The Role of Social Media Marketing in Shaping Brand Experience and Strengthening Customer-Based Brand Equity

Jyoti Sindhu[1], Dr Lokesh Jasrai[2]

[1] Research Scholar, Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara

Email id- jyotisindhu@ip.du.ac.in

[2] Professor, Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara

Email id- lokesh.jasrai@lpu.co.in

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: 05 Nov 2024 Revised: 18 Dec 2024 Accepted: 28 Dec 2024	This study measures the impact of Social media marketing on Brand Experience and CBBE. Data was collected from 650 respondents of Delhi /NCR who follow fashion apparel brands on social media. Seven-point Likert scale was used to assess questionnaire items. The validity and reliability of the suggested instrument were evaluated using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). SEM was done through AMOS to test the structural model. The results state that Social Media Marketing has a significant positive impact on Brand Experience and CBBE. **Keywords:** SMM, Brand Experience, CBBE, Marketers, Customers

1. Introduction

Since we live in a technologically advanced and digitally connected world these days, technology permeates all aspect of our lives, including marketing. Additionally, SMM has replaced old practices of marketing. Due to the fact that consumers spend most of their time on SM platforms and marketers utilise those platforms to promote their goods, social media marketing encourages two-way contact. Because social media provides platforms for both marketers and users, social media marketing is crucial for them. Marketers and businesspeople are making the most of it to promote their goods.

Everyone has become so tech-savvy, social media marketing has begun to take off in the digital age. Marketers are taking full advantage of this by switching from traditional to social media marketing. Compared to marketers that continue to use traditional marketing, those who have switched to social media marketing are gaining a competitive edge. These days, social media marketing is a crucial tool for reaching consumers. Because customers spent their maximum time on SM, customers are also very interested in using these platforms to obtain information.

A recent marketing tactic to quickly connect with consumers is SMM. Through social media marketing, Companies establish connections with both current and potential clients. Customers engage with businesses through SMM, and it connects with customers on social media. Marketers are constantly searching for new clients, and businesses believe social media to be the most effective platform for marketing. It is unquestionably pure innovation in a marketing setting.

Social media marketing (SMM) makes it easier for companies and customers to communicate interactively, opening up possibilities for user-generated content, personalised marketing, and real-time interaction. Consumer perceptions are shaped by these interactions, which also help to build CBBE, which includes "Perceived quality, Brand loyalty, Brand awareness". BE and purchasing decisions are greatly influenced by brand experience, which is the comprehensive reaction of a customer

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to brand-related stimuli. Through rich and interactive touchpoints that cultivate emotional ties with customers, social media marketing improves the brand experience. Consumers' experiences interacting with brands on social media shape their opinions and actions, which in turn affects BE. Still, there is considerable scholarly interest in how much SMM affects CBBE and BE.

The goal of the study is to explore how SMM affects CBBE and BE. The study focus to shed light on how well social media marketing (SMM) works to create powerful, customer-focused businesses by examining the connections between BE, CBBE, and SMM. This study focus to ascertain the degree to which SM tactics aid in the growth of powerful, customer-focused businesses by examining the connections among SMM, BE, and CBBE.

The results will have important ramifications for academics, brand managers, and marketers who want to comprehend how digital involvement shapes brand value.

2. Review of literature

2.1. SMM

In order to establish and strengthen solid stakeholder relationships through social media, businesses nowadays frequently develop, communicate, and offer a variety of online marketing services (Koay et al., 2020). These acts are referred to as social media marketing, and businesses use them to improve relationships with customers, engage with stakeholders, and offer tailored recommendations (Yadav & Rahman, 2017).Nowadays, companies use tactics to capture consumers' interest and earn their trust on a variety of SM platforms, particularly digital ones .SMM set out as a route of drawing in new client segments, going beyond its traditional function in customer retention This importance is especially increased in contemporary marketplaces (Mahoney & Tang, 2024).The increase in social media usage has prompted marketers to take advantage of SMMAs via fostering connections with customers (Aral et al.,2013). Social media marketing is regarded by consumers as more dependable than traditional marketing methods.Social media facilitates real-time connections, allowing firms to quickly address questions and issues in variance to old marketing, it depends on 1-way communication (Seo & Park,2018).

