

Revitalizing Brand Loyalty through Social Media Communication: A double mediation survey

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ABSTRACT

Today, building and keeping up brand loyalty are among central themes of research for marketers. They have utilized innumerable tactics to sustain brand loyalty over a period. However, the concept of brand loyalty is vanishing nowadays due to shift in means of communication. Intention of the study is to explain the pronounced impact of social media communication on brand loyalty in apparel industry, provided that the phenomenon is grabbing more attention of marketing industrialists and researchers. An online survey was carried out through various social media forums including Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter to collect data from household consumers. Data were collected from all over the Pakistan via structured close ended questionnaires. Out of 500, just 452 responses were acknowledged. The findings from path analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between social media communication and brand loyalty. Results shed light on the fact that brand trust and brand equity are equally crucial to sustain brand loyalty, since alone social media communication is not sufficient. Findings are expected to assist marketing managers in developing and sustaining brand loyalty in this phase of digital communication. Based on the outcomes, this study can be considered as a landmark breakdown in this era and proposes some considerable strategies for the marketing managers.

Keywords: Social Media Communication; Brand Loyalty; Marketing Promotion; Brand Trust; Brand Equity

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1. INTRODUCTION

Social media is continually changing the brand communication tactics in the corporate world by contributing a noteworthy capacity in buyers' learning, research and data sharing about their brands (Nisar & Whitehead, 2016). Moreover, the rapid growth of information technology has brought revolution in social media communications as it has replaced the traditional media in corporate communications (Ashraf, Ilyas, Imtiaz, & Ahmad, 2018).

Since the advent of social media, it is building and expanding significant ways to attract users all over the globe. Social media sites not only give an opportunity for consumers to connect with others, rather it furnishes opportunities to collaborate with the intended audience better (Rialti, Zollo, Pellegrini, & Ciappei, 2017). Hence, assists in making a brand community where brand managers and advertisers can communicate effectively in regard to their brands (Jackson, 2011).

Brand loyalty on the similar note, is not a new concept. Plenty of investigations are executed to unearth the factors that can maximize the brand loyalty. However, framework of brand loyalty is changing with the each day passing. Since, social media has grasped everything in its spell; business terminologies are amended as well (Lou & Koh, 2017). Brand loyalty is now determined by like, dislike, share, comments and online review on social media forum of particular brands. Social media platforms are

considered as most viable means to build and sustain brand loyalty in this futuristic era. Sometimes, these social media communication techniques give chances to learn purchasers' observations and feelings, thus making it a two-path stream of branding. As Bidmon (2017) rightly stated that high profile brands are spending chunk of their budgets on social media networks for sponsorship and advertising. In same manner, multiple studies (Ali & Lodhi, 2017; Gozegir & Gocer, 2018) revealed that nowadays consumers are very much influenced with advance technology especially social media channels due to their numerous advantages. They are usually excited for using state of the art technological forums.

In this contemporary world, channels of social media like Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and YouTube have different interaction approaches among people because they like to spend greater amount of time on these forums (Gozegir & Gocer, 2018; Shabbir et al., 2018). Similarly, brand managers are also utilizing different intermediates to create brand awareness, brand positioning and to promote brands for many years. Now, the most popular intermediary is social media forum. Social media channels encourage the value of relationship between brand and consumer, making it essential source to develop brand loyalty (Lou & Koh, 2017).

Hence, it is interesting to explore the contribution of social media communication in enhancing and maintaining relationships with the customers. Ismail (2017) suggested that by looking into the supporting role of favorable role of brand image, knowledge, trust and equity, social media communication and brand loyalty can provide a productive platform for the marketers.

1.1 Problem statement

Various researchers (Chahal & Rani, 2017; Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014; Ismail, 2017) argued that concept of brand loyalty is vanishing day by day. State of the art

technology has exposed consumers to so many brands. Wide variety of brands with numerous features has resulted in diminished brand loyalty in almost all the industries. Antecedents of brand loyalty are changing with the global technological advancements. As a result, the market share of some existing apparel brands has also declined in past years. The only option is to go with the stream of river (Nisar & Whitehead, 2016).

