

The Effect of Facebook Marketing on Consumers' Purchase Intention

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Abstract: Facebook Marketing has increasingly become popular in Bangladesh with the effect of globalization. Consumers' choice of a particular product depends on many factors, i.e. number of likes, number of friends' likes, location based check-in, comments posted, shares, and many more aspects. This study tries to determine how Facebook marketing tools work on consumers. To fulfill this objective, the study explores the most used features of Facebook marketing which are number of likes, number of friends' likes, location based check-in, comments posted, and shares. By using Multiple Linear Regression Model, the association between Facebook marketing and consumers' purchase intention was calculated and the strength of each factor was calculated.

Keywords: Facebook, marketing, Consumers' Purchase intention.

Introduction

Social media has develop into an important power in consumer decision making, such as escalating awareness and knowledge, sharing information, forming opinions and attitudes, purchasing, and evaluating postpurchase experience. The past decade has witnessed the evolution of social media websites all over the world. Along with the advent of social media platforms came about a wide range of ways in which the technology could be used. People all over the world started using social media for both personal and professional purposes. Marketers were no exception—they quickly adopted the platform to promote their products and drive sales through it, and soon enough social media marketing turned into a very popular and widely used tool for businesses and marketers worldwide. After a decade, social media has expanded to the farthest corners of the world. In Bangladesh, social media platforms are as popular as in any developed country. Today, most marketers in Bangladesh too extensively use social media to stay in the competition and reach out to the maximum number of audiences.

However, the ever-growing popularity of the medium has also given rise to questions on its effectiveness. For instance, a large number of people believe social media marketing/promotion hardly draws customers' attention to a particular product or service, and they also dismiss the perception that social media marketing has a substantial effect on the overall promotion of a product/service among the customers. Social media has quickly changed the contemporary marketing approach. It has established a connection between marketers and other consumers, creating new possibilities and opportunities with the aim of increasing consumer brand awareness.

Staying competitive in today's fast-moving business landscape requires a solid social media strategy because Social Networking Sites (SNS) are becoming an important medium for businesses. Facebook is growing among those social media tools. Facebook is used as a core part of marketing campaigns of many businesses.

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Facebook's global advertising performance indicates that now-a-days consumers are, to a great extent, influenced by the Facebook advertising. Therefore, companies need to learn social media tools using strategy and activities in Facebook environments so that the hearts and minds of the consumers are captured. At the same time they should also analyze their target audience and their perception. However there has been little research that investigates whether SNS applications such as the like, sharing, posting and check-in capabilities in Facebook influence a consumer's intention to purchase a product through the Facebook platform. Better understanding of Facebook's application will enable marketers to involve with customers better online and assist in their marketing communication strategy more profitably. That's why this study will try to explore the impact of Facebook marketing on consumer's intention-to-purchase.

Literature Review

The rapid growth of social media platforms has permanently altered the way that numerous consumers interact with each other and organizations. Hence, this has changed the way that organizations attract and retain prospective consumers (Leung et al., 2015). Previously, marketers would create captivating advertising messages and purchase space in the mass media in the hope that consumers would become aware of and develop a preference to and purchase the brand. Social media has irrevocably altered marketing communications by shifting ways in which consumers select, share and appraise information.

In today's technology driven world, social networking sites have become an avenue where retailers can extend their marketing campaigns to a wider range of consumers. Chi (2011) defines social media marketing as a "connection between brands and consumers, while offering a personal channel and currency for user centered networking and social interaction." The tools and approaches for communicating with customers have changed greatly with the emergence of social media; therefore, businesses must learn how to use social media in a way that is consistent with their business plan (Mangold and Faulds, 2009).

Consequently, marketers are increasing their social media budgets with digital interactive advertising forecasted to reach \$138 billion in 2014, a growth rate of nearly 15 per cent in comparison to 2013 (eMarketer, 2014a). Furthermore, the Middle East and Africa are predicted to have the highest social media advertising spend growth (64 per cent) in 2014 (eMarketer, 2014c). Business-to-consumer (B2C) ecommerce revenue is expected to reach \$1.5 trillion in 2014 (an increase of 20 per cent), with growth primarily coming from emerging markets (eMarketer, 2014b). Current figures reveal that the largest online social medium in the world is Facebook, with 1.32 billion active members, and it is also the largest social commerce site that accounts for 85 per cent of all orders from social media (Facebook, 2014a; Shopify, 2014). The aforementioned evidence necessitates research into behavioral attitudes towards Facebook in an emerging country like Bangladesh which will be of interest to managers and their organizations.

