

Customer-Brand Engagement by Fashion Brands through Online Brand Communities in India: A Multimethod Approach

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By

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DECLARATION

I, **Samala Nagaraj**, hereby declare that this thesis entitled “**Customer-Brand Engagement by Fashion Brands through Online Brand Communities in India: A Multimethod Approach**” in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Management Studies, is the outcome of original study, free of plagiarism, undertaken by me under the supervision of **Dr. Sapna Singh**.

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A. Published in the following Journal:

1. International Journal of E-Business Research (Indexing: Scopus, ESCI)

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1. 5th Annual International Conference on Sustainability - SUSCON-5 at IIM-Shillong (International Conference)
2. 9th Doctoral thesis conference at ICFAI Business School, Hyderabad (International Conference)

Further, the student has passed the following courses towards fulfilment of coursework requirement for Ph.D.:

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List of Acronyms & Abbreviations

ACT	– Activation
AFF	– Affection
AI	– Artificial Intelligence
API	– Application Programming Interface
ARF	– American Research Foundation
ASV	– Average Shared Variance
AVE	– Average Variance Extracted
B2B	– Business-to-Business
B2C	– Business-to-Customer
BESC	– Brand Engagement with Self-Concept
C2B	– Customer-to-Business
C2C	– Customer-to-Customer
CBE	– Customer Brand Engagement
CCT	– Consumer Culture Theory
CE	– Customer Engagement
CFI	– Comparative Fit Index
CI	– Confidence Interval
COG	– Cognitive Processing
COM	– Commitment
CR	– Composite Reliability
df	– Degrees of Freedom
GFI	– Goodness of Fit Index
IBEF	– Indian Brand Equity Foundation
IFI	– Incremental Fit Index
LOY	– Brand Loyalty
MGFI	– McKinsey Global Fashion Index
MLM	– Maximum Likelihood Method
MSI	– Marketing Science Institute
MSV	– Maximum Shared Variance
MTurk	– Amazon’s Mechanical Turk
NFI	– Normed Fit Index

OBC – Online Brand Community
PAR – Participation
RMSEA – Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
RQ – Relationship Quality
SAT – Satisfaction
S-D logic – Service-Dominant logic
SEM – Structural Equation Modelling
SET – Social Exchange Theory
SNS – Social Networking Site
SIT – Social Identification Theory
TLI – Tucker Lewis Index
TRU – Trust

Symbols used in the study

%.....	Percentage
\$.....	Dollar
>.....	Greater than
<.....	Less than
$\geq$	greater than equal to
$\leq$	Less than equal to
H.....	Hypothesis
R^2	Root Mean Square
χ^2	Chi-Square
α	Cronbach's Alpha value

Chapter – 1: Introduction

1.1. Customer Engagement

In the present world, change is a norm, sophistication a need, technology a means, innovation a solution and improvement a goal. With the rapid growth in the science and technology in various fields, earth has become a small and better place to live. Technological changes and some disruptive breakthroughs have brought positive practical changes beyond imagination in almost every sector. New paradigms like internet, social media, artificial intelligence etc., have created a positive impact in every walk to human life. At the same time, the application of these technologies has posed various challenges to overcome for the betterment. One such endeavor is ‘Social Media’.

Social media has its application and implication in almost all the segments of life. Business is one such arena, which has exploited the benefits of social media at a large scale. When the whole landscape of business is changing from brick-and-mortar to click-and-mortar, due to the application of Internet, there arise certain challenges in terms of customer involvement and interaction. To encounter this challenges, social media emerged as a solution. This media is effectively used by the marketers to reach out for the customers, improve interactions and two-way communication. Marketers and brands have created their own community pages on various social media platforms to improve and extend their services. These kinds of virtual communities are otherwise called a “Online Brand Communities”.

Customers and brands are in sync with the usage and benefits of these communities. The stakeholders of these communities share a common goal of improving communication through easily accessible platform for interactions. These interactions can be with the marketers of the brands, with the peer or other related stakeholders. And these interactions are for various reasons like product related information, feedback, complaints, recommendations, references, reviews etc. One another important common objective customers and marketers share via these online communities is 'Engagement'.

Where retaining an existing customer is more important than finding a new customer, 'engaging' is the key effective marketing strategy to retain an existing customer and creating a new customer. According to Oxford dictionary, the term 'Engage' means "to occupy or attract someone's interest or attention". The very essence of the meaning 'engagement' for marketers is to engage customers through various activities like posting brand related information, promoting the brand, sharing success stories of the brand and responding to the customer feedback. These 'engagement' activities by brands not only improve communication and interactions, but also develops trust and satisfaction.

Marketers objective to engage customers, is not only to occupy or attract the interest of the potential customers towards brands, but also to exhibit their engaging behavior in terms of certain actions like liking, sharing, recommending the brand content to others; provide feedback to improve services; suggest ideas to co-create product/service; share their brand experience with peer; refer new customers etc. Hence, marketers are increasing their presence on social media platforms through virtual communities to engage customers. Hence, these actions of customers towards a brand on online brand communities (OBC)

can be regarded as ‘Customer-Brand Engagement’ (CBE) and is explored and studied in detail in this present research.

1.1.1. Practitioner’s Viewpoint

Engaging the customers has become an effective strategy of marketers, as customer engagement is a perfect predictor of organic growth (Gallup, 2014a). Aggressive sales promotions, advertising campaigns, rewards, discounts, etc. may fetch you a customer, but customer engagement creates an emotional connection with the brands/firms/services, which drives customer loyalty and long-term profitability. Practitioners define ‘Engagement’ as those marketing efforts that strengthen consumers’ psychological, emotional and physical investment in the product/service through two-way interactions, leading to increased customer satisfaction, retention and advocacy.

Business consultants like Mckinsey, Gallup, Nielsen Media Research have already given due importance to the concept of customer/consumer engagement. The customers have become increasingly selective about their favorite brands with the information they need at a keystroke, and this situation throws an opportunity and challenge at the same time to the marketers (McKinsey, 2012). Organizations should design an effective customer engagement program to increase loyalty.

In the present business dynamic environment of increased interaction with stakeholders, customer engagement is considered as a strategic tool for generating enhanced firm performance via increased competitive advantage (Sedley & Perks, 2008), sales growth (Neff, 2007) and profitability (Voyles, 2007). Practitioners identified that engaged customers play an important role in marketing brands through recommendations

and referrals. According to (Gallup, 2014b), customers who are fully engaged show an average of 23% increase in terms of wallet share, profitability, and revenue when compared with other customers. SocialMediaToday.com (2014), reported a 44% increase among engaged customers in the electronics industry. (AberdeenGroup, 2014) in their report indicated that companies applying customer engagement analytics could retain 14% customers when compared to their counterparts.

Following the growing importance for customer engagement among business firms, “Marketing Science Institute (MSI) has declared Customer Engagement (CE) as a critical research topic in their research priority list for the period 2010-2012 and 2014-2016 (MSI, 2010, 2014)” (Brodie, Hollebeek, Jurić, & Ilić, 2011; Hollebeek, 2011). A properly executed customer engagement strategy with clear and relevant content can increase the emotional connection with the brand (ARF, 2016). According to www.adageindia.in (2018), in their DMAAsia report mentioned that 45% of the India digital marketers are focusing on customer engagement in the year 2018. In an article published in cutomerthink.com, author Savelli (2018) has even emphasized on the already use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) by 51% of the marketers in their customer engagement activities.

Considering the increased concern and recommendations for the use of customer engagement by various marketing and consumer research institutes, CE is an interesting concept to investigate. The significant share of engaging customers by firms today is happening on social media via Online Brand Communities. Hence, it would be interesting

to study the role of customer engagement (CE) by brands through online brand communities. Although marketers measure the effects of their CE activities using the latest analytical tool, it is imperative to study the antecedents and consequences of CE empirically from an academic perspective.

1.1.2. Academician's Viewpoint

Though the concept of Customer Engagement (CE) is relatively new in the marketing domain, it has gained massive popularity in terms of academic research after 2005 (Brodie, Hollebeek, Jurić, & Ilić, 2011; Linda D. Hollebeek, 2011a; Linda D. Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014). The concept of 'engagement' is widely researched in the areas of psychology, sociology, political science, etc. (Linda D. Hollebeek, 2011b) and is applied in the customer relationship marketing to understand the dynamics of consumer behavior concerning engagement. The concept gained the attention of the academicians amid the positive outcomes reported by the practitioners by implementing customer-engagement strategies in business.

Since its introduction in marketing & service literature, Customer Engagement (CE) has been defined by academicians in various contexts (Linda D. Hollebeek, 2013). Authors have attempted to differentiate CE with similar constructs like involvement, flow, and participation (Brodie et al., 2011; Brodie, Ilic, Juric, & Hollebeek, 2013). (Van Doorn et al., 2010), suggests "Customer engagement behaviors go beyond transactions" (cf. MSI 2010), and may be defined as "customers' behavioral manifestations that have a brand or firm-focus, beyond purchase, resulting from motivational drivers" (p. 254). This definition

focus on the behavior exhibited by customer apart from purchase transactions, like word-of-mouth, advocacy, and blogging. On the other hand (Kumar et al., 2010) emphasizes on inclusion of customer purchase and defines CE as “a customer’s behavioral manifestation toward a brand or firm and that it results from motivational drivers, we also argue that it would be incomplete without the inclusion of customer purchases from the firm” (p. 298).

Hollebeek defines ‘customer brand engagement’ as “the level of a customer’s motivational, brand-related, and context-dependent state of mind characterized by specific levels of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral activity in brand interactions.” (p. 790). The subject engagement is associated with different objects and context in marketing literature, like customer /consumer engagement (Bowden, 2009; Brodie et al., 2011; Brodie et al., 2013), consumer –brand engagement (Dwivedi, Wilkie, Johnson, & Weerawardena, 2016; Linda D Hollebeek et al., 2014), online engagement (Wirtz et al., 2013), brand-engagement with self-concept (BESC) (David Sprott, Sandor Czellar, & Spangenberg, 2009; Flynn, Goldsmith, & Korzenny, 2011) etc. Researchers have operationalized the definitions based on the object and context focused while studying engagement. There is no consensus as the concept is more context-dependent and object-oriented (Brodie et al., 2011; Linda D. Hollebeek, 2011b). Although researchers defined engagement as multi-dimensional and one-dimensional construct at times, it is widely accepted that CE is more a multi-dimensional (Gambetti, Graffigna, & Biraghi, 2012) defined as a cognitive, emotional and behavioral construct.

Overall, customer/consumer engagement is that behavioral manifestation by existing or potential customers towards a focal brand/product/firm, through a media (Verhoef, Reinartz, & Krafft, 2010; Vivek, Beatty, & Morgan, 2012). The behavior is more often are reactions to the engagement content posted by the marketers to inform, update or entertain existing or potential customers. Marketers are showing their presence mainly on social media and online brand communities, which are popular media to reach a wider audience. The customers in return react to these marketers' engagement activities by liking/disliking, commenting, tweeting, recommending, sharing, blogging, etc. (Wirtz et al., 2013; Won-Moo, Kwang-Ho, & Minsung, 2011). Hence, customer-brand engagement for the present study is defined as “a customers' psychological state of mind identified by cognitive, emotional, and behavioral reactions towards a brand engagement related activity through interactions on online brand communities.”

1.2. Online Brand Communities

Online Brand Communities (OBCs) are playing an essential role in establishing and enhancing customer-brand relationships. Online Brand Community (OBC) is a unique kind of online communities where customers related to a specific brand, join a group to exchange brand related knowledge and information. According to (Jang, Olfman, Ko, Koh, & Kim, 2008, p. 57) OBC is “specialized, non-geographically bound community, based upon social relationships among admirers of a brand in cyberspace.” This definition is in line with the well-accepted definition of OBC by (Muniz & O'guinn, 2001) as “a specialized, non-geographically bound community, based on a structured set of relationships among admirers of a brand” (p. 412). This kind of groups exist both offline

and online, however with the increase in the use of internet, online environment is suitable (McKenna, Green, & Gleason, 2002) for these communities to interact with peer, employees, brands, etc.

People by participating and engaging in their favorite OBC, exhibit shared consciousness, sense of moral responsibility and shared traditions and rituals (Muniz & O'guinn, 2001). The participants join or follow the online brand community to seek/share/exchange information or opinion related to the brands with the peer or brands (Algesheimer, Dholakia, & Herrmann, 2005; Arnone, Colot, Croquet, Geerts, & Pozniak, 2010; Brodie et al., 2013). These interactions increase the emotional relationship between the brand and customers (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006; Baldus, Voorhees, & Calantone, 2015; Ilic, 2008). These kinds of relations generate positive outcomes for the brands in terms of customer participation, purchase intentions and loyalty behavior (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006; Casaló, Flavián, & Guinalíu, 2008; Wirtz et al., 2013).

Online brand communities have become very popular in recent times. These are more often managed and partially funded by owned brand. Earlier these communities are offline communities formed by selected members/customers of the brands. With the advent of social media and the internet, social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc. have become attractive to participate (Casaló et al., 2008; Cova & Pace, 2006). A substantial population participates in these social online networks platforms for various reasons like developing social relations, exchange of social information, entertainment, etc. (Jang et al., 2008; Laurence, Cleopatra, & Anna, 2015).

These SNSs have provided brands to create communities of their own, attract customer to join or follow their activities through the pages and content they create. These are brand pages owned and embedded by brand on social networking platforms are also a form of OBC (Brogi, 2014; Laurence et al., 2015; Muniz & O'guinn, 2001). Customer who voluntarily join these communities exhibit their opinion and like/dislike towards the brand through various activities like sharing, .liking, commenting, recommending, tweeting, etc. (Brodie et al., 2013; Wirtz et al., 2013). These kinds of activities enhance customer's purchase, referral and loyalty behavior towards the brand. Hence, a study on OBC engagement behavior and outcomes are highly recommended (Schau, Muñoz Jr, & Arnould, 2009).

1.3. Fashion Brands

The fashion industry is one of the fastest growing segments. McKinsey Global Fashion Index (MGFI) predicted growth of 4-5% in 2018 against a 2.5-3.5% increase for the year 2017 globally (McKinsey, 2019). According to McKinsey's FashionScope Indian apparel market is expected to grow worth \$59.3 billion by the year 2022, becoming the sixth largest market in the world (McKinsey, 2019). Indian has become a focal point for the fashion industry because of the increasing middle-class segment, educated and tech-savvy youngsters (McKinsey, 2019). Since a large percentage of customer purchase fashion products online, the entry of domestic and international brands via online stores has increased (Kearney, 2014).

Besides some of the top Indian fashion brands like Allen Solly, Flying Machine, Monte Carlo, Peter England, Loius Philippe etc. (Bhattacharya, 2015), some of the top global fashion brands like Armani Exchange, Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Hermes, Dior etc have already entered India and aggressively expanding their business (www.indiaretailing.com, 2017). Some of the global brands entering into Indian fashion market through third-party online portals like Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, Jabong, etc. due to the lack of strong regulations for selling through third-party portals (Chaturvedi, 2016), which has paved way for many global brands to do business and sales without directly operating in India (Chaturvedi, 2016). Additionally, the third-party fashion retail portals also have started their fashion brands.

Despite fast changing fashion trends and preferences, fashion brands are proactively looking forward to the opportunities than to tackle the challenges. One such possibility is digital social media, which is more cost-effective and reach a broader audience to interact or communicate. Domestic and global brands besides selling online, they also are actively present on social media via online brand communities and fan pages. These fashion brands like Shein, Zara, Levi's, Pepe etc. have created brand pages on social networking platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram. They post fashion and brand-related content continuously to engage existing and potential customers.

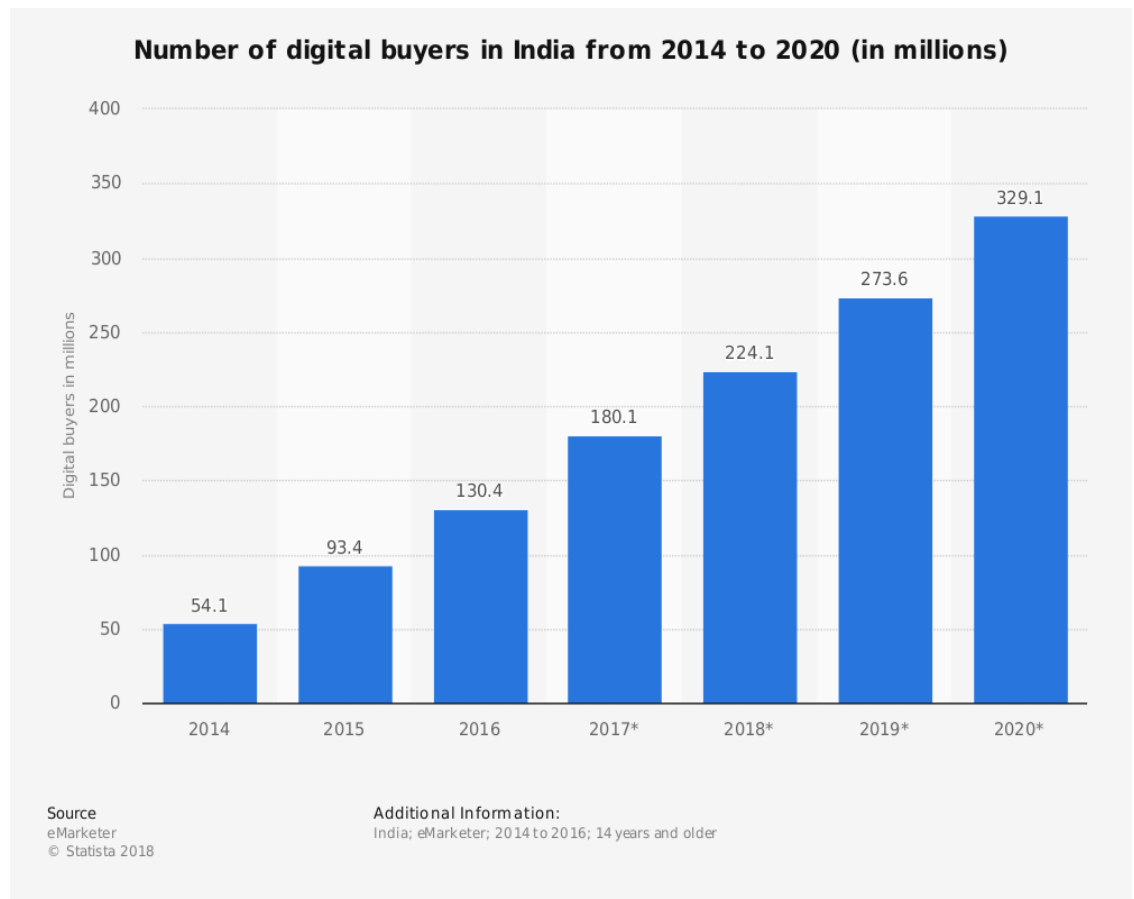
1.4. Need for the Study

Considering the growing importance for customer engagement by fashion brands via online brand communities, it is felt relevant and appropriate to examining the customer-

brand relationship by fashion brands in India through OBCs. Hence, the same is studied as Customer-Brand Engagement (hereafter CBE) as a core concept in the present research. The present section tries to highlight some of the major reasons motivating the need for this study.

- The rapid growth of the number of online purchasers in India paves way for studying the online purchaser's behavior. According to (eMarketer, 2018) the online purchaser's count is going to grow from a 224 million in the year 2018 to 274 million in 2019 and a whopping 329 million by the year 2020 as shown in figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Number of digital buyers in India from 2014 to 20 (in millions)



Source: eMarketer © Statista 2018.

- According to Kearney (2014) report published in Statista.com, fashion & apparel is the most bought category, i.e., 84% customer buy fashion & apparel category online as shown in table 1.1. Moreover, fashion products are those categories, which require high involvement by the customer in a purchase decision.

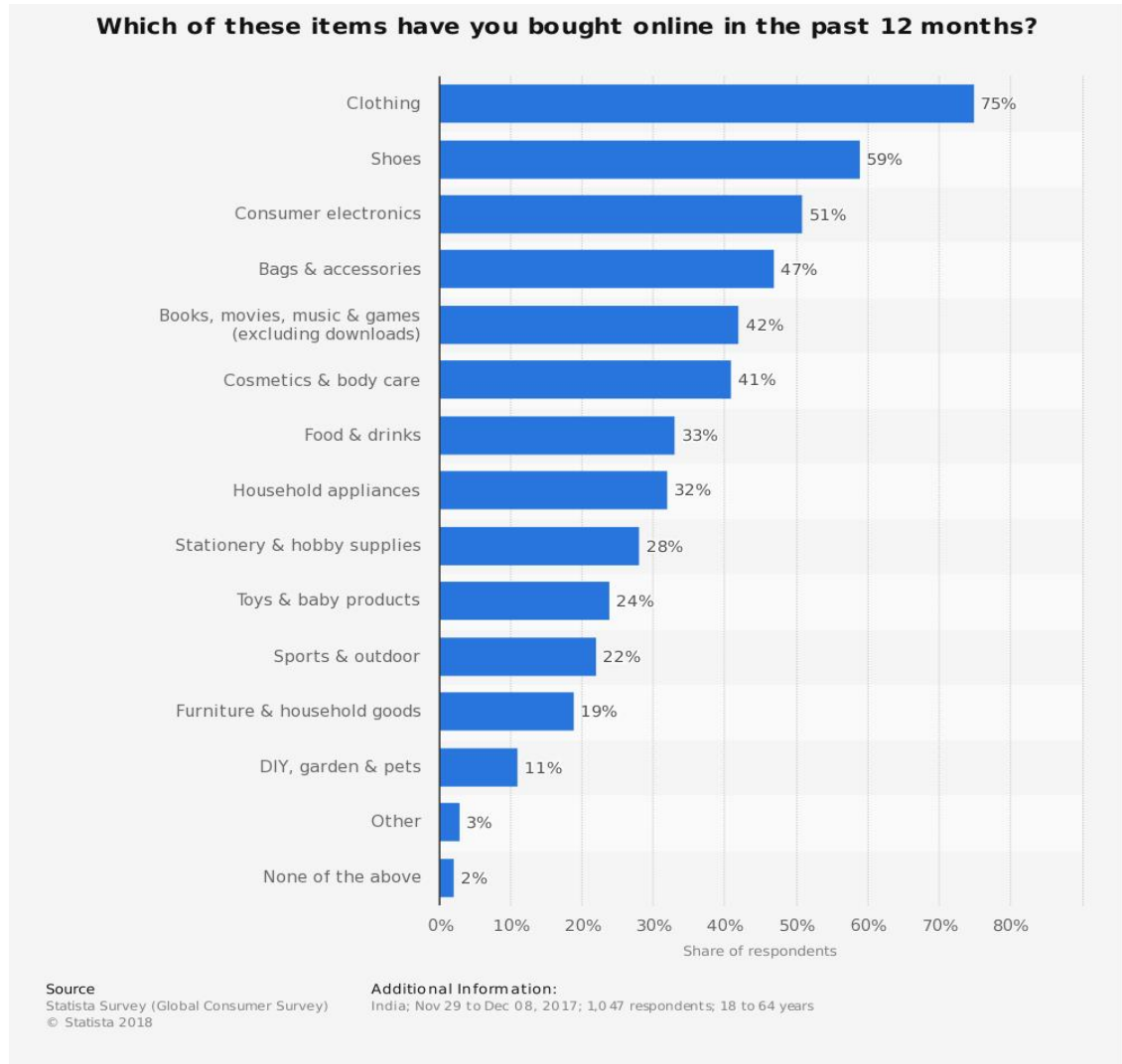
Table 1.1: Most popular online shopping categories 2014, by country (in %)

Categories	Global average	United States	United Kingdom	Germany	Japan	India
Electronics	77	83	84	90	53	79
Home appliances	59	46	65	58	41	67
Home furnishings	53	56	65	66	53	59
Fashion and apparel	76	87	85	88	66	84
Sports and outdoor	52	56	53	66	36	52
Beauty products	57	50	56	62	48	68
Household items	45	36	48	40	41	60
Groceries	45	26	60	36	68	52
Toys, kids and baby products	49	48	53	49	32	61
Tickets	64	74	69	63	43	79
Music and games	62	74	75	66	46	65
Books	73	82	82	80	65	70
Services	76	80	76	77	63	82

Source: A.T. Kearney (2014) report.

- In a survey conducted by Statista (2017), as shown in figure 1.2, a majority of the customers are purchasing clothing and related fashion products online in India.
- The expected growth of Indian fashion retailers is US\$ 7-9 billion in 2017 to US\$ 30 billion by the year 2020 (IBEF, 2018). A significant number of domestic and international brands are joining the Indian online market to increase their presence through and cover larger target customers.

Figure 1.2: Category of products bought online by Indian customers (in percentage)



Source: Global Consumer Survey © Statista (2018)

- According to a survey report by Google India, 84% of the purchasers buy fashion & apparel products online followed by 71% buying electronic products (www.yourstory.com, 2013). The frequency of purchase is also high for fashion and apparel category, i.e., 34%, followed by beauty & personal care products by 33% of the customers.

- When compared with other countries Indian fashion choice is very diverse due to the greater diversity in culture. People across the country follow diverse fashion clothing due to different economic, geographic and cultural background.

Due to the reasons mentioned earlier, the present research finds a significant need to study CBE by fashion brands through online brand communities in the Indian context.

1.5. Focus of the Study

The previous section mentions, the primary driving reasons for researching CBE as a core concept. Keeping in view the reasons identified, the study is focused and confined to specific product category and context.

- The study is mainly focused on investigating the role of Customer-Brand Engagement (CBE) with its identified antecedents and consequences relevant to the selected context.
- Since fashion brands (both domestic & international) are engaging their customers through online brand communities, and simultaneously the fashion brands are most bought and followed online by customers, the present research is confined to consider fashion & apparel as the selected category.
- Fashion brands are engaging customers both offline and online. However, the engagement activities implemented by marketers are higher and practical at the same time, reaching a broader set of customers. Hence, the focus of the present study is customer engagement by fashion brands through online brand communities alone, and not offline.

- Though the study initially included only domestic fashion brand retailers, i.e., only Indian fashion brands, later this is extended to international brands operating and selling in India. However, the target respondents for this empirical study are restricted to be only Indians, the context of the study is focused on India alone.

1.6. Research Gaps

The present research is inspired by the research work carried out by the pioneers in the Customer/Consumer Brand Engagement like Brodie et al. (2011), Linda D. Hollebeek (2011a) and Kumar et al. (2010). The research gaps in the present study are derived from the propositions, shortcomings and future research directions given by these eminent researchers.

CE is done by firms, brands, products/services. While engaging, the customer is the subject of engagement; the object focused may differ, i.e., firm or brand or service. Hence, the aim of engaging the customer/consumer may vary. CE is therefore studied with different object focused and has different dimensionality. Consequently, the antecedents and outcomes of the CE are also changing with the object in focus. Hence, it is imperative to study a context-specific engagement with a select focused object like the brand, and its relevant antecedents and consequences.

- The concept of CBE is studied mostly in isolation and with relation to specific other marketing constructs. A comprehensive model which explains the CBE behavior along with the relevant antecedents and consequences in a 'specific context' is scarce (Bowden, 2009; Linda D Hollebeek et al., 2014).

- The dynamics of customer engagement is unique due to the two-way interactive nature involved between the customer and brand. These interaction dynamics are to be studied explicitly in between different parties like B2C, B2B, etc. these kinds of studies need theoretical and empirical investigation (Brodie et al., 2011).
- Customer Engagement is context specific. According to Brodie et al. (2011), the dynamics of engagement are different in online and offline environments. There is a need to study these different expressions in online based brand communities (Baldus et al., 2015) or product category.

1.7. Research Questions

The present research questions have raised from the research gaps identified and a thorough review of relevant and extant literature. The literature reviewed is detailed in Chapter – 2.

Customer Engagement (CE) by brands is done both online and offline. In the online medium unusually public platforms, open to all like Social Networking Sites (SNS) there is a complete provision for brands to engage both existing (purchaser) and new (non-purchaser) customer. Moreover, most of the times these two customers (existing & new) exposed to the same brand content. It would be interesting to study the dynamics of engagement between these two customers. The two different schools of thought can back up this argument on Customer Engagement (CE). One by (Brodie et al., 2013; Linda D. Hollebeek, 2011a) and the other by (Kumar et al., 2010). Where the former focus more on

new (non-purchasers) customers and the latter focused on existing (purchasers) customer. Also, have expressed CBE may play a different role between the two set of customers.

RQ1: Does Customer-Brand Engagement (CBE) play a different role between existing and new customers?

Any marketing activity pursued by the brands is to improve the customer-brand relationship and ultimately retain customer loyalty. Customers develop certain trust, commitment & satisfaction with the brand in the process of their journey through experience and interactions with the brand. These positive experiences drive customers to be loyal to the brand. To gain these experiences customers tend to participate in online brand communities of their favorite brands voluntarily.

RQ2: Does customer participation in their favorite Online Brand Community (OBC) increase their Engagement, which may further enhance Relationship Quality (RQ) leading to Brand Loyalty?

While participating in online brand communities, customers exhibit different levels of involvement in the content and activities created by the brands. These involvement levels, however, depend on the objectives of the customers in joining the online brand communities, they indeed alter their engagement behavior.

RQ3: To what extent does the customer level of Involvement (INV) affect CBE and RQ in a specific product category?

While participating and engaging in the online brand communities, customer invests their valuable time and effort, in terms of commenting, suggesting, etc. Often the most critical object to participating our favorite brand on OBC is to have updated information about the brand; exchange & share related information. Hence, ultimately when a customer investing time and effort would expect to fulfill their objectives, which customers measure in terms of value. Consequently, customers received different amounts of value for participating and engaging in OBCs.

RQ4: To what extent does customer Perceived Value (PVAL) affect CBE and RQ in a specific product category?

1.8. Research Objectives

Based on the research questions identified in the previous section, the following research objectives are framed:

1. To test the effect of participation on their brand loyalty through Customer-Brand Engagement (CBE) and Relationship-Quality (RQ), when they engage in their favorite fashion Online Brand Communities (OBC).
2. To study the relationship between Customer-Brand Engagement (CBE) and Relationship-Quality (RQ) among purchasers and non-purchasers with Fashion brands in India.

3. To test the role of customer-involvement on Customer-Brand Engagement (CBE) and Relationship-Quality (RQ).
4. To test the role of perceived value the relationship between Customer-Brand Engagement (CBE), Relationship-Quality (RQ) and Brand Loyalty.

1.9. Research Hypotheses

To empirically investigate the four research objectives framed for this study, hypotheses are developed from the related existing literature available. Only the hypotheses are mentioned in the present section, the literature support for the logical development of the hypotheses is explained in Chapter – 2, ‘Review of Literature.’

H1: There is a significant difference in the mediating effect of CBE and RQ in the relationship between participation and loyalty concerning new and existing customers.

H2: There is a significant positive effect of Participation on Consumer Brand Engagement (CBE).

H3: There is a significant positive effect of Participation on Relationship Quality (RQ).

H4: There is a significant positive effect on Participation and Brand Loyalty.

H5: There is a significant positive effect of CBE and Brand Loyalty.

H6: There is a significant positive effect on Relationship Quality and Brand Loyalty.

H7: There is a significant positive effect of CBE on RQ.

H8: Involvement moderates the relationship between Participation and CBE.

H9: Involvement moderates the relationship between Participation and RQ.

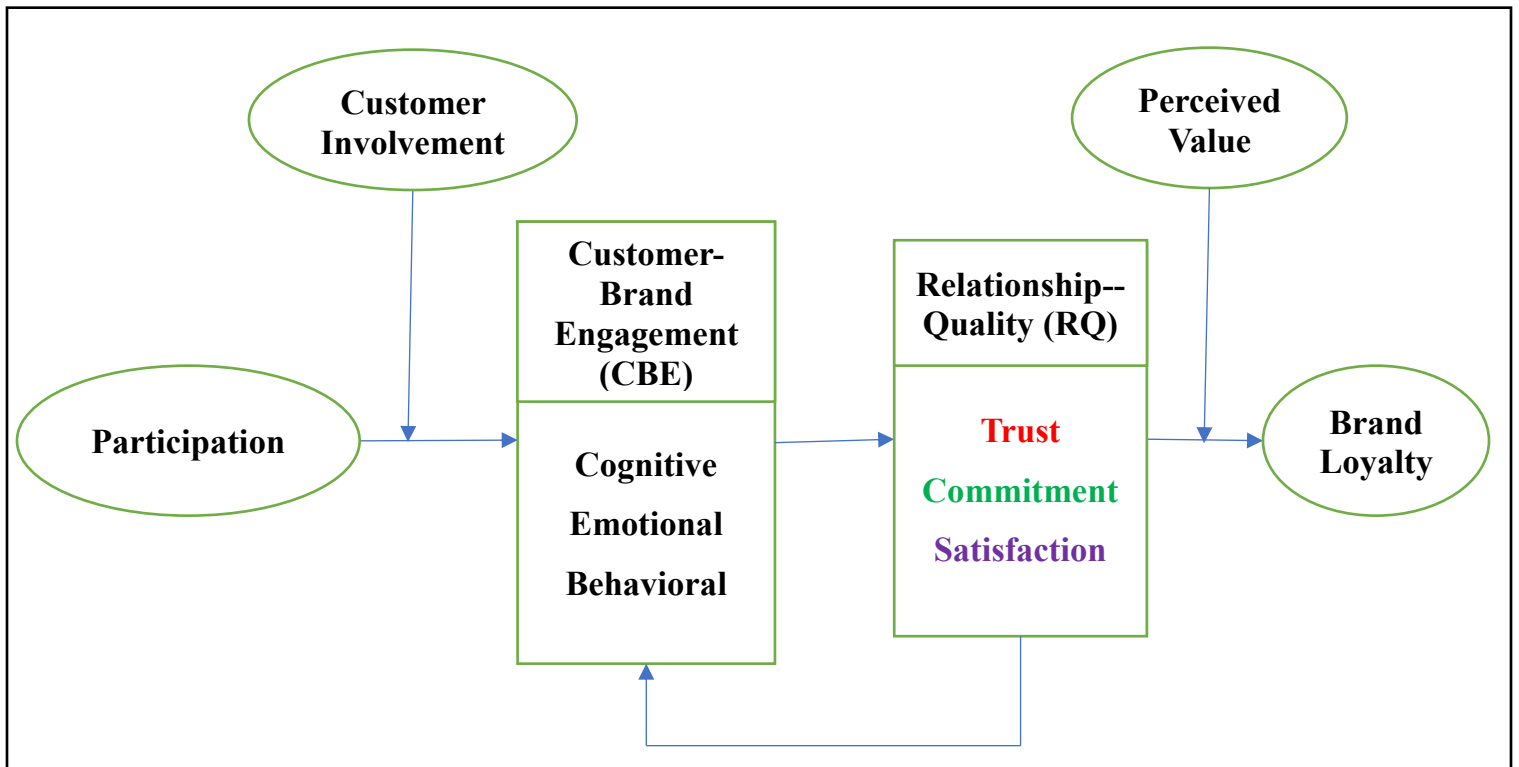
H10: Perceived Value moderates the relationship between CBE and Brand Loyalty.

H11: Perceived Value moderates the relationship between Relationship Quality and Brand Loyalty.

1.10. Conceptual Framework

Based on the hypotheses developed a conceptual framework to investigate the relationships between the selected constructs for the study are depicted in the form of a diagram. It is hypothesized that the participation of the customers in OBCs lead to engagement which further influences relationship-quality (RQ) with the brand further generating brand loyalty. In this process, the involvement of the customer and the perceived value derived alter the effects of these relationships. The same is conceptually shown in the form of a diagram in figure 1.3

Figure 1.3: Conceptual model of the study



Chapter – 2: Literature Review

2.1. Customer Engagement

2.1.1. Introduction

The use of social media has increased substantially in the recent times not only with the increased advancements in technology but also because of the psychological impacts of social media. Social media networks and online brand communities fulfil individual needs for self-actualization and help in forming sense of belongingness with other users on social media (Shiri D. Vivek, Beatty, Dalela, & Morgan, 2014; Shiri D Vivek, Beatty, & Morgan, 2012). The massive user base on social media as well as emerging forms of social media with diverse and interactive content has provided the opportunity for organizations across many industries to opt for social media as the proven channel to engage with customers. The developments in marketing have been translated into diverse contextual disciplines which are related to the concerns of society, technology, economy, emerging markets, globalization and many other factors.

According to Dwivedi (2015), the extensive connectivity provided by the internet in today's world prompts organizations to recognize new approaches for improvement of effectiveness in marketing communication as well as the loyalty of customers for brands. Therefore, organizations are known for adopting different kinds of new communication approaches for reaching out to their target audience alongside personalizing their interactions with the help of new online tools. A high level of integration between marketing communications and the digital world has been observed as a mandatory trait for every organization (Dwivedi, Wilkie, Johnson, & Weerawardena, 2016).

Continuing with the emphasis on social media, various digital innovations have improved the capabilities of social networks to enable communication between internet users. This phenomenon has also enabled customers to interact with each other as well as brands to find out information about products or services which they intend to purchase (Bolton, 2011). The outcomes of innovation can be clearly observed in the placement of customers as active participants on various social media channels such as Twitter, Facebook, Google and YouTube. As per Shiri D Vivek et al. (2012), the interaction between consumers on social media also provides the platforms for developing online brand communities which has been responsible for the increasing appeal of social media as a marketing instrument. The validation for social media's significance in the marketing strategy could be observed in the instances of various marketing strategies and advertising plans across the world depending on social media's use (Gambetti & Graffigna, 2010). Therefore, organizations leverage the tactics of social media marketing and approaches for improving online engagement of consumers with their brands in order to enhance their competitive advantage (Linda D. Hollebeek, Srivastava, & Chen, 2019).

The following literature review would focus on the essential themes of consumer-brand engagement, participation, involvement and customer loyalty on social media with respect to the fashion industry. The reflection on literature would enable identification of the necessity of social media and online brand communities as tools for mediating between customers and brands, the motivating factors which drive the engagement of users with social media, attributes of brands on social media which promote the participation of users and the factors that ensure involvement of customers on social media with different fashion

brands (Baldus, Voorhees, & Calantone, 2015). The literature would also draw out inferences regarding the approaches in which social media can be utilized for development of brand loyalty among consumers.

2.1.2. Customer-Brand Engagement

The theme of customer engagement is also another prominent aspect that must be included in this literature review. The engagement of consumers on different online platforms and communities has been the focal point of discussions in research pertaining to marketing approaches since the 2000s (Brodie, Hollebeek, Jurić, & Ilić, 2011; Linda D. Hollebeek, 2011a). Different studies have pointed out towards the positive impact of consumer engagement on brand equity, brand commitment and brand loyalty. On the contrary, a study by the IBM Institute of Business Value has clearly pointed out towards a completely different view of consumers in this context (Higgins & Scholer, 2009). It was found out that 33% of the participants did not feel any relationship between social media interaction with a brand and their loyalty to the company and 38% reported a positive relationship between the two factors.

Another prominent aspect that was found in this study was that customers engaged with brands on social media with whom they are familiar or are passionate about the brand. Despite the skepticism observed among consumers regarding the impact of social media interactions on formation of attitudes towards new brands or the improvement in possibilities for purchase decisions, various studies have consistently pointed out towards the positive impacts of customer engagement on online brand communities and platforms

(Demangeot & Broderick, 2016; Dwivedi et al., 2016). Consumers that have higher levels of commitment to a brand community online are more likely to have stronger commitment to the core brand. Some studies have reported that around 84% of consumers have pointed out towards development of positive attitudes towards a particular brand by actively engaging with online brand communities and platforms as compared to the 62% of customers reporting positive attitude before involvement (Gallup, 2014; www.mckinsey.com, 2015). This implies the necessity of reflecting on the nature and dimensions pertaining to consumer engagement.

Various studies have reflected on the concept of consumer-brand engagement which can be found in marketing literature that discusses on the passive nature of engagement. Various scholars have pointed out towards the importance of people specific and firm specific factors responsible for determining consumer engagement and this implies the need to review literature on consumer engagement behavior as a prolific dimension of consumer-brand engagement (Brogi, 2014; Kabadayi & Price, 2014; Laurence, Cleopatra, & Anna, 2015). It is essential to reflect on the ways in which consumer engagement is independent of the facets of consumer attitudes such as commitment, satisfaction and trust (Gambetti & Graffigna, 2010; Gambetti, Graffigna, & Biraghi, 2012). The definitions of customer engagement found in literature are largely based on a behavioral focus with the concept of media engagement implying prominent focus on the psychological experience of customers during the consumption of media. Hence, the foundations of relationship marketing and the opportunities for creation and publishing information to consumers and study of the different factors that characterize the

contextual, experiential or symbolic interactions of customers with a brand clearly show that consumer brand engagement is responsible for positive outcomes in relations such as improved loyalty through the co-creation of value for customers, retention and positive word-of-mouth communication (Won-Moo, Kwang-Ho, & Minsung, 2011).

Consumers could be assumed as the active participants who dedicate appropriate emotional, physical and cognitive resources for co-creation of value with particular brand interactions (Linda D Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014; Van Doorn et al., 2010; Shiri D. Vivek et al., 2014). Furthermore, customer brand engagement has been identified for its association with three unique dimensions that are consumer participation, self-expressive brand and consumer involvement. So, it would be necessary to reflect on these dimensions of consumer brand engagement in order to clarify the particular tenets of social media and online brand community influence on customer behavior, attitudes, involvement and loyalty towards the brand. Some of the definitions of consumer brand engagement indicate that it is reflective of the positive outcomes derives from the alignment of an individual with brand community by leveraging the intrinsic motivation of consumers for interacting or cooperating with other members in the community. In other words, consumer brand engagement can be defined as the extent to which consumers are willing for investment of personal resources towards the brand other than the resources that are invested in the purchase and consumption of the brand's products, services or information.