Based on these ideas, new communication means must be adopted to survive in today's market. One of the key challenges for present marketers is to streamline social media communication with brand loyalty (Dahl, 2018). Furthermore, in Pakistan, this it is still a neglected research area. Further studies are required to address this issue rigorously (Ashraf et al., 2018; Shabbir et al., 2018).

Following questions could be concluded from arguments discussed in Problem Statement:

- 1) What is the affect of social media communication on brand loyalty?
- 2) What is the extent of mediation of brand trust between social media communication and brand loyalty?
- 3) What is the degree of mediation of brand equity between social media communication and brand loyalty?
- 4) What are the practical implications of this study for industrialists?

1.2 Purposes of the study

This study is productive for two reasons. Initially, it has contributed to the literature of marketing as researchers from this particular domain can use this study for further explorations. Although, the concept of brand loyalty is not new in industry but it is considered as backbone of marketing. With the changing scenario, it has become essential to explore brand loyalty from new perspectives.

Secondly, vendors of apparel industry will come to know the secret of survival in this

fierce competitive era. Due to smudging concept of brand loyalty, it has become very difficult to sustain potential consumers. Thus, industrialists can be acquainted with the fact that through social media communication, how brand loyalty could be enlightened at present.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Brand loyalty and social media communication

Brand loyalty is recognized as repeat purchase behavior of specific items or services during particular duration. Accordingly, it is not astonishing that for years, one of the chief global factors predicting buying behavior has been brand loyalty (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001).

Likewise, brand loyalty could be explained as behavioral attachment of a product although the client has choice of abundant alternatives (Aaker, 1991). Likewise, brand loyalty can fade away when consumer trends change, but the brand name does not. Consumer trends can be changed by time due to social development, fads and updated technology including internet (Lau & Lee, 1999).

Developing and maintaining brand loyalty are among the central subjects of research for marketers for quite a while because; it generates revenue for the overall industry. Brand loyalty aids managers in achieving the eventual objective of business which is earning profit (Keller, Parameswaran, & Jacob, 2011). Latest technology has synchronized it with social media networks.

If talking about social media communication, it refers to the form of electronic communication through which people develop online communities for acquaintance, to share information, ideas, private messages and other data. It is internet-based and gives

participants instant electronic access to information or content (Erdoğan & Cicek, 2012). With the advancing innovation, it is perceived as integral part of commerce. The concept of Electronic commerce has prevailed over mere commerce. Social media has become central component of internet based commerce nowadays (Dahl, 2018).

Interestingly, most of the institutions have a keen focus on boosting the skills and knowledge of their internal customers so that they can compete in international markets (Ali & Muhammad, 2018), and in order to do so, social media communication is one of the imperative sources to maximize the international exposure.

Social media networks offer multiple ways to promote and communicate with target audience. The promotions are mostly paid. On Facebook, for example, companies create their own pages and groups. Deals, running promotions and sale offers are communicated through sponsored videos and pictures. Loyal customers comment, tag (invite) friends and share posts (videos and pictures) on their timeline (personal profile). By doing so, they endorse their preferred brands in public without charging any fee (Unamo, 2019).

According to Schaffer (2017), Facebook and Instagram have almost same promotional features except Instagram stories (status) feature, which is more productive than others. However, on YouTube, paid videos and web banner ads are prominent. Equally, mobile marketing including messages and calls along with chat groups are famous for WhatsApp based promotion. As far as Twitter is concerned, ads appear with a small "Promoted" badge. Typically, first few Tweets of the day will receive the most advertised content.

Social media marketing give organizations better communication grounds with the customers to formulate brand loyalty beyond conventional marketing strategies (Erdoğan & Cicek, 2012; Jackson, 2011). Additionally, social media empower buyers

to convey data to their associates about the product and service provider brands (Lou & Koh, 2017). In this manner, one might say that social media causes firms to establish brand loyalty through system administration, discussion, networking, and community building (Nisar & Whitehead, 2016).

Typically, researchers observe several types of behavior to determine loyalty in a competitive market. Firstly, the percentage of customers those are currently buying a brand, purchase frequency, number of customers with strong brand resonance and lastly, voluntary brand ambassadors are few common behaviors associated with brand loyalty (Bloemer & Kasper, 1995).