Facebook Marketing Communication Efficacies

The worldwide adoption of mobile phones has driven Facebook's mobile impetus, as the number of consumers that access the internet via mobile is closing the gap on computer-based online users. World Wide Worx indicated that there are 9.4 million active Facebook users in SA (making it the largest social medium in the country), with 87 per cent accessing Facebook via mobile devices such as cell phones and smart phones (Wronski and Goldstruck, 2013). Few studies have determined whether social media advertising is effective when accessed via mobile devices, which is examined in this paper. A review of Facebook's global advertising performance indicated that click-through rates had improved by 20 per cent from 2011 to 2012 (AYTM, 2012).

Furthermore, the cost per click had risen by over a quarter and the cost per thousand increased by more than half. However, Greenlight (2012) found that 44 per cent of consumers did not ever click on Facebook advertisements, 31 per cent rarely did, 10 per cent often did and 3 per cent clicked regularly. While Associated Press and CNBC (2012) reported that over eight out of ten Facebook users never or seldom viewed Facebook advertisements or their sponsored content. However, Reuters and Ipsos (2012) revealed that one in five Facebook users had purchased products as a result of advertisements and/or comments that they viewed on Facebook.

Chandra *et al.* (2012) conducted research into attitudes towards SNA among undergraduate and postgraduate students. The study found that social media advertising aided the purchase decision and resulted in more competitive prices, but held unfavorable attitudes in terms of various cognitive (information) and affective (enjoyment, entertainment value and authenticity) components (lower level pyramid activities). Powers *et al.* (2012) agreed with the aforementioned sentiments and disclosed that over 20 per cent of consumers believed that social media was important for their final purchase decision; while another 20 per cent stated that it helped them to decide what to purchase.

Consumer Attitudes/Motives

It is vital for retailers and marketers to be aware of the factors that affect consumer attitudes and motives because consumers are increasingly creating content about brands, something previously controlled solely by companies (Heinonen, 2011). As a result, current research has examined what aspects of social media sites affect consumer attitudes and motives.

Chu (2011) examined the link between Facebook brand related group participation, advertising responses, and the psychological factors of self-disclosure and attitudes among members and nonmembers of Facebook groups. The study determined that users who are members of groups on Facebook are more likely to disclose their personal data than nonmembers are. Chu (2011) explains group participation and engagement with online ads requires a higher level of personal information because users openly reveal their connections with Facebook groups and promote brands or products when they pass on ads to their friends. "Facebook groups provide channels that consumers deem useful when seeking self-status in a product category, as does passing on viral content about brands to their social contacts" (Chu 2011).

Chu (2011) also found that users who are Facebook group members maintain a more favorable attitude toward social media and advertising. Users who have more positive attitudes toward advertising are more likely to join a brand or a retailer's Facebook group to receive promotional messages. Based on this result, Chu (2011) suggests that a link exists between consumers' use of and engagement in group applications on a social media sites. The relationship between consumers' use of and engagement with group applications influences the rate and effectiveness of advertising on social media, particularly Facebook. Generally, as Chu (2011) notes, Facebook's college-aged users have the most favorable attitudes toward social media advertising and are the largest growing demographic, which suggests that social media sites are a potentially rich platform for online advertising campaigns, especially for companies with a younger target market.

Cox (2010) also investigated the correlation between age and attitude and found that social network user attitude toward online advertising formats (i.e. blogs, video, and brand channel or page) differed to some extent across age groups. She explains that users who fall in the 18-28 age brackets had strong positive attitudes towards blogs, video, and brand channel ad formats. This was because users found these ad formats to be eye catching, informative, and amusing. The 35-54 age groups preferred ad formats on video and brand channels because

they found them to be more eye catching, informative, and had better placement within the online page layout. Overall, online advertising formats with positive attributes are welcomed by users; however, ads that are intrusive or interfere with online social networking activities, such as popup, expandable, or floating formatted ads were disliked by network users (Cox, 2010).