2.2. Brand Experience

Consumer perceptions feelings, and purchase decisions are significantly influenced by brand experience in today's cutthroat market. The term "brand experience" describes the comprehensive emotions, thoughts, sentiments, and behavioural reactions that a brand elicits during face-to-face or indirect contacts (Hwang and Lee, 2018). Brand experience encompasses a variety of points in time during consumers' consumption patterns. BE is defined as "subjective reaction that are invoked by specific brand attributes in such settings (Brakus et al., 2009)".Consumers of today acquire goods and services for their pleasing experiences as well as for their useful features and advantages. Brand marketers are always pushing for new and creative methods to build great brand experiences that enhance the brand's positive relationship with customers (Kim & Han,2020).
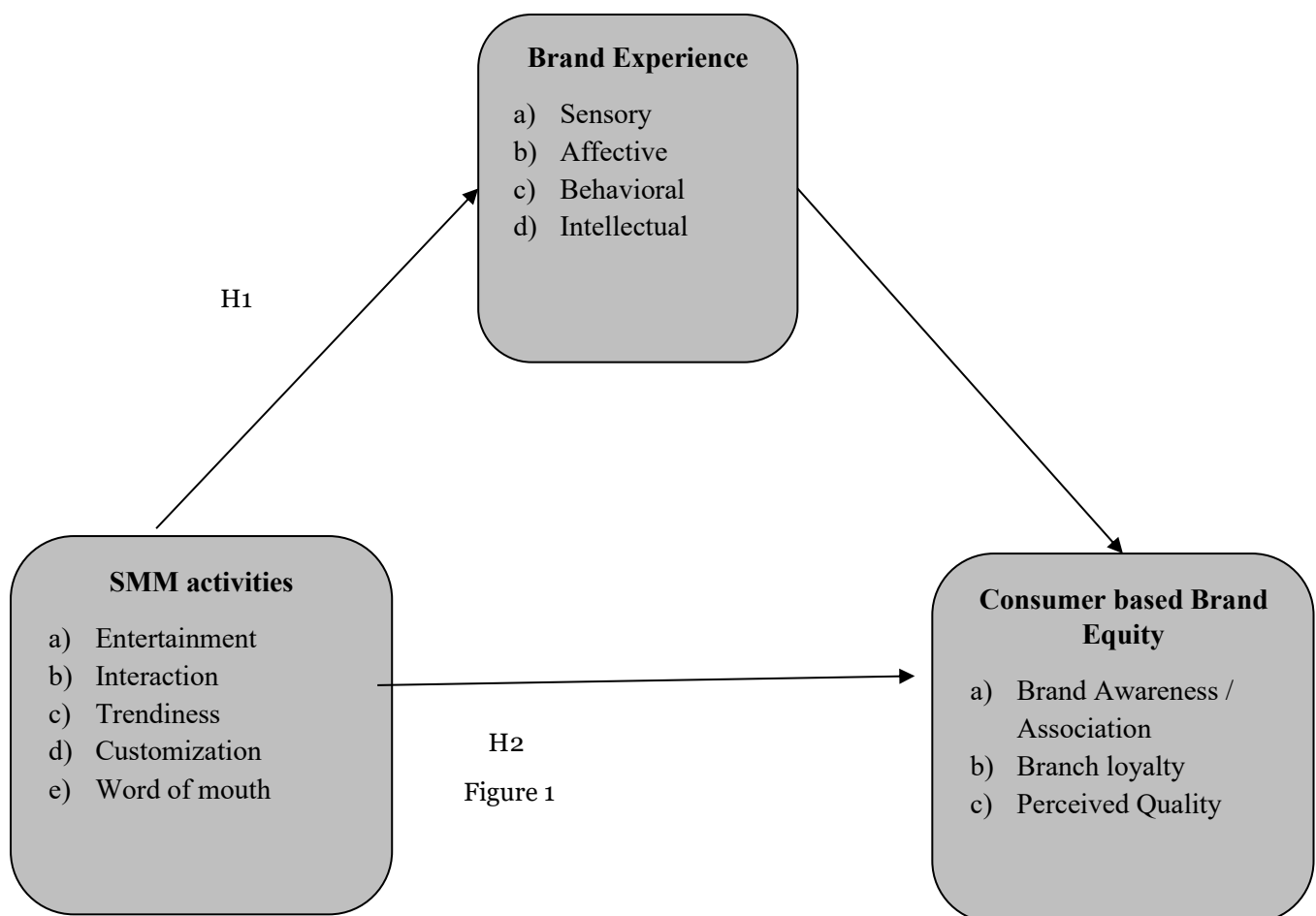
2.3. Customer based brand equity

