Unpacking the Mediating Role of Brand Community Character on the Relationship Between Social Media Marketing Activities and Intention to Purchase Online

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ABSTRACT

Whether it's the latest news or details on a specific product, social media is being used as the go-to source for information in today's digital age. Companies utilize social media marketing to spread the word about their products and spark online discussions. Brands with active online communities are more likely to see a rise in consumer interest and spending’s when consumers get familiar with such brands. Nowadays, people are more inclined towards doing business online than before. This study focuses on the impact of Pakistan's automobile sector marketing efforts on the social media and intention to purchase online. The use of customer-based brand equity and perceived brand community character as mediators. Furthermore, due to increase in online sales E-commerce quality is utilized as a moderator to comprehend the impact on the association between the company’s marketing efforts on the digital platforms and intention to purchase online. The Google form questionnaire yielded 398 replies by using a convenience sampling strategy. SPSS and Hayes Process Macro are utilized for data analysis. All hypothesis was accepted. The findings will aid automobile brand managers in understanding what to showcase in their online communities to achieve a positive brand outcome.

INTRODUCTION

Social networking is becoming essential for businesses around the world. It has driven many companies to use this as an internal medium to contact staff, external promotions, and customer management. Weber (2009) described Social media (SM) as an online environment where people of common interest share suggestions and views. The company's SM activities are categorized as communication, supplying information, advertising, selling, and daily support. According to Lee (2017), social networking sites deliver the most recent news and information, making them a useful resource for locating the most valued things. Marketers have taken notice of social media as a platform since SM advertising recall rates are almost 55% greater than those of traditional advertising. Several billion individuals are connected in real-time across the globe today. Facebook's active users illustrated the social media value in December 2016, 1.86 billion (Park, 2017). Around 39% of people use SM for information on specific goods and services. One of the most potent tools for SM firms in diverse sectors is to
be constantly in touch with their customers (Casey, 2017). In addition, SM is widely used in marketing e-commerce activities (Yadav & Rahman, 2017). As of September 2020, the world's Internet users are 4.9 billion, and out of this, 51.8 percent of the internet users are from Asia ("Internet World Stats," 2020). In 2019, a record 1.92 billion individuals bought products and services online. E-commerce retail sales are anticipated to have reached USD 6.54 trillion by 2022, compared to the worldwide retail sales total of USD 3.53 trillion in 2019.

Brand community exists online when a group of individuals who have self-selected themselves on the basis of their shared interests and who communicate with each other around the topic of brand through the use of computer-based communication (Baldus et al., 2015). Using online forums, weblogs, and social networks is becoming commonplace in most people lives. These communities have evolved as a cost effective alternative contact channel that promotes current partnerships between peer groups, clients, and advertisers (Pandey et al., 2018). Uses and Gratification (U & G) researchers demonstrate that the people who follows the brand on SM are value conscious and for influencing the individual engagement in the community perceived advantages play a very important role (Tang et al., 2019).

The Internet and SM users are continuously increasing in Pakistan. As per reports, from 2020 to 2021, internet users increased by 11% and reached 61.34 million in 2021 and Similarly, SM users reached 46 million in 2021("Digital Pakistan," 2021). The pandemic and lockdowns would have a 33.6 percent effect on Pakistani vehicle sales in 2020. The leader Suzuki lost 10.4 percent market share, falling 47.1 percent, with a total of 127.939 sales for the year and Toyota 14.1 % of the market share. In the months that followed, the market stabilized and began to expand again, with revenue increasing by 36.2 percent in August., the rest of the year saw double-digit growth, with November (+45.5 percent) registering the highest increase ("focus2move," 2021).

Any nation's economic development can be significantly attributed to the contributions made by its automotive sector. The automotive industry in Pakistan is seeing constant expansion as a result of new entrants in the market, which is leading to an increase in the level of rivalry between various brands on a daily basis. This study examines how SM marketing practices and online communities improve the automobile industry's customer-based brand equity. CBBE is crucial for automotive firms because it helps them stand out from the crowd, maintain their individuality, and evoke the urge to buy their products.

