be the most wide spread social media form in China. They see people posting negative opinions on their tourism experience as a major problem, which eventually becomes difficult to tackle, putting the cities'

reputation to threat. They also point out how the authenticity and validity of such posted information is questionable. Interestingly, they also bring to the fore the issue of low income groups not having access to such social media as one drawback of SMM. Their verdict has it that traditional media, in their context, for now, cannot replace SMM.

## 3.10  Social Media and Music Industry

Florina and Andreea (2012) investigate the success of musicians of the Romanian Popcorn Wave fame via Facebook and YouTube. They conclude that apart from the musicians' own musical credibility, social media plays a major role in making their presence more pronounced and making their music available to millions. They discuss how the ripple effect and the *wor(l)d of mouth* phenomena strengthens a musicians standing and overall credibility. Kaplan and Haenlein (2012) look into the use of social media by pop singer, Britney Spears' marketing team for reaching out to her fan base. They note the importance of being alert and active, and also emphasize on creating online content that appears interesting to the target audience. The authors use insights from Britney Spears' SMM strategists to highlight the essentials of maintaining honesty, an aligned media plan, and choosing a particular social media site, or even making one's own site to stick to it for all communications related to the brand/product/music. Lankinen and Mantymaki (2013) identified access to the music content and level of affinity towards music as the two strongest motivations for the audiences using social media to relate to the music they most like; they suggest for music companies to mark their presence across social media bearing these aspects in mind to attract larger masses of music fans.

## 3.11  Social Media and Mobile Marketing

Kaplan (2012) discusses the concept of mobile social media and its different facets. They suggest ways in which firms can make use of mobile SMM. They identify integration,

individualization, involvement, and initiation as the four I's that they offer as the advice for companies employing mobile social media. A 2013 article by Adam Leposa shows how guests express their hotel stay experiences on the mobile social media, and how important it is for the hotel management to capture these customer sentiments to improvise the stay experiences for their future guests. They give an example of a hotel that makes efficient utilization of such feedback via analytics on their social media dashboard to appropriately record and address their guests' sentiments. Jara et al (2014) focus on participative marketing and propose for it to be a reliable type of marketing involving increased user participation via the social networking sites and mobile phones. They appreciate the credibility of social media in allowing content creation by millions that becomes instantaneously available to millions.

### 3.12  Social Media and RFID

Only one study explored the conjunction of the radio frequency identification (RFID) technology with SMM. Oinonen et al (2012) explore the aspect of value creation through the integration of RFID with SMM. They show how important it is for the consumers to be willing to be tracked down, to ultimately allow for their location information to be shared on social media. They conclude for this RFID equipped SMM system to have a promising and flourishing future.

## 4.  Discussions, Limitations, and Future Research Directions

Podobnik (2013) suggested that most companies are making sure of creating their online presence over social media due to their increasing importance for marketing purposes. Kaplan and Haenlein (2009) spread the scope of social media under six exclusive headings with sites such as Wikipedia being put under the *collaborative project type*, networking sites such as Twitter being placed under *blogging and microblogging type*, sites as YouTube being called the *content community*, Facebook and MySpace being grouped as the *social*

*networking type*, gaming sites such as world of warcraft being termed as the *virtual gaming world*, and lastly, those as second life being placed under the *virtual social world type*. Gu and Wang (2012) on the other hand, spread the social media scope across five categories, which they call blog, microblog, social networking site, location based service, and theme community. All of these aforementioned social media types are being used in more than one ways by marketers and planners to promote their ideas of interest.

Cambria et al (2011) refer to a buzz mechanism based on which the entire SMM operates. They describe for it to be a duplication process of a released message which is expected to travel faster, and turn out to be cost efficient in comparison to a highly paid advert in the newspapers or television, or a promotional press release. They also explain that a winning marketing strategy is aimed at capturing the attention of social wielders with its SMM content. Kooser (2013) takes the discussion on an alternate plane to suggest that social media is playing a role of more than just a marketing tool. They exemplify a few organizational responses to social media responses, and show how customers use this form of media to express their dissatisfaction, as much as they do to express goodwill. They suggest for businesses to always keep an open ear for consumer feedback and complaints posted online to tap the potential problem areas within their businesses, which will eventually help them earn happy customers at the end of the day. Frandsen et al (2013) evaluate social media against conventional advertising for attracting representatives for cessation trials, during which they put social media on a higher scale owing to its potential for a wide reach, profile based audience targeting, and flexibility.

Of the 11 studies on health and wellbeing, six studies (Taubenheim et al., 2008; Thackeray et al., 2008; Clergy, 2012; Frandsen et al., 2013; Orsini, 2010) discussed the pluses of employing SMM, one study turned out to be a literature review of SMM in healthcare (Gupta

et al., 2013), one study chose to point at how inefficiently SMM was being used in the wellbeing industry (Grunden, 2014), and four studies (Abrahams, 2012; Mackey and Liang, 2013; Williams, 2013; Miller, 2014) critiqued SMM for wrong information, or ill health promoting information remaining unmonitored and circulating the social media sites that instilled wrong health notions in the minds of the people. In summary, literature on health and wellbeing offers insights on both, the boons and banes of SMM, in that, the potential impact that this media form can have on people's overall wellbeing.