CBBE is an influential technique that assists businesses to realize how valuable their product is to consumers. A powerful brand is constructed by a thorough comprehending of customer insights, according to fundamental tenet of CBBE.

In correspondence, the terms "CBBE" and "Brand Equity" have been employed. The majority of the elements supporting the conceptualisation of CBBE are covered by the two Aaker frameworks (Aaker,1991). "CBBE is defined as the differential influence of brand awareness on consumers' response to brand marketing". Additionally, he views CBBE as a process that takes place when a consumer is

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familiar with the brand and recalls a positive, potent, and distinctive brand association (Keller, 1993).Customers have more faith in brands than in competitors, which is where CBBE got its beginnings (Lassar et al.,1995).Since brand equity first emerged in the 1980s, marketing scholars and practitioners have been more interested in the topic. CBBE includes the extra worth that a brand adds to a company by generating favourable connection with its customers, which affects retention and loyalty. This extra value can be created in a number of ways, such as increased client happiness, recurring business, and favourable word-of-mouth from recommendations (Dev,2016).

3. Conceptual model

Brand Experience

a) Sensory
b) Affective
c) Behavioral
d) Intellectual

H1

SMM activities

a) Entertainment
b) Interaction
c) Trendiness
d) Customization
e) Word of mouth

H2

Figure 1

Consumer based Brand Equity

a) Brand Awareness / Association
b) Branch loyalty
c) Perceived Quality

4. Objective : To examine the relation between the SMM activities adopted by the fashion apparels brands and their brand equity from customer perspective.

5. Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: *SMM have a positive significant influence on BE of fashion apparel brands .*

Hypothesis 2*: SMM have a positive significant influence on CBBE of fashion apparel brands*

Hypothesis 3: *BE have a positive significant influence on CBBE of fashion apparel brands.*

6. Research Methodology

This study used descriptive research design. Hypotheses are developed and the research problem is predetermined in this study. Proposed hypothesis was tested by an online survey that was conducted by using google form. Consumers who follow fashion apparel brands on SM Platforms are included in

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the research's target group. A total of 650 samples were gathered from Delhi/NCR. Customers are chosen for the sample using the non-probability, Purposive sampling approach (Kim & Ko 2012; Chahal & Rani 2017). The modified scales were used to gather primary data. Seven-point Likert scale was used to assess the questionnaire items.

7. Data Analysis and Interpretations

7.1. Assumption testing

The assumptions of normal distribution, internal consistency, construct validity and absence of common method bias ensures relevance of the conclusions made in the research.

7.1.a Test of normality

The skewness and kurtosis scores were analyzed along with the mean scores of the dependent and independent factors. The result of Assessment of normality table states that skewness is in between +1 and -1 which is acceptable range of Skewness. Kurtosis also lies in the acceptable range i.e +1 and -1. In view of skewness and kurtosis, it can be assumed that data is normally distributed.

