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Creating brand loyalty: Role of brand love, trust, product quality, customer service on customer engagement among social media users

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ABSTRACT

Social media have evolved into a potentially important virtual arena, where they are used not only for socializing but also for promoting businesses and their products. A brand's emotional relationship with a customer is called customer engagement. Customers who are extremely engaged are more likely to buy, promote, and remain loyal to a brand. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to discover if social networking sites play a significant role in boosting customer engagement and brand loyalty by exploring various independent factors like Brand love, Brand trust, Product quality and Customer Service. A self-administered questionnaire was used to conduct a survey and the model was tested using SEM analysis. It is concluded that the majority of customers believe that using social networking sites is the best way to interact with their brands.

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1. Introduction

Today, businesses increasingly rely on social networking sites to increase customer interaction, so promoting one's brand on these sites is an effective way to promote the brand. It is undeniable that social media has a significant impact since submitting an advertisement can allow for swift dissemination of information to many people and reduce marketing expenses while guaranteeing advertisements are reaching the targeted market.

Social media is beneficial for businesses as it enables customers to easily find their brands on the platform. It permits brands to connect with their intended audience, retain their attention, and promptly answer any questions they pose. Assessing the competition through their social media profiles is a fantastic strategy. The brand can establish a responsive and caring reputation by offering support over social media. By implementing a

tracking framework for customer feedback on social media channels such as comments, inquiries, and grievances; the company could attain its objectives. Additionally answering questions quickly is essential but also maintaining a positive attitude while providing support can help improve customer satisfaction levels. Paying close attention towards customer feedback shows how much their opinion matters further improving their experience on the platform lastly recognizing when ending public chat sessions will lead into private messaging.

According to global statistics on social networking, people spend about 2.46 minutes per day on SNS (Social Networking Sites), with the 18–32-year-olds spending 3.64 minutes per day and the 33–51-year-olds spending only 2.21 minutes (Global Web Index, 2020). With about 2.89 billion users, Facebook is the most popular profile-based SNS on the planet (Statista, 2020). Flickr, YouTube, and other content-based SNSs do not focus on members' profiles but rather on the contents, such as images and videos. ¹⁻⁵

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The act of establishing a connection between companies & their clients is referred to as customer engagement. It's aimed at building loyal customers who recognize the brand by means of various techniques including marketing campaigns & publishing new website material while also using different digital platforms like social networks or wearable technologies. The purpose of a business is to develop a positive relationship with its customers in order to promote the brand, increase sales, and provide a more personalized experience. Customer engagement is the emotional relationship that exists between a customer and a brand. Customers who are extremely engaged are more likely to buy, promote, and remain loyal. Providing a high-quality customer experience is crucial in customer engagement strategy. One of the most critical parts of a successful business is customer involvement. According to studies, a customer who is completely engaged with a firm is more likely to create 23 percent more revenue than a customer who is disengaged. As a result, increased consumer engagement translates to increased revenues for the business, and who doesn't want that.⁶⁻¹⁰

Brand loyalty is a pattern of consumer behaviour in which customers become emotionally attached to a particular brand or product and purchase it repeatedly over time. Brand loyalty is described as a consumer's emotionally charged decision to purchase a specific brand time and over again. The buyer believes that the particular brand possesses the traits that will match their personal expectations and demands. Brand loyalty aids in the development of a strong client base and trust, which may then be used to outperform competitors and gain a competitive advantage, especially in today's increasingly competitive business world.¹¹⁻¹⁴

2. Literature Review

Corporate businesses are starting to realize that social media is an essential tool for engaging with online consumers. Marketers widely adopt the idea of customer involvement, but it lacks exact definitions and applications. To continue growing their online audience, brands everywhere are putting greater emphasis on social media investment. Having a social media presence on the internet allows brand owners to access numerous beneficial platforms that aid in advertising their products or services while also developing new ones by analyzing and observing user-generated content. Additionally, they will gain valuable market insights from this process per Richter et al. (2011). In today's world, social media is a must for all businesses as it is trendy, allows for interactive communication, and can reach people of all ages and backgrounds while boosting e-word of mouth. (Divya & Regi, 2004). Social media marketing can involve professional strategies to impact consumer-to-consumer communication through Word of Mouth (WOM) marketing. Kozinets et al. (2010) explained

that viral marketing, buzz, and guerrilla marketing are alternative names used for this form of advertising. Utilizing this fresh electronic channel is possible for communicating globally. Additionally, it could increase customized marketing to buyers (Mangold & Faulds 2009). Listening to user comments or observing social media conversations can help a company learn about a consumer's needs, which can result in community members creating value through co-creation (Palmer & Koenig-Lewis, 2009).