Interestingly, these sorts of behavior can be visualized easily on social media channels too. Customers stalk Facebook and Twitter profiles of their beloved brands, they invite peers to join Facebook and WhatsApp groups and often did not hesitate in arguing with others on social media websites for their preferred brands. Perhaps, the last category could be considered as voluntary brand ambassadors (Laroche, Habibi, & Richard, 2013; Rialti et al., 2017).

2.2 Role of brand trust and brand equity

Brand trust portrays the appreciation that brand value can be developed and sustained with the management of some aspects that go beyond consumer's satisfaction with the exceptional performance of the product and its attributes (Aaker, 1991; Keller et al., 2011). Fundamental rationale of trust is to achieve sustainable competitive advantage and subsequently build up an organization's favorable image. This notion is more dominant in uncertain situations, data unavailability and fear of mistaken choice; therefore, the part of trust is to diminish uncertainty about brand and build a level of comfort for the consumers with their brand (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001).

Brand trust is very significant especially for growing customers' satisfaction and loyalty

for the brands on internet (Ha, 2004). Likewise, Chahal and Rani (2017) concurred that online social communication develops close affiliation with customers, draw admirations from their long-term contact, makes them trustworthy and cherish with the brand. Numerous researchers (Shabbir et al., 2018) contended that brand trust is one of the foundations of brand loyalty and has the ability to influence it. In the same way, Matzler, Grabner-Kräuter, & Bidmon (2008) also acknowledged brand trust as a mediator in their examination.

Moving forward, brand equity is a marketing term that represents brand's overall value. That efficacy is controlled by purchaser's attitude and experience with the brand. Organizations can make brand equity for their products and services by making them memorable, identifiable, distinct, and trustworthy in quality (Kim & Ko, 2012).

There is a critical role of brand equity in the development of brand loyalty, which is actually based on consumer perception. Companies should try to position favorable brand equity in the customers' mind (Ashraf et al., 2018). Likewise, Schivinski & Dąbrowski (2016) affirmed that brand equity is an antecedent of brand loyalty. They argued that a brand acquires positive Customer Based Brand Equity (CBBE) when customers responded more auspiciously for a product due to emotional attachment with it. This is the actual reason that marketers have used brand equity as liaison for a long time.

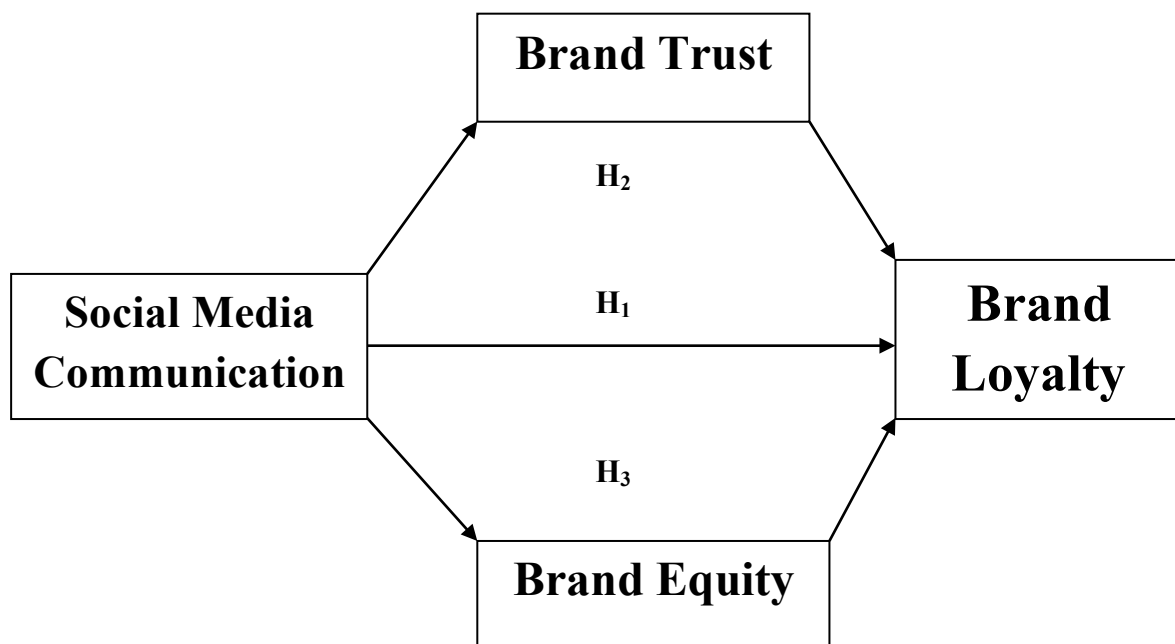
Relation between brand equity and loyalty has also been highlighted by the findings of Han, Nguyen, & Lee (2015) revealing that there is a favorable connection between brand loyalty and brand equity. Additionally, the study of Stojanovic, Andreu and Curras-Perez (2018) emphasized that brand equity is being utilized nowadays as a powerful tool to attract potential consumers through social media channels.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Rationalization of research framework