Due to the increased use of social media, marketers continuously shape their communities to get positive brand outcomes. In general, brand communities lead to increases in affective loyalty to the brand (Casaló et al., 2008), but it depends upon the traits of a specific brand community (Relling et al., 2016). Understanding the role of characteristics of a particular brand community (i.e., PBCC) and the brand outcome has not been investigated a lot. Previous research has not evaluated the potentially significant role of perceived brand community character on the particular link between SMM activities, brand equity (Zollo et al., 2020), and purchase (Relling et al., 2016). Therefore, it is necessary to investigate whether traits of a specific brand community influence the positive link between SM marketing activities/practices, customer based- brand equity and purchase outcome or not, and the effect of E-commerce Quality on their relationship. This will ultimately provide an opportunity for
marketers to shape their community members effectively to achieve a better and positive brand outcome. We are discussing and evaluating the role of Perceived brand community character on consumer behavior. Much research has already been done on the impact of SM marketing activities/practices and Brand equity (Angella J Kim & Ko, 2012) and purchases Intention (Chu et al., 2019; Angella Jiyoung Kim & Ko, 2010). Our study is not necessary to look at the influence of SMM activities on brand equity, which leads to purchase Intention. We argue that SMM activities effectively create brand equity if a member of the brand community has a positive perception of other community members (i.e., a high level PBCC). This PBCC construct scale was developed and empirically examined first time by Relling et al. (2016). Our study contributes to understanding PBCC role in the link between SMM activities, brand equity, and purchase intention, which has never been discussed before. During the COVID-19, the pandemic period allowed people to fulfill their wishes by staying at home, for which they preferred online shopping. Up to 80% of increased digital activities in the worldwide was observed during these months. The online market was pushed more during this period, from which it was observed that over 60% of people have borrowed online and preferred buying from online stores. There was a ratio that people avoided shopping in this period, but it was shallow than those who approached online stores for shopping (Kashif & Aziz-Ur-Rehman, 2020).

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**Uses and gratification theory**

Katz et al. (1973) are the pioneer of the U & G theory. This theory was first originated in 1940 when researchers began to study why people listen to popular radio shows and why newspapers are read regularly. The U & G and technology acceptance model is used by Hausman and Siekpe (2009) to demonstrate the positive link between perceived information, usefulness, and entertainment with the website's flow and attitude predict Purchase Intention and plan to revisit. The behavior towards and the use of SM depend upon the user gratification, so it is essential to understand the gratification of a user to provide the right content and strengthen brand equity (Zollo et al., 2020). U & G scholars define different benefits related to SMM marketing activities. These benefits strongly affect the individual to stay as an active community member (Verhagen et al., 2015). The interaction between the community members provides more comprehensive social services to its members in information about the brand (Muniz & O'guinn, 2001). The U&G theory has been commonly used to explain the benefits and functions of numerous channels, including websites (Hausman & Siekpe, 2009). Six primary psychological and social reasons for consumer participation in online brand communities on SNSs are interpersonal utilities, recompense, entertainment searching, content acquisition, convenience, and brand likeability according to Sung et al. (2010). So we summarize the gratification in getting information by social interaction, interpersonal links, entertainment, love for brand, attractiveness, and credibility. The following values were suggested by Dholakia et al. (2004), which members may derive from online community participation, including intentional benefits, self-discovery, the sustainability of interpersonal interconnections, improved social experiences, and entertainment benefits.
SM marketing activities/practices and purchase intention

SM refers to digital tools, channels, and media that make it easier to form connections, partnerships, and share content (Richter & Koch, 2007). According to Angella J Kim and Ko (2012), SMMA/Practices significantly impact a brand's image. When a business wants to reach out to its target audience on a more personal level, social media marketing can help facilitate that connection and ultimately lead to sales (Kelly et al., 2010). SM Entertainment is an important aspect that creates optimistic thoughts, enhances participatory actions, and influences the person to use it constantly (Kang, 2005). The ability to entertain will make ads more enjoyable. According to Ducoffe (1995), there is a connection between entertainment and advertisement value. Huang et al. (2013) found a positive link between advertising value and Purchase Intention. fun and enjoyment. According to Pine and Gilmore (1999), providing pleasurable, enjoyable, meaningful, and valuable experiences can remain in the memory and affect the user's attitudes and potential purchasing intentions (Pine et al., 1999).