In the dynamic business scenario, where the emergence of new concepts opens up new opportunities and challenges, the concept 'engagement' has gained a significant

attention of the business practitioners and academicians in the recent past. Even a number of research firms and consulting companies like the Gallup Group, Nielsen Media Research, the Advertising Research Foundation (ARF) and American Association of Advertising Agencies have emphasized the importance of Customer Engagement as an effective concept in understanding the complex consumer behavior. The growing importance of ‘engagement’ concept in marketing is driving these institutions and firms to work towards defining and measuring customer engagement Brodie et al. (2011).

Though the term ‘engagement’ has been initially used in a variety of academic disciplines like Psychology, Political Science, Sociology and Organizational Behavior over a decade now (Saks, 2006), this concept of engagement and its spill in Marketing and Service literature is about a decade old. The increased importance on Customer Engagement by both business practitioners and academicians, encouraged Marketing Science Institute to announce Customer Engagement (CE) as a priority research concept for the period 2010-2012 and 2012-2014 consecutively.

Constructs like quality, value and satisfaction are often used as antecedents to measure customer loyalty since a long time in marketing literature (Helena Martins & Patrícia, 2012; Srinivasan, Anderson, & Ponnnavolu, 2002). It is customer loyalty which is considered more reliable outcome to measure while studying consumer behavior in marketing context (Oliver, 1999). Though satisfaction is also one important outcome of positive behavior, attitudinal and behavioral loyalty has taken center stage in recent past. Very recently in the service literature a new construct is considered more consistent variable to understand consumer behavior is ‘Customer Engagement’. It is an emerging

constructs in the literature of marketing which can explain the consumer behavior more profoundly (Bowden, 2009).

Customer Engagement: The Conceptual Foundations

The term ‘engagement’ is applied in psychology discipline in 17th century to explain the concept of role to work (Brodie et al., 2011; Shiri D Vivek et al., 2012). In the past, term ‘Personal engagement’ is used by Kahn (1990) for the first time in his psychology related research work. Since then the concept engagement is explored in various disciplines. In organizational behavior the concept of engagement is used to study concepts like organizational commitment, job satisfaction, absenteeism, cohesion, and morale (Bowden, 2009; Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002; Saks, 2006).

Ever since the exploration and use of engagement concept in various fields/disciplines, due to its positive results to explain critical related variables, the concept ‘engagement’ has also bestowed the attention in service & relationship marketing discipline also of late (Bowden, 2009; Heath, 2007). Earlier to marketing domain, the concept is widely and extensively explored in other disciplines line, sociology, political science, psychology, education and organization behavior domain (Ilic, 2008). The term engagement is coupled with various concepts and has been adapted in varied disciplines. It’s been studied as ‘state engagement’ in political science, ‘civic engagement’ in sociology (Mondak, Hibbing, Canache, Seligson, & Anderson, 2010). Greenwood (2007), has explored employee engagement in his research to explain the positive effects of engagement on organizational performance. Similarly Little and Little (2006), has also explored the concept of engagement to explain the organizational behavior, providing

support for the fact that engagement is contextual and has a wide scope to explore its impact on other organizational factors.

For the first time in marketing and service literature, engagement is used to study a specific subject i.e. customer and hence is termed as ‘customer engagement’ (Bowden (2009); Patterson, Yu, & De Ruyter, 2006). Since then due to its consistent results to explain the consequences associate with it well, the term is coupled with objects such as brand, product and firm (Patterson et al., 2006). The wide scope of engagement to explain better the consumer response to the marketing activities, has gained a greater attention in the service domain. The present section is an attempt to review the literature that has attempted to explore engagement, its dimensions, antecedents and consequences. To better understand the evolution and conceptual foundation of the engagement, this section attempts to summarize the definitions, conceptualization and dimensionalities of engagement in other Marketing and Business Management discipline.

Definitions of Consumer Brand Engagement

Since the introduction of engagement variable in the marketing literature a decade ago, it is been defined and operationalized by various authors in different ways. The wide use of engagement concept in different contexts, environments and variables has increase the scope of engagement concept to be explored further in the service literature. A good number of context-specific definitions have been given in academic and business. This section attempts to carefully list out the definitions of the engagement concept in the business practice context. Later this paper focusses on comprehensive discussion on the dimensionalities and definitions of the engagement in the marketing literature context. In this section, we first attempt to explain the dimensionality and definitions of ‘engagement’

in management and other social science disciplines is explained in Table 2.2.1, discipline wise. Further in the next section, the dimensionality and conceptualization of ‘engagement’ is discussed, specifically in marketing literature is shown in the Table 2.2.3.

Table: 2.2.1. Dimensionality and Definitions of Engagement in Management and other Social Science Disciplines.

Discipline	Construct	Author(s)	Definition(s)/Key Findings	Dimensionality
Sociology	Civic Engagement	Jennings and Stoker (2004)	“Involvement in voluntary organizations and the performance of volunteer work, facilitating the development of social networks.”	Multidimensional: C, E, B
		Mondak et al. (2010)	“Civic engagement levels are impacted upon to a significant extent by the Big Five Personality dimensions.”	Undisclosed
Political-Science	State Engagement	Resnick (2001)	“Iterative process aiming to influence political behavior of a target state through maintained contacts with that state across multiple issue areas (e.g., diplomatic, economic) and focused on generating a relationship of increasing interdependence.”	Uni-dimensional: B
Psychology	Comprehensive (State) Engagement.	Kane (2008)	“A comprehensive engagement campaign comprises three key elements: (a) Mind-set change; (b) Mechanism for change; and (c) Possible staff change.”	Multidimensional: C, B
	Social Engagement	Achterberg et al. (2003)	“A high sense of initiative, involvement and adequate response to social stimuli, participating in social activities, interacting with others.”	Uni-dimensional: B
		Huo, Binning, and Molina (2010)	“Represented by group identification and group-oriented behavior.”	Multidimensional: E, B
	Task Engagement	Matthews et al. (2010)	“Vigilance performance on a particular task; attentional resource availability, sustained attention, and alertness.”	Multidimensional: C, B
	Occupational Engagement	Bejerholm and Eklund (2007)	“A lifestyle characteristic that describes the extent to which a person has a balanced rhythm of activity and rest, a variety and range of meaningful occupations/routines and the ability to move around society and interact socially. Levels may vary along a continuum.”	Multidimensional: C, B
Educational Psychology	Student Engagement	Bryson and Hand (2007)	“On a disengaged-engaged continuum, a student may exhibit differing engagement levels to a particular task/assignment, module, course of study and Higher Education.”	Multidimensional: C, E, B

Organizational Behavior	Employee Engagement	Hu (2010)	“The quality of effort students put into educationally meaningful activities.”	Multidimensional: C, B
		London, Downey, and Mace (2007)	“Students’ academic investment, motivation, and commitment to their institution; perceived psychological connection, comfort, and sense of belonging toward their institution. Engagement comprises institutional, situational & individual aspects.”	Multidimensional: C, E, B
		Frank, Finnegan, and Taylor (2004)	“Employees’ desire/willingness to give discretionary effort in their jobs, in the form of extra time, brainpower/energy (includes cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects).”	Multidimensional: C, E, B
		Catteuw et al. (2007)	“The degree to which employees are satisfied with their jobs, feel valued and experience collaboration and trust. The result is a high-performing, productive company.”	Multidimensional: C, E, B
		Luthans and Peterson (2002)	“To be emotionally engaged is to form meaningful connections with others (e.g., coworkers/ managers) and to experience concern/empathy for others’ feelings. Being cognitively engaged refers to the degree of awareness of an employee’s mission and role in the work environment. Behavioral engagement plays a lesser role.”	Multidimensional: C, E, B
		Saks (2006)	“The amount of cognitive, emotional, and physical resources an individual is prepared to devote in the performance of his or her work roles. Result is contingent on the economic and socio-emotional resources received from the organization.”	Multidimensional: C, E, B
		Macey and Schneider (2008)	“A broad construct consisting of state, trait, and behavioral forms that connote a blend of affective energy and discretionary effort directed to one’s work and organization.”	Multidimensional: C, E, B
		Crawford, LePine, and Rich (2010)	“The harnessing of organization members’ selves to their work roles by which they employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances (Kahn 1990).”	Multidimensional: C, E, B

Note: The Dimensionality of Engagement (Inferred): “C= Cognitive: E= Emotional: B= Behavioral.”

The wide spread concept of engagement, not only attracted the academic world, but also drew the attention of the business practitioners, to define, understand and practice engagement as a modern tool of customer management. (Appelbaum, 2001), of the Gallup group defines engagement as rational loyalty and emotional attachment combined with confidence in a brand, belief in its integrity, pride in the brand, and passion for it. According to (Foley, 2006), engagement is a multidimensional process exhibiting cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and aspirational facets.

According to (Van Doorn et al., 2010), “Customer engagement behaviors result from motivational drivers like customer-to-customer interactions, word-of-mouth activity and/or blogging activity, which go beyond transactions”. Brodie et al. (2011), defines “customer engagement as a psychological state that occurs by virtue of interactive, co-creative customer experiences with a focal agent/object (e.g. a brand).” (p.260). In this definition, it is stated that ‘engagement’ as a psychological state and interaction oriented with a focal object. According to Mollen and Wilson (2010), consumer engagement is “the cognitive and affective commitment to an active relationship with the brand as personified by the website or other computer-mediated entities designed to communicate brand value.” (p. 921). Most of the definitions focus on the behavioral aspects of the consumer. “The terms ‘consumer engagement’ and ‘customer engagement’ have transpired in the academic marketing and service literature only in the last 5 years.” (Brodie et al., 2011, p. 255).

On one hand academic research has its own interest and way of exploring engagement as an emerging concept to explain more about consumer behavior, on the other

hand, practitioners have their interest to pursue the concepts because of consistent profitable results due to the application of customer engagement activities in business.

Business

Table: 2.2.2. Definitions of Engagement in Business Practice.

Author(s)	Definition(s)/Key Points
Appelbaum (2001)	“Consumer Engagement includes both rational loyalty (includes overall satisfaction, intent to repurchase, and intent to recommend) and emotional attachment (including confidence in a brand, belief in its integrity, pride in the brand, and passion for it).”
Peppers and Rogers (2005)	“Engagement is a series of customized informational and financial transactions that occur over time and increase both the consumer value to the company and the value of the company to the consumer.”
ARF (2006): Blair	“Engagement behaviorally summarizes the impact of marketing/branding communications activities in the hearts and minds of consumers in a manner that leads to sales, margin, market share, market value, and cash flow.”
ARF (2006): Hamill	“Engagement is a measure of attention paid by a consumer to a piece of communication. There is a two-way flow of information resulting in easier measurement.”
ARF (2006): Plummer	"Engagement is turning on a prospect to a brand idea enhanced by the surrounding context."
Foley (2006)	“Engagement is a multidimensional concept, even a multidimensional process, with the end result defined as consumer connection in terms of cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and aspirational facets.”
Ghuneim (2006)	“Consumer engagement is a consumer-based measurement that relates to interaction with an aspect of a brand or media property.”
Harris (2006)	“Consumer engagement is a multidimensional concept: a brand’s ability to connect meaningfully with the consumer.”
Campanelli (2007)	“Consumer engagement is emotional connection and empowerment of consumers.”
Haven (2007)	“We propose a new metric, engagement that includes four components: involvement, interaction, intimacy, and influence.”
Heath (2007)	“Consumer engagement is a subconscious emotional construct. Level of engagement is the amount of subconscious ‘feeling’ going on when an advertisement is being processed.”

Owyang (2007)	“Online engagement indicates the level of authentic involvement, intensity, contribution and ownership, summarized by “‘apparent interest.’” Engagement Formula: Attention + Interaction + Velocity + Authority + Relevant Attributes (variable).”
Peterson (2007)	“Consumer online engagement is an estimate of the degree and depth of visitor interaction on the site, measured against a clearly defined set of goals. Each organization’s version of engagement will be unique. It will be derived from a number of root metrics, probably under a dozen. Common root metrics include frequency, regency, and length of visit, purchases, and lifetime value.”
Shevlin (2007)	“Consumer engagement is repeated and satisfying interactions that strengthen the emotional connection a consumer has with a brand (or product or company).”
Sedley (2008)	“Consumer engagement is repeated interactions that strengthen a consumer’s emotional, psychological, or physical investment in a brand. Consumer engagement is not a nirvana that can be reached; it is a process of developing and nurturing relationships.”
People Metrics (2010)	“Customer engagement includes (a) retention; (b) effort; (c) advocacy; and (d) passion.”
Smith and Wallace (2010)	“Customer engagement (CE) refers to the types of connections consumers make with other consumers, companies, and specific brands; CE is viewed as being conducive to enhancement of brand loyalty (Brodie et al., 2011).”

Note: Partially adapted from (Bowden, 2009; Brodie et al., 2011; Brodie, Ilic, Juric, & Hollebeek, 2013).

practitioners have identified and appreciated the results obtained by applying customer engagement in business and given a variety of definitions in their own business context and environment. The definitions by some of the marketers and business practitioners are listed in Table 2.2.2.

Conceptualizations and Dimensionality of ‘Engagement’ in Marketing Literature

As we have seen from some of the definitions of ‘engagement’, the concept of engagement is context-dependent and is better understood when coupled with a focal object like brand or product or firm. It can also be well explained when coupled with the specific

subject to be engaged like customer, consumer or stakeholder. Hence, due to the usage of the ‘engagement’ concept with various subjects or object alone or in combinations, several authors have operationalized ‘engagement’ in different ways. Some of the major suggest in the marketing literature are listed in Table 2.2.3. In this process, the authors have explained ‘customer engagement’ as unidimensional and a multidimensional construct.

A major portion of studies defined ‘customer engagement’ to be multidimensional constituting emotional, cognitive and behavioral aspects; a relative minor portion of studies identified the construct to be unidimensional (Brodie et al., 2011). The definitions given by (Linda D. Hollebeek, 2011b; Patterson et al., 2006; Shiri D Vivek et al., 2012), are considered as comprehensive as they define CE as a combination of cognitive, emotional and behavioral dimensions. (Patterson et al., 2006) has four specific components of CE as absorption, dedication, vigor and interaction, which are drawn from organizational behavior. However, Linda D. Hollebeek (2011a, p. 6) defines CBE as “the level of a customer’s motivational, brand-related, and context-dependent state of mind characterized by specific levels of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral activity in brand interactions.” At the same time (Mollen & Wilson, 2010), explains *online* brand engagement as sustained cognitive process, instrumental and experiential value.

“Customer-Brand Engagement” in the recent times in services marketing literature has gained greater important understand the antecedents and consequences of the consumer behavior. Although a large amount of research is done with respect to customer

engagement, there is still a greater scope to explore the construct in the context of marketing. In the era of information technology and social media, the concept of engaging

Table: 2.2.3. Conceptualization and Dimensionality of Engagement in Services Marketing Literature.

Author(s)	Research Form	Construct	Definition	Engagement Dimensionality
Algesheimer, Dholakia, and Herrmann (2005)	Empirical: Quantitative	Brand community engagement	“Positive influences of identifying with the brand community through the consumer’s intrinsic motivation to interact/cooperate with community members.”	Multidimensional: 1. Cognitive 2. Emotional 3. Behavioral
Patterson et al. (2006)	Conceptual	Customer engagement	“The level of a customer’s physical, cognitive and emotional presence in their relationship with a service organization.”	Multidimensional: 1. Vigour 2. Dedication 3. Absorption 4. Interaction
Heath (2007)	Conceptual	Engagement with an ad	“The amount of subconscious feeling occurring when an ad is being processed.”	Uni-dimensional
Ilic (2008)	Empirical: Qualitative	Consumer engagement	“A contextual process that consists of interactions with ‘engagement object(s)’ over time and may exist at different levels.”	Multidimensional: 1. Cognitive 2. Emotional 3. Behavioral 4. Aspirational 5. Social
Bowden (2009)	Conceptual	Customer Engagement	“A Psychological Process that models the underlying mechanisms by which customer loyalty forms for new customers of a service brand, as well as the mechanisms by which loyalty may be maintained for repeat-purchase customers of a service brand.”	Multidimensional (Inferred)

Higgins and Scholer (2009)	Conceptual	Engagement	“A state of being involved, occupied, fully absorbed or engrossed in something (i.e. sustained attention), generating the consequences of a particular attraction or repulsion force. The more engaged individuals are to approach or repel a target, the more value is added to or subtracted from it.”	Multidimensional: 1. Cognitive 2. Emotional 3. Behavioral (Inferred)
Sprott, Czellar, and Spangenberg (2009)	Empirical: ‘Qualitative’	Brand Engagement in self-concept (BESC)	“An individual difference representing consumers’ propensity to include important brands as part of how they view themselves. This conceptualization builds on self-schemas to investigate the role of brands in the self-concept.”	Uni-dimensional
Shiri D Vivek (2009)	Empirical: Quantitative	Consumer-Engagement	“The intensity of an individual’s participation & connection with the organization’s offerings & activities initiated by either the customer or the organization.”	Multidimensional Inferred: 1. Cognitive 2. Emotional 3. Behavioral
Mollen and Wilson (2010)	Conceptual	Online Brand Engagement	“The customer’s cognitive & affective commitment to an active relationship with the brand as personified by the website or other computer-mediated entities designed to communicate brand value.”	Multidimensional: 1. Sustained Cognitive Processing 2. Instrumental value 3. Experiential value
Van Doorn et al. (2010)	Conceptual	Customer Engagement Behavior	“Customers’ behavioral manifestation toward a brand or firm, beyond purchase, resulting from motivational drivers such as word-of-mouth activity, recommendations, helping other customers, blogging, writing reviews.”	Uni-dimensional: Behavioral
Linda D. Hollebeek (2011a)	Conceptual	Customer Brand Engagement	“The level of a customer’s motivational, brand-related and context-dependent state of mind characterized by specific levels of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral activity in brand interactions.”	Multidimensional: 1. Cognitive 2. Emotional 3. Behavioral

the customer by the marketers is taking new shape and dimensions. This change in the new methods of engagement is witnessing a sea change in the behavior of the consumers as well. In this context, it is an interesting to study the role played by the concept of engagement in various activities of marketing. It will also be interesting to study the behavior of the antecedents and consequences of the engagement in different industries and different regions in different contexts. The increase in online shopping and use of social media is adding to the advantage of engagement by making it more effective.

Till the last one decade, many prominent studies have been conducted to highlight the growing importance of CE. Some of the studies relevant to the present research is shown in the table 2.2.4. These studies are the summary of the various research which have studied in different contexts with CE sometimes as antecedent to related variables and sometimes as an outcome. Some significant quality studies with qualitative and quantitative approaches have been highlighted.

Table 2.2.4. Some other studies related to Customer Engagement

Author(s)	Findings	Methodology	Sample Size
(Greve, 2014)	“There is no difference between Active and Passive Engagement activity. Brand Image is negatively moderated by engagement activity.”	Students following the Facebook fan page is a school.	201
(Dwivedi, 2015)	“Brand engagement not only exerts a significant impact on loyalty intentions, but also explains significantly more variation in the outcome in addition to the variation explained by traditional antecedents.”	Management students of a school from Delhi, who use mobile phones.	420

(Brodie et al., 2013)	“The research highlights consumer engagement as an interactive, experiential process, based on individuals' engagement with brands/organizations, and/or other brand community members.”	Qualitative data from an online community.	
(Linda D Hollebeek et al., 2014)	“CBE mediates the association between consumer ‘Involvement’ and consumer ‘self-brand connection,’ and ‘brand usage intent,’ respectively.”	Students using Linkedin, Twitter and Facebook	194, 554, 556.
(Kabadayi & Price, 2014)	“The personality traits affect individuals’ mode of interaction which in turn determines if they like and/or comment on a post in a brand’s Facebook page.”	Online survey conducting for people using Facebook.	269
(Leckie, Nyadzayo, & Johnson, 2016)	“The results reveal that consumer involvement, consumer participation and self-expressive brand have differing effects on the CBE dimensions (cognitive processing, affection and activation) and brand loyalty.”	Online Survey-consumers of Australian Mobile phone service.	502
(Pervan & Bove, 2011)	“Even when customers are not engaged with the brand, in a shared service experience they may act beyond their prescribed roles if other members perform their role.”	Conceptual	
(C.M. Sashi, 2012)	“The paper develops a model of the customer engagement cycle. Four types of relationships emerge: transactional customers, delighted customers, loyal customers, and fans.”	Conceptual	
(Thakur, 2016)	“Customer Engagement explains more variance in Loyalty intentions than by Satisfaction and Convenience combined.”	Survey of users of Mobile devices for shopping.	304,433
(Apenes Solem, 2016)	“Study documented substantial positive effects of customer participation on brand loyalty through brand satisfaction. CBE was an important driver of participation and enhanced the positive effects of customer participation on brand satisfaction.”	Brand pages on social media of insurance companies in Norway.	954
(Nysveen & Pedersen, 2014)	“Participation positively influences sensory, affective, cognitive, behavioral and relational dimensions of a brand experience.”	Online survey was conducted among customers of banks in Norway	957
(Shiri D Vivek, 2009)	“Developed a Five-dimensional scale. Tested the role of CBE as a mediator between participation and loyalty.”	Qualitative and quantitative. Students of University of Alabama	247

(So, King, Sparks, & Wang, 2016)	“The findings of the study provide evidence of the significance of beyond-purchase psychological and behavioral connections (i.e., CE) with a brand in establishing customer-brand relationship quality.”	Systematic Random sampling of online law-complaint consumer panel in Australia	151
(Demangeot & Broderick, 2016)	“The results support the process conceptualization of engagement, which identifies organismic as well as conative stages, and show the distinct roles played by perceptions of exploration and sense-making in activating engagement.”	Online survey of Newcastle University students, Britain.	301
(Reitz, 2007)	“The study examined whether and how perceived Facebook company page features (i.e., perceived information quality, perceived enjoyment, and perceived interactivity) predicted online consumer engagement, and relation between consumer engagement to loyalty and (re)purchase intent.”	Online surveys were collected from U.S. adult Facebook users who “like” companies on Facebook. Snowball sampling technique.	233

Source: Compiled by the researchers

2.1.3. Social Media & Brand Communities

Prior to a reflection on the role of social media and brand communities in improvement of engagement between consumer and brands, it is essential to reflect on dimensions of literature which deal with the definitions of social media and brand communities. According to (Brodie et al., 2013; Brogi, 2014), the average internet user spends almost one third of their active day on different social media platforms (Brogi, 2014). Facebook, which can be considered as the benchmark for social media in the present times, has more than 800 million active users. Social media has proved to be an effective approach for transformation of diverse marketing practices including promotion and advertising alongside influencing the different aspects of consumer behavior including collection of information and post purchase interaction and behavior with the product or service (Kozinets, 2014).

Social media has been defined as the universal term that is suitable for online platforms, media and applications which are capable for providing interactions among users and opportunities for collaboration as well as sharing of content. Social media has also been accounted as the different online technologies and practices used by people for sharing opinions and knowledge (Vargo & Lusch, 2004; Wirtz et al., 2013). In order to refine the understanding of social media, it is essential to identify the two fundamental concepts that are related to the features, development and usage of social media. The two fundamental concepts are Web 2.0 and User Generated Content (UGC). Web 2.0 came into prominence in 2004 as a method for end users and application programmers to utilize the World Wide Web (Yamawaki, 2017). This clearly implies that Web 2.0 provided a platform on which the content and software were not created and published by individual agencies or people.

Instead, various participants were involved with the production and development of software and content in collaboration with each other on a consistent basis. The second concept i.e. User generated content (UGC) is also another driver of social media usage as it includes the different approaches that are followed by users for creation of content and utilizing social media on the technological foundation provided by Web 2.0. User generated content gained substantial popularity in 2005 and included references to different variants of media content which could be available to everyone. Therefore, these two concepts provided the basis for social media technologies which have facilitated easy approaches for consumers to create and publish content, share ideas, take opinions on specific ideas and share recommendations with others (Leckie et al., 2016).

The different functionalities ensured by Web 2.0 and UGC in the case of social media imposed a formidable influence on marketing approaches that deviated from traditional norms (Chauhan & Pillai, 2013; Kaufmann, Loureiro, Basile, & Vrontis, 2012). For example, the information communicated in advertising and promotion materials are not the sole information sources regarding products and services. Social media acts as an appropriate platform on which consumers could share their views and experiences about different products and services thereby implying the notable influence rendered by social media on consumer behavior (Goh, Heng, & Lin, 2013; Linda D Hollebeek et al., 2014; C.M. Sashi, 2012).

The increasing involvement of users on social media through interaction with each other and finding common elements in each other has been one of the notable reasons for development of relationships on various online platforms (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006). Relationship marketing is a strategic resource for an organization that helps it in development and maintenance of long-term relationships with customers rather than focusing on individual transactions. It is clearly evident that developing and maintaining individual relationships with customers could not be efficient and can present issues regarding management. So, organizations resorted to the introduction of brand communities as the favorable solution for serving customers (Tripathi, 2009). Brand communities are responsible for execution of various crucial activities such as provision of customer support, information sharing or developing the translation of the brand's history and culture into a tangible entity for consumers. It can be clearly observed that brand communities provided the opportunity for organizations to execute many tasks on their

behalf (Aksoy et al., 2013; Algesheimer et al., 2005; Brogi, 2014). Furthermore, brand communities also ensured the provision of social structure to the relationships between customer and marketer alongside strengthening the opportunities for customer loyalty (Dessart, Veloutsou, & Morgan-Thomas, 2015; Fournier & Lee, 2009; Habibi, Laroche, & Richard, 2014). The definition of a brand community implies a specialized community that is not bound to geographical limitations and has its foundation in a definitive set of social relations between followers of a brand.

2.1.4. Social media and online brand communities in fashion

The evident findings that have been identified till now in this review of literature regarding consumer brand engagement on social media and online brand communities for fashion brands clearly show the importance that has been placed on consumers as active players in determining the positioning of a brand on social media as well as in development of new products and services or improvement of the existing ones (Helal & Ozuem, 2018; Rupik, 2015). Hence, it is crucial for this literature review to focus on the use of social media and online brand communities in the sector of fashion (Ananda, Hernández-García, Acquila-Natale, & Lamberti, 2019; Khare, 2014; Samala Nagaraj & Sapna Singh, 2019; Wiegand, 2017). This literature reflection would continue ahead with indications towards the specific factors in the social media and online brand community activities of fashion brands which motivate users to engage with them. However, for the present section it would be relevant to delve into the workings of social media and online brand communities in the case of fashion brands.

The initial applications of social media for fashion brands were associated with different challenges. Fashion brands did not want to feel more exposed with their availability on social media and this was primarily backed up by apprehensions regarding a compromised brand identity (Da Silveira, Lages, & Simões, 2013). On the contrary, the contemporary marketing scenario would be practically incomplete without social media. Traditional norms of advertisement and promotion for fashion brands dictated considerable levels of dependence on fashion shows that were closed events with only select buyers and press without having too much exposure in the media (Ananda et al., 2019; Helal & Ozuem, 2018; Wiegand, 2017). However, the arrival of social media and online brand communities has reformed these precedents comprehensively. Consumers of fashion brands who had to wait for latest magazines and other information regarding latest trends could now access tweets, posts, live-streams and pins on social medial sites such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and Pinterest to know about the latest trends immediately (Laroche, Habibi, Richard, & Sankaranarayanan, 2012). The prominent inference that can be drawn from such change in consumer interaction with fashion brands is the transformation of one-way communication facilitated by traditional media into interactive two-way communication facilitated by innovative modern technologies. Experts from the fashion industry have claimed that social media and fashion work effectively together as the former provides opportunities for spontaneous communication about the fashion industry. Individuals are interested in displaying images of new fashion products in their closet on their social media accounts and this clearly reflects on the higher appeal of visual items that is prominently observed in fashion industry thereby showing a clear connection between the functions of social media and fashion (Henderson, Prayag, & Morrish, 2017).

Another aspect that should be outlined with respect to the applications of social media and online brand communities in engaging consumers with fashion brands is the role of consumers as co-creators of value, innovation processes and competitive strategy of a firm. Customers can contribute to these aspects as outcomes of their participation on social media and online communities specific to a brand through community engagement, brand utilization, social networking and impression management. Hence the focus of fashion brands on social networking practices and community engagement practices of consumers on social media and online branding communities has improved recently (Won-Moo et al., 2011). The initiatives taken by fashion brands to improve the engagement of users on their social media pages and online brand communities, especially the ones on social media have been based on welcoming, empathizing and governance of different social networking initiatives that could promote homogeneity of brand communities as well as identification of similarities between members (Laroche et al., 2012). The concerns of community engagement practices are intended to reinforce the increasing levels of engagement of members with the brand community. Some of the notable examples of practices that are suited for community engagement include documentation of significant events in the brand community and through development of personal brand narratives with which members can associate comprehensively. Fashion brands have been identified to shift their focus towards ensuring community engagement practices with intent of promoting collaborative work with relevant partners having shared interests and objectives (Ublova, 2015).

Online brand communities are an indispensable tool to upgrade the level of engagement that takes place between a marketer and a customer. In the current era, when

numerous business undertakings compete to get the attention of the consumers, it is extremely vital to establish a robust and direct engagement with the customers so that they can be aware of a specific brand and its unique offerings (Aksoy et al., 2013; Wirtz et al., 2013). In the marketing scene, the concept relating to engagement has received a significant level of attention. According to Bowden (2009), engagement is a psychological process which models the core mechanisms by which a customer's loyalty is established for new consumers of a brand. Engagement acts as an extremely important component which has the power to influence the loyalty that is exhibited by the market audience towards a business entity. The Online brand communities act as powerful mediums which enable marketers in the competitive market arena to engage and interact with the existing customers and the potential consumers (Baldus et al., 2015; Laurence et al., 2015).

In the digitalized era, the concept of engagement has also emerged in the online brand community context. The community that is established on the digital platform is used by marketers to motivate the audience to prefer their offerings over that of the rival marketers. According to the research study by Baldus et al. (2015), today, a majority of the brands have taken the decision to establish online communities that are dedicated to the brand. The ultimate intention is to connect and interact with the market audience so that a strong and long-lasting relationship can be established. Today, fashion brand has shifted their communication to social media platforms and online brand communities. The online brand communities basically enable them to get a better view of the fashion tastes and preferences of the consumers. The fashion brands are in a better position to resonate with individual market audience across varying levels.

2.1.5. The role of Social Media in Customer Branding

In the technology-driven era, the role of social media platforms is of paramount importance for the business undertakings that exist and perform in the dynamic market environment. According to Kabadayi and Price (2014), Facebook is one of the most preferred social media networking sites that is used by business organizations to engage and interact with the vast market audience. Many brands that span across various industries and markets are able to reach consumers and comprehend their exact needs and preferences (Kabadayi & Price, 2014). This new form of engagement is gaining high popularity like never as it enables and empowers marketers to extract value from their potential and existing customers.

Social media channels are extremely useful and valuable for business undertakings that function in the dynamic fashion industry. A wide range of fashion brands has exploited social media channels for the purpose of streaming their fashion shows and engaging with the target market audience. Some of the popular fashion brands that have gained a high reputation because of their robust and highly engaging social media strategic models include Missguided, Everlane, Nike, and Fossil. These business undertakings have taken the social media marketing concept to the next level and used the medium to make their presence felt in the dynamic and evolving market setting (Hanna, Rohm, & Crittenden, 2011; Malthouse, Haenlein, Skiera, Wege, & Zhang, 2013).

Social media platforms that exist today have basically redefined customer branding and the way different business undertakings are able to transform into global brands. Social

media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube enable companies to establish meaningful and long-lasting connections with the target market audience (Ross & Harradine, 2011). The primary objective of the business concerns is to engage with them so that a robust engagement can be possible, and customers will be able to have valuable experience while interacting with the brand. According to Ross and Harradine (2011), a number of fashion brands try to align the brand identity with the brand image that is perceived by the young market audience (Valero, 2014). The fundamental intention of marketers is to create value for the customers so that their expectations can be fulfilled effectively.

According to Linda D. Hollebeek (2011a), in the competitive market arena, most of the business undertakings try to gain a competitive edge in the market by seeking participation from the customers. The customer brand engagement has been defined as the level of the customer's emotional, cognitive and behavioral investment in a specific brand's interaction and engagement. Customer branding is something which many of the marketers are focusing on the current times because it influenced brand sustainability and performance in the long run. According to the social exchange theoretical model (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), the market audience is able to reciprocate favorable thoughts, behavior, and feelings towards a brand when they are able to receive certain benefits from the brand association. Thus, customer branding plays a crucial role to make sure that brands are connected with customers and the experience are positively linked with the association. In the prevailing market context when social media plays a key role in the

marketing domain, it helps marketers including fashion brands to influence the ultimate experience of the customers.

2.1.6. Online communication to influence customer loyalty

According to Tseng, Cheng, Li, and Teng (2017), the online presence of business undertakings is of indispensable importance in the current market setting. The media richness is of critical importance as it enables business companies to engage and communicate with the vast market audience that exists in the global market arena. The media richness has been associated with the value that is perceived by customers. This ultimately has a vital implication on the loyal behavior of the market audience towards specific business undertakings and brands. Media richness has been defined as the ability of media to strengthen the level of understanding between the communication participants in an effective and timely manner.

In the present times, when hundreds of business entities operate in a single industrial setting, it is extremely important for marketers to establish a transparent communication network with the target market audience. The communication channel will basically enable them to create social value, functional value, self-expressive value and other forms of value for them in the best possible manner (Wirtz et al., 2013). Thanks to online communication channels, business undertakings in the prevalent market setting are empowered to engage with the customers relating to their unique services and products that are offered in the market. Wirtz et al. (2013) in their research have stated that online communication platforms allow businesses to build online brand communities which have

got a direct impact on customer loyalty. The platform that is established enables the existing and potential market audience to involve with the brand and comprehend how it creates value for them in order to meet their specific needs and wants (Parihar, Dawra, & Sahay, 2019).

In the fashion industry setting, brand acts as a core asset for any business as it helps it to have a competitive edge against the other players that exist and function in the industrial setting. As per San Lim, Heng, Ng, and Cheah (2016), a number of factors come into play and influence loyalty among the Generation Y people while selecting the preferred fashion brands. The identified factors include the brand experience, the level of satisfaction of the customers, and the switching cost. The communication model that is implemented by a fashion business has a direct relationship with the experience of the customers (San Lim et al., 2016). Customers remember their quality of experience the most and not the brand logo or mission. So, fashion brands can use innovative online communication approaches for the purpose of enhancing the ultimate consumer experience and creating superior value for them. Thus, the type of communication and experience of customers can influence the loyalty that is exhibited by them in the market setting.

2.1.7. Building online Brand Communities

Branding is of paramount importance in the competitive market setting because it helps them to establish online brand communities which ultimately helps them to retain their customers. Just a few decades ago, the market audience was not interested in brands. They basically measured the value that was created in terms of the monetary value and

intrinsic value. According to Linda D. Hollebeek (2013), customer engagement is extremely crucial in the intensely competitive market setting as it helps in the generation of customer value which strengthens their level of loyalty towards the brand. Today, most of the business organizations are seeking customer engagement and participation with their brands so that the views and opinions of customers can be properly understood. Today, customers are no longer viewed as passive participants of the marketing environment. They are in fact, considered to be the active members around whom the business entities and their operations revolve.

The online brand community engagement approach is considered to be a highly innovative and useful way of communication which enables business undertakings to interact in a transparent, simple, and personalized manner. As per the research by Baldus et al. (2015), many global brands such as Procter & Gamble, General Motors, Dell and Boston Red Sox are spending a significant amount of their finance to invest on their online brand communities. The online brand communities came into existence because business undertakings wanted to establish a platform so that they could interact and engage with the market audience. Their ultimate motive was to get a detailed insight into how consumers think, perceive and view their brand and their market offerings. With the passage of time, the concept of online brand communities has undergone significant changes (Baldus et al., 2015). Today, it is believed to be one of the most vital communication tools that help business undertakings to share their brand message in the global market context. At present, the online brand communities that have come into existence fundamentally represent a network of associations that exist between brands, products, marketers, and consumers.

According to Brogi (2014), the impact of online brand communities is extremely severe on brand equity in the luxury fashion industrial setting. In the words of the famous French fashion designer, Coco Chanel, technology has transformed the manner in which fashion is viewed. Fashion does not merely refer to dresses and apparels. It has to do with unique ideas, the manner in which people live and the current happenings. Due to the use of technology, in the present times, consumers are in a position to communicate and interact with one another as well as market players (Brogi, 2014). Due to the virtual platforms, the marketers that operate in the fashion industry do not have to face the challenges relating to time and space. These online brand communities are viewed as power communication instruments that help fashion brands to influence their market audience and shape their consumer behavior (Brogi, 2014). The internet-mediated interaction is far superior to the traditional communication approach as it enables a two-way interaction which creates a win-win situation for the marketers as well as their customers. The online brand communities have a number of advantages such as the ease of accessibility, the simplicity factor, cost-effectiveness and high speed which make it extremely useful for fashion brands in the competitive fashion industry.

2.1.8. Engagement through Social Media channels

Today, social media platforms have become an indispensable component for individuals and organizations alike. According to Kozinets (2014), social brand engagements have become an extremely vital model that is used for developing meaningful connections between the consumer and the business concern. The best part about the engagement that takes place on social media platforms is that the engagement can take

place when the brand is a celebrity, a destination, an idea or a cause. Thanks to the model and innovative engagement concept which revolves around social media the relationship has evolved from person-brand to person-person-brand.

When it comes to fashion luxury brands, the marketers use the social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to the core so that they can highlight the value that they are creating for the end-users. As per Yamawaki (2017), a social media engagement strategy that is implemented by luxury brands plays a key role to influence millennials. The engagement strategy through new media channels basically bridges the gap between the marketer and the customer. In the dynamic online environment, social media channels make a significant level of contribution while strengthening customer brand engagement. The research study that has been carried by Yamawaki (2017) has revealed that the engagement by brands such as Chanel, Louis Vuitton and Prada on various social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube and Twitter influences their brand image. As per the study, there exists a vital relationship between the cultural aspect and customer brand engagement in the fashion industry setting (Yamawaki, 2017).

In the last few years, there has been exceptional growth in the social media setting which has further influenced the engagement strategies that are used by businesses to interact with their target market audience. A wide range of business undertakings spanning across different industries has been using social media websites for the purpose of connecting with the customers and sharing valuable online content (Yamawaki, 2017). Yamawaki (2017) has highlighted in his research work that the very first blogging content

came into existence in the year 1999 and it is still used today by marketers to communicate and interact with the customers. Due to the high power of social media engagement channels, social media has been recognized as a distinct element of the marketing mix of a business organization.

Ublova (2015) has stated in his research work that in the current times almost a majority of the existing fashion brands use social media engagement strategy for establishing a personalized connection with the target market audience (Ublova, 2015). The technology-based platform is used to motivate the market audience to get a better understanding of how a brand creates value for them. The online brand community pages that exist on various social media platforms basically have the motivation that can be categorized onto utilitarian and hedonic. The customers who have the utilitarian motive try to use social media communication platforms in order to accomplish specific goals through the community like receiving information about the brands. The customers with hedonic motive use the community online platforms for spending their free time.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

The concept of 'customer engagement' has gained it important in last decade (Brodie et al., 2011). In 2009, Bowden (2009) identified and stated that 'customer engagement' has no theoretical base for measuring the engagement process. It is more often conceptualized on the basis of practice rather than the theory (Bowden, 2009). Later this period, as the research on this has increased at a large extent, to explain the conceptualization of 'engagement' in marketing along with its potential antecedents and

consequences, many researchers have taken the support of theories like Social Exchange Theory (SET), Social Identification Theory, Self-Determination Theory, Consumer Culture Theory (Leckie et al., 2016). Preece and Maloney-Krichmar (2005) about the theories applied to explain the OBC, stated that “no particular theory or set of theories currently dominates research on online communities. Rather, we see an application of different theories”. However, to explain the participation of customers in OBCs, support of theories like “Social Cognition Theory”, “Social Practice Theory”, “Consumer Culture Theory”, and “Social Identification Theory” have been used.

Since, the emergence of “Service-Dominant (SD) logic” (Lusch & Vargo, 2010; Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008), the transcending view of relationship theory; from the traditional and transactional view *via* “Goods-Dominant (GD) logic (Pels & Vargo, 2009), there has been a different outlook towards the relationship theory in marketing. The conceptual roots of ‘customer engagement’ can be found in the S-D logic fundamental propositions. S-D logic has articulated the marketing relationship with 10 fundamental propositions in view of customers interaction with stakeholders. “Four of the foundational premises underlying the S-D logic are of particular relevance for determining the conceptual foundations underlying the emerging CE concept (Vargo & Lusch, 2008).” The premise 6 highlights customer a cocreator of value, which is one of the underlaying benefit and objective of engagement through interactions. These interactions need a platform to support, where OBC play a major role. Next, premise 8 of S-D logic states “A *service-centered view is inherently customer oriented and relational*”, which emphasizes on objective of the service to generate specific benefits to customer through cocreated value

via interactions and experiences. Premise 9 highlights that all the factors/actors involved in the service are ultimately to integrate the resources, whereby customer join and use networks to generate values cocreated services, individually or collectively. Premise 10 of S-D logic states that “*Value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary.*” This emphasizes on the point that on the inherently subjective and experiential view of value creation. Customer sometimes act as “prosumers”, where they create their unique service experience rather than being mere recipients or cocreators of value. Based on these four fundamental propositions of S-D logic, which resemble the reason and process of customer engagement in virtual network landscape, the concept of ‘customer engagement’ is developed.