7.2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Before evaluating the structural model, it is important to see the validity and reliability of measurement model (Ifinedo,2006). Using AMOS 22, CFA is used in the study to assess the construct validity of the measurement model's fit. Prior to verifying the significant interrelationships of the structural model build, the measurement model must be tested. It will demonstrate whether the measurement model's validity and construct reliability is sufficient (Fornell & Larker, 1981). Figure 1 illustrates the measurement model, which comprises three key constructs. Social Media Marketing (SMM) is operationalized through five dimensions—"Entertainment, Interaction, Trendiness, Customization, and Word of Mouth", measured using 20 indicators. BE is captured through four dimensions "Sensory, Affective, Behavioral, and Intellectual", assessed with 16 indicators. Lastly, Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) is conceptualized with three dimensions "Brand Awareness/Association, Brand Loyalty, and Perceived Quality" evaluated using 13 indicators.
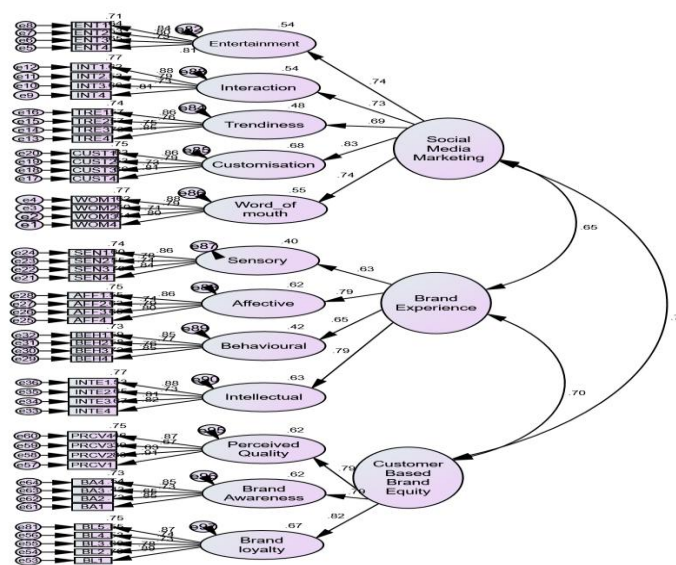

Figure 2

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7.3.ReliabilityandValidity

Internal consistency is measured using Cronbach's α, by checking pairwise correlation between items that ranges from 0 to 1. It is measured for every construct to measure internal consistency. The Cronbach alpha of Social media marketing is 0.930, Brand experience 0.911 , CBBE is 0.915. These metrics are, therefore, applicable and useful for SEM analysis. Composite reliability of SMM is 0.863, Brand experience is 0.840 , CBBE is 0.808. "CR is utilize to quantify the reliability of a construct in the measurement model". A value of greater than 0.70 for the CR is seen as a sign of good scale reliability. Thus, we may conclude that the CR of all the measurement model variable is more than 0.70. Convergent validity and discriminant validity investigate construct validity. CR, factor loading, and AVE is used to assess convergent validity (Hair et al.,2014). The distinction between one construct and the others is demonstrated by discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker,1981). As seen in the table, CR, AVE, and MSV are within the appropriate range for convergent and discriminant validity. Moreover, the Fornell-Larker criteria is also satisfactory.