H1: SMMA/Practices have a positive effect on the Purchase Intention (PI)

SM marketing activities/practices and perceived brand community character

A consumer tends to create a special association with the brands (O’Malley & Tynan, 2000). According to Escalas (2004), Consumer–brand links are better represented through self-brand connections. If the link becomes more profound, the customer will see a connection between the brand and themselves and open out the positive memories and emotions about the brand. As a direct consequence of this, they will engage in a greater level of interaction with the brand community (Verhagen et al., 2015). The perceived level of personalization has strongly impacted the subsequent brand loyalty and customer commitment to the brand. Kumar and Nayak (2018) highlighted the importance of engagement and loyalty in converting a brand-community link to a brand link. Consumers demonstrate a desire to engage with brands' psychological characteristics, and this level of interaction can result in significant behavioral and emotional benefits. As a result, the extent to which SM marketing practices will strongly influence the subsequent bond established with customers will be determined by the strength of the brand-consumer link (Panigyrakis et al., 2020).

H2: SM marketing activities/practices are positively related to Perceived Brand Community Character.

SM marketing activities/practices and customer based- brand equity

According to Keller (1993), most important tool for improving marketing, effectiveness is brand awareness generated in consumers' minds. Brand awareness significantly influences the long-term achievement of a brand's marketing campaign that the organization's marketing efforts have created (Keller, 1993). Angella J Kim and Ko (2012) find that SMMA/Practices effectively enhances link equity, brand equity, and value equity. According to Godey et al. (2016), SM marketing activities/practices strongly and significantly affect brand equity. SM marketing enables businesses to interact quickly and rapidly with customers. From a business point of view, their mere presence in SM creates positive consequences in the same way as a conventional advertisement. Interactions with potential customers and current ones enable
businesses to share positive brand images (E.-J. Seo & Park, 2018). SM marketing allows customers to generate word of mouth, allowing the inflow of new customers (Bae, 2002). Significant effect of brand equity due to word of mouth marketing describes by W.-S. Seo and Kim (2003). SM allows businesses to interact with their customers, enabling them to share content and collaborate (Richter & Koch, 2007).

**H3:** SM marketing activities/practices are positively related to CBBE

**Perceived brand community character (PBCC) and customer based-brand equity**

According to the study of Relling et al. (2016), there is a positive relation between PBCC and Brand equity. Many academics and practitioners consider brand communities as vast market opportunities to influence consumers' buying behavior effectively and better understand customers by monitoring their thoughts and views (Adjei et al., 2010). According to Esch et al. (2006), E-word of mouth influences purchases strongly and indicates that customers similarly attach with brands as they form personal links among individuals. This link forms due to Brand communities' participation (Muniz & O'guinn, 2001). Brand communities are the admirers of the brand (Muniz & O'guinn, 2001). It has been debated that customers' attitudes toward brands are affected mainly by their expectations of brands and that perceptions are a predictor of customers' behavior toward brands (Shimp, 2010). The interaction among customers in a brand group generates brand loyalty and brand awareness (Godey et al., 2016).

**H4:** Perceived brand community character positively related to Customer based- brand equity

**Perceived brand community character (PBCC) and purchase intention**

Online brand communities have become an essential source of consumers' interaction, getting information, and entertainment (Y. Wang et al., 2002). A member's trust, satisfaction, and dedication to online community members have a substantial influence on their continued engagement with the community, resulting in a long-term connection with the commitment which promotes purchase intention (C.-Y. Wang et al., 2017). Furthermore, Hajli (2014) concludes that SM promotes customers' social engagement, contributing to higher confidence and Purchase Intention. These findings suggest that, in addition to information quality, link quality can also influence purchasing intent. It is more likely that members of a group that is actively involved in activities will aid other members of the group and participate in activities together, to achieve personal goals (Nambisan & Baron, 2009). Shang et al. (2006) examines the impact of customer posting activity on brand loyalty in online communities and finds that the group stickiness of a participant effect its intent to purchase.