An important theory supporting the brand community’s participation is “Social Identity Theory (SIT)”. Dholakia, Bagozzi, and Pearo (2004) has focus on two aspects to define brand communities. Group norms and social identity are the two main characteristics of participation in virtual brand communities. Similarly, Algesheimer et al. (2005), has also emphasized in brand community identification in their research and defines it as a person’s behavior which “construes himself or herself to be a member – that is ‘belonging’ to the brand community” (p. 20). Social identification is also an important factor, rather it is a form of community participation (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006). Later, Heere et al. (2011) in their research on football team members has identified social community identification as an important factor of participation.

In the similar lines with the principles of SIT, the present research defines social community identification as a major basis for the customers to participate in the online brand communities. In support with some of the premises of S-D logic, mutual benefit for cocreation through experiential interaction is not only the underlying cause of engagement, but also the inherent feeling of the customers to be identified themselves with their favorite brand on the communities is also a driving force for participation which eventually engage the customers.

According to Arnould and Thompson (2005) “Consumer culture theory explores how consumers actively rework and transform symbolic meanings encoded in advertisements, brands, retail settings, or material goods to manifest their particular personal and social circumstances and further their identity and lifestyle goals” (p. 871). One another important theory which supports the concept of participation and engagement on Online Brand Communities (OBCs) is consumer culture theory discussed by Arnould and Thompson (2005). This theory has led to number of studies related to OBCs, engagement and participation. Muniz Jr and Schau (2005) has in their qualitative study emphasized on the customer participation on brand communities using Consumer Culture Theory (CCT). O'Sullivan, Richardson, and Collins (2011), through their quality study explored the process contributing to the origin or genesis of brand communities with the support of CCT. In the similar lines, the present study takes support of the CCT to explain the role pf participation of customers on OBCs and its various consequences.

“CCT investigates ‘the contextual, symbolic and experiential aspects of consumption cycle’ which begins with acquisition, consumption and possession and disposition of products, services and commercial brands (Arnould & Thompson, 2005).” CCT also focuses on the way consumers actively work with market-generated materials and draw a coherent self-identity within the marketplace. For example, consumers actively use marketplace ideologies and map their identity via brand meaning (Murray, 2002; Thompson & Haytko, 1997). Thus, as specified in our conceptual model, CCT underpins the effect of self-expressive brand on CBE, representing the symbolic, embodied and experiential aspects of consumer behavior.

S-D logic and CCT complement one another as both put the consumer at the center of the value co-creation process (Vargo & Lusch, 2004) and investigate how consumers allocate their economic, social and cultural capital resources among competing brands and service offerings to enrich their lives (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). Overall, by integrating S-D logic and CCT, this study captures the key constructs that explain why consumers interact directly with brands.

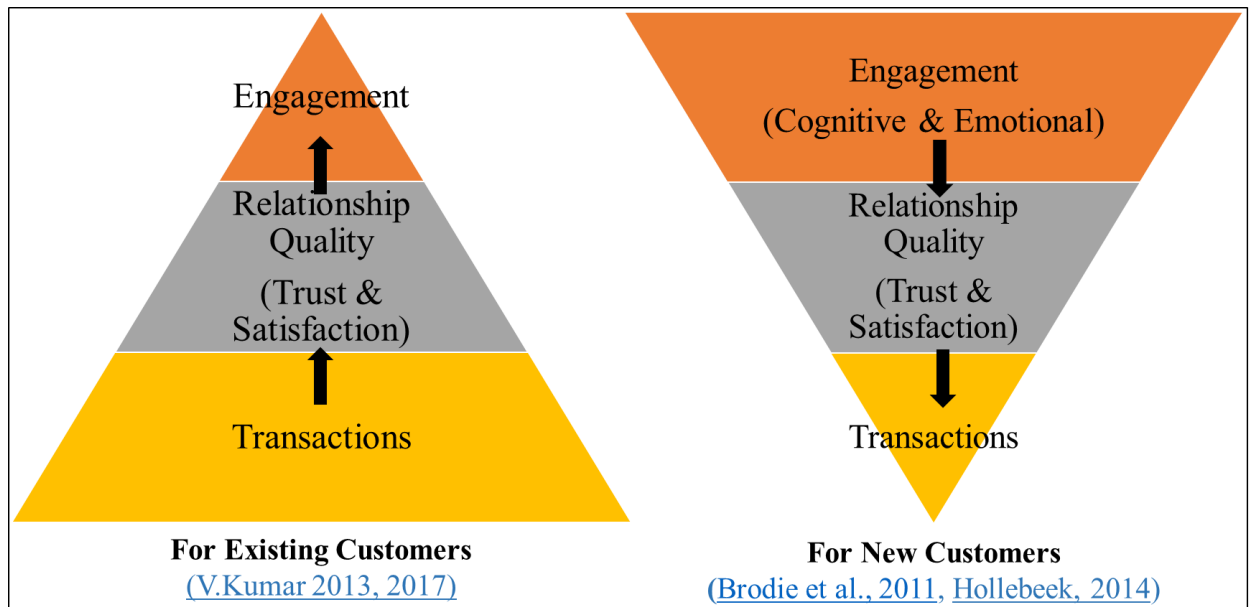
2.3. Hypotheses Development

The present section attempts to develop the hypotheses for the study which are mentioned based on research gaps and objectives in Chapter – 1. Hypothesis – 1 is based on the research question – 1 and objective – 1. Customer Engagement is happening among about the customer who are purchasers (existing) and also non-purchasers (new) of the brand. Engagement activities over the OBCs can be followed by both existing and new

customers. However, in the marketing literature, there are two different schools of thoughts who have done significant researches and have mentioned that CE behaves differently between these two types of customers. Brodie et al. (2011) and Linda D Hollebeek et al. (2014) has proposed that CE acts as an antecedent to new customers driving them towards trust and loyalty; and CE acts as a consequence for customers who are satisfied and committed customer of the brand. However, they emphasized their research more on new customer studying how CE drives customers' satisfaction, trust and commitment. Kumar et al. (2010) and Pansari and Kumar (2017) in their research emphasized more on customers who are purchasers of the brand. They argue that customer with transactional experience with the brand develop an emotional satisfaction or dissatisfaction and this experience would drive them to engage or disengage with the brand. These two thoughts arise the curiosity to empirically test the changing role of CBE and RQ between new and existing customers. The thought process of these two arguments in literature is depicted in Figure 2.1.1. Based on this argument, hypothesis – 1 has been developed that there might be a change in the role played by Customer-Brand Engagement (CBE) and Relationship Quality (RQ) between new and existing customers.

H1: There is a significant difference in the mediating effect of CBE and RQ in the relationship between participation and loyalty concerning new and existing customers.

Figure 2.1.1. The difference in the follow of CE between new & existing customers



2.3.1. Participation (PAR)

The existing literature related to consumer brand engagement show that consumer participation could be defined as the discretionary behaviors by customers for supporting the ability of a service organization to facilitate improved service quality. Consumer participation could also be identified from the imperatives of providing constructive feedback and prolific suggestions pertaining to a product/service offering and the delivery of products and services. Therefore, it can be observed that consumer participation has a formidable influence on the production and delivery of an organization's products and services (Leckie, Nyadzayo & Johnson, 2016).

Many researchers have included the concept of co-production through the proactive involvement of consumers other than communicating feedback to organizations to explain the significance of consumer participation. The impact of consumer participation could be

observed clearly in context of the fashion industry as higher participation of consumers could lead to creation of new products, improvement of fashion designs and timely access to information. Furthermore, different sources of research accessible in literature have pointed out towards the influence of consumer participation with interactions that share common interests for the consumer and organization. The credible benefits that can be derived from participation of consumers refer to the higher level of enthusiasm on behalf of consumers thereby leading to consumer engagement with the organization's brand.

Participation of customers is referred as “the extent to which consumers provide constructive feedback and helpful suggestions on the service offering and delivery to service organizations” (Eisingerich, Auh, & Merlo, 2014). Customers voluntarily participate sometimes to provide feedback and suggestion which will improve the services (Dabholkar, 2015). In this process of participation, the customers are exposed to the brand related content generated by marketers or other customers. When accessing this content, the customer tends to get occupied and thus get engaged. Similarly, some of the positive content the customers access come across on the OBCs would eventually generate positive trust and satisfaction towards the brand, for example the feedback and recommendations of other customers on the community platform, would generate a positive impression towards the brand. Thus, allowing customers to be cognitively satisfied with the brand and be committed to the activities they perform with brand, which further would motivate them to be behaviorally loyal towards the brand. With the following argument the present research proposes the following hypotheses related to participation.

H2: There is a significant positive effect of Participation on Consumer Brand Engagement (CBE).

H3: There is a significant positive effect of Participation on Relationship Quality (RQ).

H4: There is a significant positive effect on Participation and Brand Loyalty.

2.3.2. Customer-Brand Engagement (CBE)

According to Van Doorn et al. (2010) “customer engagement behaviors go beyond transactions” and may be defined as “customers’ behavioral manifestations that have a brand- or firm-focus, beyond purchase, resulting from motivational drivers” (p. 254). This is the main construct of the present research. More about this construct is discussed earlier in this present chapter. Broadly for the present research, CBE is operationalized as a higher-order construct having cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions as defined and developed by Linda D Hollebeek et al. (2014). The present research adapts the concept of customer engagement as defined by Linda D. Hollebeek (2011b), “the level of a customer’s cognitive, emotional and behavioral investment in specific brand interactions.” It is the customers cognitive, emotional and behavioral reaction towards a brand that they follow on a ‘Online Brand Community’. The present study used the term ‘Customer-Brand Engagement’ (CBE) representing customer as the subject of the study and brand as the object the customer is engaged with.

These activities which describe the engagement behavior of the customer are sharing information about the brand, writing suggestions and recommendations, referring

the brand to others, sharing positive or negative experiences, commenting, liking, tweeting etc. These activities are beyond the purchase activities of the customer i.e. manifestation is or more likely to happen irrespective where a customer has purchased or not.

Customer engagement is popular in the marketing literature because is a relatively a more effective predictor of customer attitudinal or behavioral loyalty besides satisfaction, perceived value etc. Many researches like (Linda D Hollebeek et al., 2014), (Nysveen & Pedersen, 2014), (Mollen & Wilson, 2010), (Pansari & Kumar, 2017), (C. M. Sashi, Brynildsen, & Bilgihan, 2019), (Thakur, 2016), (Shiri D. Vivek et al., 2014), (Wirtz et al., 2013), (Laurence et al., 2015), and (Leckie et al., 2016) have extensively researched conceptually and empirically CE as an antecedent and/or consequence of other related constructs like, flow, participation, brand-identity, satisfaction, loyalty, commitment etc. In the similar lines, we have hypothesized that CBE better predicts the loyalty of the customer.

Relationship-Quality (RQ) represents a higher-order construct comprising the dimensions of Trust, Commitment, and Customer Satisfaction (Dorsch, Swanson, & Kelley, 1998; Zolkiewski, Turnbull, Ulaga, & Eggert, 2006). In the organizational behavior discipline it is found that employee engagement has a positive effect on satisfaction and commitment (Saks, 2006). Analogously, the present research hypothesizes that customer engagement would positively impact satisfaction and commitment. According to Linda D. Hollebeek (2011a), customer engagement positively effects trust the customer develops towards a brand. Since we have considered the three constructs satisfaction, trust and

commitment as first order dimensions of ‘Relationship-Quality’, we hypothesize that CBE positively affects RQ.

H5: There is a significant positive effect of CBE and Brand Loyalty.

H7: There is a significant positive effect of CBE on RQ.

2.3.3. Relationship Quality (RQ)

Dorsch et al. (1998) conceptualized relationship quality as “being indicated by trust, commitment, and satisfaction.” Crosby, Evans, and Cowles (1990) identify satisfaction and trust as key constituents of relationship quality. Relationship quality has been described as a higher-order construct with trust and commitment as first-order constructs (Hewett, Money, & Sharma, 2002). In the marketing literature, it is proven multiple times that trust, commitment, satisfaction are effective predictors of customer loyalty. Since, we are considering for the present study RQ as a higher order construct, we assume and hypothesize that the aggregate effect of the three relatively associated constructs satisfaction, trust and commitment have positive effect on brand loyalty.

H6: There is a significant positive effect on Relationship Quality and Brand Loyalty.

2.3.4. Brand Loyalty (LOY)

The loyalty of the customer could be toward the brand, the product or the employee of the company. Loyalty can be either attitudinal or/and behavioral. Repeated purchases (behavioral loyalty) prompted by a strong internal disposition (attitudinal loyalty) (Day, 1976) over a period of time (Guest, 1944). Loyalty measures only repeated purchase transactions of the customer and focuses only on the revenue of the firm. CBE

focusses on four different behaviors of customer (purchases, referrals, influence, and feedback). Further, CBE goes beyond the revenue of the firm and looks at overall firm profits. Loyalty is the ultimate outcome the firm is interested to measure as a result of their marketing efforts. This has been defined in various forms in the literature. However, the present study operationalize Brand loyalty to be the attitudinal and behavioral dimension of the customer's intention to exhibit loyalty (Bettencourt, 1997; Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996).

2.3.5. Involvement (INV)

Consumer involvement explains “the degree to which consumers perceive the relevance of the object based on their inherent needs, values and interests” (Zaichkowsky, 1985). Brodie et al. (2011) in their research paper have explicitly distinguish the difference between engagement, involvement and participation constructs. “The rationale underlying this assertion is that CE, unlike traditional relational concepts, including ‘involvement’ and ‘participation’, is based on the existence of a customer’s interactive, cocreative experiences with a specific engagement object (e.g., a brand). The concepts of “involvement” and ‘participation’, therefore, may be viewed as CE antecedents, rather than dimensions” (Brodie et al., 2011, p. 264).

Consumer involvement is reflective of the extent to which consumers feel that an object is relevant to their vested interests, needs and values. The higher level of consumer involvement would result in higher possibilities for consumers feeling connected to a brand other than the area of mere consumption (Leckie et al., 2016). Consumers that associate

deeply with focal brands show better potential of engaging with search information about the brand from external sources and process information related to the brands extensively. Research has clearly established that consumers with higher levels of involvement are more likely to be associated with higher levels of engagement with the brand. The impact of consumer brand involvement has been found to be a positive influence on the cognitive processing, activation and affection of consumer brand engagement. However, the level of involvement of the customer with the brand varies from customer to customer. Customers with high involvement with brand and actively participate would have higher engagement levels. Similarly, customers with higher involvement and participation on OBCs would generate higher satisfaction, trust and commitment with the brand when they come across positive content and information about the brand. The phenomenon is vice-versa with customer having lower involvement levels with the brand. Hence, the study in this section proposes hypothesis that the level of customer involvement moderates/alters the relationship between participation, customer-brand engagement and relationship quality.

H8: Involvement moderates the relationship between Participation and CBE.

H9: Involvement moderates the relationship between Participation and RQ.

2.3.6. Perceived Value (VAL)

Customer perceived value (VAL) is one of the important concepts in marketing which acts as a catalyst to measure consumer behavior outcomes. It has been in the limelight and a central part in marketing and consumer behavior research. It is “the fundamental basis for all marketing activity” (Holbrook, 1994, p. 22). Perceived value is often measured in terms of value derived out of the cost spent on product. However, the

value of product perceived by customer is beyond these conventional measurement (Caruana, Money, & Berthon, 2000; Tam, 2004). It is considered as one of the important predictors of customer satisfaction.

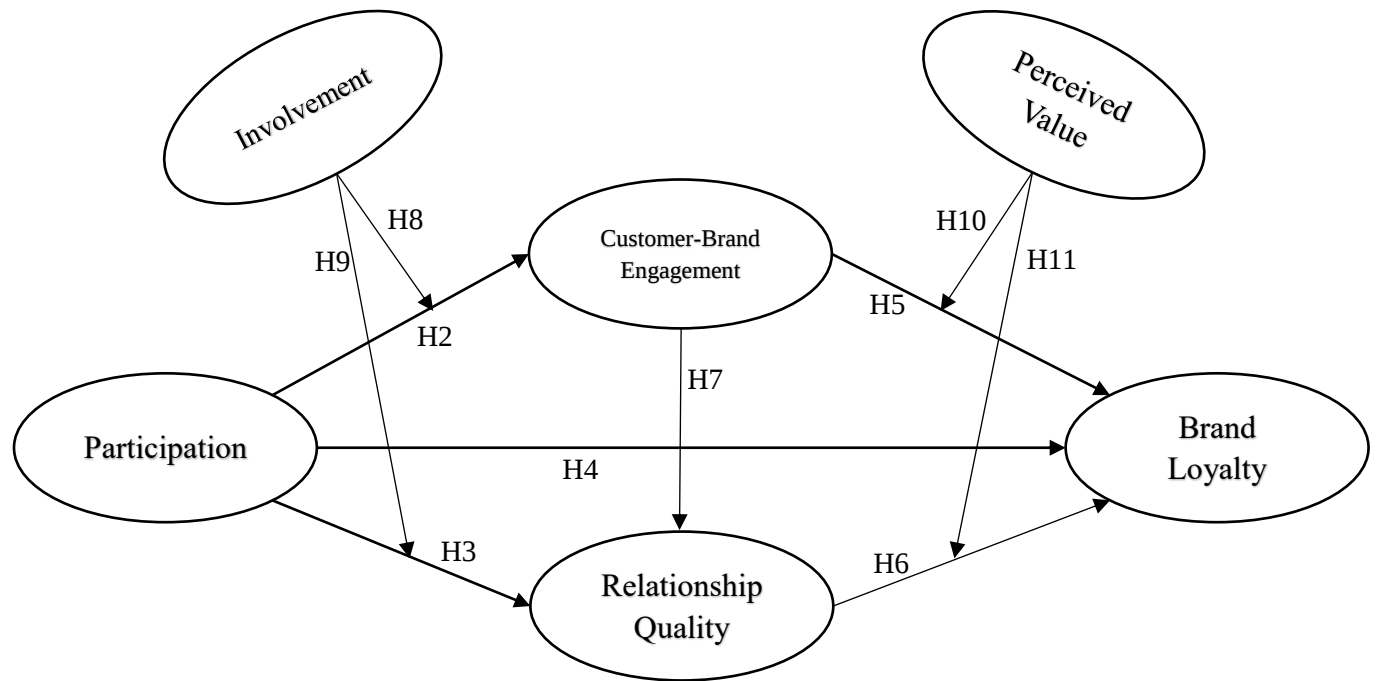
Some of the researchers like (Caruana et al., 2000), (Hsin Hsin & Hsin-Wei, 2008), and (Hsin Hsin, Yao-Hua, & Wen-Ying, 2009) have identified and studied perceived value as a moderator between marketing construct satisfaction, commitment, trust and loyalty. The value the customer derives from the value alters the online engagement behavior and its outcomes. For example, customers who perceive higher value and have higher relationship quality would have greater loyalty towards brand than customers with lower perceived value. Hence, the study hypothesizes that perceived value would enhance the effect of ‘relationship quality’ and ‘brand loyalty’. Similarly, perceived value also alters the engagement activities of the customer. For suppose the perceived value from a brand for a customer is high, then he would tend to get occupied with brand activities or sometimes he may not engage much because the loyalty is more driven by the value perceived than engagement.

H10: Perceived Value moderates the relationship between CBE and Brand Loyalty.

H11: Perceived Value moderates the relationship between Relationship Quality and Brand Loyalty.

With the above hypotheses formulated, the relationships between the constructs are depicted in the form of a model as shown in the figure 2.1.2. below.

Figure 2.1.2. Model with hypotheses of the study



Chapter – 3: Research Methodology

3.1. Overall Study Methodology

“When we talk of research methodology we not only talk of the research methods but also consider the logic behind the methods we use in the context of our research study and explain why we are using a particular method or technique and why we are not using others so that research results are capable of being evaluated either by the researcher himself or by others.” (C.R.Kothari, 1990, p. 8). The present section defines and explains all the elements constituting a research methodology for a better understanding of the methodology followed. Elements of a research methodology like research design, methods of data collection, sampling techniques, statistical tools, etc. Research methodology “is a way to systematically solve the research problem,” whereas research methods/techniques all those methods or techniques a “researcher uses in performing research operations” (C.R.Kothari, 1990, p. 8).

The present research has been probed under three sub-studies namely study – 1, study – 2, and study – 3. Study – 1 follows quasi-experimental design conducted with students as respondents. Study – 2 is an online based survey method where the respondents are identified as followers of study select four brands. Study – 3 also is an online based survey (MTurk) where the respondents are self-selecting samples responding for their favorite fashion brands. Study – 2 and study – 3 have been conducted to increase the generalizability of the results. The research has been conducted as three sub-studies as the objectives of the study are demanding different relevant methodologies and data collection to support the findings. The present research intended to study relationships between

customer participation, customer-brand engagement, relationship quality, and brand loyalty. Since the four objectives of the study were demanding different methodologies to collect data. Three different methods have been followed to investigate the goals of the study. The reason for conducting three studies is elaborately discussed in the next sections.

On the whole, the research developed a multi-method (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998) technique to provide a strong basis for the research questions. The methodologies have been used to support the hypotheses of the study; each methodology has its strengths and weaknesses; none is superior to the other. This multimethod data collection is used when research is focused on a larger population and a specific context. The multimethod technique increases the reliability and generalizability of the results, simultaneously minimizing the methodological errors if any. A comprehensive comparison between the methodologies of the three studies is shown in Table 3.1 at the end of the chapter.

3.1.1. Research Design

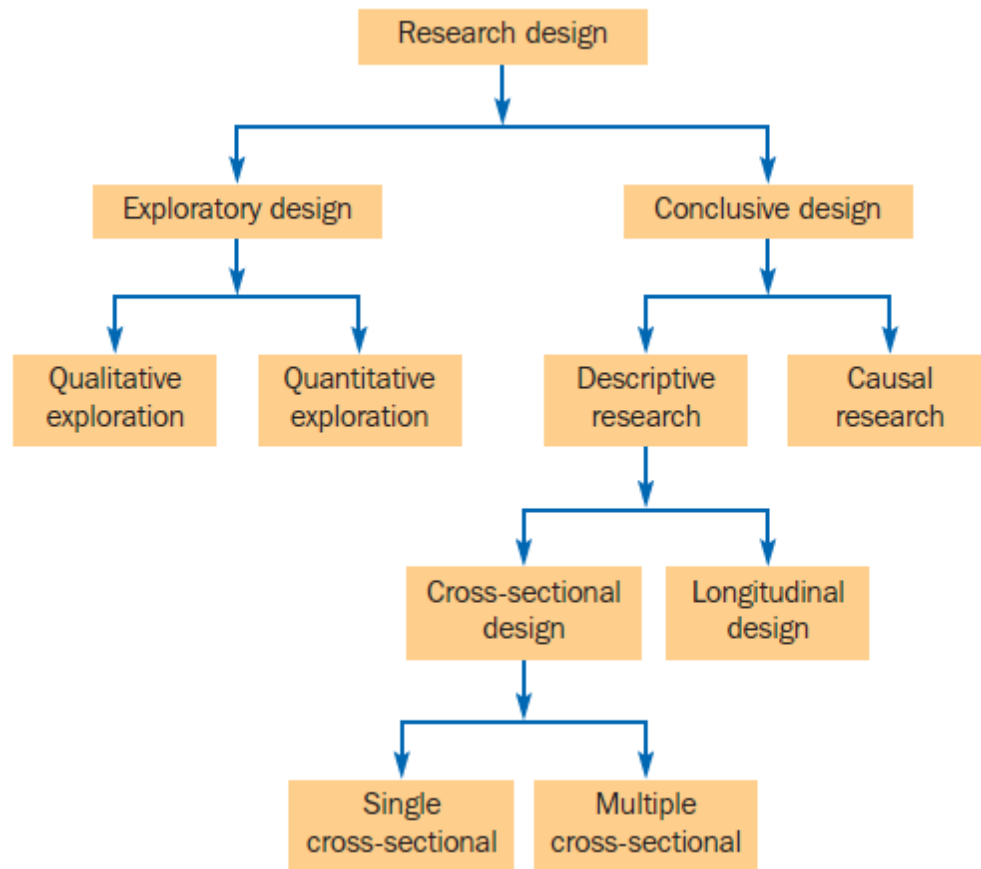
“A research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure” (Selltiz et al., 1959, p. 50). According to Kerlinger (1966) ‘Research Design’ is the “plan, structure, and strategy of investigation conceived to obtain answers to research questions and to control variance” (p. 275). The present study follows three different methods of data collection. However, the overall research design can be concluded as conclusive design as addressed by Naresh K. Malhotra and Birks (2007), as shown in Figure 3.1.1. To be very specific the design is descriptive and cross-sectional.

Conclusive research is a “research design characterized by the measurement of clearly defined marketing phenomena”(Naresh K. Malhotra & Birks, 2007, p. 69). The characteristics of conclusive research design are:

- The objectives of the research are to examine the relationship between constructs and test specified hypotheses.
- The information required is defined clearly; the research process is structured and formal.
- The research is more often quantitative and requires a large representative sample.
- The findings and results are complementary to explorative studies; or as a piece of empirical evidence to conceptual and theoretical understanding.
- The methods often used are structures surveys, observations, panel data, and secondary data.

‘Descriptive Research’ is defined as “A type of conclusive research that has as its major objective the description of something, usually market characteristics or functions” (Naresh K. Malhotra & Birks, 2007, p. 73). The major difference between exploratory and descriptive research is the prior formulation of specific hypotheses and research questions. The most commonly and frequently used design in descriptive research is cross-sectional design. It is defined as "research design involving the collection of information from any given sample of population elements only once” (Naresh K. Malhotra & Birks, 2007, p. 74). Hence, the present study design is descriptive cross-sectional design following a multimethod data collection approach.

Figure 3.1.1: Classification of Marketing Research Designs



Source: Adapted from Naresh K. Malhotra, & Birks, D. F. (2007). Marketing Research: An Applied Approach (3rd ed.)

3.1.2. Multimethod approach

The present research followed a multimethod approach for data collection to test the formulated hypotheses. Since three different methodologies have been followed for three studies taken up in this research; we can consider this as a multimethod approach. This method has been adopted was not only answer different research questions and

objectives requiring a different set of a sample but also to strengthen the generalizability of the results to the context considered for the study.

Multimethod research may be broadly defined as the practice of employing two or more different methods or styles of research within the same study or research program rather than confining the research to the use of a single method (Brewer & Hunter, 1989, 2006). “Unlike mixed method research, it is not restricted to combining qualitative and quantitative methods but rather is open to the full variety of possible methodological combinations. As there are numerous methods available to social researchers, and a variety of ways in which these methods can be combined, the topic of multimethod research design involves foremost asking (a) which methods are combined with which other methods and (b) how are the different methods deployed and implemented in relation to one another in the research process” (Hesse-Biber & Johnson, 2015, p. 187).

An assumption contained in a multimethod approach is that more methods are better. For example, (Brewer & Hunter, 2006) go on to note in their monograph on multimethod: “each new set of data increases our confidence that the research results reflect reality rather than methodological error” (p. 4). (Brewer & Hunter, 2006) suggest that using multimethod can also assist in sorting out “divergent findings” by noting: “They signal the need to analyze a research problem further and to be cautious in interpreting the significance of any one set of data” (p. 4).

(Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007), in the inaugural issue of the *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, defined mixed methods research as “research in which the investigator collects and analyzes data, integrates the findings and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods” (p. 4). What most approaches to mixed methods have in common is the mixing of at least one qualitative and one quantitative method in the same research project or set of related projects (e.g., in a longitudinal study). (Creswell, Klassen, Plano Clark, & Smith, 2011), for example, differentiate multimethod studies from mixed methods studies by noting that the former are studies in which multiple types of qualitative or quantitative data are collected in a single research project. Prior commentators on multimethod research have produced some typologies reflecting the “what” and “how” of combining or mixing different distinct methods. It was noticed that most commonly in the literature “mixed methods” is used to refer to mixing quantitative and a qualitative method, while “multimethod” more broadly refers to mixing of two or more methods—regardless of whether they are qualitative or quantitative. In short, a mixed method is a subset of multimethod (Hesse-Biber & Johnson, 2015, p. 187).

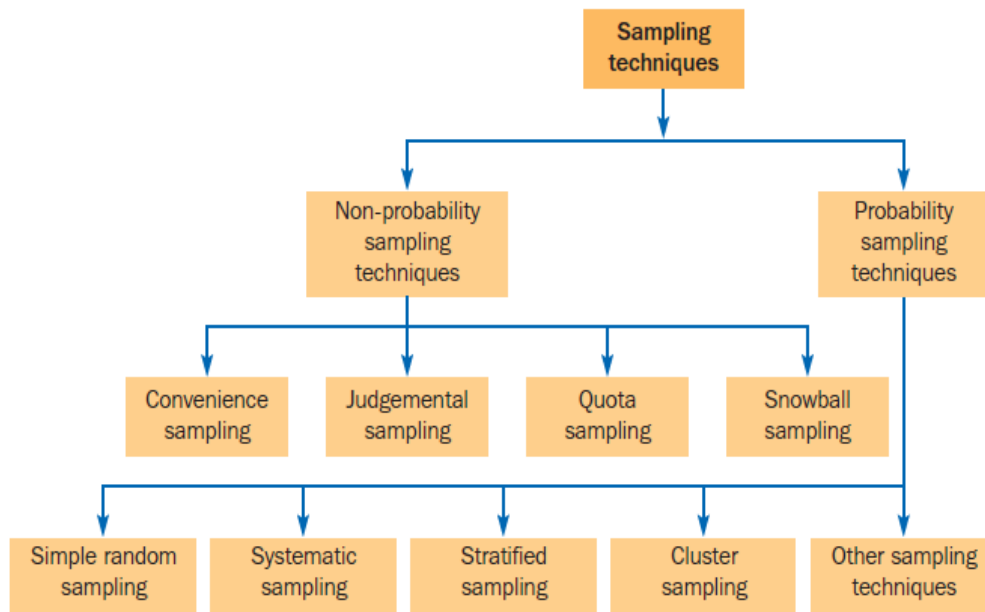
Multimethod research differentiates itself from mixed methods in that its definitional borders do not require having at least one quantitative/qualitative method in any given research project. A multimethod strategy does not necessarily need the mixing or integration of methods (Hesse-Biber & Johnson, 2015). Brewer and Hunter (1989) note that multimethod research is deployed “to attack a research problem with an arsenal of methods that have nonoverlapping weaknesses in addition to their complementary

strengths” (p. 17). Considering the above explanation from the literature on multimethod approach, I study finds multimethod as an appropriate and suitable approach.

3.1.3. Sampling

Sampling in research is defined as “the selection of a small number of elements from a larger defined target group of elements and expecting that the information gathered from the small group will allow judgments to be made about the larger group” (Joseph F. Hair, Bush, & Ortinau, 2002, p. 333). Sampling is an essential step in the research process. Sampling is an art and science of selecting a relevant and representative sample from the target population to guide data collection and analysis in the right direction to obtain reliable and applicable results. The general classification of sampling in research is shown in the form of a diagram in Figure 3.1.3.

Figure 3.1.3: Sampling Classification



Source: Adapted from Naresh K. Malhotra, & Birks, D. F. (2007). Marketing Research: An Applied Approach (3rd ed.)

Though the study has followed different sampling techniques for three studies, broadly it can be said that the present study followed a non-probability-based sampling. The specific non-probability sampling technique for each study in the present research is detailed in the subsequent sections study-wise.

3.1.4. Population and Sample

A population is defined as “The aggregate of all the elements, sharing some common set of characteristics, that comprise the universe for the marketing research problem” (Naresh K. Malhotra & Birks, 2007, p. 405). To understand the important issues related to sampling in research, the population can be modified to "defined target population," which consist of all those elements identified for investigation (Joseph F. Hair et al., 2002). This target population can be identified as “The collection of elements or objects that possess the information sought by the researcher and about which inferences are to be made” (Naresh K. Malhotra & Birks, 2007, p. 406). These target population and the characteristics can be identified with the context or environment the research being conducted. Since the present study is not a census survey where all the elements of the population are available and considered, a sample has to be selected as participants or respondents of the study. A sample is a subset of elements of a target population with the entire representative characteristic.

The present research focuses on customer engagement behavior with their favorite brand; the study is confined to fashion brands. Hence, the target population broadly considered for the study is Indian customers who follow their favorite fashion brands in

online brand communities. Also, a relevant respondent sample and size has been followed representing the targeted population for each study separately based on the required sample characteristics.

3.1.5. Sample size

Sample sizes become critical in determining the overall cost of collecting the required primary data, the accuracy or representativeness of the data, and the insights that should be included in the current research models. According to the central limit theorem, data collected by a large sample size are approximated to be normally distributed. It is not always necessary to sample size should be large to better get better results. The concept of how large sample size can be decided with statistical methods or expert researcher advice. What sample size is adequate for a study is always a consensus issue. The researcher can provide a statistical, experiential or literature-based justification on the required sample size. However, it is important to minimize the sampling error while decided on the sample and its size. A “sampling error is any type of bias that is attributable to mistakes made in either the selection process of prospective sampling units or determining the sample size” (Joseph F. Hair et al., 2002, p. 340).

The present study considered different sample sizes for three different studies based on the objectives the study is addressing. Literature and statistical based justification are provided on the adequacy of the sample to conduct the study.

3.2. Methodology for Study – 1

3.2.1. Research Design

As discussed earlier, broadly the present study followed a conclusive type of research design. According to Naresh K. Malhotra and Birks (2007), there are two types of conclusive research designs: descriptive and causal. The type of design is based on the objective of the study. The research that is trying to understand and identify which variable is the cause and which variable is the effect is called 'causal research.' If the variable is already identified to be cause and effect in the literature, and thus have been hypothesized and required empirical investigation is called 'descriptive research.' Since, the present study – 1 is an attempt to empirically support the hypothesized relationships through a conceptual model developed from the literature, it can be regarded as a descriptive design.

3.2.2. Research Method: Quasi-Experiment

Research, which is trying to identify the cause and effect between variables for the first time under controlled conditions, an experimental design, is the most suitable one. However, not all the experiments are pure experiments, which follow all the prescribed rules for the design; such experiments are called quasi-experiments. The present study – 1 adopted a quasi-experimental method to investigate the objective – 1 of the research.

“Quasi-experiments approximate randomized experiments, that is, studies with some of the characteristics of experiments but lacking random assignment. Quasi-experiments may be used when the effect of a treatment on an outcome is of interest, but the random assignment is infeasible or unethical. Several different quasi-experimental

designs exist, ranging in how susceptible they are to internal validity threats. That is, the designs differ about the general plausibility of alternative explanations of their results” (Hesse-Biber & Johnson, 2015, p. 37).

One way to try to avoid selection and selection by maturation threats is to implement a stronger quasi-experimental design, such as the so-called regression-discontinuity design. Another approach is to use statistical procedures in an attempt to control for selection bias. Various alternatives exist, including the difference in differences, regression analyses, structural equation modeling, and the use of propensity scores (Morgan & Winship, 2007; Rubin, 2006).

“Other quasi-experimental designs use comparison groups without time-series data. When the assignment to conditions is not random, designs of this sort may be called nonequivalent group designs. In these quasi-experiments, individuals either self-select into the different groups (e.g., individuals may choose to participate in an afterschool online math program or not), or are assigned in some nonrandom fashion into the groups by others such as program administrators (e.g., teachers are allowed to assign some students to the program), or group assignment is determined nonrandom by one’s location (e.g., the program is implemented in one school district but not another one)” (Hesse-Biber & Johnson, 2015, p. 38).

In the simplest nonequivalent groups design, the posttest only nonequivalent groups design, conditions are formed other than at random, there is no pretest, and a posttest

measure of the outcome is taken to estimate the treatment effect. One way to try to avoid selection and selection by maturation threats is to implement a stronger quasi-experimental design, such as the so-called regression-discontinuity design. Another approach is to use statistical procedures in an attempt to control for selection bias. Various alternatives exist, including the difference in differences, regression analyses, structural equation modeling, and the use of propensity scores (Morgan & Winship, 2014; Rubin, 2006).

The study – 1 hence adapted a non-equivalent posttest only form of quasi-experiment. The first objective of the research is to examine whether there is a difference between purchasers and non-purchasers about the conceptual model. In other words, does the role of CBE and RQ change between these two groups, i.e., whether CBE leads to RQ or RQ leads to CBE. Since it is like to find which is the cause and effect for the two groups, an experimental study seemed appropriate.

3.2.3. Target Population & Sample

The objective of study – 1 is to test the cause and effect (reverse) between two variables for two groups, the target population defined as those who are purchasers or non-purchasers; and following or not following a particular selected fashion brand. Since the effects vary with participants age, income, occupation, etc. the preferred to target population with homogeneous characteristics, example ‘student’ population of university/school. The present study – 1 selected students of a graduate program from a university as sample participants for the quasi-experiment.

“Although the use of student samples has raised objections (Stevens, 2011), the practice is frequently used and widely accepted for behavioral experiment (Bowles & Flynn, 2010; Krause, Terpend, & Petersen, 2006) and buyer-seller relationship researches (Fugate, Thomas, & Golicic, 2012; Thomas, Fugate, & Koukova, 2011)” (Samala Nagaraj & Sapna Singh, 2018). A student sample is also considered desirable as it serves as a control mechanism in experimental designs, due to the consistent classroom settings and homogeneity in the demographics of the sample (Thomas, Esper, & Stank, 2010). Student sample is considered as the desirable sample representing a homogeneous group that relatively limits the confounding effects of unknown demographic variables (Thomas et al., 2011).

3.2.4. Sampling Technique

The study demanded a homogeneous sample with not much variance in age, income, education, and occupation because these elements influence engagement behavior; and these must be methodologically controlled before the data is collected. Post-graduate students of a program from a university are selected for the study. These students are invited to participate in the experiment against a couple of credits for a subject in their post-graduate program. Since all the students of a program from a university are selected and not picked up randomly; the study does not consider it a random sample. However, these participants are picked up for a specific reason like a homogeneous profile; the study defines this sampling as purposive and convenience.

3.2.5. Sample Size

The participants of this study – 1 are students of a program from a university, it was difficult to gather and convince a large number of students. A total of 194 students participated in the study. Though this sample size seems to be less for a study, 194 is a relatively adequate sample for a quasi-experiment (Batistatou, Roberts, & Roberts, 2014; Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002) conducted for 5 days.

The sample size is to be justified statistically because the study involved testing hypothetical relations using a structural model. Hence, statistical support is felt necessary to defend the sample size. The sample size is considered adequate for the study for the following reasons:

- The sample size is acceptable according to the recommended ratio of (5:1) by (Bentler & Chou, 1987). They suggested a minimum of 5 responses to each free parameter in the study (Samala Nagaraj & Sapna Singh, 2018).
- According to Kline (2011, p. 12), a typical sample size in studies where SEM is used is about 200 cases (Samala Nagaraj & Sapna Singh, 2018).
- Similarly, according to Kline (2011) for complex model estimated using methods other than Maximum Likelihood (ML), <200 samples would become untenable. The present study is, however, using Maximum Likelihood estimation (ML) method to analyze the structural model. Hence the present sample size 194 can be considered tenable (Samala Nagaraj & Sapna Singh, 2018).

- According to Wolf, Harrington, Clark, and Miller (2013), a sample size range of 30 to 460 is adequate to estimate a structural model (Samala Nagaraj & Sapna Singh, 2018).
- Some researchers like Velicer and Fava (1998) and Tinsley and Tinsley (1987) have suggested sample size as low as 150 also considerable for conducting SEM (Samala Nagaraj & Sapna Singh, 2018).
- For conducting a multi-group analysis using SEM, the rule of thumb for minimum sample size requires is 100 cases per group (Samala Nagaraj & Sapna Singh, 2018).

3.2.6. Data Collection Method

The 194 students participated in the experiment were clearly explained about the research and its objectives. They were given clarity about fashion brands and online brand communities. All the students were having a Facebook account and are active members. The brand selected for the study is ‘Myntra’ a fashion category retailer selling multiple branded products online. Hence, measuring engagement with this brand on online community page created by Myntra is the objective.

Since some of the participants are already followers of this brand, and some are not, and some participants have purchased products from this brand, and some have not yet. There are four sets of participants in combination concerning their purchase and following status. To minimize the different engagement levels among these groups and

have similar engagement experience with the brand, all the 194 students were exposed to this brand page and content on Facebook for 20 minutes each day for 5 days consecutively.

After these four groups of participants are engaged with a similar brand and fashion content on Facebook, a structured questionnaire is distributed to give their opinion regarding engagement and their relationship quality with the brand.

3.2.7. Fashion Brands

Since brands engage customers with different contents and stories on social media, customers may be engaged with different levels and experience. To minimize this variance and have similar engagement experience, the study – 1 selected only one fashion brand for the study, i.e., Myntra. Myntra is a fashion retailer selling more than 100 fashion brands online that include other brands and Myntra owned brands as well. This is selected for the reasons being the most followed Indian fashion brand on Facebook with 1,51,247 followers in the first quarter of 2016.