Table 1

Item code		Construct	Construct Loadings	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted	Maximum Shared Variance	Cronbach Alpha
Entertainment	<---	Social Media Marketing (SMM)	0.74	0.863	0.558	0.498	0.930
Interaction	<---		0.73				
Trendiness	<---		0.69				
Customization	<---		0.83				
Word of mouth	<---		0.74				
Brand Awareness / Association	<---	Customer based Brand Equity (CBBE)	0.79	0.840	0.637	0.498	0.915
Perceived Quality	<---		0.79				
Brand loyalty	<---		0.82				
Sensory	<---	Brand Experience (BE)	0.63	0.808	0.516	0.498	0.911
Affective	<---		0.79				
Behavioral	<---		0.66				
Intellectual	<---		0.70				

Table 2

Fornell Larcker Criteria of Second order CFA

	Brand_Experience	Social_Media_ Marketing	Customer_Based_Brand_ Equity
BE	**0.718**		
SMM	0.653	**0.747**	
CBBE	0.698	0.706	**0.798**

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7.4 Model Fit

The measurement model is investigated using the model fit indices in CFA. Therefore, the measurement model is evaluated using a variety of indicators to determine its validity. CMIN/Df =1.436, GFI = .904, AGFI = .894, CFI = .975, TLI =.974, NFI =.924, RMSEA = 0.26.

7.5.Biasness

In research, bias is the term used to describe systemic flaws that affect the validity and reliability of study results, resulting in conclusions that are either false or misleading. The "Harman single-factor approach" is used to analyse the "common method bias" in the results. Result shows that extraction sum of "Squared loadings,% variance/Cumulative variance" is 29.958. There isn't a serious bias issue if the Single factor variation is less than 50%.

Table 3

"Total Variance Explained					
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings	
Factor	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %"
1	15.359	31.345	31.345	14.680	29.958	29.958
2	3.913	7.987	39.331			
3	3.046	6.217	45.548			
4	1.925	3.928	49.476			
5	1.804	3.683	53.159			
6	1.663	3.395	56.553			
7	1.611	3.289	59.842			
8	1.509	3.080	62.921			
9	1.422	2.902	65.824			
10	1.361	2.777	68.601			
11	1.308	2.669	71.270			
12	1.108	2.262	73.532			
13	.680	1.388	74.920			
14	.609	1.243	76.163			
15	.570	1.164	77.327			
16	.525	1.072	78.399			
17	.493	1.007	79.406			
18	.478	.976	80.382			
19	.467	.953	81.334			
20	.464	.947	82.281			
21	.454	.927	83.209			
22	.434	.886	84.095			
23	.427	.872	84.967			
24	.413	.843	85.810			
25	.402	.819	86.629			
26	.388	.791	87.420			
27	.374	.764	88.184			
28	.361	.736	88.921			
29	.352	.718	89.638			
30	.342	.698	90.336			
31	.334	.681	91.018			
32	.313	.638	91.656			
33	.295	.603	92.258			
34	.291	.593	92.851			
35	.289	.590	93.441			
36	.280	.572	94.013			
37	.273	.557	94.570			

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38	.267	.545	95.115			
39	.261	.533	95.647			
40	.255	.520	96.167			
41	.240	.491	96.658			
42	.233	.475	97.133			
43	.225	.460	97.593			
44	.220	.450	98.043			
45	.212	.433	98.476			
46	.198	.404	98.881			
47	.193	.395	99.275			
48	.188	.383	99.659			
49	.167	.341	100.000			
Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.						

7.6. SEM

SEM is a second-generation multivariate technique, it estimates a number of interrelationships between the elements of the proposed model at the same time by combining confirmatory factor analysis and multiple regressions. SMM, BE, CBBE are the several constructs that make up the structural model. The SEM was used to see the affect of relation between SMM and BE and CBBE. The SEM approach examines the hypotheses. This study uses AMOS software and the covariance-based SEM.
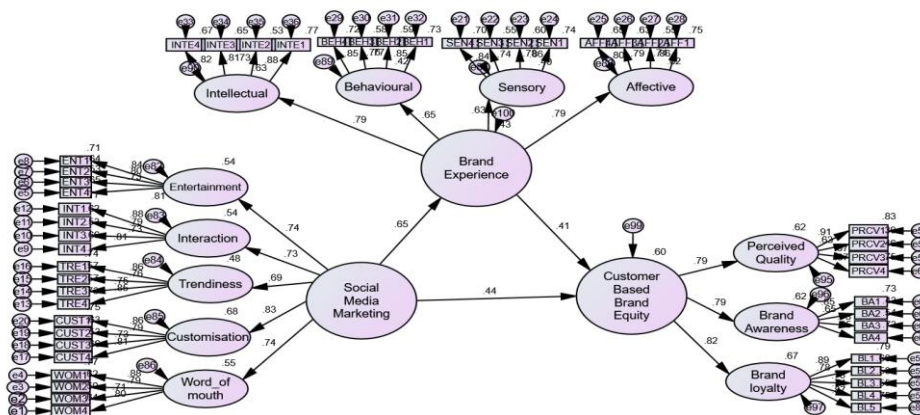