**H5:** Perceived brand community character positively related to Online Purchase Intention

**Customer based-brand equity and purchase intention**

Brand loyalty has a substantial and beneficial impact on the purchasing Intention of consumers (Koçoğlu et al., 2015). According to Aaker and Keller (1990), brand loyalty depends upon brand image and awareness, and higher purchase intention is an antecedent of brand awareness and trust. Perceived quality and loyalty are correlated with each other, leading to purchase Intention (Washburn & Plank, 2002). Consumers tend to have a higher purchasing intention to familiar brands than unknown brands (Kamins & Marks, 1991). Increased brand loyalty will
make the customer purchase the product or brand and encourage them to repurchase the product and generate positive word of mouth (Foroudi et al., 2018). Customers who are extremely loyal are more likely to make a purchase than customers who are just somewhat loyal or consumers who are new (Yoo et al., 2000).

**H6:** Customer based- brand equity is positively related to Purchase Intention (PI)

**Mediating role of perceived brand community character (PBCC)**

Many companies are focused on developing brand communities to meet marketing goals. A lot of companies are struggling in particular when members' individual and social necessities cannot be recognized or fulfilled (Fournier & Lee, 2009). Marketing activities have a significant role in community rituals and traditions as community members have to promote the brand with the help of ads to the outside of the community and themselves through exchanging ideas and knowledge among people through brand-based SM activities (Muniz & O'guinn, 2001). Most people use SM for entertainment and community interaction (Agichtein et al., 2008). Creating a brand community is very important in marketing. The user and gratification approach used by Sicilia and Palazón (2008) is to investigate community engagement in an online environment and found that function, social, and entertainment benefits are the main reasons for community engagement. People want to be connected with SM for different reasons due to varying motivations like Entertainment, earning money searching for information (Zhou et al., 2012).

**H7:** PBCC mediates the positive link between SMMA/practices, and Purchase Intention (PI)

**Mediating role of customer-based brand equity (CBBE)**

Brand equity is a brand's name, symbol, assets, and liabilities that increase or decrease a product or service's value to a corporation and its customers (Aaker, 1991). Strong brands play a key role in acquiring a competitive advantage, brand equity is regarded as a critical concept for modern businesses and in academic study (Lassar et al., 1995). Constructing brand equity is an integral part of branding (Keller, 1998). Marketers have an extraordinary opportunity for brand-based SM activities to reduce confusion and harm to brands and enhance brand value through exchanging ideas and knowledge among people (Angella J Kim & Ko, 2012). CBBE model's fundamental concept is that brand power lies in customers' minds and depends on what the consumer has experienced, sensed, saw, and heard over time (Keller, 2001). In building substantial brand equity, SM marketing activities/practices are significant, and high brand equity is correlated with brand customer preferences and purchasing intentions (Angella J Kim & Ko, 2012).

**H8:** CBBE mediate the positive link between SMM activities and Purchase Intention

**H9:** PBCC and CBBE mediate the positive link between SMMA/Practices and Purchase Intention
Moderating role of E-commerce quality (ECQ)

It is well acknowledged that the quality of online business services is a crucial factor in determining the success of business-to-consumer (B2C) online retailing (Parasuraman et al., 2005). E-commerce defined as “the extent to which a website facilitates efficient and effective shopping, purchasing, and delivery of products and services” (Zeithaml et al., 2002, p. 363). Website design, browser performance (including search and information accessibility), safety concerns, online purchasing (including transaction security), and timely product delivery are all relevant factors to consider when determining what features and capabilities an online store must offer. The website quality is calculated in three categories according to Barnes and Vidgen (2003) defined as follows: (1) Information quality entails correct information, accurate data, latest information depending on the topic of conversation, information comprehension, information specificity, and the appropriate information design. (2) Interactive quality refers to the ability to build trust while transacting, to become well-known, to promote communication, to elicit more personal emotions, to share personal information, to form a specific community, and to keep promises (3) Usability is described as the ease with which a website can be learned, understood, and used, as well as the website’s beauty, a fun layout, professionalism, and the ability to provide a nice new experience. Numerous researchers have examined into a theoretical context in which website quality influences perceived confidence, which influences purchase intent (Chang & Chen, 2008).