3.2.8. Social Media

Facebook and Twitter as the most popular social networking sites among the student community. Students follow brand created communities/pages for various reasons like information, feedback, reviews, comments, etc. Facebook and Twitter are the most effectively used social networking platforms by a fashion brand to engage their customers.

The study selected Facebook, as all the student's participants were already having a Facebook account and were active members. Most of the students were not having Twitter; hence, instead of creating new accounts on Twitter and ask students to participate, the study considered Facebook as the appropriate social networking site.

3.3. Methodology for Study – 2

Study – 1 is to answer the questions mainly related to the objective – 1, i.e., whether there is a change in the role of CBE and RQ between two groups of customers; purchasers and non-purchasers. Once, the result confirms that there is a change in the role of CBE and RQ between two groups, the study – 2 was intended to test the remaining hypotheses related to Objectives – 2, 3, and 4. The data collected in the study – 1 is neither sufficient nor relevant to test the remaining hypothesis. Hence, a second study with a larger sample and a more representative sample of a larger population in the fashion context were required. Hence, study – 2 has taken with different SNS (Twitter), multiple Indian brands (four), and larger sample size (624).

3.3.1. Research Design

The research design adapted in this study – 2 is also descriptive, as the same hypothesized relationship mentioned in the conceptual model is being tested in this study – 2 also. Since the survey, neither exploring a new dimension/variable nor investigating a cause/effect variable, the design can be regarded as a descriptive design (Naresh K. Malhotra & Birks, 2007).

3.3.2. Research Method: Online Survey

The study-targeted customers following selected Indian fashion brands on Twitter, a unique sample selection is adapted. Twitter IDs of the followers of selected brands are extracted using Twitter API and 'R' software. Since these customers just know through their Twitter IDs, it was not possible to get responses face-to-face for the study purpose. A structure questionnaire link is distributed to these Twitter IDs extracted. Hence, this study – 2 followed an online survey method unlike study – 1. Online surveys are more popular in recent times because they are more reachable when the target population is widespread and not reachable. Online surveys are flexible, cost-effective and convenient (Evans & Mathur, 2005).

Evans and Mathur (2005) have highlighted the pros and cons of online surveys against traditional surveys. Online surveys are getting more consideration for the positive reason's convenience, flexibility, cost, follow-up, controlled sample, etc. The low response rate is one of the weaknesses of online surveys. However, a well-designed and targeted online survey can result in similar results as other surveys (Evans & Mathur, 2005).

3.3.3. Target Population & Sample

Most of the fashion brands are aggressively and substantially making efforts to engage customers online through social networking sites and online brand communities. However, the engagement activities taken up vary from brand to brand in terms of scale and creativity. To reduce this variation, the study – 2 has selected five Indian fashion brands. The target population is the people who follow these brands on Twitter. To identify and list these followers, R programming code and Twitter API is used.

3.3.4. Sampling Technique

The objective of the study – 2 is to get responses from followers of selected brands on Twitter. It was easier to collect Twitter IDs through software programming than Facebook IDs. Brands engage customers on different platforms (SNS) in different ways. To have similarly engaged customers the study – 2 selected followers of selected brands from a single SNS, i.e., Twitter. Hence, study – 2 adapted a purposive and convenient sampling technique.

3.3.5. Sample Size

The sample size for study – 2 is 624. 4000 identified customers from four brands have been sent the questionnaire link. After a severe follow-up, 624 responses have been received. A response rate of 15.6% is achieved, which is a decent percent for self-administered online surveys (Nulty, 2008).

Nulty (2008) Has suggested ways to improve the response rate via online surveys and emphasizes that if the target population as larger as more than 2000, even a response rate as low as 10% is also acceptable. Similarly, (if Wählberg & Poom, 2015) has reported that low responses are no threat to the validity of the results, they do not impact much on the effect size of the results, as they have found minor effects with low response rate as low as 6%. (Deutkens, De Ruyter, Wetzels, & Oosterveld, 2004) Identified response rate as low as 12.7% in online surveys; and also found that longer version of questionnaires also generates around 17% of response rate against shorter version around 25%, which is considerably high. Hence, the extended version of the questionnaire with more than 20 questions also yields considerable rate of response.

The sample size of the present study is also justified according to the relevant statistical recommended techniques applied to test the hypotheses. According to Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2006), while using SEM for a complex structural model, the minimum sample size is dependent on the responses for each item used to measure the constructs; and recommended 15:1 as an acceptable ratio. Fifteen cases for each response used. Forty-Two items were used to measure the six constructs in this study – 2. Hence, around 630 responses are required, and the study could collect 624 cases, which is over the acceptable range of sample size required to conduct SEM.

3.3.6. Data Collection Method

To get respondents from Twitter following selected brands, a unique online method approach is followed, as these respondents could not interact face-to-face. The four Indian fashion brands selected Craftsvilla (6400), Raymonds (7215), Manyavar (3825), and AmericanSwan (8055) have 25,495 followers as on April 2016. Using R programming code and Twitter API, 1000 followers were randomly extracted from each brand, totaling 4000 Twitter IDs. These 4000 followers were sent a questionnaire hyperlink using the IDs retrieved. An aggressive and thorough follow-up for three months has generated 624 usable response datasets. Though the response rate is low which is quite common in online surveys, 15.6% is a decent acceptable rate. The questionnaire is prepared using 'Google Forms,' and the generated hyperlink is distributed to the study participants.

3.3.7. Fashion Brands

Craftsvilla, Raymonds, Manyavar, and AmericanSwan are the four brands for study – 2. These are the four Indian fashion brands, which sell their brand products in India. The study – 2, wanted to restrict the brands to be more Indian and sell their own branded products. Other fashion brands like pantaloons, reliance trends, myntra, jabong sell their brands and other international brands as well. Hence, the customer may be following these brands because of the other brands they sell through their portals or outlets. This may cause variation in the image of the brand being Indian. To define the selected brands to be more Indian, study – 2 have selected these four brands, although these other popular Indian fashion brands.

3.3.8. Social Media

The study – 2 has selected Twitter as the SNS, firstly it was easier than Facebook to collect follower IDs. Secondly, Twitter has a unique format of limited words to tweet, which restricts the brands to post their engagement content in a way.

3.4. Methodology for Study – 3

To overcome the methodological limitations in study – 2, another study – 3 is conducted. The study – 2 is taken up with selected brands and only one SNS, i.e., Twitter. This is in a way is a biased sample which overlooks the customer choice of a favorite fashion brand and the SNS most actively participating. Hence, another study is recommended which would give respondents to select their favorite fashion brand (national

or global) and their most followed SNS (like Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram). The study also does not want to force or pursue respondents to fill the questionnaire.

Hence, unique platforms of data collection are used in study – 3. Qualtrics to design questionnaire which would pipe customer selected brand and SNS in the subsequent questions. This software will also allow the questions to randomize the questions automatically, which will reduce the common method bias. Amazon Mturk is used to collect data from respondents where participants self-select the questionnaire to answer out of their interest.

3.4.1. Research Design

The study – 3, research design is also descriptive. This study – 3 attempts to collect larger and relevant data, which will improve the validity and generalizability of the test results. In this method, the study gives away the customer to select the fashion brand he follows the most on any OBC, unlike in study – 2 where the respondents are restricted to followers of select brand on Twitter.

3.4.2. Research Method: Online Survey

The present study – 3 is also an online survey method, where a unique platform of data collection is used. The study used Qualtrics questionnaire design software which offers more features when compared to Google forms. A more improved version of the questionnaire as in study – 2 is designed using Qualtrics and distributed to self-selecting

samples through Amazon's Mtruk. The reasons for such method are explained in the previous section. The advantages are explained in the subsequent sections.

3.4.3. Target Population & Sample

The population targeted here in the study – 3 are Indians who follow a favorite brand any SNS or OBC. Since, these people are large and widespread across the country, reaching them face-to-face for opinion is highly difficult. Hence, a unique online survey, which does not restrict respondents to a particular fashion brand, or SNS, or OBC, or a particular place, is applied. To collect responses from people spread across country and respondents who voluntarily participate are required. Hence, the sample is Indian participants (MTurkers) on Amazon's MTruk who are willing to participate in the study by filling up the questionnaire in return for a small compensation.

3.4.4. Sampling Technique

Sample collected through MTurk is considered as convenience sampling in the methodology literature (Smith, Sabat, Martinez, Weaver, & Xu, 2015). Since the respondents are self-selected samples and are voluntarily participating in the study, the sampling technique followed for this study – 3 is convenience sampling.

3.4.5. Sample Size

A sample of 1074 responses has been collected when the questionnaire is posted on MTurk for one month. Methodologically, it is highly challenging to justify the adequacy of the sample, since we do not have any estimation of how many Indian are registered on

MTurk or how many Indians follow their favorite fashion brand on any OBC. Hence, a statistical sample justification can be applied alternatively. 42 items are used using adapted scales to measure the major six constructs included in the study. According to Hair et al. (2006) and Kline (2011), a ratio as large as 15:1 is sufficient when conducting a multivariate analysis using structural equation modeling (SEM). 1074 sample responses for 42 items used to measure the constructs is statistically adequate to perform data analysis.

3.4.6. Data Collection Method

A structured questionnaire designed for the study using Qualtrics is posted on Amazon's MTurk for data collections. The respondents are initially asked to confirm their favorite fashion brand, and the online brand community (OBC) followed on. These two are reflected in the statements asked further in the questionnaire, making sure that the respondents are answering about their favorite brand and the OBC they follow the brand on. "Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) is a relatively new website that contains the major elements required to conduct research: an integrated participant compensation system; a large participant pool; and a streamlined process of study design, participant recruitment, and data collection" (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011, p. 3). Some of the researchers like (Nelson & Stavrou, 2011; Rice, Winter, Doherty, & Milner, 2017) have demonstrated the disadvantages of Mturk for data collection, many for example (Landers & Behrend, 2015) and (Buhrmester et al., 2011) have recommended and explained the advantages of using Mturk.

Although Mturk is a relatively new method of collecting data, Smith et al. (2015) has recommended the use of Mturk for Hard-to-reach populations. In a similar line, Landers and Behrend (2015) have also proposed the use of Mturk for organizational research samples. They have also emphasized the advantages of online convenience sampling over traditional samples like college students, and employee convenience samples. Clifford, Jewell, and Waggoner (2015) have confirmed the validity if Mturk for using as a data collection tool in political ideology. Wessling, Huber, and Netzer (2017) urged the high internal validity of Mturk responses, although there is a small amount of misuse and misrepresentation by Mturk respondents.

Stritch, Pedersen, and Taggart (2017) advocated the use of Mturk for data collection in management research. They reported five situations where this data collection platform can be used; one among them is when you need a unique set of respondents with broad characteristics and are not reachable easily with other methods. The attention of participants is also a major concern in researchers, and participants in Mturk are more attentive to instructions and response when compared to other forms of data collection like pooled sample participants (Hauser & Schwarz, 2016). Casler, Bickel, and Hackett (2013) have compared data collected from in-lab, face-to-face and Mturk for a behavioral study, and reported that responses are equivalents and online mode of data collection is more effective.

3.4.7. Fashion Brands

To overcome the use of responding to the study-selected fashion brands only in study – 2, this (study – 3) has kept open for respondents to select their most favorite fashion

brand they like. To avoid ambiguity about what is a fashion brand, they respondents before start answering the questionnaire were well explained about the operational definition in the questionnaire screening process. Hence, this method has also over the selection of national brands alone (as in study – 2). Using this method, the respondent could select any fashion brand including national or global brand. This minimizes the brand selection bias occurred in study – 2, where the respondent is forced to answer with reference to the selected brand only. Hence, by giving away the freedom of choosing their favorite brand improves the validity of the results.

3.4.8. Social Media

In study – 2, Twitter was the social media collected for respondents to be of the same SNS. However, a respondent may be following a brand more on other SNS like Facebook or Instagram or another online brand community. The present study – 3 has given the option of selecting the most followed SNS by the respondent. After the respondent selects the favorite brand, he would select the SNS that he uses to follow this brand. This would aptly serve the broad objective of the study of the respondent being answering the measured constructs with reference to this favorite brand and OBC.

3.5. Survey Instrument

To collect the data for the testing of hypotheses, a structured questionnaire is designed, which is exhibited at the end of the thesis in the Appendix section. The questionnaire is designed by adapting the developed corresponding scales. Eight main constructs used in the study namely participation, customer-brand engagement (CBE),

involvement, perceived value, brand loyalty, and finally relationship quality (RQ) which constitute of trust, satisfaction, and commitment. Preliminary screening questions and demographics related questions are also included in the questionnaire. The operationalization of the constructs is provided in Chapter – 2, ‘Literature Review.’

A four-item scale developed by Eisingerich, Auh, and Merlo (2014) and Bettencourt (1997) is adapted for measuring participation of the customers on OBCs. A ten-item scale developed by Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014), which include three dimensions namely cognitive processing, affection, and activation. Four-items relevant for the present study is adapted for ‘Personal Involvement Inventory’ scale developed by (Zaichkowsky, 1985, 1994) to measure the involvement levels of the customer with the brand.

Four-items have been adopted from Anderson and Srinivasan (2003), and Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal (1991) to measure perceived value. Brand loyalty is measured by adapting behavioral loyalty items used by Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996). Finally, to measure relationship quality, which is a higher-order construct with trust, satisfaction, and commitment is measured with the individual developed scales. Trust is measured by adapting Crosby, Evans, and Cowles (1990), and (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999). Satisfaction is measured using four-items developed by Johnson, Herrmann, and Huber (2006), and commitment is measured using (Brown, Barry, Dacin, & Gunst, 2005) scale. All the scale items are measured using five-point Likert’s scale; 1 resembling ‘Strongly Disagree’ and 5 resembling ‘Strongly Agree.’

Table 3.1. Comparison of three study methodologies and data collection

	Study-1	Study-2	Study-3
Objectives	1 & 2	2, 3 & 4	2, 3 & 4
Hypotheses	H1 to H7	H2 to H11	H2 to H11
Research Design	Descriptive	Descriptive	Descriptive
Sampling Technique	Purposive & Convenience	Purposive & Convenience	Convenience
Sample Population	Students selected for a Quasi-Experiment	Followers on Twitter. Study select four brands.	Anyone who purchase & follow a favorite fashion brand.
Sample Size	194	624	1074
Data Collection	Offline	Online	Online
Questionnaire	Forms	Google Forms	Mturk & Qualtrics
Social Media	Facebook	Twitter	Respondents Choice
Brands	Myntra	Raymonds, AmericanSwan, CraftsVilla, Manyavar.	Respondents Choice
Respondents	Purchasers & Non-Purchasers	Only Purchasers (Online only)	Only Purchasers (both Online & Offline)

Chapter – 4: Data Analysis & Results

4.1. Study – 1

4.1.1. Respondent's Profile

The respondents for this study – 1 are purposively selected to match the required characteristics. The respondents are post-graduate students of a university program. Hence, the age of the 194 students is almost same i.e., between 20-24 years of age. 41% i.e. 80 participants are female and 59% i.e. 114 are male. Income of the students is not recorded and considered it as same or nil, as the participants are full time students of a university graduate program. Thus, the methodology controls for age and income of the respondents.

Initially, the respondents were asked about the online purchasing behavior. All of the respondents declared their awareness about online shopping. The participants are purchasers of variety of products from some of the top online e-commerce retailers. 66% of the participants declared that they have bought products from Amazon.in. Some of the other websites the participants are customer are Myntra, e-bay, Jabong, She-in etc. Apparel & fashion related a product is the top category, followed by electronics category purchased by the respondents.

The respondents were then asked about their knowledge and presence on social networking sites (SNSs) like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc. All 194 students reported having a good knowledge about SNSs. All the 194 respondents declared having a registration with one of the SNS. 75% of the respondents are registered members on Facebook and rest declared to be members on Twitter and Instagram. Then the respondents

were asked about following fashion brand communities on the SNSs created by brands. The respondents have indicated that follow their favorite fashion brand pages on the SNS they registered.

In this study – 1, respondents are asked to follow ‘Myntra’ a fashion brand online retailer in India, on Facebook. For the quasi-experiment purpose and to have a uniform engagement content (as explained in the research methodology section), only one brand and SNS is preferred, irrespective of what fashion band and SNS they respondents are already following/members. Since, Myntra is no one brand and most of respondents are already are members of Facebook, there are a mix of respondents following Myntra on Facebook. For example, some participants are already purchaser (existing customers) and following Myntra on Facebook, some or not. Few of them follow Myntra but are not customers yet. The details are provided in Table 4.1.1.

Table 4.1.1. Contingency table for Followers & Purchasers.

			Following		Total
			Non-Following	Following	
Purchase	Non-Purchasers	Count	45	67	112
		Total (in %)	23.2%	34.5%	57.7%
	Purchasers	Count	37	45	82
		Total (in %)	19.1%	23.2%	42.3%
Total		Count	82	112	194
		Total (in %)	42.3%	57.7%	100.0%

23.2% are existing customers of Myntra and followers of Myntra page on Facebook, while 19.1% are customer but not following Myntra page on Facebook yet. 34.5% of the respondents have not bought anything from Myntra (i.e New or Potential customers), however following Myntra brand page on Facebook, while 23.2% of the

customers are neither customers nor followers of Myntra brand. Hence, a unique combination of purchasers and non-purchasers participated in the study. All these participants were engaged with Myntra's brand page content to have uniform engagement exposure. Responses were collected after a five-day consecutive engagement for all the participants.

4.1.2. Data Validity & Reliability

The collected dataset is initially screened for missing and incomplete responses. Then as a first step before testing the hypotheses, the data is tested for its validity and reliability. An Exploratory Factor Analysis is conducted to the inter-item correlation between the constructs using SPSS 20.0. The analysis resulted with sample adequacy values, total variance explained by the constructs and the factor loadings (Kline, 2011). Both "Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy" (Kaiser, 1970; Kaiser & Rice, 1974) and "Bartlett's Test of Sphericity" (Bartlett, 1950) were recorded; KMO value obtained is 0.802 which is slightly higher than the recommended value of 0.80 (Tabachnick, 2013) and Bartlett's test is significant at $p < 0.05$ with a value of 73361.5 (210). The Total Variance Extracted (TVE) is 76.54% with 25 items converging to eight factors. The factor loadings of the 25 items are recorded higher than 0.40 (Costello & Osborne, 2005; Tabachnick, 2007) as shown in Table 4.1.2.

Table 4.1.2. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) results for Study – 1

Constructs and their Items	Factor Loadings
Participation (PAR) (Eisingerich, Auh, & Merlo, 2014)	
PAR1: "I let [Brand X] know of ways that it can better serve my needs."	0.736

PAR2: “I make constructive suggestions to [Brand X] on how to improve its offering.”	0.778
PAR3: “I spent a lot of time-sharing information with others about [Brand X].”	0.880
Cognitive processing (COG) (Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014)	
COG1: “Using [Brand X] gets me to think about [Brand X].”	0.841
COG2: “I think about [Brand X] a lot when I am using it.”	0.753
COG3: “Using [Brand X] stimulates my interest to learn more about [Brand X].”	0.864
Affection (AFF) (Hollebeek et al., 2014)	
AFF1: “I feel very positive when I use [Brand X].”	0.814
AFF2: “Using [Brand X] makes me happy.”	0.787
AFF3: “I feel good when I use [Brand X].”	0.850
AFF4: “I’m proud to use [Brand X].”	0.835
Activation (ACT) (Hollebeek et al., 2014)	
ACT1: “I spend a lot of time using [Brand X], compared to other apparel brands,”	0.819
ACT2: “Whenever I am using apparel & accessories, I usually use [Brand X].”	0.793
ACT3: “[Brand X] is one of the brands I usually use when I use apparel & accessories.”	0.874
Trust (TRU) (Crosby, Evans, & Cowles, 1990) and (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999)	
TRU1: “[Brand X] can be relied on to keep its promises.”	0.674
TRU2: “[Brand X] puts the customer's interest first.”	0.771
TRU3: “I can count on [Brand X] to provide a good service.”	0.794
Satisfaction (SAT) (Johnson, Herrmann, & Huber, 2006)	
SAT1: “I did the right thing when I bought from this [Brand X].”	0.780
SAT2: “I am satisfied with my [Brand X].”	0.818
SAT3: “My [Brand X] meets my expectations.”	0.809
Commitment (COM) (Brown, Barry, Dacin, & Gunst, 2005)	
COM1: “I am committed to my relationship with [Brand X].”	0.824

COM2: “I really care about my relationship with [Brand X].”	0.687
COM3: “The relationship that I have with [Brand X] deserves maximum effort to maintain.”	0.677
Brand Loyalty (LOY) (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996)	
LOY1: “Say positive things about [Brand X] to other people.”	0.847
LOY2: “Recommend [Brand X] to someone who seeks your advice.”	0.805
LOY3: “Encourage friends and relatives to do business with [Brand X].”	0.605

Initially 30 items were used to measure the four major constructs (Participation, CBE, RQ and Loyalty). However, five items i.e. one each from participation, loyalty, satisfaction, trust, and commitment has been removed in EFA process, due to poor standard factor loadings and cross loadings (Henson & Roberts, 2006; Tabachnick, 2007). According to Floyd and Widaman (1995, p. 294) "In exploratory analysis, factor loadings are generally considered to be meaningful when they exceed .30 or .40." and “these items may be deleted from the analysis” (Floyd & Widaman, 1995, p. 295). Hence, the five items have been removed, and retained 25 items are used for further analysis.

Cronbach’s alpha for scale reliability is calculated for each construct and found to be above the recommended value of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1994) as shown in Table 4.1.3. The Composite Reliability (CR) values are above .70 as recommended by Joseph F. Hair, William, Barry, and Rolph (2010). Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are also meeting the standard recommendations by Fornell and Larcker (1981), i.e., AVE values should be above 0.50, thus confirming the convergent validity of the constructs. Confirming the discriminant validity among the constructs, AVE of all the constructs are higher than they correspond Maximum Shared-Squared Variance (MSV) (Joseph F. Hair

et al., 2010). Similarly, the square-root values of AVE of each construct is greater than the absolute correlation values of the corresponding construct with other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Hence, the data is tested for its composite reliability, discriminant, and convergent validity as shown in Table 4.1.3.

Table 4.1.3. Data Reliability & Validity values for Study – 1.

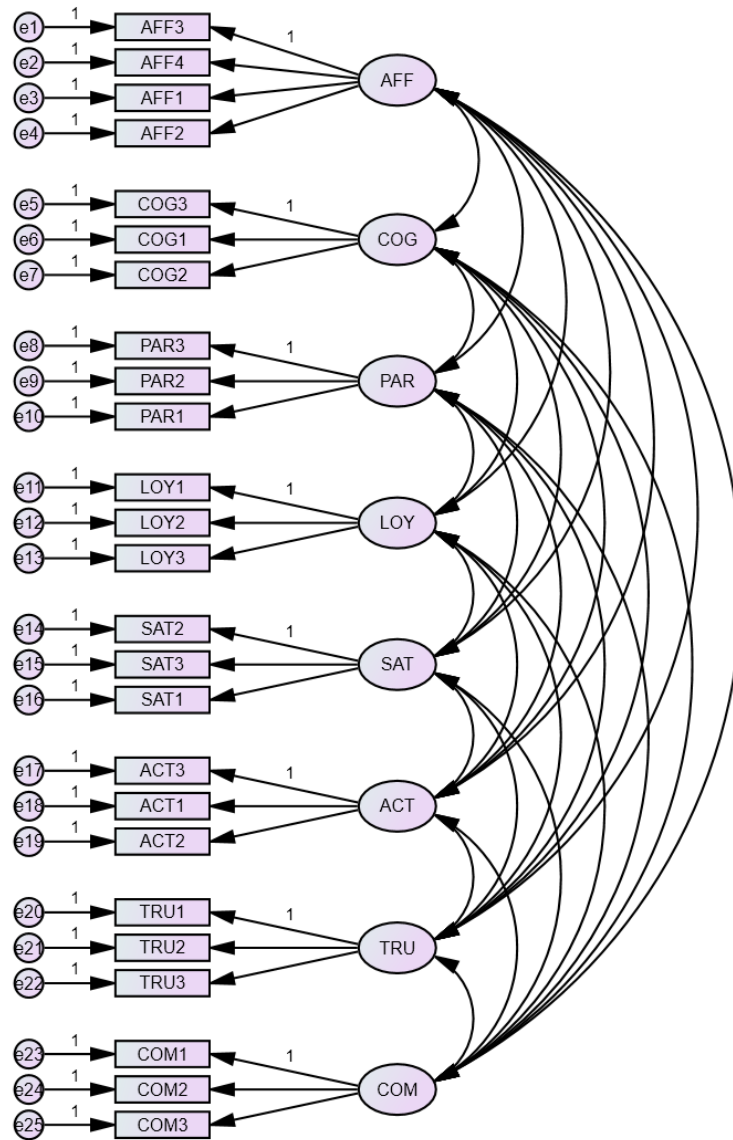
	α	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV	COM	AFF	COG	PAR	LOY	SAT	ACT	TRU
COM	.710	0.737	0.515	0.333	0.140	0.718							
AFF	.982	0.877	0.650	0.237	0.144	0.487	0.806						
COG	.875	0.766	0.622	0.233	0.137	0.365	0.402	0.789					
PAR	.846	0.837	0.642	0.333	0.154	0.577	0.361	0.382	0.802				
LOY	.823	0.852	0.659	0.332	0.155	0.405	0.418	0.483	0.576	0.812			
SAT	.824	0.847	0.663	0.236	0.123	0.272	0.384	0.477	0.123	0.309	0.814		
ACT	.769	0.813	0.603	0.065	0.027	0.081	0.243	0.058	0.009	0.101	0.255	0.777	
TRU	.706	0.738	0.591	0.236	0.094	0.186	0.310	0.237	0.345	0.275	0.486	0.207	0.769

Notes: α is Cronbach's Reliability Alpha value; Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Maximum Shared Variance (MSV), and Average Shared Variance (ASV); the values in the diagonals are the square root of AVE of the corresponding constructs.

To test the relationship among the interrelated dependent constructs, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is conducted using SPSS AMOS 20.0. The measurement model (as shown in Figure 4.1.1.) with eight variables and 25 items used resulted to be fit according to the recommended statistics (Iacobucci, 2010). The model fit indices thus, obtained are $\chi^2 = 356.67$, $df = 199$, $\chi^2/df = 1.79$ (Jöreskog, 1993; MacCallum, Widaman, Zhang, & Hong, 1999), $p < .05$, GFI = .916 (Jöreskog & Sorbom, 1988), CFI = .936 (Bentler, 1990), TLI = .919 (Hu & Bentler, 1999), IFI = .937, NFI = .935 (Bentler & Bonett, 1980) and RMSEA = .064 is less than 0.08 (Browne & Cudeck, 1993). The standardized factor loadings of the items meeting the minimum criterion as suggested

(Bentler, 1990; Hu & Bentler, 1999) i.e. loadings to be greater than 0.40. Hence, the data is verified for its reliability, validity, and ready for further hypotheses testing.

Figure 4.1.1. Measurement model for study – 1.



4.1.3. Structural Models & Data Analysis

Testing for H1 (difference between two groups):

The major aim of the study – 1 is to test the H1, which is to test whether there is a difference in the mediating role of ‘CBE’ and ‘RQ’ in the relationship between purchasers (existing customers) and non-purchasers (new customers). The conceptual model explaining the mediating role of CBE and RQ is developed with help of H2 to H7. Hence, study – 1 aims to test H1 to H7 between two different groups. Hence, a multi-group analysis using SPSS-AMOS 20.0 is adopted to test the hypotheses.

SPSS-AMOS is used to perform a Covariance Based-Structural Equation Modelling (CB-SEM) method. CB-SEM and (Partial Least Squares- Structural Equation Modelling) PLS-SEM are two robust alternative techniques to test simple and complex models, having their strengths and weaknesses (Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Mena, 2012). One of the main drawbacks of PLS-SEM is the absence of widely accepted criteria of a model fit, which using CB-SEM can be obtained (Hair et al., 2012). PLS-SEM is more used for complex and reflective models, CB-SEM is more suitable for simple formative and mediation models (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011; Hair et al., 2012). Since, neither of the SEM techniques, i.e., CB-SEM and PLS-SEM is superior to one other (Hair et al., 2012), the study should select one which suits the data characteristics, research objectives and model being tested (Fornell & Bookstein, 1982; Gefen, Rigdon, & Straub, 2011). The present study tests the simple mediation, measuring the indirect effect in the first case, a CB-SEM is more relevant (Byrne, 2016; Fornell & Bookstein, 1982; Hair Jr, Matthews, Matthews, & Sarstedt, 2017).

To compare the two groups' purchasers (112) and non-purchasers (82); a multi-group analysis is conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) in SPSS-AMOS. The test is performed using Maximum Likelihood Method (MLM) and bootstrapping with 2000 bootstrap samples at 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (CI). The results of the test are shown in Table 4.1.4. Before discussing the results, the model tested reflects appropriate fit indices providing evidence of structural model to be fit. The fit values obtained are well within the recommended values. $\chi^2 = 670.62$, $df = 434$, $\chi^2/df = 1.54$ (Jöreskog, 1993; MacCallum et al., 1999), $p < .05$, GFI = .916 (Jöreskog & Sorbom, 1988), CFI = .909 (Bentler, 1990), TLI = .898 (Hu & Bentler, 1999), IFI = .911, NFI = .912 (Bentler & Bonett, 1980) and RMSEA = .053 is less than 0.08 (Browne & Cudeck, 1993).

Table 4.1.4. Comparative results between purchaser (existing) and non-purchasers (new).

Effect(s) of Independent Variable on Dependent Variable				
Hypotheses	Purchasers (112)		Non-Purchasers (82)	
	Estimate	Confidence Interval	Estimate	Confidence Interval
H2: PAR → CBE	.39	.23, .55 (S)	.37	.15, .59 (S)
H3: PAR → RQ	.16	-.01, .32 (NS)	.28	.09, .47 (S)
H4: PAR → LOY	.39	.22, .56 (S)	.27	.09, .45 (S)
H5: CBE → LOY	.15	-.05, .36 (NS)	.25	.06, .43 (S)
H6: RQ → LOY	.29	.09, .48 (S)	.18	-.02, .39 (NS)
H7: CBE → RQ	.52	.35, .70 (S)	.44	.27, .62 (S)
Direct Effect	.39	.22, .56 (S)	.27	.09, .45 (S)
Indirect Effects (H1)				
PAR → CBE → LOY	.06	-.02, .16 (NS)	.10	.01, .27 (S)
PAR → RQ → LOY	.04	.01, .13 (S)	.06	-.01, .19 (NS)
PAR → CBE → RQ → LOY	.06	.01, .12 (S)	.03	-.01, .13 (NS)
Total Effect	.55	.39, .72 (S)	.44	.27, .62 (S)

Since in H1, we are testing the serial mediating role of CBE and RQ, the results of indirect effects are shown under H1 and the rest of the direct relationships between the

constructs from H2 to H7. The direct and indirect effects along and confidence intervals for significant acceptance criterion are shown in Table 4.1.4. The results show that there is a difference in the “serial mediation of CBE and RQ” (Samala Nagaraj & Sapna Singh, 2018) between the two comparison groups. If we first focus on indirect effects of H1 between the two groups; among purchasers’ group, CBE is not mediating between participation and loyalty, however, it is serially mediating loyalty along with RQ. This can be inferred that, for purchasers participation-loyalty is not mediated by CBE alone, but is mediated along with RQ i.e., for purchasers trust, satisfaction and commitment is the an important factor driving towards loyalty i.e. $PAR \rightarrow CBE \rightarrow RQ \rightarrow LOY$ is significant at 95% level of confidence interval.

For non-purchasers, CBE mediates directly between participation and loyalty, but RQ does not mediate directly. This can be inferred that, for non-purchasers’ loyalty is generated through engagement, but not the relationship quality because they would not have any satisfaction or trust related experience with the brand. The serial mediation of $PAR \rightarrow CBE \rightarrow RQ \rightarrow LOY$ is also not significant; inferring non-purchasers CBE alone mediates and does not serially mediate along with RQ. The direct effect between $RQ \rightarrow LOY$ i.e. is also insignificant among non-purchasers group. Providing evidence is absence of satisfaction and trust related experience among non-purchasers.

Among purchasers group, H3: $PAR \rightarrow RQ$ and H5: $CBE \rightarrow LOY$ are also not significant at 95% confidence intervals (-.01, .32) and (-.05, .36) respectively. It can be understood that among purchasers participation in OBC alone effect RQ, and engagement

does not alone make them brand loyal. Finally, the results provide an evidence for the difference between the two groups in terms of the role played by CBE and RQ between the two constructs customer participation and brand loyalty (Samala Nagaraj & Sapna Singh, 2018).

Testing for Serial Mediation (irrespective of groups):

As an additional analysis, to have a better understanding of the relationships between the constructs, a serial mediation i.e. $PAR \rightarrow CBE \rightarrow RQ \rightarrow LOY$, irrespective of the group i.e. with combined sample of 194 is conducted. The structural model tested is shown in Figure 4.1.2. The fitness of the model is resulted as $\chi^2 = 413.83$, $df = 217$, $\chi^2/df = 1.90$ (Jöreskog, 1993; MacCallum et al., 1999), $p < .05$, GFI = .914 (Jöreskog & Sorbom, 1988), CFI = .922 (Bentler, 1990), TLI = .909 (Hu & Bentler, 1999), IFI = .923, NFI = .921 (Bentler & Bonett, 1980) and RMSEA = .069 is less than 0.08 (Browne & Cudeck, 1993). The model is tested for H2 to H7, and the serial mediation $PAR \rightarrow CBE \rightarrow RQ \rightarrow LOY$. The direct and indirect effects are obtained through bootstrapping with 2000 bootstrap samples at 95% bias-corrected confidence interval. The results of this model are shown in Table 4.1.5. The R^2 obtained for the dependent constructs CBE, RQ, and loyalty is 0.15, 0.37, and 0.40 respectively.

Figure 4.1.2. Structural model for serial mediation for study – 1.

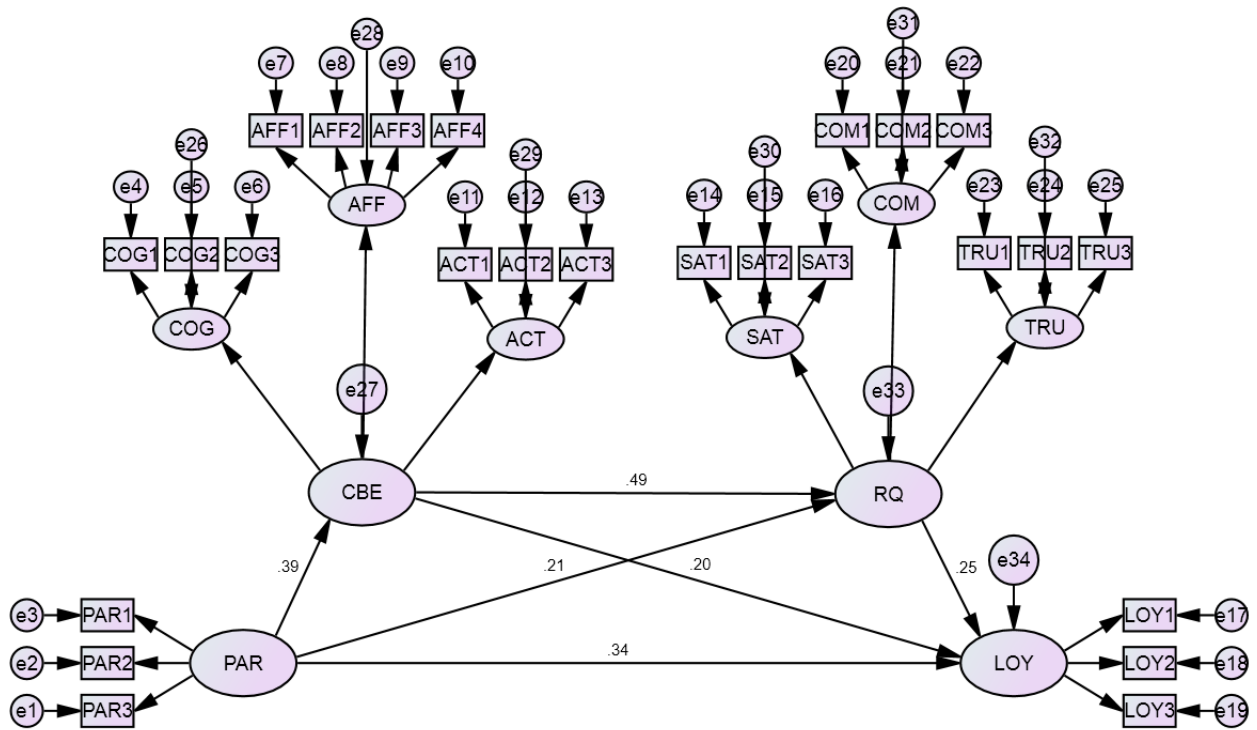


Table 4.1.5. Results of serial mediation model for study – 1.

	Path Coefficients		
	To Loyalty (LOY) (R ² = 0.40)	To CBE (R ² = 0.15)	To Relationship Quality (RQ) (R ² = 0.37)
Participation (PAR)	0.34 (.06) (S)	0.39 (.07) (S)	0.21 (.06) (S)
CBE	0.20 (.07) (S)		0.49 (.06) (S)
Relationship Quality (RQ)	0.25 (.06) (S)		
Effect(s) of Independent Variable on Dependent Variable			
	Estimate	Confidence Interval	
Direct Effect	0.34 (.06)	.21, .46	
Indirect Effect			
PAR → CBE → LOY	0.08 (.03) (S)	.02, .16	
PAR → RQ → LOY	0.05 (.03) (S)	.01, .14	
PAR → CBE → RQ → LOY	0.05 (.02) (S)	.01, .10	
Total Effect	0.52 (.06)	.39, .64	

The results show that the direct relationship i.e. H2 to H7 all are significant, and the hypotheses are accepted. The indirect effects i.e. $PAR \rightarrow CBE \rightarrow LOY$ and $PAR \rightarrow RQ \rightarrow LOY$ are both significant with standardized regression weights 0.08 and 0.05 respectively. The serial mediation $PAR \rightarrow CBE \rightarrow RQ \rightarrow LOY$ is also significant with an effect of 0.05 at 95% confidence interval of (.01, .10). The results provide the evidence that, irrespective of whether the respondent is purchaser of the brand or not, if we test for the serial mediation of $PAR \rightarrow CBE \rightarrow RQ \rightarrow LOY$, the indirect effect is significant and it can be inferred that participation positively affect CBE, leading to RQ and influencing loyalty.

Testing for Reverse Serial Mediation (irrespective of groups):

The reverse serial mediation i.e. $PAR \rightarrow RQ \rightarrow CBE \rightarrow LOY$, is tested as an additional evidence to the arguments in the literature, stating that in some instances, RQ can lead CBE, however this is not a major objective of the study. The structural model depicting the reverse role of CBE and RQ is shown in Figure 4.1.3. Similar to the previous serial mediation, SPSS-AMOS was used with Maximum Likelihood Method (MLM), with 2000 bootstrapped samples at 95% bias-corrected interval limit. The results are shown in Table 4.1.6.

Figure 4.1.3. Structural model for reverse serial mediation for study – 1.

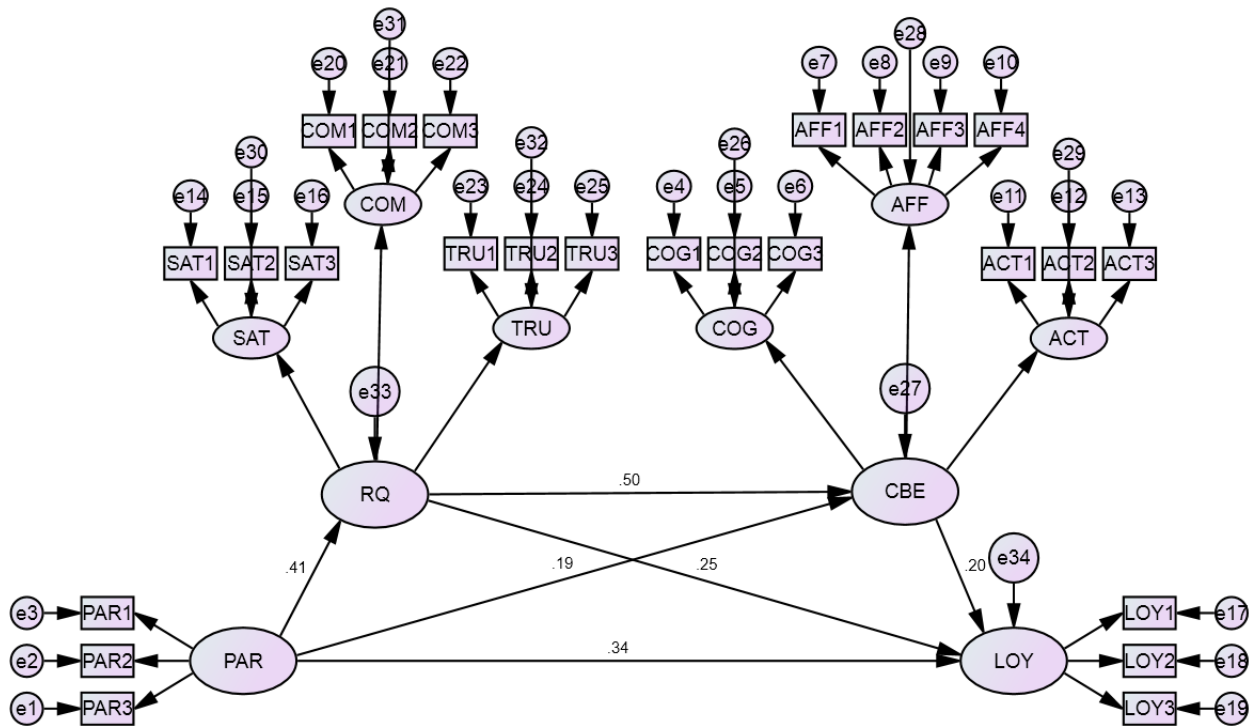


Table 4.1.6. Results of reverse serial mediation model for study – 1.