Brand experiences are critical for building brand loyalty and ensuring long-term economic viability. Customer loyalty has an impact on business performance, both directly through purchase behaviour and indirectly through attitude toward a brand. Customers may have various types of brand experiences based on sensation, affection, behaviour, and intellect. (Ong, Lee & Ramayah T, 2018). The development of social media has drastically altered the way brands and people interact. Firms that employ social media-based brand communities to increase customer engagement and strengthen consumer-brand connections are embracing them. (Lee & Hsieh, 2021).

According to a 2013 survey, eight out of ten consumers believe that customer service can affect their buying decision. Four out of ten people would be willing to pay more for superior service, and 86% of people would leave a company that treated them badly. Customer expectations are rising, and the growing practice of sharing unfavourable experiences online is placing pressure on businesses to improve. Smart businesses recognize that providing excellent service is critical to their success, as it allows them to retain existing clients while also attracting new ones. Customers who are happy are the foundations of any business. “*Brand trust is the degree to which customers believe that a brand can provide the required value*” (Doney & Cannon, 1997).

Brand loyalty occurs when customers regularly purchase their favourite products, and being committed consistently has an impact on repeated purchase of the same brand. The loyalty of customers is unaffected by marketing tactics and situational factors that might cause them to switch (Kabiraj & Shanmugan, 2010)

A product is considered high quality if it meets the expectations of customers and the industry, which includes being able to fulfil its intended purpose effectively, and evaluating product quality involves considering several key factors, such as how well it solves problems and how appropriate it is for satisfying customer needs. Their assessment of a product takes into account both its design excellence and reliability along with how user-friendly it is but the assessment of a product includes not only determining its safety but also gauging whether or not it's affordable and visually pleasing (Delgado 2011).

The intense feelings of passion and admiration that consumers develop for brands are what we define as brand

love so to cultivate enduring consumer-brand relationships it is essential to foster brand love. The brand love concept can also be referred to as a sharp construct. It is because brands can form emotional connections with their consumers. The stronger that connection is, the higher the level of loyalty consumers will have. This loyalty is often referred to as brand love. As a result, consumers develop emotional attachments to brands operating across various product categories that are referred to as "love" (Barker et al., 2015).

Customer service encompasses all the efforts made by a company to ensure that customers can easily conduct business with them and people’s perception of customer service changes depending upon the situation they are in. Having clarity about what it wants to achieve through customer care programs and their counterparts is essential for the company, as this firm provides a product or service intended to cater for their clients’ requirements and also includes all of the non-material components associated with it like customer care. As per John Leppard & Liz Molyneux’s findings in 1994 it is wise to create a positive experience for customers during their dealings with the company

Consumers who trust a brand feel secure during interactions with the brand. Furthermore, the notion of trustworthiness encompasses both dependability as well as interest in safeguarding the welfare of consumers for brands, and the concept of brand love is rooted in one’s willingness to take risks based on faith in the value that a particular brand represents. Confidence and security are essential for establishing brand trust (Delgado,2011).

Customer service can mean different things to different people, according to their circumstances. For this reason, it is important that the company is clear about what it is trying to achieve with ‘customer care’ programmes and their like. The company offers a product or service designed to meet customer needs, together with all the intangible elements which go with it including customer service. It is eminently sensible to make customers feel good about their dealings with the company, said (Leppard & Molyneux, 1994).

This paper is an attempt to understand the various independent factors which affect Customer Engagement and Brand Loyalty through Social Networking Sites.

3. Materials and Methods

An online survey was conducted to collect data for this study. The sample consisted of college students. Participants (N = 200, 54% Male, 46. % Female) were college students who have completed their UG/PG. Most participants were of the range 22-24 (76.5%) age category.

3.1. Design

1. *Type of Research Design:* The descriptive research design was used in this study.

2. *Source of Data:* The primary data has been collected through questionnaires generated through the Google forms. Secondary data are collected reviewing the literature such as published articles, reports, journals, and the internet. The study is conducted among college students.
3. *Sampling Design:* A sample of 200 college students has been taken for the study. The sampling method used for the study was simple random sample.
4. *Data Collection Tools:* For measuring the technology acceptance model of Customer Engagement and Brand Loyalty through Social Networking Sites, the TAM scale of (Davis, 1947) is used. Customer Engagement, Brand Loyalty, Brand Love, Brand Trust, Product Quality and Customer Service are measured on a five-point Likert scale from (5) Strongly Agree, (4) Agree, (3) Neutral, (2) Disagree and (1) Strongly Disagree. The instrument has a reliability score of 0.969.
5. *Statistical tool:* The statistical analysis tool used for the study is WARP PLS SEM.

4. Discussions

Survey results of demographic information shows that 76.5% of respondents are between the ages of 22-24, while 16% are between the ages of 19-21 and 7.5% are between the ages of 25-27. The results also show that 34.5% of participants have completed a master’s degree, 63.5% have completed their degree or diploma, and 4% have completed high school. The data was analysed using Structural Equation Modelling and the tool used was WARP PLS. The figure shows the research model, which includes the latent variables and the variables they are meant to measure. Within the latent variable, an 'R' is shown in parentheses indicating whether the variable is reflective or not. Along with the variable label, the number and type of indicators used to measure each latent variable is shown.