H10: E-commerce quality moderates the positive link between SMM activities and Purchase Intention.
**DATA AND METHODOLOGY.**

**Sampling and procedure**

Our sample selection eligibility criteria are the people who follow different Car Brands on social media (SM) and should be 21 years old and above. As our dependent variable is Purchase intention, we limit the income level to a minimum of 50,000 RS for the sample selection. Our research is about the people who are following the Selected Car brand on social media. So we have asked the respondents first are they following any mentioned favorite brand on SM before moving forward. In the shape of a Google form, 650 questionnaires were distributed to employees, owners of various businesses.

**Measurement of variables**

SM marketing activities/Practices measures were adopted from Angella J Kim and Ko (2012), with five dimensions, Entertainment, Interaction, Trendiness, Customization, and Word of mouth (Godey et al., 2016), including 11 items (Zollo et al., 2020). We adopted the Perceived
Brand Community Character (PBCC) measure from Relling et al. (2016). They have developed the scale of PBCC. It consists of three dimensions: Consciousness of kind, shared ritual and traditions, and Sense of moral responsibility, including 14 items. We have adopted the measure of customer based- brand equity from Yoo and Donthu (2001b), developer of the scale. It is consisting of three-dimension: Brand Loyalty, Perceived Quality, Brand awareness/association comprising of 10 items (Zollo et al., 2020). E-commerce quality measure was adopted from Yoo and Donthu (2001a), also the developer of the scale known as the SITEQUAL model. It consists of four dimensions: Ease of use, Aesthetic design, Processing Speed, and Security, comprising nine items scales. We adopted the Purchase intention (PI) measure from Schivinski and Dabrowski (2016), who adopted these items from Shukla (2011) and Yoo et al. (2000). Items are also taken for the measurement from the study of Pavlou (2003). Later it was used by Peña-García et al. (2020). To measure all those items, a 5-point Likert scale was employed in Order from SD (1) to SA (5).

Table- 1: Measurement of variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.NO</th>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>DIMENSION</th>
<th>TOTAL ITEMS</th>
<th>SOURCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>PBCC</td>
<td>The consciousness of kind (COK) shared ritual and traditions (SRT) Sense of moral responsibility (SMR)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>(Relling et al., 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>CBBE</td>
<td>Brand Loyalty (BL) Perceived Quality (CPQ) Brand awareness/association (AW)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>(Yoo &amp; Donthu, 2001b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>ECQ/Website quality</td>
<td>Ease of use (EOU) Aesthetic design (AD) Processing speed (PS) Security (SE)</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>(Yoo &amp; Donthu, 2001a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>Brand Purchase intention (BPI) Online Purchase Intention (OPI)</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>(Schivinski &amp; Dabrowski, 2016; Shukla, 2011; Yoo et al., 2000) (Pavlou, 2003; Peña-García et al., 2020)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

We have picked nine famous car brands based on their social media followers. We have asked the respondents to select their famous Car brand, which they follow on social media. Out of which 552 people responded vigorously, and 154 people were not following any Car Brand on social media. They were excluded from our final results. In the end, 398 respondent’s results are taken into consideration for our data analysis.

Table-2: Brand followed by Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency(f)</th>
<th>Percentage %</th>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corolla</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yaris</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortuner</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>60.6</td>
<td>60.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>68.6</td>
<td>68.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vezel</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultus</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sportage</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tucson</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A discussion on, data reliability, and correlation among different variables has been done in detail. The robust results of regression analysis, moderation, and serial mediation analysis has been presented.

Reliability and correlation analysis

Cronbach's Alpha was calculated, and it was found to be 0.7, which is a good enough number to support data reliability according to Nunally and Bernstein (1978).