User Generated Content

“While social media provides never ending avenues for communicating, it is the individuals who serve as the influencers not the technology” (Gonzalez, 2010). User generated content produces social currency for marketers because it helps define a brand. User generated content describes “the sum of all ways in which people make use of social media, usually applied to describe the various forms of media content that are publicly available and created by end users” (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

Consumer Generated Advertising (CGA) is a form of user-generated content, which refers to specific instances where consumers create the brand, focused messages with the purpose of informing, persuading, or reminding others (Campbell et al. 2011). Campbell et al. (2011) state that today, traditional marketing is coexisting with CGA. Retailers need to be aware of this because CGA can positively support traditional marketing or it can negatively impact and undermine it. Cheong and Morrison’s (2010) research supports the previous statement by explaining how the lack of research on the credibility of both positive and negative user generated content (UGC) highlights the need for retailers to be conscious and study UGC to completely understand its influence. Consumers are taking part in a diverse array of activities such as consuming content, participating in discussions, and sharing knowledge with other consumers, to contributing to other consumers’ activities (Heinonen, 2011).

Pehlivan, Sarican, and Berthon (2011) found that CGA differs from FGA (Firm Generated Advertising) because each type of ad (CGA or FGA) elicits different discussion content surrounding the ad. Consumers express appreciation for FGA, but found CGA to be more entertaining causing consumers to talk about the ad more (Pehlivan, Sarican, and Berthon, 2011).

Taylor, Strutton, and Thompson (2012), found however, that social media users’ message sharing behaviors are also attributed to the need for self-enhancement. When consumers perceive an online advertisement to be consistent with their identity, they are more likely to share the message with others because it is representative of who they are and what they like. Thus, “advertisers should consider the symbolic and self-expression properties of their online ads and match them to targeted consumers’ self-concepts” (Taylor, Strutton, and Thompson, 2012, 13). In other words, the marketing of a company needs to share similar characteristics with its target market’s interest. All of the findings from these studies show the significance of CGA and its impact on online marketing. In a study on investigating the influence of Facebook marketing on consumer purchase intention, Richard and Guppy (2014) used 5 variables to measure consumers’ purchase intention. Those were Likes, Friends’ Likes, Location-based Check-ins, Comment posting and Sharing. They concluded that friends’ likes has the largest impact on consumers purchase intention. Sharing and location-based check-in had moderate impact on consumers’ purchase intention. On the other hand, Comment posting has no significant influence on consumer purchase intention.

“Like”

Like is a Facebook feature that is represented by a blue thumb up button. If a user clicks on this button, it means he likes the content. An individual’s personality traits and intentions can be easily predicted by his ‘likes’ on pages and contents. (Kosinski, et al., 2013).

Friends’ Likes

According to Harris and Denis (2011), consumers purchase through social networks trusting the recommendations of their friends. This is why friends’ likes can be considered as one of the most important variables that can affect consumers’ purchase intention.

“Comment”

The most common use of social media among businesses is to communicate and engage in conversation with their customers (Kietzmann et al., 2011; Kwok & Yu, 2012; Linke, & Zerfass, 2012; Lipsman et al., 2012; Lovejoy et al., 2012; Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Rao, 2012; Yan, 2011; Zauner et al., 2012). Porter et al., (2011) claim that social media have not only shifted communication from monologue to dialogue, but has also given rise to a new phenomenon which is ‘trialogue’ where customers also engage in conversations with other customers.

Location Based “Check-In”

“By checking-in to a place or an event, on so-called location based social networks (LBSNs), such as a restaurant or a gathering, users implicitly accept to reveal the geographical coordinates and the semantic information of the place.” (Bilgrevic et al., 2015)

“Share”

Facebook allows consumers to ‘share’ product/service or business pages that they think are important and relevant. Every 20 minutes one million links are shared on Facebook (Branckaute, 2010).

Purchase Intention

“Purchase intention is the preference of consumer to buy the product or service. In another words, purchase intention has another aspect that the consumer will purchase a product after evaluation.” (Rasheed, 2015).

“Many factors affect the consumer’s intention while selecting the product and the ultimate decision depends on consumers’ intention with large external factors.” (Keller, 2001).

Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis Development

This study will try to measure the significance of women users' involvement with the Facebook marketing. From the study of Richard and Guppy (2014) mentioned in the literature review section, 5 distinct variables have been used in this study to measure their influence on consumers' purchase intention in the context of Bangladesh. They are: likes, friends' likes, location based check-ins, comment posting and sharing. Using this model, the hypotheses can be developed as below: -

H₀: Facebook marketing does not significantly influence consumers' purchase intention.

H₁: Facebook marketing significantly influences consumers' purchase intention.

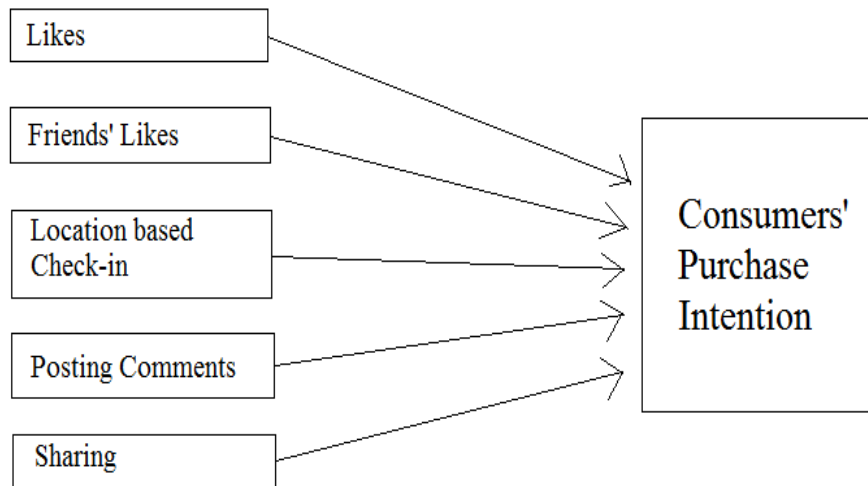


Figure 1:
Conceptual
Framework
(developed by
authors)

Objectives of the Study

This study focuses on analyzing the overall effect of Facebook marketing on consumer's purchase decision. Actually, this empirical study will reveal the effectiveness of

today's Facebook marketing and how the Facebook marketing tools can influence or persuade consumers to make their purchase decision as well as how this Facebook marketing strategy develop consumers purchase intension. So, the broad objective is to examine the influence of Facebook marketing and its various tools on making the purchase decision of consumers in the context of Bangladesh. The Specific objectives are-

1. To get an understanding of the Facebook marketing tools and features that influence purchase decision.
2. To measure the relative strength of tools according to their influence of purchase decision.

Methodology

This study collected both primary and secondary data. Literature review part of this study has been used secondary sources such as review of scholarly journals, books, and newspaper. The information derived by these procedures provide meaning, concept, model of theory and are used to develop the framework for this study. This study used descriptive research design because it is useful in measuring certain behavior of population and applicable to make specific prediction. Therefore, achieving the determined research objectives descriptive research design was found suitable to carry out the research. Moreover, this study preferred cross sectional study due to time constraints and respondents unwillingness to repeated responses for a longer period of time.

Sampling Plan

The respondents for this study were selected from Dhaka city. Convenience sampling technique has been used for collecting data from 120 respondents in Dhaka city. All the respondents of this study were female consumer of different age groups ranging from 25 years to 40 years. Ninety percent had at least a college degree which indicates that the respondents were well educated and knowledgeable. Convenience sampling technique has been used for collecting the primary data as this method is frequently used by researchers for its easy administration.

Questionnaire development

In this study, **structured questionnaire** was used as the instrument of this research. It is a structured sequence of questions designed to draw out facts and opinions and which provides a vehicle for recording the data (Hague and Jackson, 1996). The main advantages of this kind of questionnaire are that it can be collected in a complete form within a short period of time and can be obtained from the target respondent upon the immediate completion of the respondent. This approach is also easily interpreted by the computer (Zikmund, 2000). The questionnaire attempted to obtain information about consumers' engagement with different Facebook features such as like, friends' likes, comment, check-in, and share to intend to purchase a product. There are **16 statements**. For each statement the respondent was provided with a five-point scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). The questionnaire for the survey comprised of two parts; the first part collected information about respondents' age and profession. Since our sample was determined to be 25-40 years old, the respondents aged below 25 and above 40 were eliminated. The second part measured respondents' level of agreement with 16 given statements. All the questions were multiple-choice and close-ended questions.