	Path Coefficients		
	To Loyalty (LOY) (R ² = 0.40)	To CBE (R ² = 0.36)	To Relationship Quality (RQ) (R ² = 0.16)
Participation (PAR)	0.34 (.06) (S)	.19 (.06) (S)	0.41 (.07) (S)
CBE	0.20 (.07) (S)		
Relationship Quality (RQ)	0.25 (.07) (S)	.50 (.06) (S)	
Effect(s) of Independent Variable on Dependent Variable			
	Estimate	Confidence Interval	
Direct Effect	0.34 (.06) (S)	.21, .46	
Indirect Effect			
PAR → RQ → LOY	0.10 (.05) (S)	.02, .22	
PAR → CBE → LOY	0.04 (.02) (S)	.01, .09	
PAR → RQ → CBE → LOY	0.04 (.02) (S)	.01, .09	
Total Effect	0.52 (.06)	.39, .64	

The direct effects proposed from H2 to H7 resulted significant, and the indirect effects, hence hypotheses H2 to H7 are accepted. Indirect effect i.e. $PAR \rightarrow CBE \rightarrow LOY$, $PAR \rightarrow RQ \rightarrow LOY$, and $PAR \rightarrow RQ \rightarrow CBE \rightarrow LOY$ also shown up to be significant at 95% level of confidence. It can be inferred that irrespective of whether the respondent belongs to existing or new customer groups, it can also be said that relationship quality also acts an antecedent to customer-brand engagement. The model fit indices and the R^2 values of this model are also same as the previous (serial mediation) model, as it is just the change in the role of CBE and RQ, and rest of the parameter & variables remain same.

4.1.4. Results & Findings

There are three major structural model tests performed in this study – 1, to test the study hypotheses H1 to H7

1. Testing the role of ‘CBE’ and ‘RQ’ with respect to two groups; purchasers and non-purchasers.
2. Testing the serial mediation of ‘CBE’ and ‘RQ’ irrespective of the group.
3. Testing the reverse serial mediation of ‘CBE’ and ‘RQ’ irrespective of group.

The results of the H1 i.e. whether there is a difference between two groups (purchasers & non-purchasers) with respect to CBE and RQ, suggest that there is significant difference in the relationship between the constructs $PAR \rightarrow CBE \rightarrow RQ \rightarrow LOY$. This hypothesis is developed based on two different schools of thought on CBE. It is argued that for purchasers, it is the RQ (trust, satisfaction and commitment) is established before they engage with the brand, in other words RQ precedes CBE. Contrarily, non-purchasers develop a sense of emotional and cognitive relationship with the brand through

engagement, which drive them to be customers in the future and further infuse loyalty. This argument stating the different role played by CBE and RQ between existing and new customers, proved correct empirically in this study – 1.

The indirect effects of H1 for the serial mediation of $PAR \rightarrow CBE \rightarrow RQ \rightarrow LOY$ for purchasers is significant at 95% confident interval (.01, .12), with an estimate of 0.06, whereas for non-purchasers this indirect effect is insignificant with confident interval (-.01, .13). Hence, it is found that serial mediation direction between CBE and RQ difference with respect to two groups (existing & new customer). The serial mediation $PAR \rightarrow CBE \rightarrow RQ \rightarrow LOY$ is significant for existing (purchasers) group alone.

Additionally, serial and reverse serial mediation i.e. $PAR \rightarrow CBE \rightarrow RQ \rightarrow LOY$ and $PAR \rightarrow RQ \rightarrow CBE \rightarrow LOY$ is tested with combined sample (194) of two groups. It is evident from the results that both serial and reverse serial mediation occur, when the combined sample is used. Without considering whether the customer is existing or new customer, the results provide support to the argument that engagement (CBE) can lead to relationship quality (RQ) and vice-versa. However, if we particularly test for the role of antecedent and consequence between CBE and RQ, it is different for existing and new customers, as proposed in the earlier works like (Brodie, Hollebeek, Jurić, & Ilić, 2011), (Hollebeek, 2011), (Sashi, 2012), (Vivek, Beatty, & Morgan, 2012), and (Pansari & Kumar, 2017).

4.2. Study – 2

4.2.1. Respondent's Profile

The study – 2 collected responses from followers of four selected brands on Twitter. 624 respondents have answered the structured questionnaire sent online on Twitter. This section provides the demographic profile and online purchasing details of the respondents in detail in Tables 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 respectively. A very wide variety of respondents in terms of age, gender, income and education has participated in this study – 2. 59.3% of the respondents are male and 40.7% are female. 69.1% are under 35 years of age suggesting a large portion of respondents is young adults, and only 11.9% are below 25 years of age. Majority of the respondents i.e. 76.4% are graduates, post-graduated, and rest are having education below graduation. 56.3% are students and private employees. This suggest that most of the respondents are educated adults with are private employees or students. Almost half i.e. 49% of the respondents are having income between Rs. 25,000 and Rs. 50,000. The study also confirmed the current location of the respondents to check whether the respondent is an Indian or not. All the 624 respondents are Indians and currently residing in India.

Table 4.2.1. Demographic profile of respondents: Study – 2

Variable	Groups	Percentage
Gender	Female	(254) 40.7%
	Male	(370) 59.3%
Age Group	Under 25	(74) 11.9%
	25 – 30	(179) 28.7%
	31 – 35	(178) 28.5%
	36 – 40	(113) 18.1%
	41 and above	(80) 12.8%

Qualification	Intermediate	(139) 22.3%
	Graduation	(279) 44.7%
	Post-Graduation	(206) 33.0%
Occupation	Student	(162) 26%
	Government Employee	(97) 15.5%
	Private Employee	(191) 30.6%
	Business	(103) 16.5%
	Others	(71) 11.4%
Income	Less than 10000	(135) 21.6%
	10000 – 25000	(136) 21.7%
	25000 – 50000	(170) 27.3%
	50000 and above	(183) 29.4%
Current Residence	India	(624) 100%
	Outside India	Nil

Another set of questions were related to the purchasing and online shopping behavior of the respondents. The respondents have declared that they have bought some or the other product online, confirming they have online purchasing experience. 71% of the respondents purchase online occasionally or whenever required, only 12.5% purchased once in a month and the rest 16.5% purchase more than one in a month. Apparel and accessories (fashion related products) is the most bought category online i.e. 78.8% by the respondents followed by 65% of electronic products. Other categories like mobile phones, books and groceries are also purchased online.

Table 4.2.2. Online purchasing profile of respondents: Study – 2

Variable	Groups	Percentage
Frequency of Online Shopping	Once in a month	(78) 12.5%
	2 - 4 times a month	(103) 16.5%
	Occasionally	(206) 33%
	Whenever requires	(237) 38%
Category of products bought online	Apparel & Accessories	(492) 78.8%
	Electronic Goods	(405) 65%
	Mobile Phones	(354) 56.7%
	Books	(201) 32.2%
	Groceries	(316) 50.6%
	Others	(383) 61.4%
Favorite fashion brand	Craftsvilla	(164) 26.3%
	Raymonds	(169) 27.1%
	Manyavar	(101) 16.2%
	American Swan	(190) 30.4%
Purchased favorite brand products	Yes	(624) 100%
	No	Nil
Duration of following favorite brand on Twitter	More than 3 years	(203) 32.5%
	3 - 1 years	(234) 37.5%
	Less than 1 year	(187) 30%

Since, the respondents are the list of followers of selected brands, a preliminary question regarding their Twitter account confirms that all 624 respondents have account and are active over one year on Twitter. Each respondent is a purchaser and follower of one brand out of four selected Indian fashion brands (Craftsvilla, Raymonds, Manyavar, and American Swan). 1000 followers from each brand, a total of 4000 Twitter IDs was sent the questionnaire link on their Twitter page. 164 (26.3%) responses from Craftsvilla followers, 169 (27.1%) from Raymonds, 101 (16.2%) from Manyavar, and 190 (30.4%) from American Swan followers have been received. All the 624 respondents have

confirmed that they have purchased online from their favorite brand more than ones have and are following the brand page on Twitter for more than a year.

4.2.2. Data Validity & Reliability

To proceed further with the data analysis and test the hypotheses, the data is initially screened for its reliability and validity. An Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using SPSS 20.0 is conducted to check for the inter-item correlation between the variables. EFA is conducted with principal components extraction method and varimax rotation. The analysis resulted with sample adequacy values, total variance explained by the constructs and the factor loadings (Kline, 2011). Both “Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy” (Kaiser, 1970; Kaiser & Rice, 1974) and “Bartlett's Test of Sphericity” (Bartlett, 1950) were recorded; KMO value obtained is 0.866 which is higher than the recommended value of 0.80 (Tabachnick, 2013) and Bartlett’s test is significant at $p < 0.05$ with a value of 14706.6 (666). The Total Variance Extracted (TVE) is 71.07% with 38 items converging to ten factors. The factor loadings of the 38 items are recorded greater than 0.40 (Costello & Osborne, 2005; Tabachnick, 2007) as shown in Table 4.2.3.

Table 4.2.3. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) results for Study – 2

Item Code.	Item Description.	Factor Loadings
	Involvement (INV)	
	To me [____] is:	
INV1	Boring : Interesting	.728
INV2	Important : Unimportant*	.798
INV3	Involving : Uninvolving*	.738
INV4	Relevant : Irrelevant*	.654
	Participation (PAR)	
PAR1	I let [____] know of ways that it can better serve my needs.	.675
PAR2	I make constructive suggestions to [____] on how to improve its offerings.	.662

PAR3	When I experience a problem with [_____], I let them know so they can improve.	.800
PAR4	If I have a useful idea on how to improve [_____], I give it to them on [_____].	.821
Consumer-Brand Engagement (CBE)		
COG1	“Using [_____] gets me to think about [_____].”	.730
COG2	“I think about [_____] a lot when I’m using it.”	.763
COG3	“Using [_____] stimulates my interest to learn more about [_____].”	.639
AFF1	“I feel very positive when I use [_____].”	.851
AFF2	“Using [_____] makes me happy.”	.586
AFF3	“I am proud to use [_____].”	.793
AFF4	“I feel good when I use [_____].”	.788
ACT1	“I spend a lot of time using [_____], compared to other similar brands.”	.834
ACT2	“Whenever I’m doing apparel shopping online, I usually use [_____].”	.647
ACT3	“[_____] is one of the brands I usually use when I use apparel shopping.”	.835
Brand Trust (TRU)		
TRU1	[_____] can be relied on to keep its promises.	.589
TRU2	[_____] puts the customer's interest first.	.760
TRU3	[_____] usually keeps the promises that it makes to me.	.801
TRU4	I can count on [_____] to provide a good service.	.750
Satisfaction (SAT)		
SAT1	I did the right thing when I bought fashion products from this [_____].	.837
SAT2	I am satisfied with my [_____].	.752
SAT3	My brand [_____] meets my expectations.	.842
SAT4	My choice is a wise one about buying from [_____].	.718
Commitment (COM)		
COM1	I am committed to my relationship with [_____].	.792
COM2	I really care about my relationship with [_____].	.883
COM3	The relationship that I have with [_____] is something I am very committed to.	.777
COM4	The relationship that I have with [_____] deserves my maximum effort to maintain.	.716
Brand Loyalty (LOY)		
LOY1	“I say positive things about [Brand X] to other people.”	.819
LOY2	“I recommend [Brand X] to someone who seeks your advice.”	.732
LOY3	“I encourage friends and relatives to do business with [Brand X].”	.842
LOY4	“I would buy more products from [_____] in next few years.”	.718
Perceived Value (VAL)		
VAL1	“Products purchased from [_____] are very good value for money.”	.651
VAL2	“I get what I pay for [_____].”	.749
VAL3	“Products purchased from [_____] are worth the money paid.”	.797
VAL4	“Compared to other brands, [_____] charges me fairly for similar products.”	.760

Note: Items with * are reverse coded.

Cronbach's alpha for scale reliability is calculated for each construct and found to be above the recommended value of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1994) as shown in Table 4.1.3. The Composite Reliability (CR) values are above .70 as recommended by Joseph F. Hair et al. (2010). Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are also meeting the standard recommendations by Fornell and Larcker (1981), i.e., AVE values should be above 0.50, thus confirming the convergent validity of the constructs. Confirming the discriminant validity among the constructs, AVE of all the constructs are higher than they correspond Maximum Shared-Squared Variance (MSV) (Joseph F. Hair et al., 2010). Similarly, the square-root values of AVE of each construct is greater than the absolute correlation values of the corresponding construct with other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Hence, the data is tested for its composite reliability, discriminant, and convergent validity as shown in Table 4.2.4. Hence, all the 38 items exhibit required data reliability and validity converging onto 10 constructs of the study.

Table 4.2.4. Data Reliability & Validity values for Study – 2.

	A	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV	COG	SAT	LOY	INV	COM	VAL	TRU	ACT	PAR	AFF
COG	0.774	0.779	0.540	0.378	0.204	0.735									
SAT	0.905	0.889	0.677	0.299	0.131	0.344	0.823								
LOY	0.876	0.877	0.641	0.378	0.166	0.615	0.348	0.801							
INV	0.828	0.831	0.553	0.341	0.167	0.491	0.547	0.372	0.743						
COM	0.823	0.830	0.553	0.077	0.039	0.257	0.222	0.199	0.229	0.744					
VAL	0.845	0.849	0.586	0.346	0.196	0.485	0.332	0.467	0.324	0.163	0.765				
TRU	0.832	0.834	0.558	0.372	0.184	0.610	0.359	0.421	0.584	0.277	0.425	0.747			
ACT	0.811	0.832	0.632	0.305	0.144	0.407	0.357	0.342	0.319	0.135	0.552	0.344	0.795		
PAR	0.832	0.829	0.555	0.249	0.142	0.377	0.353	0.403	0.336	0.082	0.486	0.335	0.359	0.745	
AFF	0.762	0.795	0.565	0.346	0.160	0.339	0.318	0.373	0.329	0.113	0.588	0.388	0.465	0.499	0.752

Notes: α is Cronbach's Reliability Alpha value; Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Maximum Shared Variance (MSV), and Average Shared Variance (ASV); the values in the diagonals are the square root of AVE of the corresponding constructs.

To test the relationship among the interrelated dependent constructs, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is conducted using SPSS AMOS 20.0. The measurement model with ten variables and 38 items used resulted to be fit according to the recommended statistics (Iacobucci, 2010). The model fit indices obtained are $\chi^2 = 1714.85$, $df = 578$, $\chi^2/df = 2.97$ (Jöreskog, 1993; MacCallum et al., 1999), $p < .05$, GFI = .889 (Jöreskog & Sorbom, 1988), CFI = .921 (Bentler, 1990), TLI = .909 (Hu & Bentler, 1999), IFI = .921, NFI = .932 (Bentler & Bonett, 1980) and RMSEA = .055 is less than 0.08 (Browne & Cudeck, 1993). The standardized factor loadings of the items meeting the minimum criterion as suggested (Bentler, 1990; Hu & Bentler, 1999) i.e. loadings to be greater than 0.40. Hence, the data is verified for its reliability, validity, and ready for further hypotheses testing.

4.2.3. Structural Model & Data Analysis

SPSS-AMOS 20.0 is used to test the hypotheses H2 to H7, and the indirect serial mediation of 'CBE' and 'RQ' in the relationship between participation & loyalty. Using AMOS for SEM would also yield model fit indices which would reveal the fitness of the model for generalizability of results. The SEM conducted used Maximum Likelihood Method (MLM) with bootstrapping technique. The analysis is bootstrapped for 2000 samples at 95% of level of significance with bias-corrected method. SEM is conducted as shown in the Figure 4.2.1., and the results are shown in Table 4.2.5. The results also indicate the fitness of the serial mediation model. The model fit indices after the test obtained are $\chi^2 = 1170.72$, $df = 360$, $\chi^2/df = 3.25$ (Jöreskog, 1993; MacCallum et al., 1999), $p < .05$, GFI = .899 (Jöreskog & Sorbom, 1988), CFI = .928 (Bentler, 1990), TLI = .919

(Hu & Bentler, 1999), IFI = .928, NFI = .927 (Bentler & Bonett, 1980) and RMSEA = .059 is less than 0.08 (Browne & Cudeck, 1993).

Figure 4.2.1. Structural Model of Study – 2

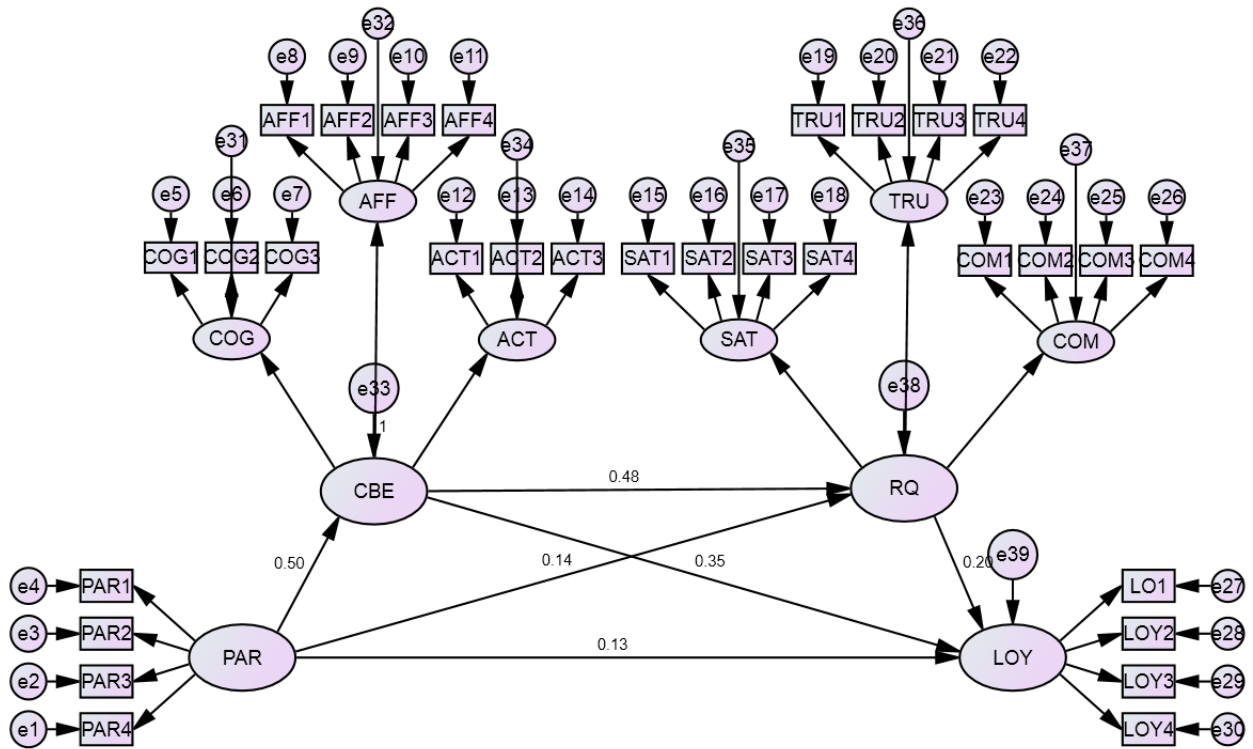


Table 4.2.5. Estimates of serial mediation model Study – 2

Hypothesis	Estimate with SE in parenthesis	Decision
H2: PAR → CBE	.50 (.03)	Accept
H3: PAR → RQ	.14 (.04)	Accept
H4: PAR → LOY	.13 (.04)	Accept
H5: CBE → LOY	.35 (.04)	Accept
H6: RQ → LOY	.20 (.04)	Accept
H7: CBE → RQ	.48 (.04)	Accept
PAR → CBE → RQ → LOY	.05 (.01)	Accept

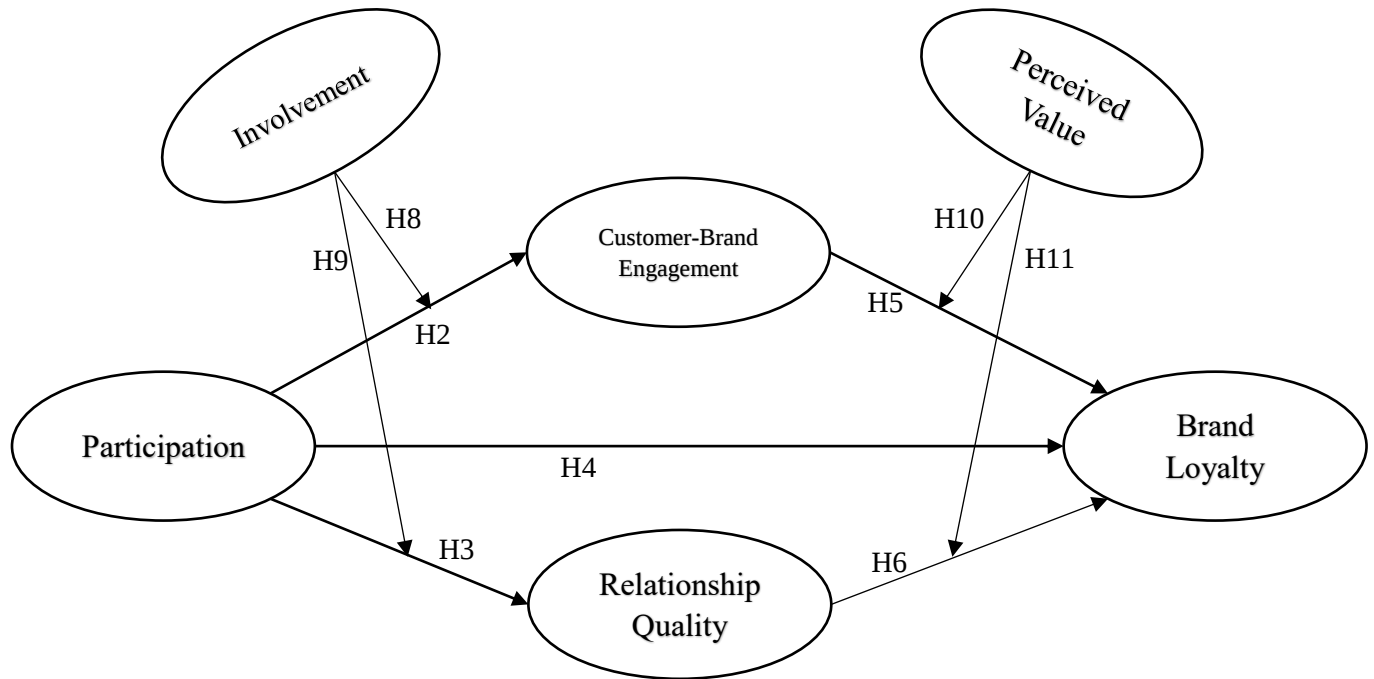
The entire hypotheses i.e. from H2 to H3 are accepted at 95% level of significance where p is less than 0.05. H2, the relationship between participation and CBE is recorded significant at $p < 0.05$ with an effect of 0.5. The relationship between participation and RQ; and participation and loyalty are also significant with 0.14 and 0.13 value respectively. The direct relationship between CBE and loyalty is also recorded significant with an effect of .35. H6, the relationship between RQ and loyalty, which is recorded as .20. The relationship between CBE and RQ is also significant with an effect of .48. The indirect serial effect of $PAR \rightarrow CBE \rightarrow RQ \rightarrow LOY$ is obtained as 0.05 and is significant at $p < 0.05$. Since, all the respondents are purchasers of the product, the serial mediation result is in line with the results of Study – 1, which says that though the mediating role of CBE and RQ differ between the two groups purchasers & non-purchasers, the indirect (serial) relationship between participation and loyalty through CBE and RQ is significant. The Study – 2 results in this analysis using SEM confirm the acceptance of the hypotheses H2 to H7.

4.2.4. Moderation effects

To test the moderating effect of customer involvement in OBCs and the perceived value they derive from the product, a moderation analysis is conducted on the model constituting hypotheses H2 to H7. The moderation hypotheses are H8, involvement moderates the relationship between participation and CBE. H9, involvement moderates the relationship between participation and RQ. H10, perceived value (VAL) moderates the relationship between CBE and brand loyalty. Finally, H11 is testing the moderating effect

of perceived value (VAL) on the relationship between RQ and brand loyalty. Model depicting these hypotheses from H2 to H11 is shown in Figure 4.2.2.

Figure 4.2.2. Model with moderators for study – 2

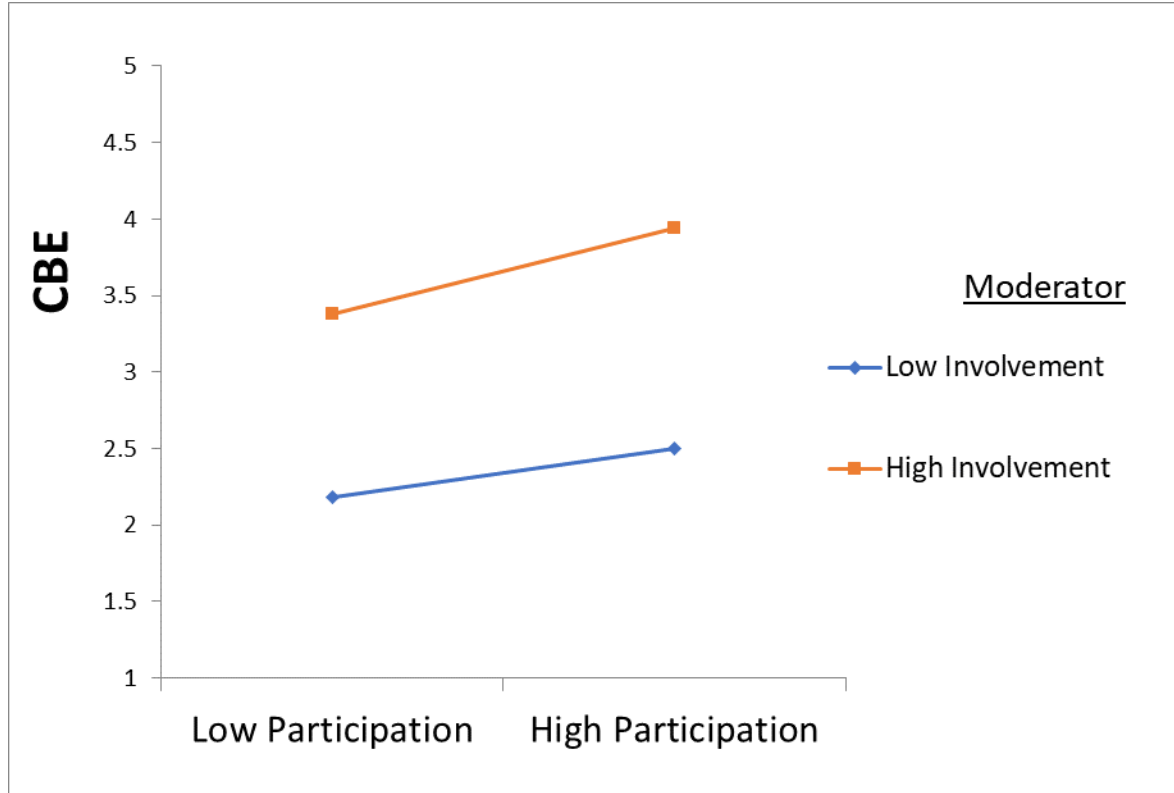


To test the moderating effects of these two variable involvement and value on to the other relationships, a plug-in for SPSS developed by Hayes (2013) for conducting conditional processing is used, which is called as hayed Process Macros. Several complex models were developed by Hayes (2013) as a template to conduct conditional process analysis. Model 21 is the appropriate to test the present model as shown in Figure 4.2.2. The analysis is conducted in IBM SPSS 20.0 with Hayes process macros. The macros allow bootstrapping the sample for indirect effects. The present analysis bootstrapped for 5000

samples at 95% level of confidence for confidence interval (CI) limits and with Bias-Corrected method. This method is widely accepted for conducting statistical analysis on complex models having multiple mediators and moderators. This macros plug-in is used for faster process with higher bootstrapped samples.

The results of the model testing are shown in Table 4.2.6. which preliminarily provides support for the hypotheses H2 to H7. The direct effects between the variables Participation, CBE, RQ and Loyalty found to be significantly affecting. However, the main aim of the present analysis is to test the moderating effect of Involvement (INV) and Perceived Value (VAL) on study variables. Hypothesis H8 resulted as accepted, which provides support for the statement that involvement moderates the relationship between participation and CBE. i.e. the moderating value of 0.06 at the significance control limits as (.01, .10) and at $p < 0.05$. It can be inferred that the combined effect of participation and involvement strengthens the effect of participation onto engagement (CBE). In other words, as customers involvement increases along with participation, engagement of the customer with the brand also increases. The same can be seen in the form of a Graph 4.2.1.

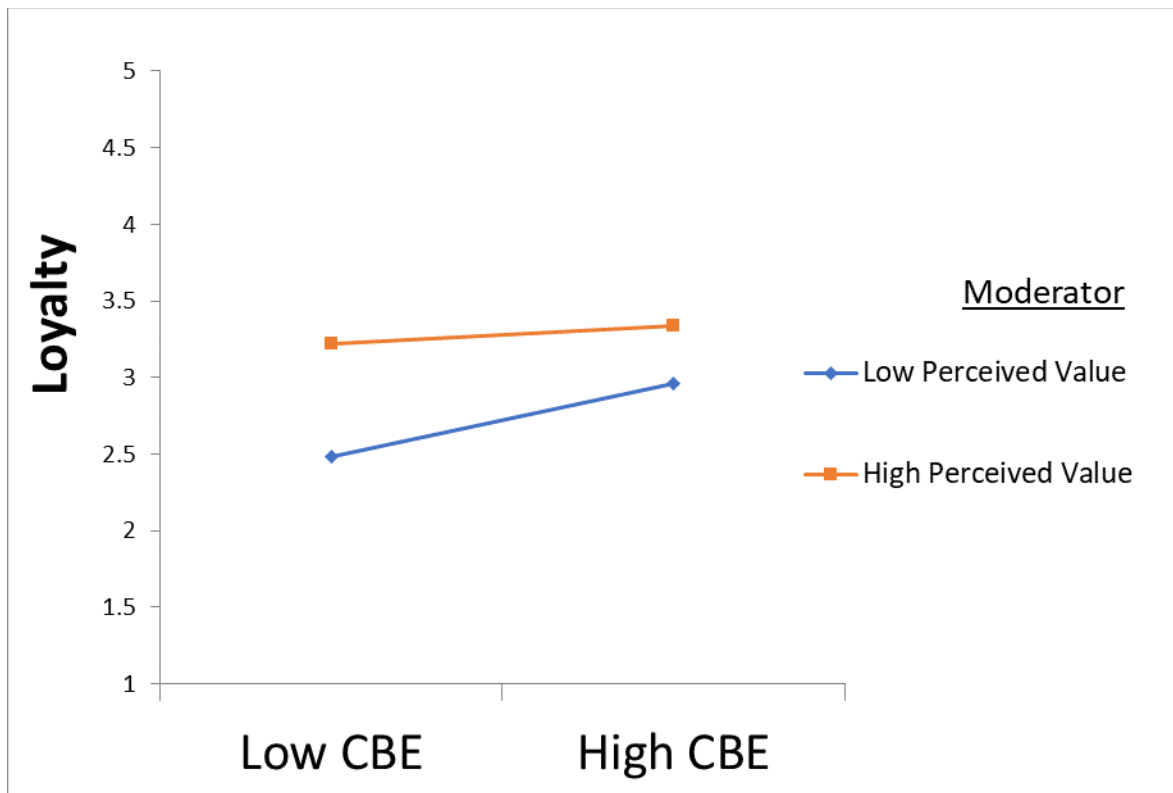
Graph 4.2.1. Moderating effect of Involvement on Participation and CBE



H9 which states that involvement enhances the relationship between participation and RQ is found to be insignificant in this study i.e. with statistical significance control limits as $(-.03, .08)$, which includes zero, hence the moderating effect is not significant at $p < 0.05$. Which can be inferred from the results that, the strength of the relationship between participation and relationship quality (RQ), is not altered by the involvement levels of the customer with the brand. H10 is the hypothesis to test the moderating role of perceived value (VAL) on the relationship between CBE and loyalty. According to the study results, VAL significantly moderates the relationship between CBE and loyalty. However, this is negatively affecting the relationship i.e. the effect value as -0.09 with significance control limits as $(-.15, -.02)$ and is significant at $p < 0.05$. This can be inferred

that higher the value perceived, lesser will be the impact of engagement on loyalty, which can be seen in the Graph 4.2.2. Customer when perceive high value from the brand, then no matter what level of engagement he/she has with the brand has a lesser impact on their loyalty levels. H11 is also significantly accepted i.e. the effect value as 0.08 with significance control limits as (.01, .14) and is significant at $p < 0.05$, and can be inferred that perceived value moderates the relationship between RQ and loyalty. This moderating effect in this hypothesis is resulted to be positive. The higher levels of perceived value would strengthen the relationship between RQ and loyalty, which can be seen in Graph 4.2.3.

Graph 4.2.2. Moderating effect of Perceived Value on CBE and Loyalty



Graph 4.2.3. Moderating effect of Perceived Value on RQ and Loyalty

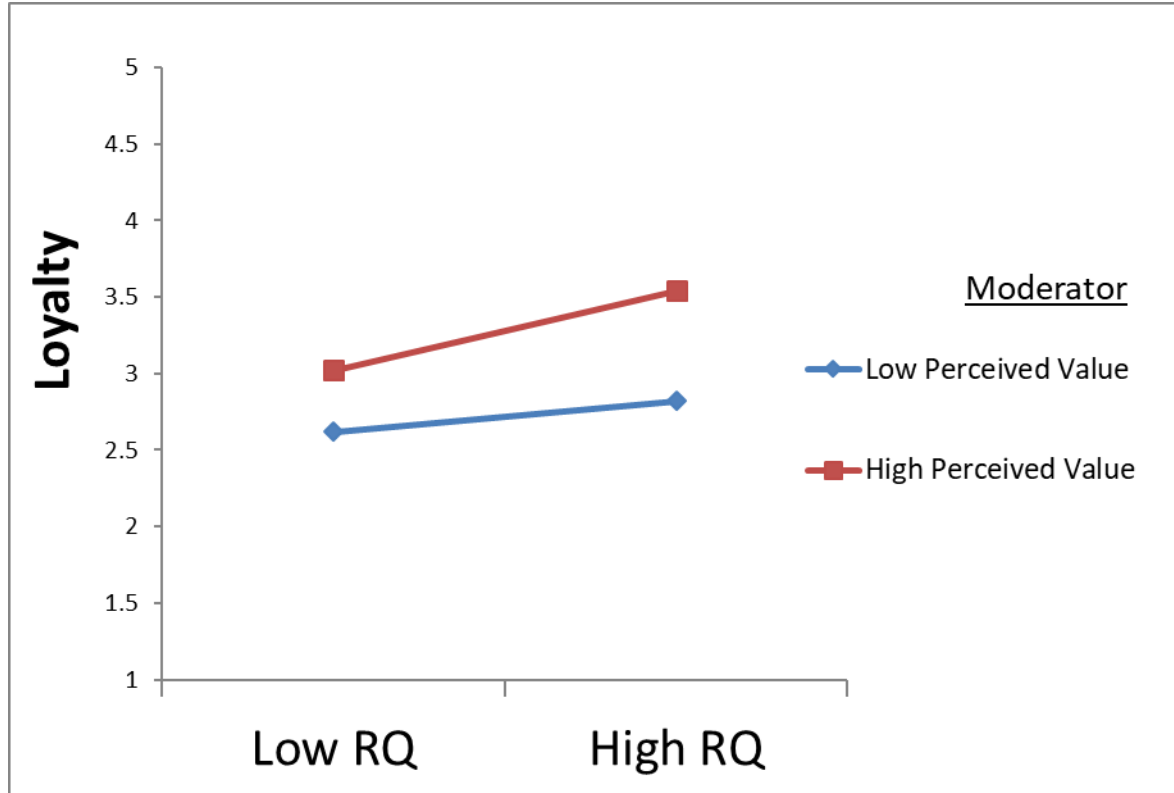


Table 4.2.6. Estimates of moderation effects of Study – 2

	CBE ($R^2 = 0.60$)		RQ ($R^2 = 0.19$)		LOYALTY ($R^2 = 0.37$)	
	Estimate	CI	Estimate	CI	Estimate	CI
Participation (PAR)	.22 (.03)	.17, .28 (S)	.29 (.04)	.21, .36 (S)	.15 (.04)	.08, .22 (S)
Involvement (INV)	.66 (.03)	.60, .71 (S)	.23 (.04)	.15, .31 (S)		
Moderation (PAR x INV)	.06 (.02)	.01, .10 (S)	.03 (.03)	-.03, .08 (NS)		
Customer-Brand Engagement (CBE)					.15 (.05)	.05, .25 (S)
Relationship Quality (RQ)					.18 (.04)	.10, .25 (S)
Perceived Value (VAL)					.28 (.05)	.18, .37 (S)
CBE x VAL					-.09 (.03)	-.15, -.02 (S)
RQ x VAL					.08 (.03)	.01, .14 (S)

Note: (S) represents significant at $p < 0.05$; (NS) represents Not Significant at $p < 0.05$

4.2.5. Results & Findings

The study – 2 is conducted to test the hypothesis H2 to H11. In hypothesis H1 through study – 1, it is found that the relationship $PAR \rightarrow CBE \rightarrow RQ \rightarrow LOY$ is significant with the purchasers' groups i.e. those who purchased the product earlier. The study – 2 is conducted to test the same again with some additional hypotheses H8 to H11, through some refined methodology when compared to study – 1. Hence, all the respondents of study – 2 are purchasers of the selected brands i.e. they have purchased earlier products from the mentioned brands. The present study – 2 also resulted in the same lines as the study – 1 with respect to hypotheses H2 to H7.

The hypotheses H2 to H7 have been resulted to be accepted and positively significant. H8 is accepted and is positively significant, whereas H9 is not accepted. This can be understood that, involvement acts as a positive moderator between participation and CBE but not between participation and RQ. H10 and H11 have been significantly accepted, however H10 resulted in negatively impact and H11 with a positive influence i.e. Value acts as a negative moderator between CBE and loyalty and acts as a positive moderator between RQ and loyalty.

The findings from the results of this study – 2 are participation, relationship quality, and customer engagement play an important role in building brand loyalty among the customers who purchase and follow their favorite brands on OBCs. Secondly, Customer involvement increases the impacts of participation on their engagement with the brand in OBCs. Third, customers' perceived value of the brand enhances the effect of relationship quality on their brand loyalty. Further the conclusion of the study, the implications and contributions will be discussed in detail in the next chapter – 5.

4.3. Study – 3

4.3.1. Respondent's Profile

Since, study – 2 was restricted to four selected Indian fashion brands and only Twitter as SNS, this limitation does not allow the results to be more generalized. Some of the respondents may follow an international brand more on another SNS like Instagram. This freedom of choice to answer towards their most favorite brand being followed by them on their very active OBC is restricted in Study – 2. Hence, Study – 3 is taken up allowing more liberty to respondents to select their favorite fashion brand (other than Indian brand also) being followed by them on any OBC they prefer. Indian participants on MTruk are considered as respondents with a questionnaire administered using Qualtrics. The advanced options on Qualtrics allow respondents to select any brand and OBC, which are piped into the subsequent questions. This allows the study to capture responses of the participants without restricting to any brand or OBC.

Table 4.3.1. Demographic profile of respondents: Study – 3

Variable	Groups	Percentage
Gender	Male	(486) 45.3%
	Female	(588) 54.7%
Age Group	Under 25	(132) 12.3%
	25 - 30	(305) 28.4%
	31 - 35	(378) 35.2%
	36 - 40	(162) 15.1%
	41 and above	(97) 9.0%
Qualification	Graduation	(507) 47.2%
	Post-Graduation	(454) 42.3%
	Others	(113) 10.5%
Occupation	Student	(90) 8.4%
	Government	
	Employee	(76) 7.1%

	Private Employee	(632) 58.8%
	Business	(186) 17.3%
	Others	(90) 8.4%
Income	Less than 10000	(233) 21.7%
	10000 - 25000	(288) 26.8%
	25000 - 50000	(336) 31.3%
	50000 and above	(217) 20.2%
Current Residence	India	(1065) 99.2%
	Outside India	(9) 0.8%

1074 Indian participants on Mturk answered the survey questionnaire. The survey instrument is same as the one in Study – 2, except the choice of brands and OBC in preliminary section. Out of 1074, 45.3% are male and 54.7% are female respondents. Almost 76% of the respondents are below 35 years of age, resembling most of the respondents to be young adults. 47.2% are graduates and 42.3% are post-graduates. It is evident that most of the respondents are highly educated. Unlike the previous Study – 2, where students are a majority, in this present study – 3 only 8.4% are students. This may be due to lower presence of student's registration on MTurk. 58.8% of the respondents are private employees, and 17.3% are business owners. It can be inferred that most of the respondents are young adults who are highly educated and employed. 58.1% of the respondents earn between Rs. 10,000 and Rs. 50,000 per month. 1065 of the respondents currently reside in India and only 9 respondents currently reside outside India. These statistics are shown in table 4.3.1.