Framework of the study is self-explanatory. Social media communication is expected to have a direct positive impact on brand loyalty. Channels of social media like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and WhatsApp, for instance, have increase the viability of brand loyalty. Similarly, brand trust and brand equity are recognized as mediating factors which attempt to enlighten the relationship of social media and brand loyalty.

Figure 1. Framework of the study



Most of the earlier studies (Aaker, 1991; Bloemer & Kasper, 1995; Lau & Lee, 1999) suggested that variables such as brand trust and brand equity are the most influential variables for developing and sustaining brand loyalty. There are numerous variables

which could be suitable for this framework, but most significant and strongly recommended factors were opted in order to generalize findings.

3.2 Research hypotheses

Based on the arguments discussed in literature review, following hypotheses could be originated.

H₁: Social media communication has positive relation with brand loyalty.

H₂: Brand trust mediates the relationship of social media communication and brand loyalty.

H₃: Brand equity mediates the relationship of social media communication and brand loyalty.

3.3 Research design and data collection

Quantitative research pattern has followed for the study as Creswell and Creswell (2017) recommended this technique while conducting surveys. The sampling technique which suited most appropriately for the examination was non-probability Purposive sampling.

Since, purposive sampling is one of the most appropriate methods to pick selective audience from entire population (Black, 2010). Thus, only those consumers were approached who actually use social media for shopping, were loyal to their respective brands, and were actively following their favorite brands on social media forums.

Total 500 followers of well known apparel brands were approached via social media channels including Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp. They were requested to fill online close ended questionnaire. As established earlier, respondents were targeted on the base of judgment. In order to keep data collection simpler, a convenience sampling approach was followed within purposive sampling technique. Participants were requested on personal messenger of their social media profiles. After filling the questionnaire,

respondents were supposed to attach it back on messenger. Each participant had only one chance to avail.

Data were collected from all over the Pakistan. Although Kline (2014) proposed surveying no less than 100 participants for any quantitative examination, however to make sure the authenticity of findings a sample size of 500 was approached. Out of 500, only 452 responses were acknowledged.

All social media users of Pakistan could be considered as population for this investigation. Nevertheless, it was impractical due to unavailability of sampling frame. We do not have sufficient data, for example, that exactly how many people of Pakistan are using social media networks. That's why exact number of population or sampling error cannot be established. Same is the rationalization for selecting non-probability sampling technique for data gathering.

Instrument utilized for responses accumulation was 5 point likert scale (1= strongly agree, 5= strongly disagree) close ended questionnaire. All 4 constructs were adopted from previously conducted examinations. Instrument was comprised of 18 items in total, from which 14 were demonstrated reliable and valid. Therefore, other 4 items were eliminated for further analyses.

4. DATA ANALYSES AND FINDINGS

SmartPLS Structure Equation Modeling (SEM) software version 3.2 has been utilized for data analyses. Hair, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2013) suggested Smart-PLS for accurate results when following quantitative research design for investigation. Smart-PLS software is the most suitable and effective tool for analyzing quantitative data as various authors (Ali, 2017; Hair et al., 2017; Wong, 2013) applied and recommended it.

4.1 Measurement model

In the form of measurement model, a confirmatory factor analysis was applied in order to inquire the validity and reliability of the constructs before deriving path model.