Table-3: Mean- Standard Deviation & Correlation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLES</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SMMMA/Practices</td>
<td>3.8673</td>
<td>.38529</td>
<td>(0.743)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECQ</td>
<td>3.9369</td>
<td>.44778</td>
<td>.506**</td>
<td>(0.839)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBCC</td>
<td>3.8548</td>
<td>.49413</td>
<td>.465**</td>
<td>.476**</td>
<td>(0.886)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBBE</td>
<td>3.8508</td>
<td>.47458</td>
<td>.568**</td>
<td>.549**</td>
<td>.509**</td>
<td>(0.791)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PI</td>
<td>3.9678</td>
<td>.50259</td>
<td>.478**</td>
<td>.562**</td>
<td>.443**</td>
<td>.566**</td>
<td>(0.833)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, CBBE= Customer-based Brand Equity, SMMMA/practices = SM marketing activities/practices, ECQ = E-commerce Quality, PI=Purchase Intention and PBCC= Perceived Brand Community Character.
Regression analysis

Direct Link:

Regression analysis has been carried out so that the nature of the connection between the dependent, independent, mediator, and moderator variables may be investigated.

Table- 4: Unstandardized Direct Path Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct Paths</th>
<th>B-value</th>
<th>S.E</th>
<th>BETA-value</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SMMA/practices→ PI</td>
<td>.624</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.478</td>
<td>10.831</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMMA/Practices→ PBCC</td>
<td>.596</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>.465</td>
<td>10.446</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMMA/practices→ CBBE</td>
<td>.700</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>.568</td>
<td>13.749</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBCC → CBBE</td>
<td>.489</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>.509</td>
<td>11.757</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBCC → PI</td>
<td>.457</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.449</td>
<td>10.013</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBBE → PI</td>
<td>.599</td>
<td>.044</td>
<td>.566</td>
<td>13.652</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mediation analysis

In this study, the SPSS, with the help of Process Macro, was used to performed Serial Mediation analysis. Using Preacher and Hayes (2008) PROCESS macro bootstrapping method to test serial mediation with 5000 resamples and 95% confidence intervals. When there is no zero in the confidence interval and the indirect effect is significant, there is a mediation between the factors. The bootstrapping method is more effective because it doesn't limit how much data can be used.

Table -5: The total effect of SMMA/Practices on PI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EFFECT</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>T-Value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>LLCI</th>
<th>ULCI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.6236</td>
<td>.0579</td>
<td>10.8313</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.5104</td>
<td>.7368</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table - 5.1: A direct effect of SMMA/Practices on PI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EFFECT</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>T-Value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>LLCI</th>
<th>ULCI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.2427</td>
<td>.0651</td>
<td>3.7296</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.1147</td>
<td>.3706</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An indirect effect of SMMA/Practices on PI mediating Role of PBCC and CBBE

Ind1= SMMA/Practices → PBCC → PI
Ind2= SMMA/Practices → CBBE → PI
Ind3= SMMA/Practices → PBCC → CBBE → PI
The Perceived brand community character has a strong indirect effect on the association between marketing activities on social media and purchase intention is also significant within the lower and upper confidence 95% interval limits (b=.1056, LLCI=.0341, ULCI=.1762). Therefore, the mediation result indicates that Brand Community Character is mediating between SM marketing Activity and Purchase Intention. Similarly, the indirect effect of SM marketing Activity and Purchase Intention through Customer-based Brand Equity is also Significant (b=.2052, LLCI=.1303, ULCI=.2926). Furthermore, Brand Community Character as well as Customer based-brand equity mediating between SM marketing practices and online purchase Intention (b=.0702, LLCI=.0383, ULCI=.1105)