Table 4.3.2. Online purchasing profile of respondents: Study – 3

Variable	Groups	Percentage
Frequency of Online Shopping	Once in a month	(115) 10.7%
	2 - 4 times a month	(121) 11.3%
	Occasionally	(391) 36.4%

	Whenever requires	(447) 41.6%
Category of products bought online	Apparel & Accessories	(861) 80.2%
	Electronic Goods	(800) 74.5%
	Mobile Phones	(658) 61.3%
	Books	(381) 35.5%
	Groceries	(545) 50.7%
	Others	(651) 62.6%
Favorite fashion brand	Myntra	(119) 11.1%
	Shein	(134) 12.5%
	Levis	(111) 10.3%
	Jabong	(141) 13.1%
	Biba	(136) 12.7%
	Others	(433) 40.3%
Social Networking Site (SNS) most active on?	Facebook	(488) 45.4%
	Twitter	(290) 27.0%
	Instagram	(229) 21.3%
	Others OBCs	(67) 6.3%
Purchased favorite brand products	Yes	(1074) 100%
	No	Nil
Duration of following favorite brand on any OBC	More than 3 years	(357) 33.3%
	3 - 1 years	(445) 41.4%
	Less than 1 year	(272) 25.3%

The online shopping behavior and pattern of the respondents is also collected through another section in the questionnaire. The information is shown in table 4.3.2. All 1074 respondents agreed that they have earlier purchased products online. 36.4 % of them bought occasionally and 41.6% bought whenever required. Very less percentage of respondents who bought one or more than once in a month. 80.2% bought fashion related products online followed by electronic products category with 74.5%. It is again clear that most of the respondents purchase fashion related apparel and accessories online. Since, the respondents have been given a choice to select their favorite fashion brand, 1074 respondents have indicated a variety of brands. These brands are both domestic and

international like Levis, Shein, Woodland, Flying Machine, Jabong, Wrangler etc. Some of the top brands indicated are Myntra (11.1%), Shein (12.5%), Levis (10.3%), Jabong (13.1%), Biba (12.7%), and other with 40.3%. All these respondents have confirmed following their favorite brand on one or more OBC. Almost 74.7% of the respondents following favorite fashion brand for more than 1 year and all the respondents confirmed purchasing products from favorite brand for more than ones. A majority of the respondents i.e. 45.4% follow OBCs created on Facebook, followed by Twitter with 27.0% and then on Instagram with 21.3%. Hence, the sample population consists of very heterogeneous characteristics.

4.3.2. Data Validity & Reliability

To proceed further with the data analysis and test the hypotheses, the data is initially screened for its reliability and validity. An Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using SPSS 20.0 is conducted to check for the inter-item correlation between the variables. EFA is conducted with principal components extraction method and varimax rotation. The analysis resulted with sample adequacy values, total variance explained by the constructs and the factor loadings (Kline, 2011). Both Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy (Kaiser, 1970; Kaiser & Rice, 1974) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Bartlett, 1950) were recorded; KMO value obtained is 0.864 which is higher than the recommended value of 0.80 (Tabachnick, 2013) and Bartlett's test is significant at $p < 0.05$ with a value of 22636.6 (703). The Total Variance Extracted (TVE) is 78.36% with 38 items converging to ten factors. The factor loadings of the 38 items are recorded greater than 0.40 (Costello & Osborne, 2005; Tabachnick, 2007) as shown in Table 4.3.3.

Table 4.3.3. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) results for Study – 3

Item Code.	Item Description.	Factor Loadings
	Involvement (INV)	
	To me [_____] is:	
INV1	Boring : Interesting	.797
INV2	Important : Unimportant*	.827
INV3	Involving : Uninvolving*	.733
INV4	Relevant : Irrelevant*	.675
	Participation (PAR)	
PAR1	I let [_____] know of ways that it can better serve my needs.	.708
PAR2	I make constructive suggestions to [_____] on how to improve its offerings.	.769
PAR3	When I experience a problem with [_____], I let them know so they can improve.	.746
PAR4	If I have a useful idea on how to improve [_____], I give it to them on [_____].	.726
	Consumer-Brand Engagement (CBE)	
COG1	“Using [_____] gets me to think about [_____].”	.820
COG2	“ I think about [_____] a lot when I’m using it.”	.633
COG3	“Using [_____] stimulates my interest to learn more about [_____].”	.743
AFF1	“I feel very positive when I use [_____].”	.704
AFF2	“Using [_____] makes me happy.”	.821
AFF3	“I am proud to use [_____].”	.634
AFF4	“I feel good when I use [_____].”	.774
ACT1	“I spend a lot of time using [_____], compared to other similar brands.”	.838
ACT2	“Whenever I’m doing apparel shopping online, I usually use [_____].”	.752
ACT3	“[_____] is one of the brands I usually use when I use apparel shopping.”	.773
	Brand Trust (TRU)	
TRU1	[_____] can be relied on to keep its promises.	.828
TRU2	[_____] puts the customer's interest first.	.897
TRU3	[_____] usually keeps the promises that it makes to me.	.752
TRU4	I can count on [_____] to provide a good service.	.717
	Satisfaction (SAT)	
SAT1	I did the right thing when I bought fashion products from this [_____].	.746
SAT2	I am satisfied with my [_____].	.714
SAT3	My brand [_____] meets my expectations.	.832
SAT4	My choice is a wise one about buying from [_____].	.726
	Commitment (COM)	
COM1	I am committed to my relationship with [_____].	.842
COM2	I really care about my relationship with [_____].	.748
COM3	The relationship that I have with [_____] is something I am very committed to.	.766

COM4	The relationship that I have with [_____] deserves my maximum effort to maintain.	.740
Brand Loyalty (LOY)		
LOY1	“I say positive things about [Brand X] to other people.”	.725
LOY2	“I recommend [Brand X] to someone who seeks your advice.”	.785
LOY3	“I encourage friends and relatives to do business with [Brand X].”	.809
LOY4	“I would buy more products from [_____] in next few years.”	.803
Perceived Value (VAL)		
VAL1	“Products purchased from [_____] are very good value for money.”	.626
VAL2	“I get what I pay for [_____].”	.722
VAL3	“Products purchased from [_____] are worth the money paid.”	.766
VAL4	“Compared to other brands, [_____] charges me fairly for similar products.”	.714

Note: Items with * are reverse coded.

Cronbach’s alpha for scale reliability is calculated for each construct and found to be above the recommended value of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1994) as shown in Table 4.3.4. The Composite Reliability (CR) values are above .70 as recommended by Joseph F. Hair et al. (2010). Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are also meeting the standard recommendations by Fornell and Larcker (1981), i.e., AVE values should be above 0.50, thus confirming the convergent validity of the constructs, except for participation (PAR) construct. Confirming the discriminant validity among the constructs, AVE of all the constructs are higher than they correspond Maximum Shared-Squared Variance (MSV) (Joseph F. Hair et al., 2010). Similarly, the square-root values of AVE of each construct is greater than the absolute correlation values of the corresponding construct with other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Hence, the data is tested for its composite reliability, discriminant, and convergent validity as shown in Table 4.3.4. Hence, all the 38 items exhibit required data reliability and validity converging onto 10 constructs of the study.

Table 4.3.4. Data Reliability & Validity values for Study – 3.

	A	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV	ACT	LOY	COM	INV	SAT	TRU	PAR	AFF	VAL	COG
ACT	0.820	0.833	0.629	0.306	0.122	0.793									
LOY	0.870	0.873	0.634	0.252	0.160	0.384	0.796								
COM	0.885	0.887	0.663	0.262	0.172	0.315	0.466	0.814							
INV	0.836	0.833	0.563	0.265	0.116	0.191	0.261	0.512	0.750						
SAT	0.839	0.841	0.570	0.265	0.151	0.265	0.399	0.486	0.515	0.755					
TRU	0.827	0.834	0.564	0.030	0.018	0.122	0.116	0.173	0.127	0.165	0.751				
PAR	0.819	0.769	0.454	0.392	0.192	0.401	0.437	0.448	0.293	0.329	0.142	0.674			
AFF	0.825	0.833	0.558	0.252	0.180	0.347	0.502	0.421	0.404	0.490	0.136	0.453	0.747		
VAL	0.830	0.831	0.554	0.412	0.220	0.553	0.474	0.405	0.291	0.365	0.109	0.626	0.499	0.744	
COG	0.767	0.803	0.577	0.412	0.182	0.373	0.410	0.407	0.252	0.349	0.105	0.601	0.437	0.642	0.759

Notes: α is Cronbach's Reliability Alpha value; Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Maximum Shared Variance (MSV), and Average Shared Variance (ASV); the values in the diagonals are the square root of AVE of the corresponding constructs.

To test the relationship among the interrelated dependent constructs, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is conducted using SPSS AMOS 20.0. The measurement model with ten variables and 38 items used resulted to be fit according to the recommended statistics (Iacobucci, 2010). The model fit indices obtained are $\chi^2 = 2635.41$, $df = 610$, $\chi^2/df = 4.32$ (Jöreskog, 1993; MacCallum et al., 1999), $p < .05$, GFI = .882 (Jöreskog & Sorbom, 1988), CFI = .909 (Bentler, 1990), TLI = .895 (Hu & Bentler, 1999), IFI = .909, NFI = .902 (Bentler & Bonett, 1980) and RMSEA = .056 is less than 0.08 (Browne & Cudeck, 1993). The standardized factor loadings of the items meeting the minimum criterion as suggested (Bentler, 1990; Hu & Bentler, 1999) i.e. loadings to be greater than 0.40. Hence, the data is verified for its reliability, validity, and ready for further hypotheses testing.

4.3.3. Structural Model & Data Analysis

SPSS-AMOS 20.0 is used to test the hypotheses H2 to H7, and the indirect serial mediation of CBE and RQ in between participation and loyalty. Using AMOS for SEM would also yield model fit indices which would reveal the fitness of the model for generalizability of results. The SEM conducted used Maximum Likelihood Method (MLM) with bootstrapping technique. The analysis is bootstrapped for 3000 samples at 95% of level of significance with bias-corrected method. SEM is conducted as shown in the Figure 4.3.1., and the results are shown in Table 4.3.5. The results also indicate the fitness of the serial mediation model. The model fit indices obtained are $\chi^2 = 1710.96$, $df = 387$, $\chi^2/df = 4.421$ (Jöreskog, 1993; MacCallum et al., 1999), $p < .05$, GFI = .902 (Jöreskog & Sorbom, 1988), CFI = .921 (Bentler, 1990), TLI = .912 (Hu & Bentler, 1999),

IFI = .922, NFI = .901 (Bentler & Bonett, 1980) and RMSEA = .056 is less than 0.08 (Browne & Cudeck, 1993).

Figure 4.3.1. Structural Model of Study – 3

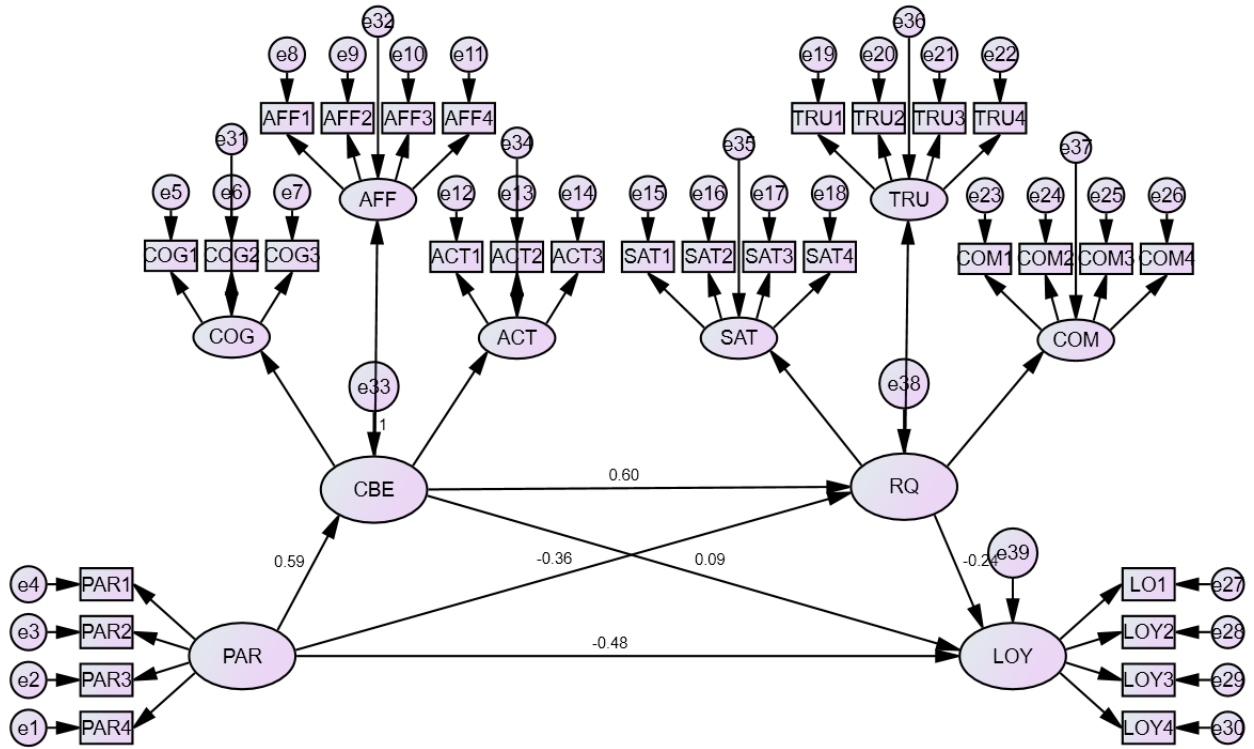


Table 4.3.5. Estimates of serial mediation model Study – 3

Hypothesis	Estimate	Decision
H2: PAR → CBE	0.59***	Accept
H3: PAR → RQ	-0.36*	Accept
H4: PAR → LOY	-0.48	Not Accepted
H5: CBE → LOY	0.19*	Accept
H6: RQ → LOY	-0.24	Not Accepted
H7: CBE → RQ	0.60***	Accept
PAR → CBE → RQ → LOY	0.78**	Accept

Note: * represents values are significant at $p < 0.01$; ** represent $p < 0.05$; *** represent $p < 0.001$

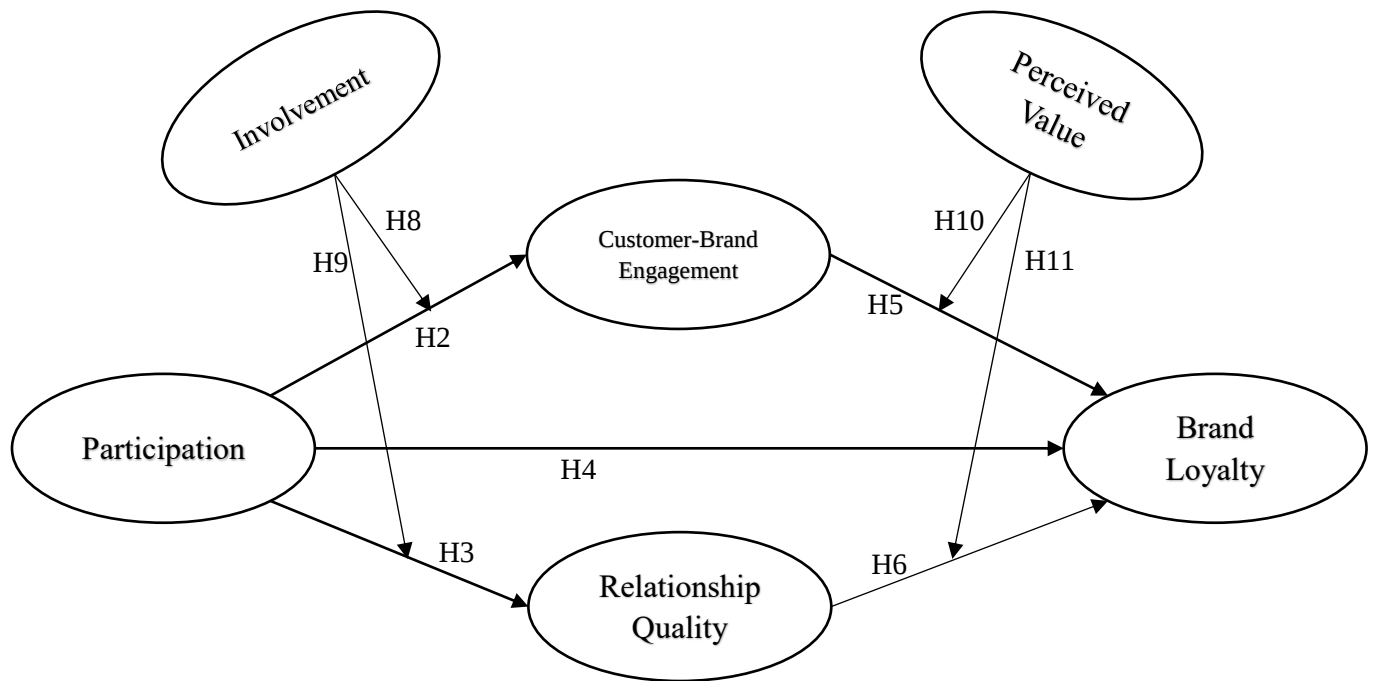
The entire hypotheses i.e. from H2, H3, H5 and H7 are accepted at 95% level of significance where p is less than 0.05, whereas H4 and H6 resulted to be insignificant. H2, the relationship between participation and CBE is recorded significant at $p < 0.001$ with an effect of 0.59. H3 the relationship between participation and RQ also came up to be significant. The direct relationship between CBE and loyalty is also recorded significant with an effect of .19 at $p < 0.01$. H6, the relationship between RQ and loyalty recorded as insignificant. The relationship between CBE and RQ is significant with an effect of .60 at $P < 0.001$. H6, the relationship between RQ and loyalty came up to be insignificant. For the hypothesis H4 i.e. the direct relationship between participation and loyalty is recorded as insignificant, however the indirect serial effect of $PAR \rightarrow CBE \rightarrow RQ \rightarrow LOY$ is obtained as 0.78 and is significant at $p < 0.05$. Since, all the respondents are purchasers of the product, the serial mediation result is in line with the results of Study – 1, which says that though the mediating role of CBE and RQ differ between purchasers and non-purchasers, the indirect (serial) relationship between participation and loyalty through Customer-Brand Engagement (CBE) and Relationship Quality (RQ) is significant. The Study – 3 results in this analysis using SEM confirm the indirect and serial mediating role of CBE and RQ in between participation and loyalty.

4.3.4. Moderation effects

To test the moderating effect of customer involvement in OBCs and the perceived value they derive from the product, a moderation analysis is conducted on the model constituting hypotheses H2 to H7. The moderation hypotheses are H8, involvement moderates the relationship between participation and CBE. H9, involvement moderates the

relationship between participation and RQ. H10, perceived value moderates the relationship between CBE and loyalty. Finally, H11 is the moderating effect of value on the relationship between RQ and loyalty. Model depicting these hypotheses from H2 to H11 is shown in Figure 4.3.2.

Figure 4.3.2. Model with moderators for study – 3

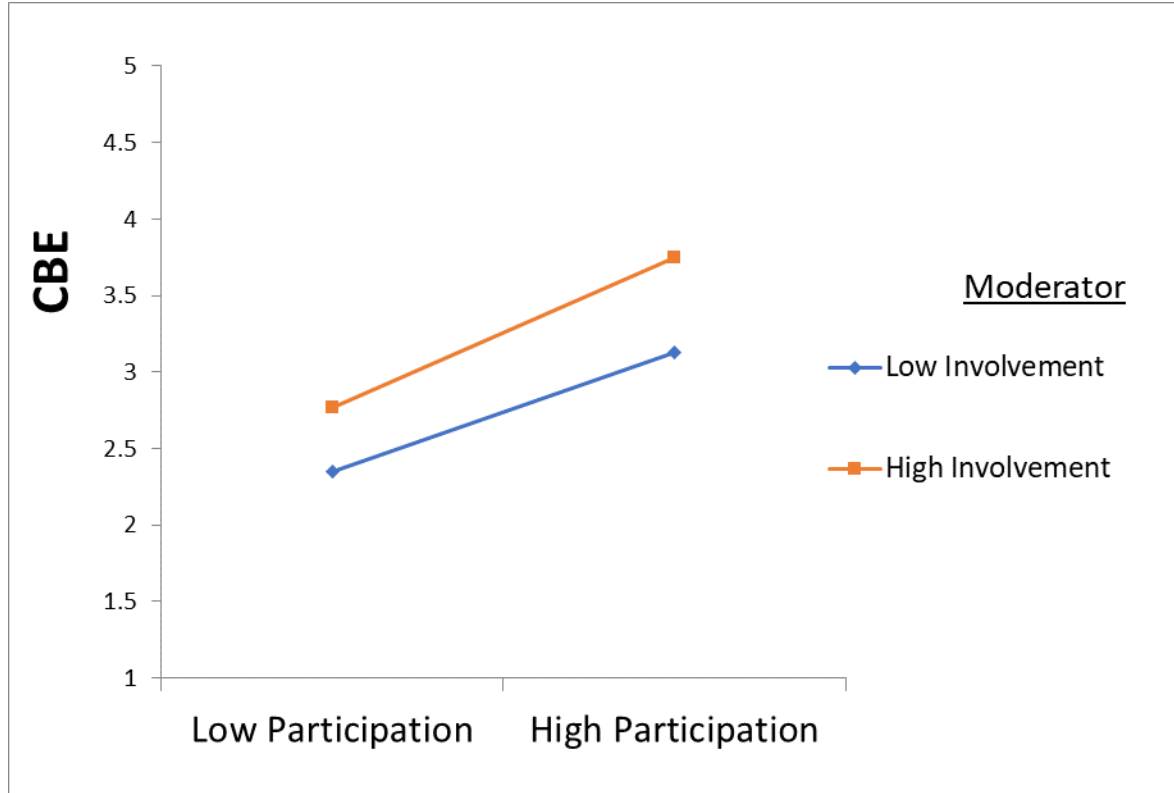


To test the moderating effects of these two variable involvement and perceived value on to the other relationships, a plug-in for SPSS developed by Hayes (2013) for conducting conditional processing is used, which is called as hayed Process Macros. Several complex models were developed by Hayes (2013) as a template to conduct conditional process analysis. Model 21 is the appropriate to test the present model as shown in Figure 4.3.2. The analysis is conducted in IBM SPSS 20.0 with Hayes process macros.

The macros allow bootstrapping the sample for indirect effects. The present analysis bootstrapped for 5000 samples at 95% level of confidence for confidence interval (CI) limits and with Bias-Corrected method. This method is widely accepted for conducting statistical analysis on complex models having multiple mediators and moderators. This macros plug-in is used for faster process with higher bootstrapped samples.

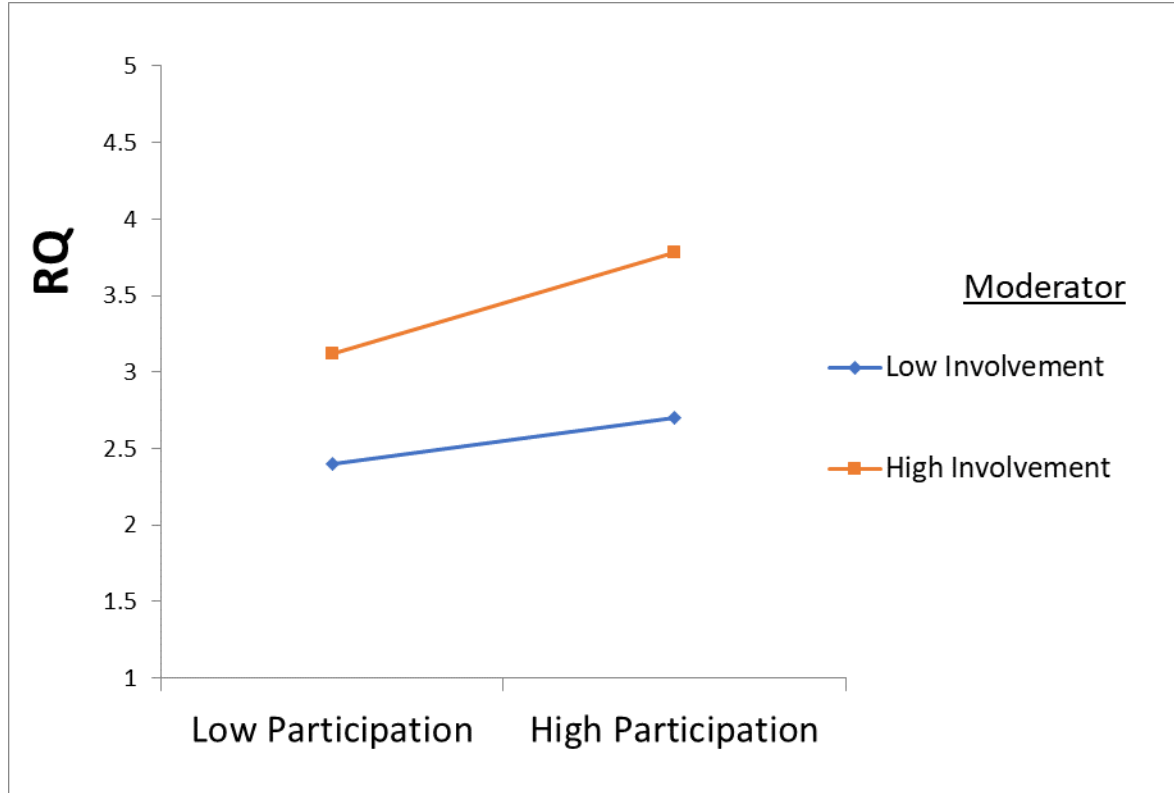
The results of the model testing are shown in Table 4.3.6. which preliminarily provides support for the hypotheses H2 to H7. The direct effects between the variables Participation, CBE, RQ and Loyalty found to be significantly affecting. However, the main aim of this analysis is to test the moderating effect of Involvement and Perceived Value on study variables. Hypothesis H8 resulted as accepted, which provides support for the statement that involvement moderates the relationship between participation and CBE. i.e. the moderating value of 0.05 at the significance control limits as (.01, .09) and at $p < 0.05$. It can be inferred that the combined effect of participation and involvement strengthens the effect of participation onto engagement (CBE). In other words, as customers involvement increases along with participation, engagement of the customer with the brand also increases. The same can be seen in the form of a Graph 4.3.1.

Graph 4.3.1. Moderating effect of Involvement on Participation and CBE



H9 which states that involvement enhances the relationship between participation and RQ is also found to be significant in this study – 3 i.e. with statistical significance control limits as (.04, .13), which does not include zero, hence the moderating effect is significant at $p < 0.05$. Which can be inferred from the results that, the strength of the relationship between participation and relationship quality (RQ), vary by the involvement levels of the customer with the brand. The same phenomenon came be understood by interpreting the Graph 4.3.2. The effect of participation is more on RQ when there is high involvement than the effect of participation on RQ when the involvement is low.

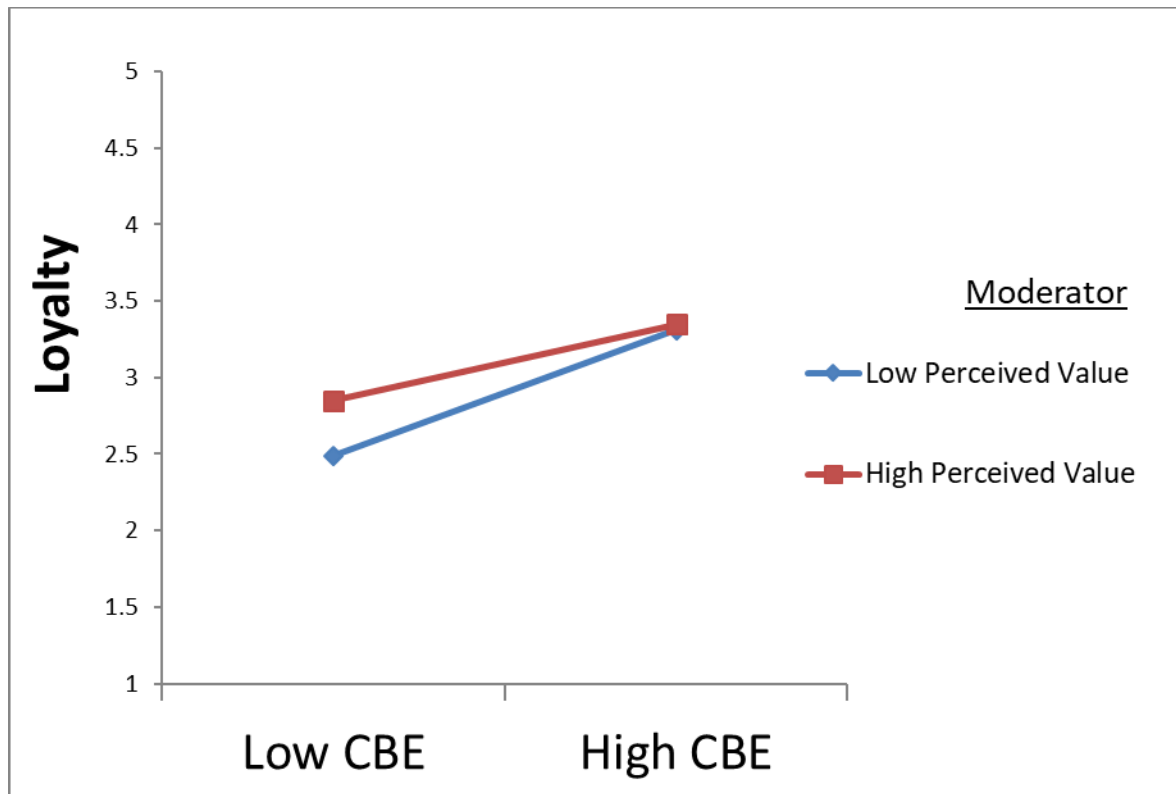
Graph 4.3.2. Moderating effect of Involvement on Participation and RQ



H10 is to test the moderating role of perceived value (VAL) on the relationship between CBE and loyalty. According to the study results, VAL significantly moderates the relationship between CBE and loyalty. However, this is negatively affecting the relationship i.e. the effect value as -0.08 with significance control limits as (-.13, -.02) and is significant at $p < 0.05$. This can be inferred that higher the value perceived, lesser will be the impact of engagement on loyalty, which can be seen in the Graph 4.3.3. Customer when perceive high value from the brand, then no matter what level of engagement he/she has with the brand, has a lesser impact on their loyalty levels. H11 is also significantly accepted i.e. the effect value as 0.12 with significance control limits as (.07, .16) and is significant at $p < 0.05$, and can be inferred that perceived value moderates the relationship

between RQ and loyalty. This moderating effect in this hypothesis is resulted to be positive. The higher levels of perceived value would strengthen the relationship between RQ and loyalty, which can be seen in Graph 4.3.4.

Graph 4.3.3. Moderating effect of Perceived Value on CBE and Loyalty



Graph 4.3.4. Moderating effect of Perceived Value on RQ and Loyalty

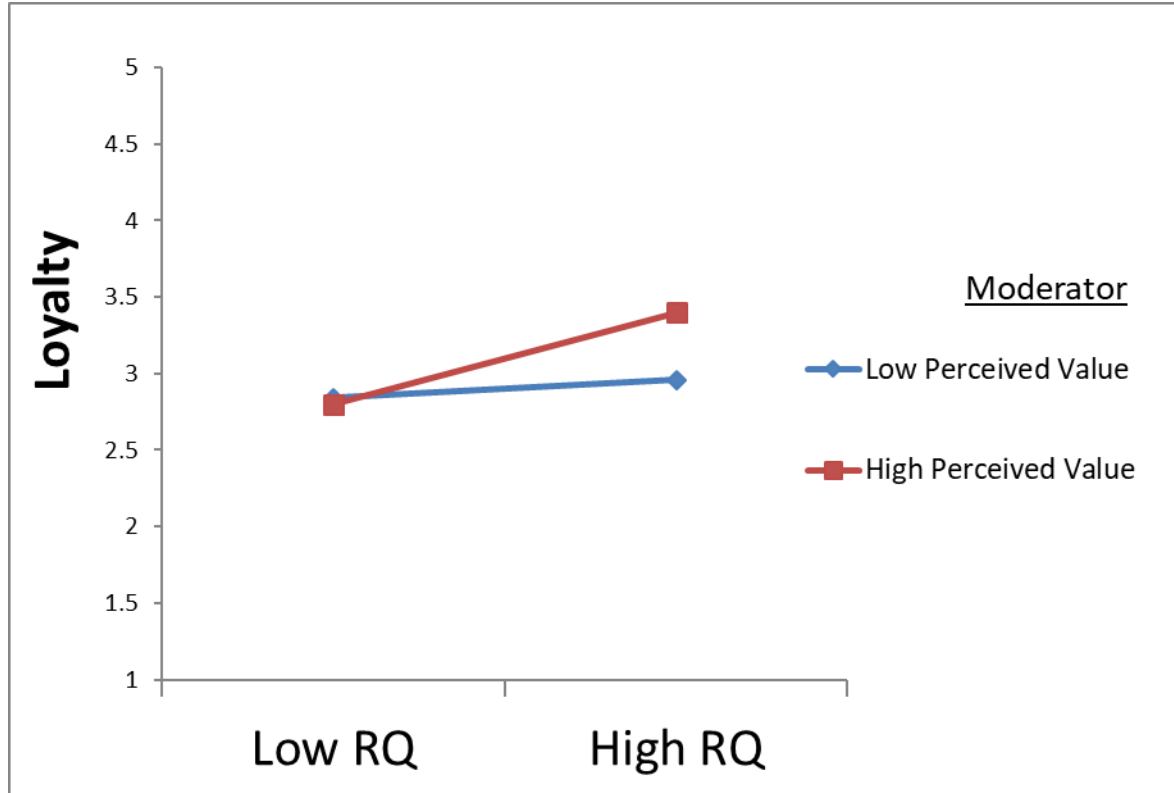


Table 4.3.6. Estimates of moderation effects of Study – 3

	CBE ($R^2 = 0.60$)		RQ ($R^2 = 0.19$)		LOYALTY ($R^2 = 0.37$)	
	Estimate	CI	Estimate	CI	Estimate	CI
Participation (PAR)	.44 (.03)	.39, .50 (S)	.24 (.03)	.19, .30 (S)	.09 (.03)	.03, .15 (S)
Involvement (INV)	.26 (.03)	.21, .30 (S)	.45 (.03)	.40, .50 (S)		
Moderation (PAR x INV)	.05 (.02)	.01, .09 (S)	.09 (.02)	.04, .13 (S)		
Customer-Brand Engagement (CBE)					.33 (.04)	.26, .40 (S)
Relationship Quality (RQ)					.18 (.03)	.12, .24 (S)
Perceived Value (VAL)					.10 (.03)	.04, .17 (S)
CBE x VAL					-.08 (.03)	-.13, -.02 (S)
RQ x VAL					.12 (.02)	.07, .16 (S)

Note: (S) represents significant at $p < 0.05$; (NS) represents Not Significant at $p < 0.05$

4.3.5. Results & Findings

The study – 3 is conducted to test the hypothesis H2 to H11. In hypothesis H1 through study – 1, it is found that the relationship $PAR \rightarrow CBE \rightarrow RQ \rightarrow LOY$ is significant with the purchasers' groups i.e. those who purchased the product earlier. The study – 3 is conducted to test the same again with some additional hypotheses H8 to H11, through some refined methodology when compared to study – 1. Hence, all the respondents of study – 3 are purchasers of the selected brands i.e. they have purchased earlier products from the mentioned brands. The present study – 3 also resulted in the same lines as the study – 1 with respect to hypotheses H2 to H7.

The hypotheses H2 to H7 have been resulted to be accepted and positively significant. H8 and H9 are accepted and positively significant. This can be understood that, involvement acts as a positive moderator between participation and CBE, and between participation and RQ. H10 and H11 have been significantly accepted, however H10 resulted in negatively impact and H11 with a positive influence i.e. Value acts as a negative moderator between CBE and loyalty and acts as a positive moderator between RQ and loyalty.

The findings from the results of this study – 3 are participation, relationship quality, and customer engagement play an important role in building brand loyalty among the customers who purchase and follow their favorite brands on OBCs. Secondly, Customer involvement increases the impacts of participation on their engagement, and also their RQ with the brand in OBCs. Third, customers' perceived value of the brand enhances the effect of relationship quality on their brand loyalty. Further the conclusion of the study, the implications and contributions will be discussed in detail in the next chapter – 5.

Chapter – 5: Findings & Conclusion

5.1. Findings & Conclusion: Study – 1

The purpose of conducting study – 1 stands as a primary base to conduct other two studies answering two other questions, although emphasizing on different methodologies. The study – 1 is to find answer for the question related to objective – 1 of the overall present research. Objective – 1 of the present research is to find out the different role played by the two important concepts CBE & RQ, which lead to brand loyalty. To check whether these two play a different role between two customer groups; customer who purchase a brand earlier (existing customers) and customers did not buy the brand yet (new customers). By designing a quasi-experiment to test the hypotheses associated with the objective, the following points have been confirmed from the results of the data analysis.

1. CBE and RQ acting as mediators between Participation and Loyalty.

2. Results provide evidence for:

Participation → CBE → RQ → Loyalty.

Participation → RQ → CBE → Loyalty.

3. However, when compared between purchasers & non-purchasers:

For Purchasers – CBE not leading to Loyalty, but RQ is leading to Loyalty.

For Non-Purchasers – RQ not leading to Loyalty, but CBE is leading to Loyalty

4. Irrespective of respondent being a buyer or not of a particular brand, both his Engagement with the Brand and Relationship Quality (RQ) will positively affect his Brand Loyalty.

Conclusion: This supports the two different schools of thoughts on CBE, that CBE and RQ acts differently for New & Existing customers. Thus, supporting hypothesis – 1 (H1) of this study.

5.2. Findings & Conclusion: Study – 2

Study – 1 was intended to examine the objective – 1 formulated as hypothesis – 1. The results of study – 1 have answered the question of ‘the changing role of CBE and RQ between existing and new customers.’ A quasi-experiment with small sample size is used to test the hypothesis. Hence, a second study was felt necessary to test the hypotheses H2 to H7 with a larger sample and relevant methodology. Hence, study – 2 is undertaken where data was collected from Twitter based respondents with selected Indian fashion brands. The study – 2 also included another four hypotheses H8 to H11 to test the moderating effects of involvement and perceived value on the other variables in the model. The findings from the data analysis of study – 2 are as follows.

1. CBE and RQ acting as mediators between Participation and Loyalty.
2. Customer Involvement enhances the positive relationship between Participation and CBE, however, does not affect the positive relationship between Participation and RQ
3. Perceived value negatively moderates the relationship between CBE and loyalty.
4. Perceived value positively moderates the relationship between RQ and loyalty.

Conclusion: Though Involvement of customer on brand pages positively effect CBE and produce higher levels of engagement, there is no evidence of the interaction of customer participation and involvement leads to higher levels of Relationship Quality (RQ).

Customer Perceived Value (PV) increases the Brand Loyalty along with RQ, however, it reduces the impact of CBE onto loyalty i.e., higher levels of Perceived Value would decrease the influence of CBE on Brand Loyalty.

5.3. Findings & Conclusion: Study – 3

Since the study – 2 was suffering from limitations of ‘respondents being selected from only Twitter; and for only four selected brands’, the whole research felt the need of another study where respondent is given more freedom to select their favorite brand and the online brand community they are most active to follow that particular brand. Hence, study – 3 was conducted with a unique data collection platform and from the data collected so has been analyzed. The findings from the results of data analysis of study – 3 are as follows.

1. CBE and RQ acting as mediators between Participation and Loyalty.
2. Customer Involvement positively moderates the relationship between Participation and CBE.
3. Customer Involvement positively moderates the relationship between Participation and RQ
4. Perceived value negatively moderates the relationship between CBE and loyalty.
5. Perceived value positively moderates the relationship between RQ and loyalty.

Conclusion: Involvement of customer on brand pages positively effect CBE and produce higher levels of engagement, similarly there is an evidence of the interaction of customer participation and involvement leading to higher levels of Relationship Quality (RQ).

Customer Perceived Value (PV) increases the Brand Loyalty along with RQ, however, it reduces the impact of CBE onto loyalty i.e., higher levels of Perceived Value would decrease the influence of CBE on Brand Loyalty.

5.4. Findings & Conclusion: Overall Study

Overall, the present research was designed to study four objectives through three studies with different methodology, data and sample size. The four objectives were tested using eleven hypotheses formulated based on the objectives. From the findings of the three studies, the overall findings of the present research are summarized and discussed in this section.

Before discussing the overall findings of the study, we first attempt to present the findings and conclusion of the study objective wise. The Figures 5.1.1., Figure 5.1.2., Figure 5.1.3., and Figure 5.1.4. depicts the summary of the study objective-wise. The Table 5.1.1. shows the decision on all the hypotheses i.e. from H1 to H11 of the present research.