Data Collection

The questionnaire was distributed to the people who are living in Dhaka city and between the age group of 25 years to 40 years. Personal administration method has been used to collect the data as it is helpful in achieving good quality and sufficient data. However, this method requires personal visits to respondents and patience to provide guidance to the respondents to complete the survey forms, emerges challenging to conduct the research.

Data Analysis Approach

One hundred forty two completed questionnaires returned among them one hundred twenty were found usable. Multiple Linear Regression Model has been used to measure the association between five Facebook variables and consumers' purchase intention on the basis of acceptance and non-acceptance of the formulated hypothesis. SPSS version 16 package was used for the analysis of data. Descriptive statistics was used that mainly contained the model summary, ANOVA table, coefficient chart, and correlation matrix.

Results and Discussions

In this study **quantitative analysis** has been performed. The analysis method used for this study is **Multiple Linear Regression Model**. Here the strength of association between Facebook marketing and consumers' purchase intention has been measured. For data processing the IBM SPSS Statistical Software version 16.0 package has been used.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.587	.344	.315	.873

a. Predictors: (Constant), Share, Comment, Like, Friends' Likes, Location based Check-in

Table 1: Model Summary

Here, by stating the model summary of the research, the researcher has tried to identify the association between Facebook marketing and purchase intention created in consumers. R is called the correlation coefficient that represents the strength of association between dependent variable and independent variables. Its value ranges between -1 and +1. When the value of **R** is positive, it suggests a positive association between dependent variable and independent variables (Malhotra and Dash, 2012-2013). From the above table, we can see that the value of **R** is **.587** which indicates that there is a positive association between Facebook marketing and consumers' purchase intention in Bangladesh.

From the aforementioned figure, it can be observed that the value of **R square** is **.344** which means that dependent variable is weekly associated with independent variables, i.e. **34.4%** of variance in dependent variable is explained by independent variables. "The strength of association is measured by the coefficient of determination, R^2 . It varies between 0 and 1 and signifies the proportion of the total variation in Y that is accounted for by the variation in X." (Malhotra and Dash, 2012-2013).

Here, the value of adjusted R square is **.315**. As little difference between R square and adjusted R square can be noticed, there is no opportunities to add more variables. " R^2 is adjusted for the number of independent variables and the sample size to account for diminishing returns. After the first few variables, the additional independent variables do not make much contribution." (Malhotra and Dash, 2012-2013)

ANOVA^b

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	45.557	5	9.111	11.965	.000 ^a
Residual	86.810	114	.761		
Total	132.367	119			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Share, Comment, Like, Friends' Likes, Check_in

b. Dependent Variable: I would like to try a product recommended in Facebook.

Table 2: ANOVA

According to Malhotra and Dash (2012-2013), "the F test is used to test the null hypothesis that the coefficient of multiple determination in the population R^2_{pop} is zero. This is equivalent to testing the null hypothesis." The significance level in the model was 0.00 which is less the 5% level of significance used in the model. It therefore follows that the model is statistically significant in predicting how the independent variables affect consumers' online purchase intention. On the other hand, F critical at 5% significance level is 3.17 while the F-calculated is 11.965. It therefore follows that the overall model is significant since the F-calculated is greater than the F-critical. Using the values shown in table 2 (Appendices), the regression model becomes the following:

Consumers' purchase intention = .981 (Constant) + .026 (Likes) - 0.146 (Friends' Likes) + 0.067 (Location Based Check-In) + 0.200 (Comment) + 0.500 (Share) + e_i (error term).

The beta coefficients are the partial regression coefficients obtained. It "denotes the change in the predicted value, Y, per unit change in X when the other independent variables are held constant." (Malhotra and Dash, 2012-2013)

Standardized coefficients calculated for each predictor variables, showing the percentage of variation in the dependent variable caused by the individual independent variables. It can be revealed that only the variable 'Share' is significant at 5% level. The Standardized beta coefficient of using share function is 0.500 (the highest) which means it is also the most important variable that influences purchase intention. The second important variable is 'Comment'. Its standardized coefficient is 0.200. The third most important variable is 'Check-in' having a standardized coefficient of 0.067. The next important variable is 'Like' having a standardized coefficient of 0.026. The only variable that has a negative standardized beta coefficient is 'Friend's Like'. However, except the 'Share' variable, no other variables are significant at 5% level.