**Moderation analysis**

Moderating analysis was performed using SPSS and with the help of PROCESS macro. This table shows moderating effect of E-commerce Quality on the association between SMM activity and online purchase Intention. E-commerce Quality moderating role was measured using the bootstrapping method with a 95% confidence interval.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interaction term</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>T-Value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SMMA/Practices</td>
<td>.3564</td>
<td>.0606</td>
<td>5.8815</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECQ</td>
<td>.4882</td>
<td>.0518</td>
<td>9.4166</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMMA/Practices ECQ</td>
<td>.1896</td>
<td>.0767</td>
<td>2.4741</td>
<td>.0138</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The findings indicate that the quality of the e-commerce platform greatly moderate the association between social media marketing practices and the intention to purchase. \( (b=0.1896, t=2.4741, P=0.0138) \). The empirical results are beneficial for the Automobile brand's marketing managers because they will provide theoretical and practical insight.

We derived the results by testing the link of different variables hypothetically. We focused on the role of brand communities of different Car Brands in the social network sites. We hypothesize that their contribution is very significant in creating brand loyalty—similarly, the role of E-commerce Quality in influencing the people to purchase online. Building on User & Gratification theory and technology acceptance model, our results show the following results.

SM marketing activities/practices are positively related to purchase intention (PI). Increased SM marketing practices would result in increased buying intent. This study also strengthens the result from previous studies on social marketing activities and purchase intention (Balakrishnan et al., 2014; POTURAK & SOFTIC, 2019). Despite digital and electronic marketing terminologies and phenomena, social media marketing has gained more popularity than its predecessors. Acceptance of this hypothesis validates the previous research on social media marketing practices and purchase intent (PI) (Ceyhan, 2019). This result shows that the automobile brands that are successful in social media marketing practices have a greater influence on the customers' purchase intent (PI). SM marketing activities/practices are positively related to perceived brand community character (PBCC). Increased SM marketing practices would result in a high level of perceived brand community character. This shows that SM marketing activities/practices significantly impact the customer to become members of the brand. Furthermore, it helps the brand members develop such characteristics that can create long-term loyalty to the brand. The brand's loyalty through community members was discussed by Casaló et al. (2008), and customer loyalty depends upon the specific traits of community members (Relling et al., 2016).
CBBE is positively related to with SM marketing practices. This means that as the use of social media marketing strategies grows, so too will consumer perceptions of the value of brands. This finding furthers validates the previous study on the association between SM marketing practices and CBBE. (Angella J Kim & Ko, 2012; Zollo et al., 2020). Customer-based brand equity (CBBE) is correlated with a perceived brand community character (PBCC). CBBE rises when there is a strong sense of community surrounding the brand. Perceived brand community character has a large and beneficial impact on customer based-brand equity. This research validates and strengthens the findings of a prior study on customer based-brand equity and perceived brand community character. (Relling et al., 2016). Brand communities can offer consumer loyalty, better customer care, and brand genuineness brands, but only if they are established to serve their members. Perceived brand community character (PBCC) is positively related to purchase intention (PI). It means that a high level of Perceived brand community character will increase Purchase intention.

Furthermore, customer based-brand equity positively related to purchase intention. This study strengthens the result of a previous study of customer-based brand equity and purchase intention (Liu & Wang, 2019; Wright et al., 2017). The acceptance of this hypothesis validates the existing literature on Customer-based brand equity and purchase intention. Brand equity creates value to the customer and businesses. Hero Honda Splendor's customer-based brand equity is largely influenced by the perceived quality and brand awareness, according to a study by Jayakumar et al. (2012). Perceived brand community character (PBCC) mediating the link between SMM practices and Purchase intention (PI). The perceived brand community character impact on the positive link between SMM practices and purchasing intention (PI) is significant and positive. The result from the hypothesis proves that with the increase in social marketing activities, there is an increase in Purchase intention if there is a high level of perceived brand community character. The mediating role of perceived brand community character in the link between SMM practices has never been discussed before. Strong brand communities perform critical functions for the company and are more valuable to the marketer in general than weakly-communicated brands (Muniz & O’guinn, 2001).