Moving forth, of the nine studies under social media analytics and sentiment analysis category, six studies (Chan and Guillet, 2011; Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2011; Cambria et al., 2012; Saravanakumar and SuganthaLakshmi, 2012; Li et al., 2013) reported how consumer sentiments, their feelings or opinions about a particular product or a service floats through social media, and how businesses and brands can capture and analyse these sentiments via SMM to address consumer concerns by improvising, and ultimately conveying an important message to their consumers that 'they care'. Along a parallel plane, the remaining three studies (Bruner, 2011; Podobnik, 2013; Vorvoreanu et al., 2013) particularly touch upon the SMM metrics available to the businesses for monitoring the public sentiments and making use of the data to their benefit by tweaking their marketing strategies accordingly. Next, there were publications available for SMM in finances. Four studies (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010; Lugmayr, 2012; Mirchandani, 2012; Kumar and Sundaram; 2012) concentrated on exploring the better management of finances via the use of SMM. These studies invested special interest in evaluating how different financial metrics across SMM could be used to extract valuable information at different levels (consumer and organizational) to be of use for executing practical and profitable strategies that would maximize the returns on investments for a business/company.

There were eight studies concentrating all their interests in social media advertising. Whilst one study (Okazaki and Taylor, 2013) dedicatedly reviewed the available literature on social media advertising, another by Khang et al (2012), also literature based, reviewed the literature on social media advertising, marketing, communications, and public relations. The remaining six studies (Hensel and Deis, 2010; Ramsay, 2012; Carmichael and Cleave, 2012; Gu and Wang, 2012; Powers et al., 2012; Minton et al., 2012) focussed on how businesses can place intelligent adverts on social media to attract a high load of traffic to their web pages, in turn interesting or tempting the consumers to buy the products and services being offered by the them. At the same time, these studies insist on the critical need to carefully monitor their posts and pages on such social media sites to ensure that they are listening to what the audiences of their social presence have to say.

Five studies evaluated SMM in the educational context, subjectively. Two studies (Schafermeyer, 2011; Reinhard et al., 2012) reveal the outcomes of SMM solely executed by the students themselves, and also speak of it to be an effective learning experience compared to the conventional teaching methods. Two studies (Zehrer and Grabmuller, 2012; Luo et al., 2013) examine the student perceptions of the SMM campaigns employed by their educational organizations. One study (Palmer, 2012), along a parallel plane, marketed an academic program online using SMM to attract students. These studies conveyed that creating a social presence is not sufficient, and that devoted efforts in maintaining that presence to keep their audiences updated with current information is an essential requisite.

Seven studies (Kim and Ko, 2011; Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2011; de Vries et al., 2012; Lipsman et al., 2012; Mccluskey, 2012; Shen and Bissell, 2013) emerge as the ones probing into how luxury fashion and other brands use SMM to reach out to their fans and followers. While most of these studies showed that the use of SMM helped the brands make their image more pronounced, all vouched for the fact that SMM can help strengthen the brand and

consumer bond. They were also seen putting out how important it is for these brands to retain consumer interest whilst maintaining a steady level of interaction. One study (Petty, 2012) particularly warns the brands against imposters on such social media sites, capable of causing potential damage by releasing misleading information about the brand, in effect, reiterating the importance of monitoring and moderating communications over these sites.

Three studies (Michaelidou et al., 2011; Pentina and Koh, 2012; Fetaji and Demiri, 2012) investigate how SMEs integrate SMM in their marketing plans. The low number of studies under this category can be seen showing that either the concept of embedding SMM is still slowly diffusing within the SMEs, or that the marketing strategies for SMEs should refrain from solely relying on SMM, and should incorporate other strategies in combination to arrive at a successful marketing strategy. SMM in banking has also received attention with three studies exploring the different facets of SMM in this context. Whilst one study (Ramirez, 2010) promotes the use of SMM as a recruitment tool, the other two (Mitic and Kapoulas, 2012; Chikandiwa et al., 2013) show that some legal and security related issues have been observed to prevent, or more likely, inhibit the use of SMM within the banking industry. Like SMM with SMEs, SMM with banks have also only been observed to be slowly diffusing according to the above listed studies.