Here from the above correlation matrix, we can see that maximum values are less than 0.5. We know that if the maximum values of correlation matrix exceed 0.5, then we must say that the research result is suffering from multi-collinearity problem. "Multicollinearity arises when the inter-correlations among the predictors are very high." (Malhotra and Dash, 2012-2013). So we can conclude that the research result is not suffering from the multi-collinearity problem.

Hypothesis Testing

H₀: Facebook marketing does not significantly influence consumers' purchase intention.

H₁: Facebook marketing significantly influences consumers' purchase intention.

From the coefficient table, we can see that there are no values of significance level which are below 0.05. The significance values for the five independent variables are 0.765, 0.121, 0.477, 0.016, 0.000. So, we can reject the null hypothesis (There is significant impact of Facebook Marketing on consumers' online purchase intention). So, it can be concluded that Facebook marketing has significant impact on consumers' online purchase intention.

Managerial Implications

The study digs out several implications for the managers who are intending to promote their products or brands on Facebook. The following implications might be considered.

- **Making the consumers more aware of the Facebook functions:** It is clearly seen from the study that Bangladeshi consumers are using the Facebook functions subconsciously. Their participation is confined to only liking products' pages or posts and sharing them. So, marketing managers might think of make them understand the significance of likes, comments and shares. They can be informed that these functions matter for the brand and the product.
- **Importance of sharing:** Since according to the result, sharing is the most important variable to influence the purchase intention, the marketers can leverage out of this function by engaging the consumers with more and more sharing.
- **Boosting check-in:** It is interesting that check-in is positioned in the middle of the coefficients in terms of importance. It might imply that managers might generate more check-ins to their stores or events to capture the potentials.

Limitations of the Study and Future Directions

- In our study, only five Facebook marketing functions (like, friends' likes, comment, check-in and share) were taken into account. In the relevant area, there might be other functions (such as love react, direct link sharing, celebrity videos etc.) which can be used as effective marketing functions and many more are coming in future.
- In addition, our research focuses on Dhaka city only. Future research may consider including respondents from other cities like Chittagong, Sylhet etc. This will enable a stronger and a more balanced perspective on the views of the participants on the research issues.
- Another limitation of this paper is low responses. Future study should attempt for higher responses, probably about 350 or more responses. This will enable the application of more robust statistical tools such as Structural Equation Modeling techniques.

Conclusion

In today's world, social media has drilled itself into our lives to the point where most of us can't imagine a normal life without it. We are getting more and more accustomed to the conveniences and benefits that come with social media. In a world where social media has become such a popular platform, it's only wise for marketers to use the platform to its capacity. Facebook based marketing has already been proven to be an increasingly popular and extremely effective marketing tool. The importance of social media to create purchase intention among potential and existing customers can no longer be denied. Businesses that are not focused on their virtual segments will run the risk of lagging behind in the competition. Marketers need to continuously come up with innovative social media campaigns. In order to stay in the competition, marketers need to implement Facebook based marketing with as much effort as any other marketing strategy. Since, consumers in Bangladesh are still not being aware of Facebook based marketing, the marketers have huge scope to attain a large number of customers from Facebook by employing sustainable and attractive marketing functions in Facebook.

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Appendix:1

Table 3: Coefficient Chart

Coefficient Chart					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.981	.429		2.288	.024
Like	.028	.092	.026	.300	.765
Friends' Likes	-.145	.093	-.146	-1.564	.121
Check_in	.063	.088	.067	.713	.477
Comment	.201	.082	.200	2.436	.016
Share	.624	.117	.500	5.322	.000

a. Dependent Variable: I would like to try a product recommended in Facebook.

Appendix-2

Table 4: Correlation Matrix

Correlations						
	I would like to try a product recommended in Facebook. (DV)	Like	Friends' Likes	Check_in	Comment	Share
I would like to try a product recommended in Facebook. (DV)	1.000	.235	.168	.287	.356	.544
Like	.235	1.000	.345	.298	.155	.417
Friends' Likes	.168	.345	1.000	.516	.251	.440
Check_in	.287	.298	.516	1.000	.320	.448
Comment	.356	.155	.251	.320	1.000	.334
Share	.544	.417	.440	.448	.334	1.000