4.1.1 Construct validity

Total four items were dropped because of factor loading value under 0.7 (Hair & Hult, 2016). All the kept items of three constructs had factor loading value more than yardstick 0.7. Likewise, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values were also more than the limit purpose of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2013). It illustrates that instrument is completely valid as far as convergent validity is concerned.

Similarly, constructs were found valid regarding discriminant validity as well. The cross loading estimation of every indicator in its construct was greatest among all and in other constructs, it was minimum exhibiting that all of the factors and their indicators are discriminately valid (Hair et al., 2017; Wong, 2013).

4.1.2 Construct reliability

The Cronbach's Alpha for all variables outperformed the threshold 0.70 criteria (Hair & Hult, 2016). Besides this, another confirmation for instruments reliability was also applied to confirm the accuracy of results. Composite Reliability (CR) also surpasses the limit of 0.70 demonstrating the instrument's reliability (Hair et al., 2013).

Table 1. Construct Reliability

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Social Media Communication	0.766	0.743
Brand Trust	0.742	0.756
Brand Equity	0.731	0.711
Brand Loyalty	0.821	0.792

4.2 Path model

Path model was computed for hypotheses testing, measuring impact of independent variables on dependent variables and to inquire the impact of both mediators on the relationship of SMC and brand loyalty.

In Smart-PLS approach, bootstrapping was utilized twice; first time without mediation and second time with the presence of mediators. It should be notice that if the direct path is not found significant, there will be no mediating effect at all (Hair & Hult, 2016). By keeping just dependent and independent variable in model, model was run since it was mandatory to make sure a significant association within variables before checking the mediation effect; otherwise it would have been useless to check mediation (as discussed earlier). Table 2 is showing the direct path relationship, which is significant at $p < 0.01$.

Table 2. Direct Effect

Path	B value	T value	p value	Decision
SMC → BL	0.720	8.074	0.01	Accepted

Hair et al. (2017) elaborated that if the direct effect is not significant, there will be no mediation further. If the direct relation exists, it incorporates the mediating factors and suggests using the bootstrapping system once more. In the same way, there would be no mediation if indirect path is not significant after bootstrapping. If found significant, then compute the value of Variance Accounted For (VAF). A VAF estimation of more than 80% is full mediation, a number approximately 20% to 80% is partial mediation, and a value under 20% means there is no mediation at all.

Therefore, after the successful measurement of direct path, indirect effects were tested

by mediators. All the relations were found significant at $p < 0.05$ value. Consider the provided table below.

Table 3. Indirect Effects Testing

Path	<i>B</i> value	T value	p value	Decision
SMC → BL	0.310	3.435	<0.05	Accepted
BT → BL	0.581	4.961	<0.01	Accepted
SMC → BT	0.426	4.654	<0.05	Accepted
BE → BL	0.576	3.931	<0.01	Accepted
SMC → BE	0.461	4.795	<0.05	Accepted

Results of both models directed that not only direct effect of SMC with brand loyalty was significant but indirect effect of brand trust and brand equity was also significant depicting a partial mediation of both the variables. Provided table shows that brand trust and brand equity are explaining the relation between SMC and brand loyalty by 24.7 percent and 26.5 percent respectively.

While, the total effect is the combination of direct and indirect effects which is 55.7% and 57.5% respectively in case of brand trust and brand equity. Total effect is showing how much both variables can cumulatively change independent variable brand loyalty. T-value is less than 1.96 and significant at $p < 0.05$ for all the three hypotheses as per parameter (Hair et al., 2013). It means all the hypotheses are accepted.

Table 4. Mediation Analyses

Effect	Path	Path Coefficient	Indirect effect	Total effect	VAF	T value	Hypothesis decision
Direct without Mediator	SMC →	0.720	Not Applicable			8.074**	Accepted
	BL						
Indirect with Mediator (BT)	SMC →	0.310	Not Applicable	0.557	44.3%	4.521*	Accepted
	BL						
	SMC →	0.426					
	BT	0.581	0.247				
Indirect with Mediator (BE)	SMC →	0.310	Not Applicable	0.575	42%	4.77*	Accepted
	BL						
	SMC →	0.461					
	BE	0.576	0.265				
	BE→ BL						