Of all the 71 studies, 15 studies specifically investigated the general role and impact of SMM across different organizations, with all studies coming from different countries. These studies touch on various issues of establishing a relationship with the audience (Kaun, 2010), failing to exploit the full potential of SMM in a marketing strategy (Tenaiji and Cader, 2010), generating content of interest to the target audience (Akar and Topcu, 2011), social currency (Ralphs, 2011), successful viral marketing (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2011), evolving consumer opinions with product maturity (Chen et al., 2011), place marketing and the major role the consumers/users play in generating and circulating the message or content of interest (Ketter

and Avraham, 2012), alertness and judicious management of the content released across social media (Geho and Dangelo, 2012), managerial side of SMM (Berthon et al., 2012), importance of the buzz mechanism in public relations marketing (Papasolomou and Melanthiou, 2012), SMM serving as a communication tool over just being a marketing tool (Eagleman, 2013), decentralized SMM (Recine et al., 2013), the use of SMM changing with users of varied income levels (Froget et al., 2013), and lastly, being conscious of the competition and being cautious of over promotion in using social media (Thompson, 2013).

Three studies (Florina and Andreea, 2012; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2012; Lankinen and Mantymaki, 2013) were found exploring the impact of SMM in the music industry. All three studies favoured the role played by SMM in bringing the music or the musicians and their fans closer. The popularity quotient attached to a music form has been shown to receive a boost as the music content loved by the audiences becomes available for all social media users. Concepts of the ripple effect, honest interaction with the audience, well integrated marketing plans, and the music content itself were unanimously identified as some of the integral factors of a successful SMM strategy. Like the many technologies being made available on a mobile platform, SMM is also trending to be of use on the go. Three studies focus on the concept of mobile SMM. The advantages and slacks that come with the regular SMM remain the same with the mobile SMM, only now this form of marketing media is being made available on an alternate platform for use. Whilst one study (Kaplan, 2012) promotes the organizational use of mobile SMM, and another (Leposa, 2013) explores capturing mobile sentiments of hotels guests through mobile SMM, the third study (Jara et al., 2014) rests interests in participative marketing via mobile SMM. Lastly, only one study (Oinonen et al., 2012) shared revelations on creating value in the networks by incorporating RFID in the SMM strategy.

*4.1 Limitations of Existing Research and Future Research Directions*

Some of the research limitations that these 71 studies arrived at have been summarised here. Some of these studies were seen identifying the suggested problem of the prevailing perception that social media is more often flocked by the youth, which makes targeting a fair sample with people from all age groups difficult (Frandsen et al., 2013). They were particularly seen picking on the SMM's inability to target a specific consumer base as its potential drawback (Reinhard et al., 2012). Given that most of these studies were specifically targeted at a particular type or case of SMM, their generalizability was limited. Many studies were seen suggesting similar type of studies as theirs to be conducted in different contexts, which would facilitate the comparison of the results across different contexts to arrive at a thorough understanding of how impactful SMM can be across different sectors in comparison to the traditional marketing (Kim and Ko, 2012; Zehrer and Grabmuller, 2012; Lagrosen and Grunden, 2014).

Adding weight to the above made suggestion is the fact that SMM very closely operates with the consumers, and the opinions and perceptions of these consumers is likely to be different across different cultures. To gain an overall insight into the workings of SMM, data from across countries are needed, which the future research can layer out to study and show, if and how, the culture aspect can control SMM and its diffusion. There also appeared to be many exploratory studies, but predictive studies were again very limited. Future studies in this line of research could add value to the predictive dimension on the acceptance of SMM across different sectors. More empirical studies could help bring to the surface the factors controlling the diffusion and adoption of SMM, overall.

An interesting future direction offered by Petina and Koh (2012) is for studies to explore the time associated with a given SMM strategy to diffuse and fetch outcomes of interest. A rather

more global suggestion coming in by Papasolomou and Melanthiou (2012) proposes for future research to explore the consumer perceptions of SMM, in that, if SMM is being perceived as a mere marketing tool, or more of as a communication medium to broaden the understandings on the operations of social media.

Recent studies on SMM in education (Palmer, 2012), or for that matter, as evident from the numbers available in this literature review, the publications on SMM in the banking and music industries, across SMEs, and mobile SMM are scarce. This field of research on SMM could benefit from more studies across the aforementioned sectors/industries. Another 2012 study (Oinonen et al., 2012) claims that it is the first ever publication on RFID in SMM. Of the 71 studies reviewed here, none made any revelations on this topic other than the stated study. More research on how RFID and SMM are being applied in conjunction would be value adding to the literature on SMM. As a specific limitation of this study, the keywords search for this literature review was done using only Scopus as the search engine. It could be that some of the relevant studies might have not been indexed via this search engine, which could have been missed from being reviewed here.

## 5. Conclusions

Employing SMM and maintaining active social presence that is capable of drawing in constant benefits for the entity/business being marketed is entirely a game of tact. Content communicated to the audience may attract massive recognition by them at one instant, and may be abandoned by them, the next. The SMM strategists have to consciously generate content of relevance that appears interesting to the target audience, is appreciable, and true, to maintain a healthy and loyal relationship with their audiences. Most of the 71 extracted studies were seen referring to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn as the sites most often used to reach out to the audience of choice. Given the people affinity towards these

sites, they have turned out to become the regulating hubs of web 2.0 through which the entire

SMM operates.

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