Figure 3

Table 4

Hypothesis Testing Table

Hypothesis				Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	R2
H1	Brand_Experience	<---	Social_Media_Marketing	.597	.061	9.834	***	43%
H2	Customer_Based_Brand_Equity	<---	Social_Media_Marketing	.533	.076	7.049	***	60%
H3	Customer_Based_Brand_Equity	<---	Brand_Experience	.551	.086	6.426	***	60%

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Hypothesis 1: *SMM has significant positive influence on BE of fashion apparel brands.*

The hypothesis was validated by the SEM results (path coefficient = 0.597, t stats = 9.237). Customers' brand experiences are significantly enhanced by fashion clothing brands' SMM efforts, according to the positive and significant path coefficient. Memorable interactions between a brand and its customers are produced by brand experiences. The majority of firms use SM Platforms to increase their online visibility and give customers experiences they won't BVsoon forget (Chen & Qasim,2021). Various results shows that SMM has significant positive impact on BE of fashion apparel brands.

Hypothesis 2*: SMM has significant positive influence on CBBE of fashion apparel brands.*

The hypothesis was validated by SEM data (path coefficient =.533, t stats = 9.147). CBBE is significantly enhanced through SMM, according to the positive and significant path coefficient. Both SMM and traditional marketing had a remarkable impact on CBBE and aid in building brands' BE (bruhn et al. 2012). Companies are displaying their most recent content on social media and use it to build relationships with customers, as this has a significant impact on CBBE and fosters more interactions between them (Abdallah et al.,2024)

Hypothesis 3: *BE has significant positive influence on   CBBE of fashion apparel brands.*

The hypothesis was validated by SEM data (path coefficient =.551, t stats = 9.197). *CBBE* is significantly enhanced by *BE*, according to the positive and significant path coefficient. Experience influences brand equity, which is determined by the behavioural and cognitive decisions customers make when interacting with the brand. This includes perceived quality, loyalty, and brand awareness/association Moreira et al.,2017). Additionally, customers who have had a good experience with a brand may end up being loyal, which fosters a feeling of familiarity and liking and eventually raises the brand's value and has a remarkable impact on the company's BE (Pina & Dias,2021) .

8. Discussion

Social media marketing is being actively used by marketing managers to promote their brands online. This study draws with the following outcomes. The SMM have a significant influence on all the dimensions of BE. The Social media marketing has a remarkable impact on CBBE. Brand experience has a crucial impact on CBBE. Thus, this study has investigated the effect of SMM on BE and CBBE, impact of BE and CBBE of fashion apparel brands which is scarce in the previous literature. This study's identification and categorisation of numerous SMM, Brand Experience, Brand Trust, and CBBE factors has contributed to a fresh understanding of the field.

9. Managerial Implications

Marketing initiatives on an SMM page should be used by firms looking to improve the customer experience and obtain a competitive edge. Brand pages must convey product related information i.e features of current or forthcoming products, and they must be updated often. This would promote more regular posting on the brand forums and more engaged followers. To increase the Brand experience, Brand trust, and CBBE for their clients, marketing managers should thus make good use of marketing initiatives on the brand's SM page.

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