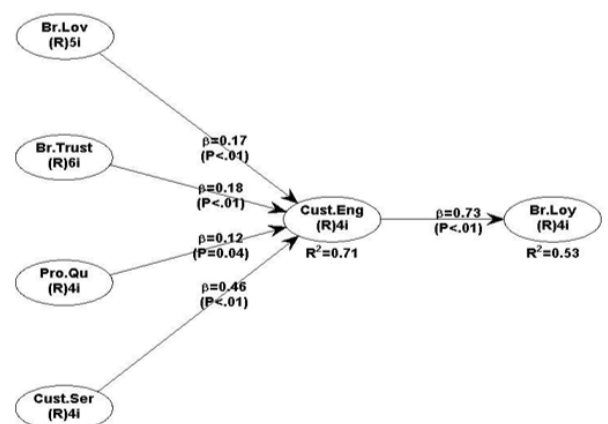


Fig. 1: Structural model with β and R2 values

The PLS models are estimated by loadings or weights, which represent the relationship between the observations and the unobservable variables. An explanation of the structure of the model is provided by the structural relationships between unobservable variables, which explain how their values affect other unobservable variables. A summary of the general results of the SEM analyses is shown in the table below. It is clear from table that the model meets all norms for model fit.

Table 1: Model fit Indices

Measures	Threshold Values/ P value Observed	Measures Threshold Values/ P value Observed
Average path coefficient		0.33, P<0.001
Average R-squared (ARS)		0.621, P<0.001
Average adjusted R-squared (AARS)		0.305, P<0.001
Average block VIF (AVIF)	Acceptable if <= 5, ideally <= 3.3	3.382
Average full collinearity VIF (AFVIF)	Acceptable if <= 5, ideally <= 3.3	3.397
Tenenhaus GoF (GoF)	Small >= 0.1, medium >= 0.25, large >= 0.36	0.628
Sympson's paradox ratio (SPR)	Acceptable if >= 0.7, ideally = 1	1.000
R-squared contribution ratio (RSCR)	Acceptable if >= 0.9, ideally = 1	1.000

As shown in Table 3 and Figure 1, the estimated model includes path coefficients and their corresponding p-values. Warp PLS refers to path coefficients as beta (β) coefficients. The R2 value of the dependent constructs is used to assess the explanatory power of a structural model. The R square coefficient measures the extent to which the model can explain variation.

Table 2: Table showing (R²) value and Adjusted R²

	Br.Lov	Br.Trus	Pro.Qu	Cust.Se	Cust.En	Br.Loy
R-squared coefficients					0.713	0.528
Adjusted R-squared coefficients					0.707	0.526

In the table above, effect sizes are given for each path coefficient. In statistics, effect size represents the strength of a relationship quantitatively (Preacher & Kelley,

Table 3: Table showing path coefficients and (P value)

Path coefficients and P value						
	Br.Lov	Br.Trus	Pro. Qu	Cust. Se	Cust. En	Br. Loy
Br. Lov						
Br. Trus						
Pro. Qu						
Cust. Se						
Cust. En	0.173 (0.006)	0.178 (0.005)	0.120 (0.042)	0.464 (<0.001)		
Br. Loy						0.727(<0.001)

Table 4: Table showing effect size for path coefficients

Effect sizes for path coefficients						
	Br. Lov	Br. Trus	Pro. Qu	Cust. Se	Cust. En	Br.Loy
Br.Lov						
Br.Trus						
Pro.Qu						
Cust.Se						
Cust.En	0.127 Small	0.130 Small	0.088 Small	0.368 Large		
Br.Loy						0.528 Large

2011). This measure of effect size tells us how much the independent variable can describe the change in the dependent variable. Similar to Cohen's (1988) f-square coefficients, warp PLS describes effect sizes. Using effect sizes, we can determine whether the path coefficients indicate small(0.02), medium(0.15), or large(0.35) effects (Cohen et al., 2003). Based on the table, it is clear that all of the relationships are statistically significant. The effect of the relationship between customer engagement and brand loyalty is large in the model. The effect of customer service and customer engagement is also large. All the other relationships between Brand love, Product quality, Brand Trust and customer engagement are small.

5. Conclusion

The main objective of this research was to find how brand love, brand trust, product quality and customer service increases customer engagement and brand loyalty through social networking sites. Social Networking sites have made a huge impact for almost all types of business organizations in the world. Social Networking sites help in increasing customer engagement which in return increases brand loyalty. From the study it is understood that the effect size of customer service on customer engagement is large and the effect of customer engagement on Brand loyalty

is also large. The study concludes that social media sites can engage customers and thus create a sense of loyalty to brands.

6. Source of Funding

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7. Conflict of Interest

None.

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