While: *= $p < 0.05$; **= $p < 0.01$

Note: SMC=Social Media Communication (IV), BL= Brand Loyalty (DV), BT=Brand Trust (Md. 1), BE=Brand Equity (Md. 2)

Finally, it was crucial to discover the strength of mediations which is processed by means of VAF, recommended by Hair and Hult (2016). VAF is calculated as $(\text{VAF} = \text{indirect effect} / \text{total effect} * 100)$ suggested by Hadi, Abdullah, and Sentosa (2016). VAF value between 20 to 80 percent means a partial mediation (Hair & Hult, 2016). Here it is 44 and 42 percent denoting that both mediating variables brand trust and brand equity are creating partial mediation between relationship of SMC and brand loyalty.

Table 5. R Square

Construct	R Square
Brand Loyalty	0.741
Brand Trust	0.563
Brand Equity	0.612

4.3 Model fit

Model is found fit because R-square is 0.741 for dependent variable brand loyalty. This value depicts that brand loyalty can be controlled 74.1 percent with variables in model i.e. SMC, brand equity and brand trust. Similarly, R square for brand trust and equity is 0.563 and 0.612 respectively.

For the model fit, the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) is also used which checks the irregularity between correlation of factors within framework. A value under 0.10 is viewed as a good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1998). Here, it is 0.0833 demonstrating goodness of model.

The RMS_theta has used for the measurement of model's residuals. As indicated by Henseler et al. (2013), it should be closer to zero to show a good model fit. Here, it is 0.232 representing appropriate goodness of fit.

The Normed Fit Index (NFI) results ought to be in values between of 0 and 1. Nearer the NFI to one, greater the chances of model fitness are there. In this particular framework, it is 0.867 illustrating that model is absolutely fit in terms of NFI (Lohmoller, 2013).

Table 6. Model Fitness

SRMR	RMS-theta	NFI
0.0833	0.232	0.867

5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The current study revisited antecedents of brand loyalty from an entirely different perspective. It recognizes that both conventional factors i.e. brand trust and equity and unconventional factors such as social media networks are imperative for building and maintaining brand loyalty. Aim of the investigation was to explain the impact of social media communication on brand loyalty with the mediating effect of brand trust and brand equity in apparel industry of Pakistan.

Quantitative research design was approached following purposive sampling data collection method. All the data were collected through social media forums via structured online questionnaire survey. Questions developed in problem statement are answered appropriately in findings and conclusion chapter. Purposes of the study are rationalized with findings. Results of SmartPLS SEM software suggest that all hypotheses should be accepted.

In this study, apparel brand industry of Pakistan was chosen as model to conduct survey. However, the chief objective of the research was to magnify the impact of social media communication on brand loyalty. Justification for selecting the apparel industry is association of a huge number of customers with this industry. The trend of using social media networks for approaching consumers is widely used in this industry, especially in

Pakistan.

Findings suggest a positive and significant relationship of social media communication with brand loyalty. This relationship is testified by multiple authors including Bidmon (2017), Erdoğan & Cicek (2012), and Ismail (2017). Nevertheless, brand equity and brand trust were discovered having partial mediation in framework of brand loyalty and social media communication. However, both mediators were proved having favorable significant relationship with brand loyalty. As expected, these findings are consistent with the previous research findings of Hollebeek et al. (2014), Rialti et al. (2017) and Shabbir et al. (2018) who stressed on dominant significant impact of social media communication on brand loyalty.

As far as discussions are concerned, it is understood that survival in today's market has become extremely challenging. Rationale of the argument is that boundaries of industries are converging swiftly. At present, when every business is trying for disintermediation, social media has emerged as the most influential intermediary for entrepreneurs. Online social media platforms are basically virtual markets with infinite limits. Rationally speaking, due to easy access to online markets, consumers have become well-informed of the various competing brands and this is not good for businessmen. Consumers can switch easily between brands and thus, the concept of loyalty is evaporating gradually.

In the same manner, enticing consumers toward your brand has become the most hectic job today. Therefore without sustaining loyalty consumers, a firm cannot capture market value. Thus, re-intermediation of social media is the only option to grab the attention of consumers which can leads to brand likeability, desirable feelings, brand conviction and brand loyalty eventually.