Figure 5.1.1. Summary of Objective – 1

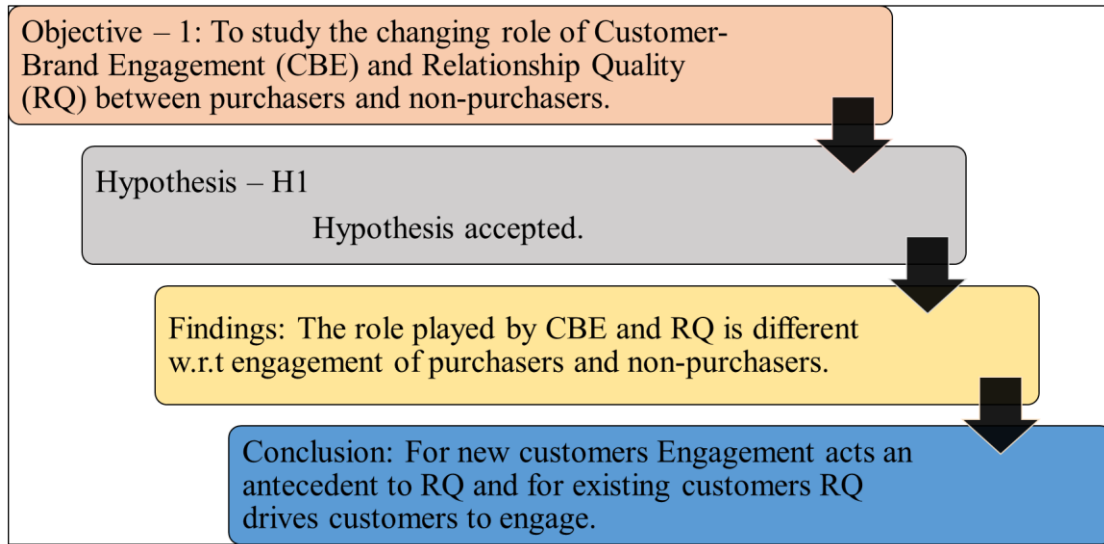


Figure 5.1.2. Summary of Objective – 2

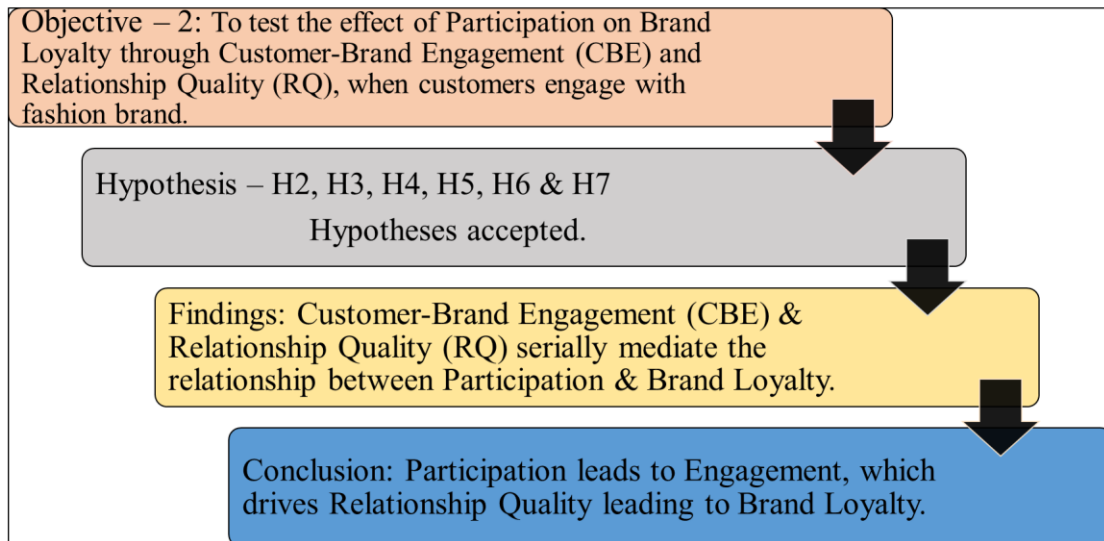


Figure 5.1.3. Summary of Objective – 3

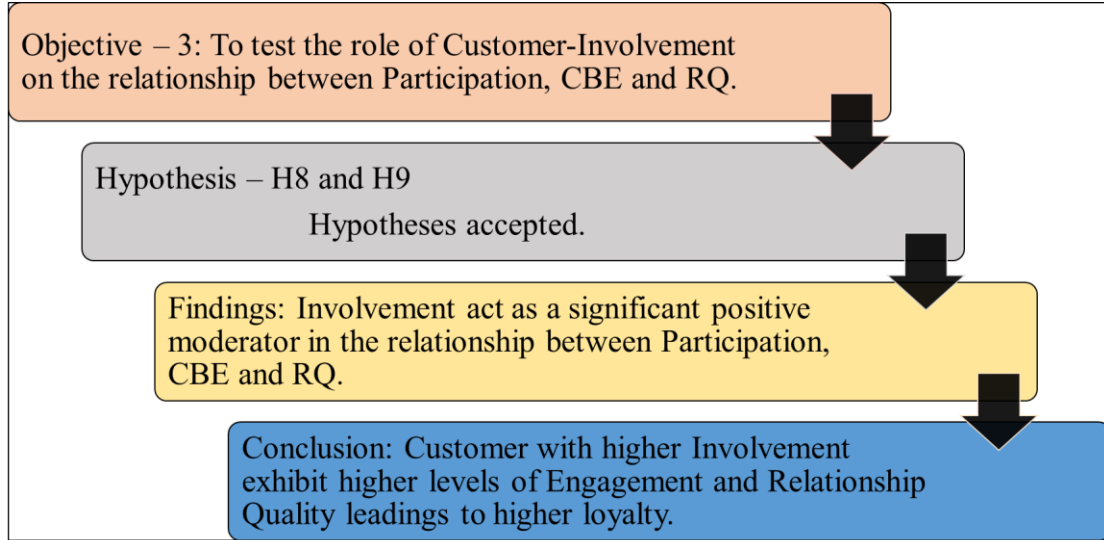


Figure 5.1.4. Summary of Objective – 4

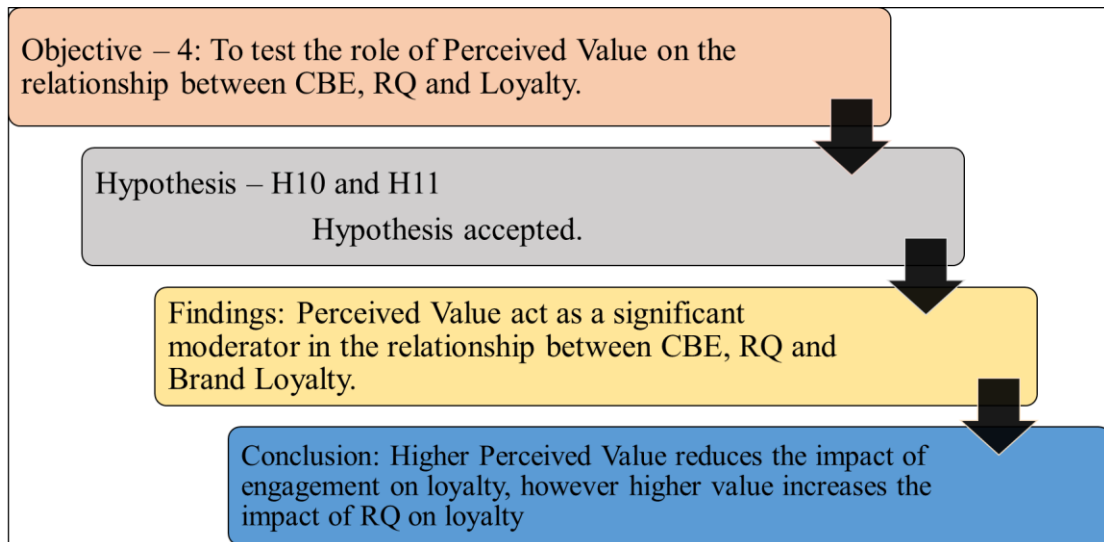


Table 5.1.1. Decision on all the hypotheses of the overall study

Objective	Hypothesis	Result
Objective - 1	H11: There is a significant difference in the mediating effect of CBE and RQ in the relationship between participation and loyalty with respect to new and existing customers.	Accepted
Objective - 2	H1: There is a significant positive effect of Participation on Consumer Brand Engagement (CBE).	Accepted
	H2: There is a significant positive effect of Participation on Relationship Quality (RQ).	Accepted
	H3: There is a significant positive effect of Participation and Brand Loyalty.	Accepted
	H4: There is a significant positive effect of CBE and Brand Loyalty.	Accepted
	H5: There is a significant positive effect of Relationship Quality and Brand Loyalty.	Accepted
	H6: There is a significant positive effect of CBE on RQ.	Accepted
Objective - 3	H7: Involvement moderates the relationship between Participation and CBE.	Accepted
	H8: Involvement moderates the relationship between Participation and RQ.	Accepted
Objective - 4	H9: Perceived Value moderates the relationship between CBE and Brand Loyalty.	Accepted
	H10: Perceived Value moderates the relationship between Relationship Quality and Brand Loyalty.	Accepted

Hence, as per the figures and tables presented above, it is evident that all the eleven hypotheses formulated against the four objectives of the study are significantly accepted.

5.4.1. Findings of the overall study

The present sections here on discuss the findings of the study overall. The findings of the study summarized from the three-sub studied conducted are:

1. Participation on OBC leads to increased Brand Loyalty through CBE and RQ.

According to the results of the study – 1, it is found that when a customer participates in a brand community, this participation would lead to engagement with the brand content which increases their trust, satisfaction and commitment with the brand, which further motivates them to be loyal in terms of exhibiting purchase and non-purchase positive behavior.

2. There is difference between purchasers and non-purchasers participation on OBCs in terms of CBE and RQ.

The objective of the study – 1 was to see whether there is a change in the role played by CBE with respect to purchasers and non-purchasers. The study provide evidence for the change in the role of CBE between these two groups of customers. People who already purchasers are more driven by their quality of relationship with the brand rather than the engagement with the brand and vice-versa.

3. For Existing customers RQ is the major motivation leading to loyalty.

Customers who are already having positive purchase experience derives loyalty through the quality of relationship with the brand. The relationship quality of the

customer with the brand also drive customers to engagement with the brand, more often through the online brand communities, where brand engagement activities are higher.

4. For New customers Engagement is the major factor which leads to loyalty than RQ.

For customer who are new (non-purchasers), it is evident that their positive experience and emotional connect with the brand because of the engagement with the brand, motivates them to trust and commit towards the brand, which eventually drives them to purchase behavior.

5. For Existing customers who follow their favorite brand on its OBC both CBE and RQ simultaneously influence their brand loyalty.

It is also observed from the results of the study – 2 and study – 3 that, customer engagement and the relationship quality simultaneously influence the loyalty behavior of the customer i.e. irrespective of CBE leads to RQ or RQ leads to CE, the results also suggest that they individually and parallelly influence the loyalty of the customers.

6. Involvement in OBCs influence the way participation effects CBE.

Involvement with the brand in OBCs is an important factor influencing CBE. Higher involved customers increase the effects of participation more than low involved customers i.e. involvement positively moderates the relationship between participation and customer engagement.

7. Similarly, Involvement influence the relationship between participation and RQ in the same way.

Customer involvement increases the effect of participation on relationship quality of the customer with the brand. The combined effect of involvement and CBE increases the relationship quality. Higher the involvement, higher is the effect of participation on relationship quality.

8. Perceived value of the customers that they generate through engaging in OBCs influence their brand loyalty.

The perceived value of the customers negatively moderates the relationship between CBE and loyalty i.e. the increase in value perceived would reduce the effect of engagement on loyalty. Higher the perceived value lower would be the impact of CBE. This may be because, the impact of perceived value is higher than the customer engagement on loyalty.

9. Perceived value increases the positively relationship between RQ and loyalty.

However, due to higher levels of perceived value the effect of RQ increases on brand loyalty. Customer with higher perceived value and higher relationship quality would lead to higher levels of loyalty. Hence, engagement enhances the relationship quality.

5.4.2. Conclusion of the overall study

- The study supports the argument of two different schools of thoughts regarding engagement of customers on OBCs.
- For existing customer Relationship Quality is the major motivation for maintaining their loyalty.
- For New customers, Engagement drives their loyalty towards a brand. Hence, the role of CBE differs as an antecedent or consequence.
- The customer involvement plays a major role in OBCs and customers exhibit different levels of involvement. It is evident for the study, involvement moderates the relationship between Participation in OBCS, CBE and RQ.
- Though the Satisfaction, Commitment and Trust of customers is studied as a higher order construct here in the present study, it was important to study the role of perceived value of customers with respect to CBE and RQ.
- The study supports the moderating role of perceived value. Where higher PV increases the effect of CBE on loyalty than lower PV.
- However, it is resulted that PV dampens the effect of RQ on loyalty, i.e., if a customer generates high value from a brand, then the effect of other determinants like trust, satisfaction & commitment would reduce on their loyalty behavior.

5.5. Theoretical Contributions

As reflected and mentioned in the literature review chapter, that the basic conceptual roots are from the four fundamental premise of S-D logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008; Verhoef, Reinartz, & Krafft, 2010). The customer is the value cocreator of the

services, the mutual benefit service orientation, and network as a platform to create value, and interaction & experiential viewpoint towards engagement. The present adapts the scale developed by Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014) for measuring cognitive, emotional and behavioral aspects of engagement, which eventually is developed on the base of the underlying theory of S-D logic i.e. interactive, experiential and cocreate aspects of the fundamental premises. S-D logic emphasizes on the participation of customers on virtual networks to gain and share information about a focal object and thereby engagement with the brand content. The results of the study provide support that the customers do participate to engage with the brand. These engagement activities include suggesting, recommending, referring and sharing brand related information.

Customer participate in a brand community (offline or online) to identify themselves with the group's members and characteristics. This behavior of identifying themselves with their favorite brand encourages customers to consistently engage with the brand. Hence, the findings if the study supports the underlying theory of Social Identification. The strong urge to identify themselves with a popular and may be a favorite brand drive the customer to engage. This engagement behavior in the long-term develops a quality relationship with brand further motivation the customer to be loyal to the brand. Thus, the findings of the study support the two major underlying theories discussed to examine the objectives.

5.6. Practical Implications

- **Though, the marketing metrics show the role of engagement in increasing marketing desired outputs, this study supports the same through empirical investigation and psychometrical approach which adds value to the marketers understanding towards CBE.**

It is evident that marketers are taking up engagement activities at a large scale and using advanced analytics tools to analyze the implications and results of the engagement efforts. This kind of evaluation is necessary is taken up wherever required. However, to understand the mechanism of the effect of engagement on psychological and relational aspects of the customer, a psychometrical and systematic study is required. This study provides insights to the marketers that customers participate in OBCs not just to suggest, recommend, complain or just feedback, they do this because they cognitively, emotionally get connected with the brand. A mere like or share does not sometimes mean they very much like the brand or not like or share does not mean they dislike the brand.

Hence, the marketers should use their message or brand content very carefully so that they capture the right essence of engaging the customers through their OBCs.

- **Since, engagement plays a different role of existing and new customers, marketers should design customized engagement activities on OBCs.**

It is evident from the results of the first hypothesis that CBE acts differently for new and existing customers. For customers who already purchased products from a brand may start engaging with the brand on an OBC just because they have been satisfied with

the brand and have trust in the brand. Because these customers got transactional connected with brand now, they do want to connect emotionally and spend some time, get occupied with brand activities just to improve the brand services through positive talk on OBCs. On the other side, the new customers who are actively engaging with the brand would know more information about the brand via online interactions with different stakeholders like peer, brand managers etc. Further a positive cognitive and emotional connect may drive them to trust the brand and get committed with the brand and further motivating them to purchase behavior.

Hence, marketers should keep track of type of the customer (new or existing) viewing the content and engage them with the related and relevant content. With the use advance machine learning algorithms, marketers are now able to find out the interests and type of customer and cater them with the content they like to engage with. This kind of activities increase the engagement levels of the customers which eventually make the customer an advocate of the brand.

- **Fashion Brand managers should increase their presence in OBCs and engage both existing and new customers, as Fashion brands are frequently shopped online and customers seek information on OBCs.**

The present study focused on the fashion brands; hence the findings of the study are much relevant to the fashion brand managers. Fashion brands are most brought and followed online when compared to other category of brands. Since, they study collected information on engagement from fashion brands followers, the results are much relevant

for the fashion brand managers. The results provide evidence that customers follow their favorite fashion brand OBCs. They exchange and share brand related information on these virtual networks. By doing so they do not just help others by sharing information but also get benefitted by others shared information. This helps customers to interact to brand managers also which helps them to get more information at lesser time with quick response. This kind of interactions improve the quality of relations between customers and brands.

Hence, fashion brands should actively participate and increase their presence in virtual communities. A wide variety of engagement activities can be designed to attract customers to follow and participate on these OBCs.

- **Since participation is the major driver of customer engagement, marketers should design attractive activities to increase participation.**

Customer engagement and participation is the major driver of consumer purchase and beyond purchase behavior. Marketers to increase customer engagement and participation should include unique and innovative methods. Storytelling, and gamification are some of the interesting and attractive methods that can be applied to increase engagement. Marketers should adopt activities which encourage customers to share their positive experiences with other on OBCs. These kinds of shared experiences would serve peer to develop trust which can further motivate them towards purchase decision. In fact, these kind of shared experiences and reviews of the customers who already purchased the product would help others to make decision. Hence, marketers should take up activities which encourage customers to share their experiences.

5.7. Limitations & Future Directions

The study considered only online mode of interactions and engagement. Offline engagement is not taken into consideration. Customers are generally engaged offline also, however, the offline mode of engagement is relatively lesser than the online mode. Further studies should consider offline mode of engagement also or can also investigate the difference between online and offline engagement.

The present study is restricted to brand initiated online communities only. Some of the brand communities online are initiated by customers or fans of a brand. However, the brand communities created by the brands are more followed because of the authenticated information related to the brand. Hence the study is restricted to only brand initiated communities only. The further studies can take up engagement on brand communities or fan pages created on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram by customers or fans.

The study – 2 & study – 3 are completely online studies. Therefore, there is no interaction with the respondents as such. For study – 2, because it was difficult to find customers who are purchasers and followers of the brand on Twitter, of study select brand (Raymonds, Craftsvilla etc.), the study approaches with online mode for data collection. Similarly, study – 3 also followed an online mode of data collection. Although there is a weakness identified for online mode of data collection, the present study has taken care in the methodology design to minimize the errors of bias related to online surveys. The future researchers should consider collection through offline mode and may also do qualitative study using face-to-face interviews, which support the findings of the study.

The study was included only few, however very important variables like involvement and perceived value to test the concept of CBE. More related antecedents and consequences like subjective knowledge, experience, brand image, attachment can be used in the further models. Though there are large number of variables being researched combined with engagement construct, it is important to consider relevant variable for the context of the study. Since, CBE is a context dependent concept, there is greater scope to study the difference in engagement levels between two reacted contexts.

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Investigating the Role of Customer Brand Engagement and Relationship Quality on Brand Loyalty: An Empirical Analysis

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this article is to investigate the role of customer-brand engagement (CBE) and relationship quality (RQ) when individuals engage online with a brand. The study empirically examines the serial mediation of CBE and RQ between customer participation and brand loyalty. The research included a posttest only, in a quasi-experiment design, with two comparative groups: Purchasers and nonpurchasers. A total of 215 students were invited to engage with a selected brand on Facebook for 5 days consecutively, and for 20 minutes each day. Subsequently, the participants' opinions were collected using a questionnaire. Process Macros was used to test the serial mediation (Hayes, 2013). The results confirm that CBE does not mediate among the purchasers' group, however, CBE and RQ exhibit serial mediation. Also, RQ does not mediate among the nonpurchasers' group. This evidence suggests that purchasers do not exhibit loyalty through engagement alone and confirms that CBE is beyond transactions. Finally, results support the importance of CBE for the management to improve brand loyalty.

KEYWORDS

Cocreate, Customer Engagement, Facebook, Online Communities, Participation, Relationship Quality, Serial Mediation, Social Media

INTRODUCTION

Advancements in technology are certainly bringing dramatic changes in the marketing landscape. The introduction of social media has made consumers even more powerful in terms of information, options, and processes they can access, posing greater challenges to marketers (Constantinides, Romero, & Boria, 2009). In addition, interesting features, such as user-generated content and interactivity across different groups, increase the potential of better service and feedback (Hoyer, Chandy, Dorotic, Krafft, & Singh, 2010; Nambisan & Nambisan, 2008; Rose, Clark, Samouel, & Hair, 2012). This opportunity of interaction with the customer allows retailers to engage their customers in nontransactional activities, such as blogging, liking, commenting, recommending, and writing

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reviews about the brands (Van Doorn et al., 2010). This is termed as ‘customer engagement’ (Van Doorn et al., 2010; Verhoef, Reinartz, & Krafft, 2010). These activities help marketers to identify their strengths and weaknesses accordingly.

Though the concept of engagement is widely discussed in other kinds of disciplines, such as psychology, sociology, and organizational behavior (Achterberg et al., 2003; Saks, 2006), the importance of customer engagement (CE) and its implications have been explored in marketing literature very recently (Bowden, 2009). Even in the business practice, the results of engaging customer made it an important marketing strategy. The (Marketing, 2014) listed CE as its key research priority for the years 2010-12 and continued to maintain it as a key research area for the years 2014-16, too.

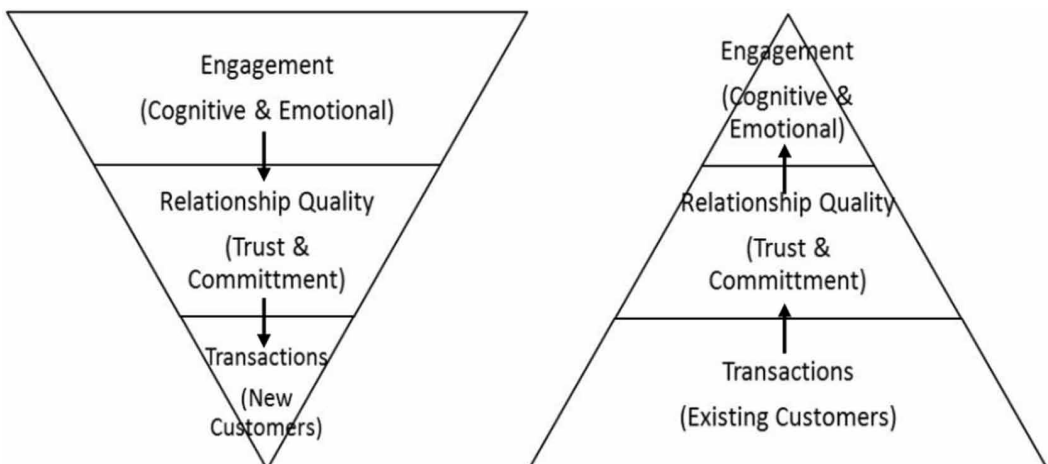
The conceptual roots of CE can be drawn on the interactive, social, and experiential nature of transcending the view of relationships which Vargo and Lusch (2008) proposed in their service-dominant logic. The engaging customers also participate to cocreate service and products (Roderick J. Brodie, Hollebeek, Jurić, & Ilić, 2011) of value through interactions. In return, this generates useful insights to marketers to provide better service and products.

Ultimately, identifying loyal customers is important, since these customers would bring new customers to the firm through nontransaction activities in the brand communities. (Aksoy et al., 2013) suggested that customers who are loyal or delighted share their experience with others on social media in an interactive form. In recent times, customer engagement is considered as a powerful predictor of the customer’s behavioral and attitudinal outcomes (Bowden, 2009; Hollebeek, 2011a).

CE is the psychological state (Bowden, 2009; Hollebeek, 2011a) that goes beyond transactions (Van Doorn et al., 2010), develops trust and satisfaction, and, thereby, drives the customer towards a transactional behavior. Another school of thought sustains that customers’ transactional relationship generates trust and commitment, and thus motivates clients to emotionally engage with the brand (Pansari & Kumar, 2017), as Figure 1 shows. This creates the curiosity to study and clarify the role of engagement as an antecedent or consequence among new and existing customers.

Since two different engagement process flows take place for existing (purchasers) and new customers (nonpurchasers), this study aims to investigate whether customer-brand engagement (CBE) and relationship quality (RQ) play a different influential role in producing brand loyalty when the customer is engaged with a specific brand. The study intends to examine:

Figure 1. Different engagement flow for existing and new customers



- Whether CBE mediates the relationship between customers' participation in brand communities and their loyalty towards the brand.
- The mediating role of RQ between participation and brand loyalty.
- The serial mediation of CBE and RQ.
- Whether the roles of CBE and RQ change among the existing and new customers' groups.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides the review of relevant literature about the major constructs of this study. In particular, the following subsections provide the review of the literature related to 'participation, CE, and RQ, in order to highlight and build arguments to develop a conceptual and measurement model for CBE with a particular brand on a social networking site. The section considers relevant literature on loyalty as an outcome and some of the antecedents of brand loyalty, especially in the context of engaging customer towards a brand on social media. Thereby, the section develops hypotheses to build a conceptual model.

This research discusses four major constructs through the conceptual model which it presents: Consumer participation, as the driver of CBE and RQ, and brand loyalty, which is empirically studied and is the result of CBE and RQ (Figure 2).

The concept of CE and the conceptual model in this work are grounded mainly on two theoretical frameworks: The service-dominant (S-D) logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008) and the consumer culture theory (CCT) (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). The S-D rationale emphasizes customers' proactive role to cocreate value and customize experiences with firms/brands through active and unambiguous dialogue and connections (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008), and also to convert customers from passive spectators to active participants (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2000, 2002).

Customers' active participation implies a diverse perceived value in terms of usage, experience, and benefits that customers seek from both products and/or services (). Consequently, deriving purchasers' role in value cocreation, the S-D logic gives a hypothetical snapshot of the impacts of consumers' involvement and participation on CBE.

At the same time, the CCT examines "the contextual, symbolic, and experiential aspects of consumption as they unfold across a consumption cycle that includes acquisition, consumption and possession, and disposition processes" (Arnould & Thompson, 2005, p. 871).

The theory also highlights the way customers actively participate in cocreating goods/services and draw a sound self-personality inside the commercial center. For instance, customers actively participate in an online or offline market environment, and draw their identity and add value through brand meaning (Murray, 2002; Thompson & Haytko, 1997). Therefore, the conceptual model of this study specifies the effect of participation on CBE, illustrating the contextual, symbolic, and experiential facets of consumer behavior, as the CCT emphasizes. Both the CCT and the S-D logic supplement each other as they put customers at the focal point of the value cocreation process (Vargo & Lusch, 2004).

The theories also investigate the process of allocating social, cultural, and economic resources by the consumers among contending brands and/or services to improve their lives (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). Thus, by integrating the CCT and the S-D logic, this study attempts to capture the major constructs that elucidate the interactive nature of consumers with brands.

Participation

The customer's role as a coproducer (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2002) was emphasized in the recent past in the literature. According to Vargo and Lusch (2008), the customer is a cocreator of value and always participates as a coproducer. This highlights the customer's interactivity with elements of relationship to cocreate value; indeed, the customer's interactivity depends on this level of participation (Bolton & Saxena-Iyer, 2009). Pratibha A. Dabholkar (2015, p. 484) defines customer participation

as “the degree to which the customer is involved in producing and delivering the service” (p. 484). In addition, the level of customer participation may differ from the firm’s production and cocreation process (Meuter & Bitner, 1998).

Claycomb, Lengnick-Hall, and Inks (2001) suggested that an increase in the customer’s active participation in services leads to socialization, and this further enhances the perceived quality of service and also satisfaction (Pratibha A. Dabholkar, 2015). Kelley, Donnelly Jr, and Skinner (1990) proposed a conceptual service quality framework which apprehends the emotional and behavioral outcomes as a result of socialization in terms of customer participation.

Customer participation as a construct is also viewed from the customer’s perspective. In this dimension, participation is studied in relation with motivation (Bateson, 1985), technology adoption, and the effect of consumer traits, other factors (Pratibha A Dabholkar & Bagozzi, 2002), and factors affecting initial trial decisions while adopting self-service technologies (Meuter, Bitner, Ostrom, & Brown, 2005).

Many researchers have always studied customer participation in the context of cocreation (Mekhail, Elina, & Aino, 2013). In recent research, cocreation is mainly focused on improving operational efficiency and marketing strategy (Kalaigannam & Varadarajan, 2015), mutually satisfying consumption (Oliver, 2006). The review of the existing literature allows highlighting that customer participation is studied in the lexicon of an exchange, where exchange is defined as an antecedent condition similar to participation. Thus, the activity dimension of customer participation provides the difference between participation and CE (Vivek, 2009).

CE primarily focuses on experiences, rather than on exchange. These experiences would generate cognitive, emotional, and/or behavioral manifestation towards the focal object. Hence, customer participation in online communities would generate online experiences, trust, satisfaction, and commitment to the brand, and enhances brand loyalty (Oliver, 2006).

- **H1:** Customer participation positively affects brand loyalty.
- **H2:** Customer participation positively affects CBE.
- **H3:** Customer participation positively affects RQ.

Customer-Brand Engagement

Though the concept of engagement is widely addressed across many academic disciplines, it has gained attention in marketing literature comparatively very recently (Roderick J. Brodie et al., 2011; Roderick J Brodie, Hollebeek, & Smith, 2011). Very soon, in service marketing literature, it has emerged as a promising construct in explaining and predicting the consumer’s behavioral outcomes, including loyalty (Higgins & Scholer, 2009; Pham & Avnet, 2009). The conceptual roots of CBE can be addressed with the propositions of value cocreation and interactive experience (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008). According to Van Doorn et al. (2010), customer-brand engagement behavior is a result of motivational activities, such as blogging and word-of-mouth interaction with peer. CBE is also defined as the set of customer-engagement behaviors that go beyond purchase behavior alone (Van Doorn et al., 2010).

Recent research suggests that the concept of CBE should be encompassed in more action-oriented studies, including both psychological and behavioral dimensions (Brodie et al., 2011; Hollebeek, 2011b; Patterson, Yu, & De Ruyter, 2006; So, King, & Sparks, 2014; Vivek, 2009). Therefore, CE is studied as a multidimensional concept (Gambetti, Graffigna, & Biraghi, 2012). Many researchers have developed CE as a multidimensional construct. This study considers cognition, affection, and activation (i.e., dimensions of CBE) which Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014a) described in their work.

Previous research suggests that a positive relationship exists between employee engagement and job satisfaction, and also between employee engagement and organizational commitment (Saks, 2006).

Analogously, this relationship can be extended to the association between customer satisfaction and commitment (Hollebeek, 2011a). Morgan and Hunt (1994) and Ganesan and Hess (1997) found a positive association between trust and engagement.

- **H4:** CBE positively affects RQ.
- **H5:** CBE positively affects brand loyalty.

Relationship Quality

No clear consensus has been reached on what makes up RQ (Dwyer & Oh, 1987; Kumar, Scheer, & Steenkamp, 1995). Relationship marketing literature often discussed the importance of trust, satisfaction, and commitment as dimensions in (Dwyer & Oh, 1987; Kumar et al., 1995). RQ is considered as the higher-order construct having trust, satisfaction, and commitment as the three dimensions (Crosby, Evans, & Cowles, 1990; Dorsch, Swanson, & Kelley, 1998; Zolkiewski, Turnbull, Ulaga, & Eggert, 2006).

Trust as a complex construct encompasses the confidence, reliability, and integrity that one party has on the other (Gundlach & Murphy, 1993; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Trust is reported as an influencer on behaviors and attitude (Schurr & Ozanne, 1985) and, most of the times, as a common ground to exchange parties to solve their problems (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). It is also found that trust has a positive effect on the stability of buyer-seller relationships (Anderson & Weitz, 1989).

Commitment is an essential factor to develop successful exchanges and relationships (Gundlach, Achrol, & Mentzer, 1995) and represents a higher level of relationship bonding (Dwyer & Oh, 1987). It involves an individual's intention to maintain relationships of value in the future (Moorman, Zaltman, & Deshpande, 1992). Commitment has an attitudinal component which can be understood as an individual's behavioral intention to enhance and maintain relationships (Dorsch et al., 1998).

Satisfaction is an important dimension of relationship quality (Crosby et al., 1990; Dorsch et al., 1998). It is important to create and retain satisfied customers who feel glad and valued (Berry & Parasuraman, 2004). Satisfied customers are assumed to maintain high-quality relationships (Crosby et al., 1990) and, thereby, are more committed towards the seller (Dwyer & Oh, 1987).

- **H6:** Relationship positively affects brand loyalty.

In addition to the above six hypotheses, three more assumptions are proposed to study the other objectives of the research (i.e., to test the mediating effect of CBE and RQ on the relationship of participation and brand loyalty):

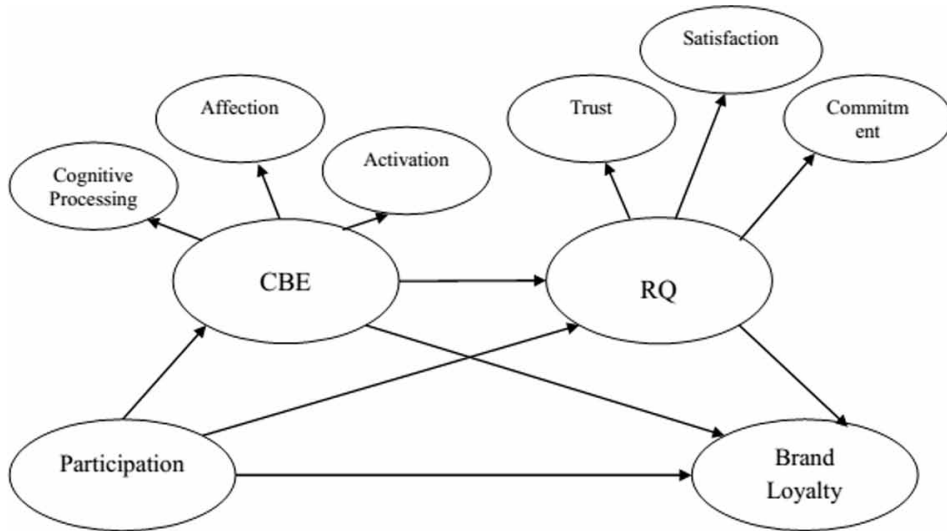
- **H7:** CBE mediates the relationship between participation and loyalty.
- **H8:** RQ mediates the relationship between participation and loyalty.
- **H9:** CBE and RQ serially mediate the relationship between participation and loyalty.

Based on the nine hypotheses, the conceptual model is proposed in Figure 2.

METHODOLOGY

Since the process flow of engagement for purchasers and nonpurchasers is different, the study adopted a comparative group methodology. As some of the respondents might have been already engaged and exhibit different engagement levels, and some might have been purchasers of a particular brand, sharing different RQ, the study followed a posttest, in an only quasi-experiment sort of design, with two

Figure 2. Conceptual model



comparative groups. Hence, a set of already engaged and nonengaged purchasers and nonpurchasers were considered for the study. In order to reduce the difference in experience with the brands among respondents, they were exposed to a single selected online apparel brand and its fan page on Facebook, for 5 days consecutively and for 20 minutes each day.

However, the study adopted predominantly an empirical survey-based approach. The study primarily aimed to measure the customers' opinion towards their participation and engagement with an online apparel shopping brand "X" on its Facebook fan page. Along the study, the expression "brand X" was used for the sake of confidentiality, as it refers to one of the top online apparel shopping stores. Postgraduate students of a course in a university were selected as the respondents for the study. Although the use of student samples has raised objections (Stevens, 2011), the practice is frequently used and widely accepted for behavioral experiment (Bowles & Flynn, 2010; Krause, Terpend, & Petersen, 2006) and buyer-seller relationship researches (Fugate, Thomas, & Golicic, 2012; Thomas, Fugate, & Koukova, 2011). A student sample is also considered desirable as it serves as a control mechanism in experimental designs, due to the consistent classroom settings and homogeneity in the demographics of the sample (Thomas, Esper, & Stank, 2010). A total of 215 students participated. The respondents were preliminarily asked whether they purchased from brand X and/or they were following brand X's fan page on Facebook. Then, a survey questionnaire was used to collect their opinion regarding brand X. A total of 194 usable response cases were collected.

The purchaser's group includes those who already purchased products from the brand's store, while the nonpurchasers are those who did not purchase anything anytime. Followers are those who are already following the brand and its activities on Facebook, while nonfollowers are those who are not following it. A combination of followers and purchasers was identified, as Table 1 shows.

A structured questionnaire was developed using the existing measurement scales from the literature. The main construct CBE scale was adapted from the multidimensional scale that Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014b) developed. The scale has three dimensions that are cognition, affection, and activation, with a total of 10 items. The 4-item scale of participation construct is adapted from Eisingerich, Auh, and Merlo (2014). A second order construct of RQ, consisting of trust, satisfaction,

Table 1. Cross tabulation of purchasers-following

			Following		Total
			Non-Following	Following	
Purchase	Non-Purchasers	Count	45	67	112
		% of Total	23.2%	34.5%	57.7%
	Purchasers	Count	37	45	82
		% of Total	19.1%	23.2%	42.3%
Total		Count	82	112	194
		% of Total	42.3%	57.7%	100.0%

and commitment as dimensions, was used by adapting different scales: Crosby et al. (1990) and Garbarino and Johnson (1999) brand trust scale, Johnson, Herrmann, and Huber (2006) satisfaction scale, and Brown, Barry, Dacin, and Gunst's (2005) commitment scale. Finally, the brand loyalty scale was used by adapting 4 items of Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996) scale.

SAMPLE SIZE JUSTIFICATION

A questionnaire with 30 items was used to collect the data for a sample size of 215, however, 194 usable response were considered for the data analysis. The study could not gather a larger sample since the study was based on a quasi-experiment posttest method, and the sample respondents are student of a university, gathering larger participants was difficult.

1. The sample size is acceptable according to the recommended ratio of (5:1) by (Bentler & Chou, 1987). (Bentler & Chou, 1987) suggested a minimum of 5 responses to each free parameter in the study.
2. According to (Kline, 2011, p. 12) "A typical sample size in studies where SEM is used is about 200 cases".
3. Similarly, according to (Kline, 2011) for complex model estimated using methods other than Maximum Likelihood (ML), <200 sample would untenable. The present study is, however, using Maximum Likelihood estimation (ML) method to analyze the structural model, hence the present sample size 194 can be considered tenable.
4. According to (Wolf, Harrington, Clark, & Miller, 2013), a sample size range of 30 to 460 is adequate to estimate a structural model.
5. Some researchers like (Tinsley & Tinsley, 1987; Velicer & Fava, 1998) have suggested sample size as low as 150 also considerable for conducting SEM.
6. For conducting a multi-group analysis using SEM, the rule of thumb for minimum sample size requires is 100 cases per group (Kline, 2005).

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The demographics of the respondents show that they are all graduates in the age group of 22-26 years who does online shopping. They are tech-savvy and frequent online shoppers. 41% are female and 59% are male respondents.

The preliminary data analysis was done to test the reliability and validity of the measurement scale. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin sampling adequacy for the variable is .802 and is significant at $p < 0.05$. The results of the exploratory factor analysis along with the Cronbach's alpha value are reported

in Table 2. All the values are within the recommended limits, i.e., Cronbach's alpha values greater than 0.70, as (Nunnally, 1991) suggested, proving the reliability of the scale.

Measurement Models: First-Order

As part of the next step, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to validate the measurement model. CBE is a multidimensional (Gambetti et al., 2012) and second-order construct

Table 2. Reliability measures of the constructs

Constructs and their Items	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha
Participation (Eisingerich et al., 2014)		.846
PAR1: I let [Brand X] know of ways that it can better serve my needs.	.736	
PAR2: I make constructive suggestions to [Brand X] on how to improve its offering.	.778	
PAR3: I spent a lot of time sharing information with others about [Brand X].	.880	
CBE (Cognitive processing) (Hollebeek et al., 2014a)		.875
COG1: Using [Brand X] gets me to think about [Brand X].	.841	
COG2: I think about [Brand X] a lot when I'm using it.	.753	
COG3: Using [Brand X] stimulates my interest to learn more about [Brand X].	.864	
CBE (Affection) (Hollebeek et al., 2014a)		.982
AFF4: I feel very positive when I use [Brand X].	.814	
AFF5: Using [Brand X] makes me happy.	.787	
AFF6: I feel good when I use [Brand X].	.850	
AFF7: I'm proud to use [Brand X].	.835	
CBE (Activation) (Hollebeek et al., 2014a)		.796
ACT8: I spend a lot of time using [Brand X], compared to other apparel brands.	.819	
ACT9: Whenever I'm using apparel & accessories, I usually use [Brand X].	.793	
ACT10: [Brand X] is one of the brands I usually use when I use apparel & accessories.	.874	
Brand trust (Crosby et al., 1990) and (Ellen Garbarino & Mark S Johnson, 1999)		.706
TRU1: [Brand X] can be relied on to keep its promises.	.674	
TRU2: [Brand X] puts the customer's interest first.	.771	
TRU3: I can count on [Brand X] to provide a good service.	.794	
Satisfaction (Johnson et al., 2006)		.824
SAT1: I did the right thing when I bought from this [Brand X].	.780	
SAT2: I am satisfied with my [Brand X].	.818	
SAT3: My [Brand X] meets my expectations.	.809	
Commitment (Brown et al., 2005)		.710
COM1: I am committed to my relationship with [Brand X].	.824	
COM2: I really care about my relationship with [Brand X].	.687	
COM3: The relationship that I have with [Brand X] deserves my maximum effort to maintain.	.677	
Brand loyalty (Zeithaml et al., 1996)		.832
LOY1: Say positive things about [Brand X] to other people.	.847	
LOY2: Recommend [Brand X] to someone who seeks your advice.	.805	
LOY3: Encourage friends and relatives to do business with [Brand X].	.605	

(Hollebeek, 2011a; Hollebeek et al., 2014a). RQ was also considered as a second-order construct (Dorsch et al., 1998; Zolkiewski et al., 2006).