There are various avenues that social media marketing activities can be used to inform consumers about a product’s qualities and cost, including blogs, Facebook, and YouTube. According to Mangold and Faulds (2009), Customers think better of brands with more marketing. This supports the idea that brand-communication efforts boost consumer satisfaction and perceived quality (Cheung et al., 2020). Perceived brand community character mediates the association between SMM practices and Purchase intention, customer based-brand equity has the similar mediation effect on the direct relationship. The result from the hypothesis proves that increase in social marketing activities, results increase in willingness of customers to purchase online if there is a high level of brand community character and CBBE. From the results it has been seen that E-commerce quality moderates the link between SMM practices and Purchase intention positively. As a result, High E-commerce quality improves SMM practices and the customer online purchasing willingness. This study strengthens the results from previous studies on the effect of E-commerce on purchase intention. 2200 American people were questioned, and 37% claimed they would consider switching to online shopping in COVID-19 (Consult, 2020). According to the study by
Nursyirwan and Ardaninggar (2020), with the increase in E-commerce quality, there is a significant increase in Purchase intention. According to one case study by Sarkar (2009) on the implementation and adoption of E-commerce on the four Automobile companies in Newzeland was very successful in increasing the sales.

CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATION

Some theoretical implications can be drawn from our observations. To begin, we extended the literature of SM marketing activities/Practices link between CBBE, together with SM marketing practices and purchase intention which was examined by. Angella J Kim and Ko (2012), and SM marketing and purchase intention (Chu et al., 2019). This research investigated the micro-level of the connection between SMMA/practices and CBBE by revealing the mediating influence of PBCC on the relation. A previous study highlighted that SM marketing activities/practices are not always favored Brand community participation, and members can abandon brand community (Tang et al., 2019) if they don’t obtain cognitive, social, and personal benefits (Zollo et al., 2020). Our research highlights the benefits obtained by the community members if they have a positive perception about other community members, like helping and supporting each other (Relling et al., 2016). Our research highlights that SM marketing activities/practices are necessary for becoming a community member. Still, they can leave the community if the traits of a specific brand community are not up to the mark, as defined by Muniz and O’guinn (2001). As a result, it will affect the commitment to the brand (Casaló et al., 2008) and loyalty to the brand and community (Dholakia et al., 2004). The findings of this study also tie in with previous research on customer brand involvement motivations, Customers connect with companies to learn about new brands and designs (Hollebeek et al., 2019).

This study will help marketers better shape their community members for a better brand outcome. The companies should invest in SM marketing activities/practices like Entertainment, interaction, trendiness, word of mouth; their content should be entertaining, interactive, visualizing, eye-catching, problem-solving experiences. This can help managers build a long-term link with the brand and consumer (Morgan-Thomas & Veloutsou, 2013).

This research looked at a developing country environment; it offers some insights and ideas for future research for international business scholars. More precisely, because this study attempted to tackle some new issues by quantifying quantitative data using existing construct measures, it lays a solid foundation for many future research routes, and some recommendations for future research are offered. A research avenue for additional confirmation in other country contexts is open. It should also be mentioned that, because this research focuses solely on developing-country views, any similar developing-country setting, such as India, Bangladesh, or any other (emerging market scenario), cross-country comparative study could be beneficial in validating the findings.

First, we have investigated the role of brand community Character on an automobile sector of Pakistan together with the role of E-commerce quality. Future research could investigate their role in other sectors like Cell phones and Luxury Fashion Brands in Pakistan. Second, the research can potentially be expanded to analyze a particular dimension of the perceived brand...
community character that had the greatest influence on developing customer-based brand equity. Future research can be done to validate the moderating influence that the quality of E-commerce has on days when there is no pandemic. Finally, and more precisely, the study has created certain construct measures, all of which have been proven to be trustworthy and valid in the current environment, but they are tentative until they have been tested and refined in a new research context. Using the perceived brand community character assessment, in particular, was a new difficulty because all previous studies had never utilized this construct. Thus, this is a substantial attempt to test and refine this measure. So, these measurements should be included in any similar study path to test further reliability and validity. It’s apparent that companies who focus more on social media marketing have better purchase outcomes and help establish brand community character and increased in brand loyalty. We observed that E-commerce quality helped automakers to sell more.
REFERENCES


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