With the major focus on social media, brand equity and trust should not be forgone at

all. These are the key drivers basically to build and boost brand loyalty in any industry. Social media is the way to survive only. However in order to capitalize market share, brand equity and trust are needed to synchronize with social media communication effectively.

The presence of mediating variables brand trust and brand equity is also critical because they develop connection between social media communication and brand loyalty. Brand equity and trust create dependency of customers on a particular brand. Some authors (Aaker, 1991; Han et al., 2015; Stojanovic et al., 2018) suggested that brand equity and trust are the compelling powers of a brand, which magnetize consumers. Whether it is traditional media, mainstream media or social media, if brand equity and trust exist in the context, these constructs would repeatedly pull consumers towards the same brand.

Lastly, world has become a global village due to internet nowadays. Marketing through social media channels has risen as an incredible opportunity to enlarge your customers' wallet share. However, social media communication all alone is not substantial to sustain potential customers in this technological village. Brand equity and brand trust are as imperative as social media communication.

5.1 Managerial implications

Initially, findings of this investigation are productive for prospect researchers as conducting study on social media's impact on business operations has become need of the age. None of the industry can achieve its vision without blessings of social media channels. Social media is attracting more and more surface researchers with the intention that they can investigate its consequences on various aspects of business, commerce, consumers, vendors, and markets in a holistic view.

Secondly, industrialists from apparel industry can utilize findings of this investigation to enhance and sustain brand loyalty in consumers of this technological era. Where,

consumers are deliberately spending chunk of their time on it. Marketers are suggested to link their businesses with the most acceptable and affordable medium of communication to position their brands in the heart of consumers. By connecting online with consumers, vendors can convey their messages easily by reaching at their doorstep and workplace directly.

Similarly by interacting consumers online at their places, marketers can interact with them better than any other mode. By interacting again and again with consumers, marketers can execute loyalty development campaigns i.e. online demonstration of product features and services, online order booking, order tracking and delivering products to consumers on their places. Likewise, online price incentives, offers of promotional deals and unearthing significant points of differences with major focus on luring customers of competitors might also be put into practice. But in order to do so, marketing managers must have a maneuver network of brand association, perceived quality, valid point of differences and active customer base to beat the clutter of competitors.

Crux of the discussion leads to the fact that brand equity and trust should be considered seriously since social media is not sufficient to beat online clutter. It can only push your brand to customers, but these are actually brand trust and equity which can direct you towards potential consumers, encouraging brand image, favorable brand judgments, and ultimately, everlasting brand loyalty.

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Appendices

Constructs Adopted

Sr. No	Variable	Items	Construct Source
1	Social Media Communication	08	Tsiros, Mittal, and Ross (2004)
2	Brand Trust	03	Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001)
3	Brand Equity	04	Yoo and Donthu (2001)
4	Brand Loyalty	03	Delgado-Ballester, Munuera-Aleman, and Yague-Guillen (2003)

Convergent Validity

Construct	Total Items	Items dropped	Factor loading	AVE
Social Media Communication	8	3	0.807	0.774
			0.762	
			0.763	
			0.745	
Brand Trust	3	0	0.791	0.764
			0.830	
			0.713	
			0.728	
Brand Equity	4	1	0.745	0.775
			0.792	
			0.788	
			0.745	
Brand Loyalty	3	0	0.765	0.762
			0.789	
			0.733	
			0.733	

Discriminant Validity Cross Loadings

Items	Social Media Communication	Brand Trust	Brand Equity	Brand Loyalty
SMC1	0.807	0.621	0.527	0.505
SMC2	0.762	0.640	0.614	0.574
SMC3	0.763	0.659	0.618	0.632
SMC4	0.745	0.611	0.631	0.559
SMC6	0.791	0.724	0.659	0.419
BT1	0.639	0.830	0.643	0.597
BT2	0.610	0.713	0.685	0.624
BT3	0.608	0.728	0.636	0.624
BE1	0.672	0.592	0.745	0.657
BE3	0.501	0.599	0.742	0.680
BE4	0.520	0.592	0.788	0.676
BL1	0.693	0.592	0.502	0.765
BL2	0.644	0.731	0.692	0.789
BL3	0.652	0.682	0.619	0.735

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