A first-order model was tested first to confirm the validity before the second-order model (Marsh, 1991) since the higher-order models necessitate the use of hierarchical analysis (Byrne, 2016; Kline, 2011). Hence, a first-order model as shown in Figure 3, with all the items of the variables were included to confirm the validity on the sample of 194 participants, using AMOS 20.

The results of the first-order CFA indicated a good fit of the measurement model with the values of $\chi^2 = 356.67$, $df = 199$, $\chi^2/df = 1.79$, $p < .05$, CFI = .936, TLI = .919, IFI = .937, and RMSEA = .064. The convergent and discriminant validity values for all the items were well within the standards that (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) and (J. Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2006) recommended. The results of the first-order measurement model are shown in Table 3.

Figure 3. First-order measurement model

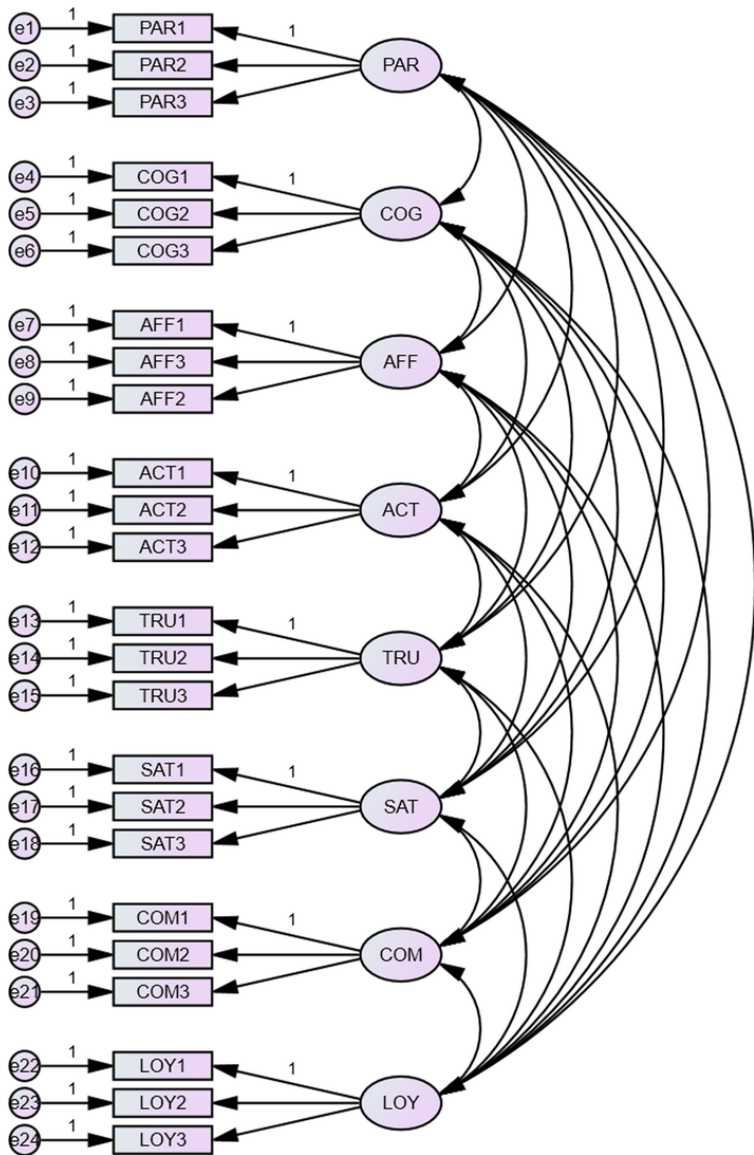


Table 3. Validity measures of the constructs

	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV	COM	AFF	COG	PAR	LOY	SAT	ACT	TRU
COM	0.737	0.515	0.333	0.140	0.718							
AFF	0.877	0.650	0.237	0.144	0.487	0.806						
OG	0.766	0.622	0.233	0.137	0.365	0.402	0.789					
PAR	0.837	0.642	0.333	0.154	0.577	0.361	0.382	0.802				
LOY	0.852	0.659	0.332	0.155	0.405	0.418	0.483	0.576	0.812			
SAT	0.847	0.663	0.236	0.123	0.272	0.384	0.477	0.123	0.309	0.814		
ACT	0.813	0.603	0.065	0.027	0.081	0.243	0.058	0.009	0.101	0.255	0.777	
TRU	0.738	0.591	0.236	0.094	0.186	0.310	0.237	0.345	0.275	0.486	0.207	0.769

Note: Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Maximum Shared Variance (MSV), and Average Shared Variance (ASV); the values in the diagonals are the square root of AVE of the corresponding constructs.

Measurement Models: Second-Order

After conducting the CFA with the first-order model, the second-order CFA measurement model was performed with the second-order constructs CBE and RQ, and with the first-order constructs participation and loyalty as shown in Figure 4. The results of the second-order CFA with constructs represent a model fit with $\chi^2 = 440.26$, $df = 237$, $\chi^2/df = 1.87$, $p < .05$, CFI = .924, TLI = .912, IFI = .925, and RMSEA = .067. The results showed significant factor loading values of the three dimensions cognition, affection, and activation on to the second-order construct CBE; the same results were obtained from the three dimensions trust, satisfaction, and commitment on its higher-order construct RQ.

The results also supported the convergent and discriminant values of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of each factor being greater than its correlations with other factors (Fornell & Larcker, 1981); AVE values of the constructs are above .50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) and composite reliability values are above the .70 threshold (J. Hair et al., 2006).

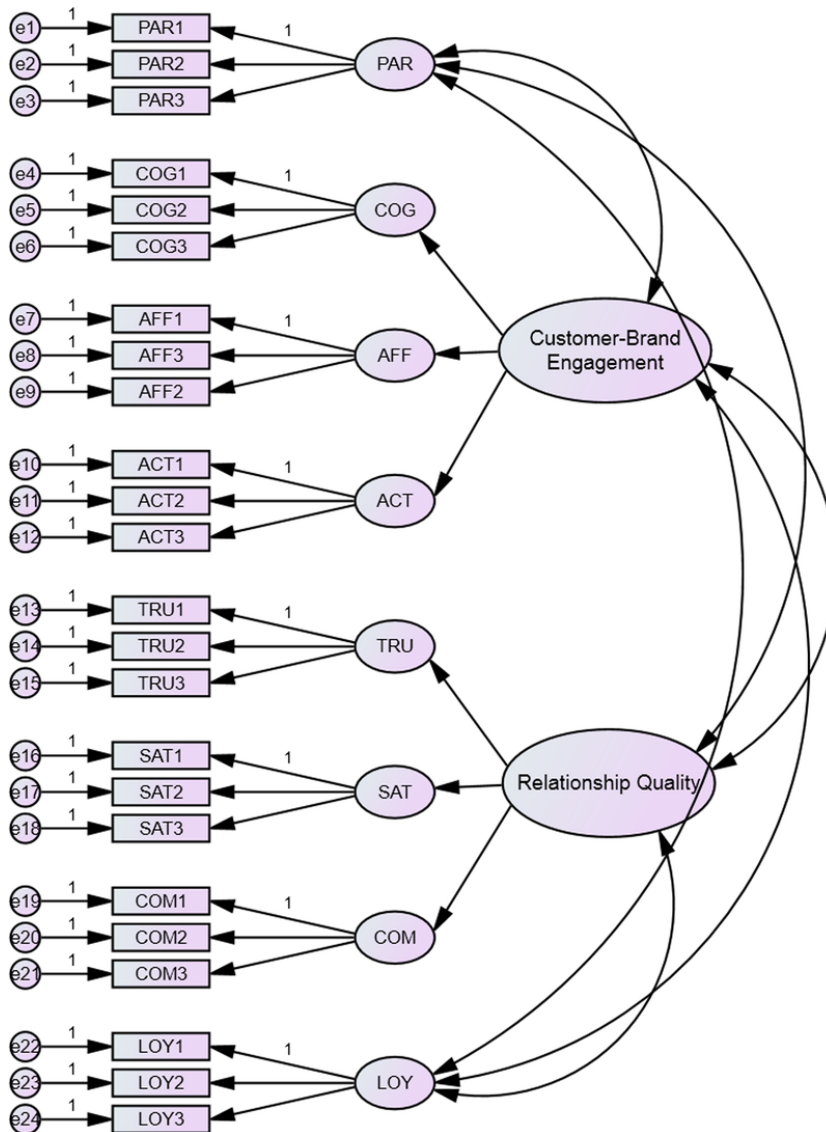
Structural Models

In order to test the relationships in the structural model along with the serial mediation of two constructs CBE and RQ, Hayes (2013) technique of process macros was used with SPSS 20.0. Further, AMOS 20.0 version was used to check the model fit of the structural model.

The data analysis was conducted in two steps. First, the structural model (as shown in Figure 5) was tested with the complete sample size of 194 participants, considering both the group who had purchase transactions with brand X and the group who did not. As part of the second step, a multigroup analysis on purchasers and nonpurchasers groups was conducted to observe the relationship between the constructs in the hypothesized model.

Model number 6 (Hayes, 2013) process macro was performed on the structural model. All the nine hypotheses of the model were supported at 95% of confidence level. The results show that CBE and RQ partially mediate the relationship between participation and brand loyalty of the people following brand X on its Facebook fan page, irrespective of people who had purchase transactions with the brand or not. The model also confirms the serial mediation of CBE and RQ. The path coefficient and estimates of the direct and indirect effects are shown in Tables 4 and 5, respectively. The model also adheres to the fit indices $\chi^2 = 413.83$, $df = 217$, $\chi^2/df = 1.90$, $p < .05$, CFI = .922, TLI = .909, IFI = .923, and RMSEA = .069.

Figure 4. Second-order measurement model



Multigroup Analysis

In order to study whether any change occurred in the relationship between the constructs and the role played by CBE and RQ, a multigroup analysis was conducted between purchasers and nonpurchasers groups. The purchasers group does not provide support for the mediation effect of CBE between customer participation and their brand loyalty; however, it supports the mediating role of RQ and the serial mediation of CBE and RQ i.e., CBE does not alone mediate the participation and loyalty relationship but acts as a mediator only in the presence of RQ also as a mediator.

On the other hand, the nonpurchasers group provides support for the mediating role of CBE. However, results do not support the mediating role of RQ between participation and loyalty; and do not support the serial mediation of CBE and RQ. Table 6 shows the results of the comparison of the

Figure 5. The structural model

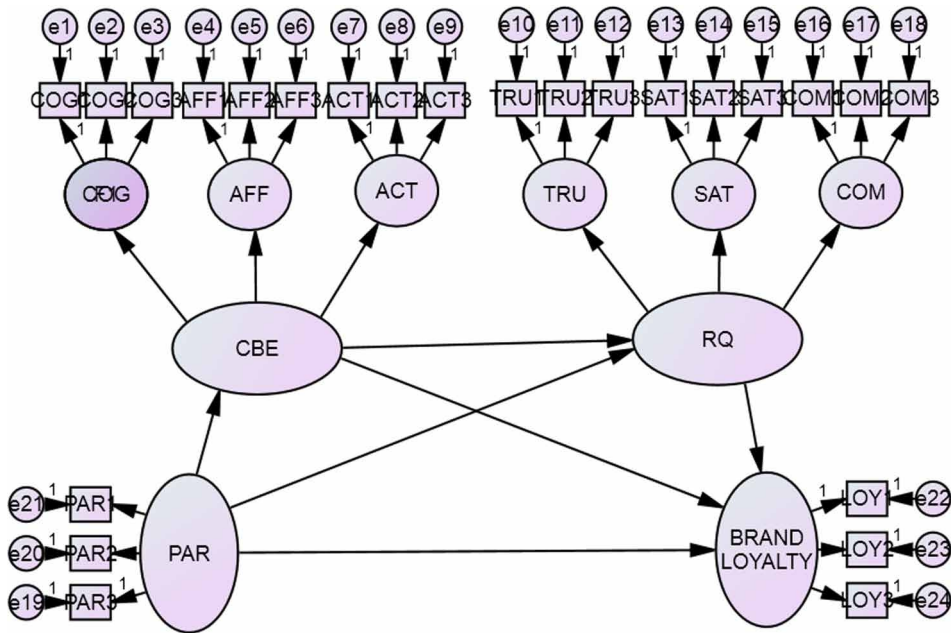


Table 4. Path coefficient of the main structural model

	Path Coefficients		
	To Loyalty	To CBE	To Relationship Quality (RQ)
Participation	0.34 (.06) (S)	0.39 (.07) (S)	0.21 (.06) (S)
CBE	0.20 (.07) (S)		0.49 (.06) (S)
Relationship Quality	0.25 (.06) (S)		

Note: Co-efficient values with the standard error values in the parenthesis. (S) = Hypothesis Supported.

Table 5. Estimates of direct and indirect effects

Effect(s) of Independent Variable on Dependent Variable		
	Estimate	Confidence Interval
Direct Effect	0.34 (.06)	.21, .46
Indirect Effect		
PAR -> CBE -> LOY	0.08 (.03) (S)	.02, .16
PAR -> RQUAL -> LOY	0.05 (.03) (S)	.01, .14
PAR -> CBE -> RQUAL -> LOY	0.05 (.02) (S)	.01, .10
Total Effect	0.52 (.06)	.39, .64

Note: Estimates with the standard error values in the parenthesis. Direct and indirect effects at 95% level of confidence intervals. (S) = Hypothesis Supported.

Table 6. Estimates of two comparison groups

Effect(s) of Independent Variable on Dependent Variable				
	Purchase (112)		Non-Purchase (82)	
	Co-efficient/Estimate	Confidence Interval Limits	Estimate	Confidence Interval Limits
H1: PAR -> LOL	.39 (.09)	.22, .56 (S)	.27 (.09)	.09, .45 (S)
H2: PAR-> CBE	.39 (.08)	.23, .55 (S)	.37 (.11)	.15, .59 (S)
H3: PAR -> RQUAL	.16 (.08)	-.01, .32 (NS)	.28 (.09)	.09, .47 (S)
H4: CBE -> RQUAL	.25 (.09)	.35, .70 (S)	.44 (.09)	.27, .62 (S)
H5: CBE -> LOY	.15 (.11)	-.05, .36 (NS)	.25 (.09)	.06, .43 (S)
H6: RQUAL -> LOY	.29(.10)	.09, .48 (S)	.18 (.10)	-.02, .39 (NS)
Direct Effect	.39 (.09)	.22, .56 (S)	.27 (.09)	.09, .45 (S)
Indirect Effect				
H7: PAR -> CBE -> LOY	.06 (.05)	-.02, .16 (NS)	.10 (.06)	.01, .27 (S)
H8: PAR -> RQUAL -> LOY	.04 (.03)	.01, .13 (S)	.06 (.05)	-.01, .19 (NS)
H9: PAR -> CBE -> RQUAL -> LOY	.06 (.03)	.01, .12 (S)	.03 (.03)	-.01, .13 (NS)
Total Effect	.55 (.08)	.39, .72 (S)	.44 (.09)	.27, .62 (S)

Note: Estimates with the standard error values in the parenthesis. Direct and indirect effects at 95% level of confidence intervals. Direct and indirect effects are completely standardized values. (S) = Supported; (NS) = Not Supported.

two groups. The model fit indices are well within the prescribed threshold values: $\chi^2 = 670.62$, $df = 434$, $\chi^2/df = 1.54$, $p < .05$, CFI = .909, TLI = .898, IFI = .911, and RMSEA = .053.

DISCUSSION

The abovementioned results highlight that CBE and RQ serially mediate the relationship between customers' participation in the online fan page of a brand and their attitudinal loyalty towards the brand, irrespective of whether a customer has a prior purchase experience with the brand or not. The results support the concept of CE as a behavioral manifestation that goes beyond transactions (Van Doorn et al., 2010). Through participation and interactions in brand communities, an individual exhibits engagement with the brand (Roderick J Brodie, Ilic, Juric, & Hollebeek, 2013), thereby developing some sort of trust and commitment towards the brand. The individual's engagement establishes a relationship to further enhance attitudinal loyalty towards the brand (So, King, Sparks, & Wang, 2016).

The results confirm that, if the customer has a prior transaction experience with the brand, his/her brand loyalty is not mediated by his/her engagement with the brand alone, but through the RQ he/she develops overtime by his/her transactions with the brand. Whereas, nonpurchasers who follow a brand online generate loyalty behavior as a result of their engagement activities with the brand in the online communities. Nonpurchasers do not generate RQ when compared to the customers who are purchasers of the brand and also engaged with the brand. The reason is that RQ acts as a consequence, rather than an antecedent, of CBE for the new customers (Roderick J. Brodie et al., 2011).

The results do not support the serial mediation of CBE and RQ for the nonpurchasers group, but it supports the mediation of CBE. This emphasizes the importance of CBE to generate loyalty behavior

amongst the individuals who participate in online brand communities. Also, the results support that CBE effects RQ among nonpurchasers (comparatively lesser than purchasers), even though it does not affect their brand loyalty intentions.

IMPLICATIONS

Theoretical Implications

The results of the study confirm that the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral nature of engagement through interactive experience on social media creates brand loyalty in the customers. The fact that nonpurchasers show their loyalty towards a brand as a result of their engagement with the activities of the brand on social media supports the ongoing discussion in the literature that CE is beyond transactions (Bowden, 2009; Roderick J Brodie et al., 2013; Van Doorn et al., 2010).

On the other hand, purchasers are loyal as a result of the trust, satisfaction, and commitment they generated through their transactions, before they get engaged or while getting engaged with the brand online (Pansari & Kumar, 2017). Hence, in line with the literature (Bowden, 2009; Roderick J. Brodie et al., 2011; Hollebeek, 2011b), RQ may be considered as an antecedent to engagement, rather than a consequence for existing customers and as a consequence of engagement for new customers.

Managerial Implications

The study was conducted using a brand that operates online and is highly active on social media platforms to engage its customers. Hence, online marketers can take away the key findings of engaging the customers. It is evident that CE and RQ play a major role in motivating the customer to purchase, recommend, and encourage others to do business with the firm. The firms should continue to engage them continuously on the social media platform to generate trust and satisfaction.

However, the findings highlight that CE and RQ play different roles for existing and new customers. Existing customers, though, do not strongly engage with the brand on social media nor express loyalty, because they develop trust, satisfaction, and commitment with the brand from the transactions they do with the firm. Customers with high RQ with the brand can get strongly engaged with the brand and recommend it to others on social media, which, in turn, may generate new potential customers. Feedback plays an important role on social media for people to start to interact with a firm. Hence, the firm should assist existing customers in improving the quality of their relationship.

Similarly, people who follow a brand on social media platforms possess greater chances of being potential and profitable customers. A firm's continuous effort to engage potential new customers and convert them into buyers is essential.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The study was conducted to investigate the role of CBE and RQ between customer participation and their brand loyalty. Nevertheless, as the study used a posttest, in a quasi-experiment design, with two comparative groups, it lacks the conditions of a true quasi-experiment. Pretest conditions could not be recorded, and the decision of making the respondents follow the brand for a certain period generated only the posteffect. However, the research is considered as an empirical and survey-based method.

The study made an attempt to study the role of CBE and RQ as an antecedent and/or consequence for existing and new customers. This attempt was made with two comparative groups of purchasers and nonpurchasers. The vital question "purchase leading to engagement or engagement leading to purchase" cannot be answered. This question can be answered in a future research with a well-designed casual investigation, which would generate interesting insights in the engagement context.

Even though, J. F. Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, and Mena (2012) recommendation supports the adequacy of the sample size to conduct structural equation modelling, the sample size of 194 participants is relatively very small to generalize the results, this is due to the sample being students and getting a larger number of students to participate in a study for consecutive days was difficult. The respondents of the survey being graduate students of a university is another limitation. However, this is recommended for the use of a homogenous sample, particularly to focus on a specific phenomenon. A larger heterogeneous sample will be considered in a future research to increase the generalizability of the findings.

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Millennial's engagement with fashion brands

A moderated-mediation model of brand engagement with self-concept, involvement and knowledge

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Millennial's
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brands

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Abstract

Purpose – Millennials are more fashion conscious, relate themselves to the fashion brands they wear. This concept of brand engagement with self-concept (BESC) studies with other marketing variables yields interesting results. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the role of BESC with brand love and brand advocacy of millennials toward their favorite fashion brands. The study also tests the moderating role of millennials' involvement and knowledge.

Design/methodology/approach – Data are collected from 621 graduate student millennials of a university. Hayes process macros is used to test the moderated-mediation model.

Findings – The study confirms the complementary mediating role of BESC and enhances the moderating role of involvement and knowledge. Millennials with high involvement and knowledge enhance the positive relationship between brand love, BESC and brand advocacy.

Originality/value – The study contributes to the existing literature of self-concept theory and provides useful insights for fashion marketers about millennials.

Keywords Self-concept, Brand love, Subjective knowledge

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Millennials are a unique group who are young, affluent, educated, tech-savvy and manifest positive social behavior (Howe and Strauss, 2009). They are confident and more fashion oriented. Millennials search and learn about the new fashion trends and related information through magazines and online media (Geraci and Judit, 2004). They are the major group participating in online shopping, hence marketers finding innovative digital media activities to engage them (Smith, 2011). And customer-brand engagement has become an effective tool for increasing customer satisfaction and loyalty (Bowden, 2009; Brodie *et al.*, 2011, 2013; Hollebeek, 2011a). The findings in the academic literature and business practice about customer engagement by brands as a successful marketing strategy, created greater importance for the discussion and exploration of the engagement concept. The discussion and exploration of the concept are of immense importance.

Since engagement can happen with different subjects (customers, students, etc.) with different objects (brands, firm, etc.), the construct has varied definitions in the literature (Hollebeek, 2011b; Vivek *et al.*, 2012). The construct in the marketing literature has been defined as both uni-dimensional and multi-dimensional. Multi-dimensional constructs constitute of cognitive, emotional and behavioral aspects of the subjects. A more widely accepted uni-dimensional construct called brand engagement in self-concept (BESC) was developed by David *et al.* (2009). It highlights the concept of customers relating the brand to self, and tend to include favorite brands as an element of their self-concept. This engagement concept is based on the underlying theory of self-schema, where people exhibit varied behavior toward an object due to differential self-schemas inherited.



This form of engagement with self-concept is appropriate in studying how customers vary in their attitudes and behavioral activities when they relate themselves to their favorite brands. Since fashion keeps changing and fashion enthusiasts tend to be highly involved with their favorite fashion brands to update themselves, it would be interesting to see the role of involvement and knowledge of customers in their beyond purchase activities like word-of-mouth (WOM). The present paper attempts to study the role of BESC, involvement and knowledge of millennials with respect to fashion brands they prefer.

The objective of the paper is twofold, first to study the role of BESC in the relationship between brand love and brand advocacy among millennials. Second, to examine the role of involvement and subjective knowledge on BESC, brand love and brand advocacy. The paper starts with formulating research hypotheses along with the review of related literature, followed by research methodology, empirical findings and discussion on theoretical and managerial implications. Finally, the paper briefly addresses the study limitations and future research directions.

Literature review and research hypotheses

Brand engagement in self-concept (BESC)

Since the evolution and development of the concept customer engagement recently (Brodie *et al.*, 2011) as an effective predictor of customer outcomes (Bowden, 2009), a variety of related terms have been used to define engagement in marketing literature. Engagement has been expressed in different forms such as brand engagement (David *et al.*, 2009; Keller, 2007), consumer engagement (Brodie *et al.*, 2011; Dessart *et al.*, 2015), customer brand engagement (Hollebeek, 2011b) and customer engagement behavior (Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014; Van Doorn *et al.*, 2010). Though the questions raised about the use of term customer or consumer or brand along with engagement are noteworthy recently (Brodie *et al.*, 2011; Hollebeek, 2011b; Vivek *et al.*, 2012), the concern is comparatively insignificant as long as the concept of engagement is developing fundamentally (Brodie *et al.*, 2011). According to Brodie *et al.* (2011) and Hollebeek (2011a) Engagement as a process is broadly characterized as specific experiences and/or interactions between the focal object (e.g. brand, product or community) and subject (e.g. customer, employees or student). For example, Hollebeek (2011a) defines customer-brand engagement as “the level of an individual customer’s motivational, brand-related and context-dependent state of mind characterized by specific levels of cognitive, emotional and behavioral activity in direct brand interactions” (p. 790). Engagement is explained both as a multidimensional (Gambetti *et al.*, 2012) and uni-dimensional construct, though there is a debate existing on the appropriateness of the dimensionality in the marketing literature (Hollebeek, 2011a).

Similarly, David *et al.* (2009) proposed a specific sub-type of one-dimensional construct termed BESC. David *et al.* (2009) suggest including brand as part of one’s self-concept and thereby defines BESC as “individual difference representing consumers’ propensity to include important brands as part of how they view themselves”. BESC is based on the theory of cognitive self-schema, explaining the self-concept as a set of schemas representing a stable structure of knowledge (Markus, 1977). There is a variation in the particular self-schemas possessed by people which leads to variation in attitudes and behavior toward objects connected to those schemas (Markus, 1983; Markus *et al.*, 1982). According to the research findings of Sentis and Markus (1986), BESC is based on the assumption that consumers vary in their brand-related schemas and these variations affect their brand-related knowledge and intentions (David *et al.*, 2009). Brodie *et al.* (2013) suggested brand attachment, self-brand connections and brand loyalty as potential consequences of engagement. In the similar lines David *et al.* (2009) suggest the relationship between BESC and brand loyalty, proving that customers include brands in their self-concept by purchasing and/or suggesting them to others. Considering the definition of advocacy as talking about the brand (Du *et al.*, 2007),

this study incorporates positive WOM as the outcome of BESC. Since engagement manifests customer behavior beyond purchase in terms of recommending, commenting, liking and commenting about the brands on social media (Hollebeek *et al.*, 2014; Reitz, 2007; Vivek *et al.*, 2012), the study finds appropriate to confine the outcome of engagement to positive brand advocacy through WOM:

H1. BESC positively effects brand advocacy.

Brand love

Brand love has been identified as an important element influencing the customer-brand relationships in the marketing literature recently (Ragheh Ismail and Spinelli, 2012; Thomson *et al.*, 2005). The construct basically derived from interpersonal love in the discipline of psychology (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Shimp and Madden, 1988), so far received limited (Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen, 2010) interest, however, seems to gain scholarly attention steadily in the customer-brand literature (Batra *et al.*, 2012).

Initially Ahuvia (1993) explains the feeling of love toward an object through conditional integration theory, later Ahuvia (2005b) compares the same with interpersonal love. Specifying brand as an object, Carroll and Ahuvia (2006, p. 81) define brand love as: "the degree of passionate emotional attachment a satisfied consumer has for a particular trade name." According to Carroll and Ahuvia (2006), brand love is characterized by a passion for the brand, attachment for the brand, positive evaluation of the brand, positive emotions in response to the brand and declaration of love for the brand.

The love toward a brand by a consumer is due to the self-image (Albert *et al.*, 2008) and the concept of self-image value is parallel to self-concept (Sirgy, 2015). Hence, brand love is related to self-concept. According to Ahuvia (2005a), consumers exhibit love for those objects which demand considerable energy and time. And fashion apparel brands are those which reflects one's image and personality (Khare, 2014). Consumers spend more time and energy to select fashion apparels since they communicate their personality and image. On the other hand, Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2010) report the positive influence of brand love on active engagement. Bridging the link between brand, self-concept, and engagement from the relevant literature, we can propose that brand love effects brand engagement in self-concept.

Brand love as a construct is different from satisfaction (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006), and is conceptualized as a means of satisfaction (Fournier and Mick, 1999). The consumer outcomes of a brand are beyond satisfaction, for example, liking, commenting and suggesting. Suggestions include recommendations and positive talk about the brand. Positive WOM about a brand is defined as advocacy (Du *et al.*, 2007). Parallel to this Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) found a significant positive relationship between brand love and positive WOM. Hence, we can hypothesize that brand love positively influences brand advocacy. We also seek to understand consumer behavioral outcomes (like WOM) through their engagement with the brands:

H2. Brand love positively affects BESC.

H3. Brand love positively affects brand advocacy.

H4. BESC mediated the relationship between brand love and brand advocacy.

Brand advocacy as an outcome

A study by Matzler *et al.* (2007) reported a positive relationship between evangelism and brand passion, where evangelism is explained something beyond WOM like spreading positive views and encouraging others to engage with the brand. Samson (2006) considers

brand advocacy as a function of customer acquisition, while Du *et al.* (2007) define brand advocacy as an act of trying new products from the same brand, talking about the brand and willing to accept any small mistakes by the brand. Consumers are willing to appraise the brand and recommend it to others and act as advocates for the brand. The role of advocacy is beyond just repeated purchase. The present study takes into consideration positive WOM as an important dimension of advocacy, which is a form of exhibiting engagement behavior. Positive word-of-mouth (+WOM) is defined as “the degree to which the consumer praises the brand to others” (Westbrook, 1987). Satisfied consumers who also love the brand are expected to be more committed to repurchase and more eager to spread “the good word” to others. Consumers/customers who engage themselves with a brand on social media tend to exhibit actions other than repurchase (Hollebeek *et al.*, 2014; Verhoef *et al.*, 2010; Vivek *et al.*, 2012). The present study examines whether consumers engaging in self-concept and love the brand become advocates of the brand.

Involvement as a moderator

While developing the scale for personal involvement inventory (PII), the construct involvement is defined as “perceived relevance of the object based on inherent needs, values, and interests” (Zaichkowsky, 1985). It is explained as a concept of perceived personal relevance or an effective, cognitive or motivational variable indicating the state of mind (Smith and Godbey, 1991), but not considered as a behavior (Celsi and Olson, 1988; Zaichkowsky, 1985; Richins and Bloch, 1986). Hollebeek *et al.* (2014) in their study reported consumer involvement (Zaichkowsky, 1994) as a potential antecedent of consumer brand engagement. In the other context Wirtz *et al.* (2013) proposed consumer involvement as a key moderator when consumers engage in online brand communities to share their brand-related experiences. On the other hand, Orth (2005) suggested product involvement as a potential predictor of consumer behavior seeking benefits from the brands.

Fei (2008) has stressed upon the importance of using involvement construct in understanding the self-concept as the two conceptions dispense self-relevant information. Consumers tend to spend more attention and effort to solve a decision-making problem in high involvement conditions, which in return produce more attention toward self-concept through brand information (Fei, 2008). Thus Fei (2008) focuses on the importance of involvement in the better understanding of self-concept in consumer-brand related decisions. In the similar context, Goldsmith and Goldsmith (2012) in their study provide support for the relationship between BESC and consumer involvement. Looking at the increasing level of interest in the consumer-brand literature for including involvement construct to understand the consumer-brand relationship, the present study intends to study the role of involvement in enhancing the relationship between brand love and BESC:

- H5. Involvement acts moderate the relationship between brand love and BESC, i.e. higher the level of involvement, higher will be the effect of brand love on BESC.

Subjective knowledge as a moderator

Flynn and Goldsmith's (1999) study of consumer knowledge is critical to explain consumer behavior in both academics and marketing practice. According to Engel *et al.* (1993), prior knowledge is “the information stored in memory.” Knowledge more often is considered as a significant moderator influencing consumer behavior (Michel *et al.*, 2010). Customer's prior knowledge about a product or service affects their decision process like information search. Brucks (1985) classified consumer knowledge into three categories: subjective knowledge, objective knowledge and prior experience. The conceptual difference between subjective and objective knowledge is explained in the marketing literature. Subjective knowledge is an individual's perceived level of confidence in his/her knowledge, while objective

knowledge is considered as to what an individual actually knows (Brucks, 1985). Although there is a conceptual and operational difference between these two constructs, these are strongly related to concepts like decision making, information search (Brucks, 1985).

Subjective knowledge is explained to exhibit stronger motivation in terms of purchase-related activities than objective knowledge in the marketing literature (Selnes and Grønhaug, 1986). However, the third category of knowledge, i.e. experience with product categories tends to increase the degree of stored knowledge and is more associated with subjective knowledge than objective knowledge (Park *et al.*, 1992). According to Sohn and Leckenby (2005) there is a significant moderating effect of product class knowledge on information and WOM inferring from the earlier finding that subjective knowledge of consumers shapes their motivational response toward the features of the product information stated. Similarly Engel *et al.* (1969) in their regarding WOM and innovators explain that consumer who is innovative in nature tends to talk more often positive than negative about the products. Hence, consumers who engage with a brand would potentially attempt to advocate positive information about the brand and the same would be altered by their subjective knowledge. This happens more when the brands are fashion apparels, as the information seeking by a peer from the innovators would be high. Therefore, we hypothesize that the level of subjective knowledge would alter the direction and strength of the relationship between BESC and brand advocacy. All the six hypotheses are shown in Figure 1:

- H6. Subjective brand knowledge acts moderate the relationship between BESC and brand advocacy, i.e. higher the level of knowledge, higher will be the effect of BESC on brand advocacy.

Methodology

As mentioned earlier, the main aim of the study is to examine millennial's engagement behavior toward their fashion brand; for this purpose, the study selected students of a university as respondents. Age was the preliminary criteria to qualify as a subject for this study. Students who responded to the study questionnaire were in the age group of 19–28 years. A structured questionnaire link was distributed to 865 students through their e-mail address obtained from university records, of which a final 621 responses were used for the study results. Students who did not fall under the specified age group were not considered for the study. The respondents were clearly explained about the purpose and context of the study and are asked to select their most favorite fashion apparel brand (in order to restrict them to one category of fashion products), before answering the questions. The subsequent questions were based on the fashion brand they initially selected.

Measurement scales

To test the hypothetical relationships developed in this study, the data are collected through adapted scales of the related constructs used in the study. The BESC is measured using the

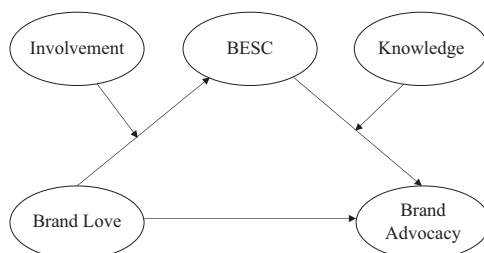


Figure 1.
Conceptual model

eight items scale developed by David *et al.* (2009). The concept of brand love (BLOV) is measured by adapting the scale developed by Carroll and Ahuvia (2006). In the present study, brand advocacy (BADV) is considered as and limited to positive WOM, hence this is measured by adapting items related to positive WOM. The items are picked up from scales used by Badrinarayanan and Laverie (2011), Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) and Elaine *et al.* (2014) in their studies. Subjective knowledge (SKNO) of the customers is measured by adapting the scale developed by Flynn and Goldsmith (1999). Finally, to measure the involvement of the customers, the widely accepted personal involvement inventory (PII) scale developed by Zaichkowsky (1985) is adapted. Only five items relevant to the study are used to measure customer involvement. A total of 32 items are used to measure the five constructs studied. A five-point Likert scale is used to record the opinion of the respondents.

Data analysis and results

Demographics and sample size

The respondents are millennials in the age group of 19–28 years and are students, thus the study tries to controls for the age and income of the respondents. Though objections have been identified regarding the use of students as respondents (Stevens, 2011), they are considered as the desirable sample representing a homogeneous group that relatively limits the confounding effects of unknown demographic variables (Thomas, 2011). A total of 621 students responded to the questionnaire, of which 56 percent are male and 44 percent are female students. Students are graduates and post-graduates of a university and belong to various regions of the country. Respondents declared that they use either website or mobile apps of their favorite brands for shopping. They have also revealed that they follow their favorite brand pages on social networking sites like Facebook or Twitter and are fashion conscious. These conditions fulfill the primary criteria of respondents being millennials who are fashion conscious and brand awareness.

The sample size for the study is 621 which is adequate according to the recommended ratio of 15:1 (Hair *et al.*, 2006), i.e. at least 15 responses are one free parameter used in the study. A total of 32 questions were used in the study apart from preliminary and demographic-related questions, hence the sample of 621 is considered adequate to generalize the results. According to Kline (2011) “A typical sample size in studies where SEM is used is about 200 cases” (p. 12).

Reliability and validity measurement

To confirm the reliability and validity concerns about the data, an exploratory factor analysis followed by a confirmatory factor analysis is conducted. The factor loadings of each item of the constructs are well above 0.30, few items in BESC and brand love are eliminated as their factor loadings are less than the recommended threshold values of 0.30. The Cronbach's α value for the reliability of the data collected along with the factor loadings of the items is shown in Table I. The Cronbach's reliability α value is recording above 0.70 as per the recommendations of Nunnally (1991).

A measurement model (Figure 2) is tested using SPSS AMOS 20.0 to report the validity measures of the constructs. The model fit indices for the measurement model are $\chi^2 = 881.43$, $df = 359$, $\chi^2/df = 2.45$, $p < 0.05$, $GFI = 0.912$, $CFI = 0.922$, $TLI = 0.912$, $IFI = 0.922$, and $RMSEA = 0.048$. Since all the values of the fit indices are above the recommended statistical values, we consider the measurement model values to be fit for further structural analysis. The values of average variance extracted (AVE) and other values related to validity issues are shown in Table II. AVE values of constructs are over 0.50 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) and composite reliability over 0.70 (Hair *et al.*, 2006). The AVE measure of each construct is greater than the correlations of other constructs (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

Millennial's engagement with fashion brands

Item code	Item description	Factor loading	Cronbach's α value
<i>Brand love (BLOV)</i>			0.874
BLOV_8	I am passionate about [_____] brand	0.720	
BLOV_5	I'm very attached to [_____] brand	0.695	
BLOV_7	I love [_____] as a brand!	0.685	
BLOV_2	[_____] brand makes me feel good	0.663	
BLOV_6	[_____] brand is a pure delight	0.636	
BLOV_1	[_____] is a wonderful brand	0.619	
BLOV_3	[_____] brand is totally awesome	0.615	
BLOV_4	[_____] brand makes me very happy	0.561	
<i>Brand engagement in self-concept (BESC)</i>			0.817
BESC_3	I often feel a personal connection between my brand [_____] and me	0.721	
BESC_6	I feel as if I have a close personal connection with the brand [_____]	0.706	
BESC_4	I can identify myself with important brand [_____] in my life	0.705	
BESC_5	Part of me is defined by important brand [_____] in my life	0.695	
BESC_7	I consider my favorite brand [_____] to be a part of myself	0.643	
BESC_2	I have a special bond with the brand [_____] that I like	0.637	
BESC_1	There is link between the brand [_____] that I prefer & how I view myself	0.635	
<i>Subjective knowledge (SKNO)</i>			0.815
SKNO_3	Among my friends, I'm one of the "experts" on fashion clothing	0.751	
SKNO_5	Compared to most other people, I know less about fashion clothing*	0.676	
SKNO_1	When it comes to fashion, I really don't know a lot*	0.672	
SKNO_4	I do not feel very knowledgeable about fashions*	0.668	
SKNO_2	I know pretty much about fashion clothing	0.666	
<i>Personal involvement inventory (PIIN)</i>			0.780
PIIN_2	Boring: interesting	0.762	
PIIN_3	Important: unimportant*	0.729	
PIIN_4	Appealing: unappealing*	0.642	
PIIN_1	Valuable: worthless*	0.587	
PIIN_5	Undesirable: desirable	0.563	
<i>Brand advocacy (BADV)</i>			0.746
BADV_2	I recommend [_____] brand to my family, friends and others	0.752	
BADV_3	I try to spread the good-word about [_____] brand	0.702	
BADV_1	I give [_____] brand a lot of positive word-of-mouth	0.699	
BADV_4	When someone approach me for advice, I suggest [_____] brand	0.612	
Note: Items with * are reverse coded			

Table I.
Reliability of the scale and factor loading values

Structural model

After confirming the validity and reliability of the data, a structural model is conducted to test the hypothesized relations between brand love, BESC and brand advocacy. The model is initially checked for the fitness and the results are $\chi^2 = 408.58$, $df = 146$, $\chi^2/df = 2.79$, $p < 0.05$, $GFI = 0.936$, $AGFI = 0.917$, $CFI = 0.936$, $TLI = 0.925$, $IFI = 0.936$, and $RMSEA = 0.054$. The fit indices are meeting the suggested cut-off values statistically. The results of the structural model are shown in Table III which support the hypothesis *H1-H4*, accepted at $p < 0.001$.

H1 is significantly supporting the positive effect of BESC on brand advocacy with β value as 0.175. *H2* is also accepted proving that brand love positively affects BESC. There is a direct positive effect of brand love on brand advocacy since *H3* is also significant at $p < 0.001$ with a β value of 0.601. The main aim of this model is to test the mediating effect of BESC in the relationship between brand love and brand advocacy through *H4*. The results

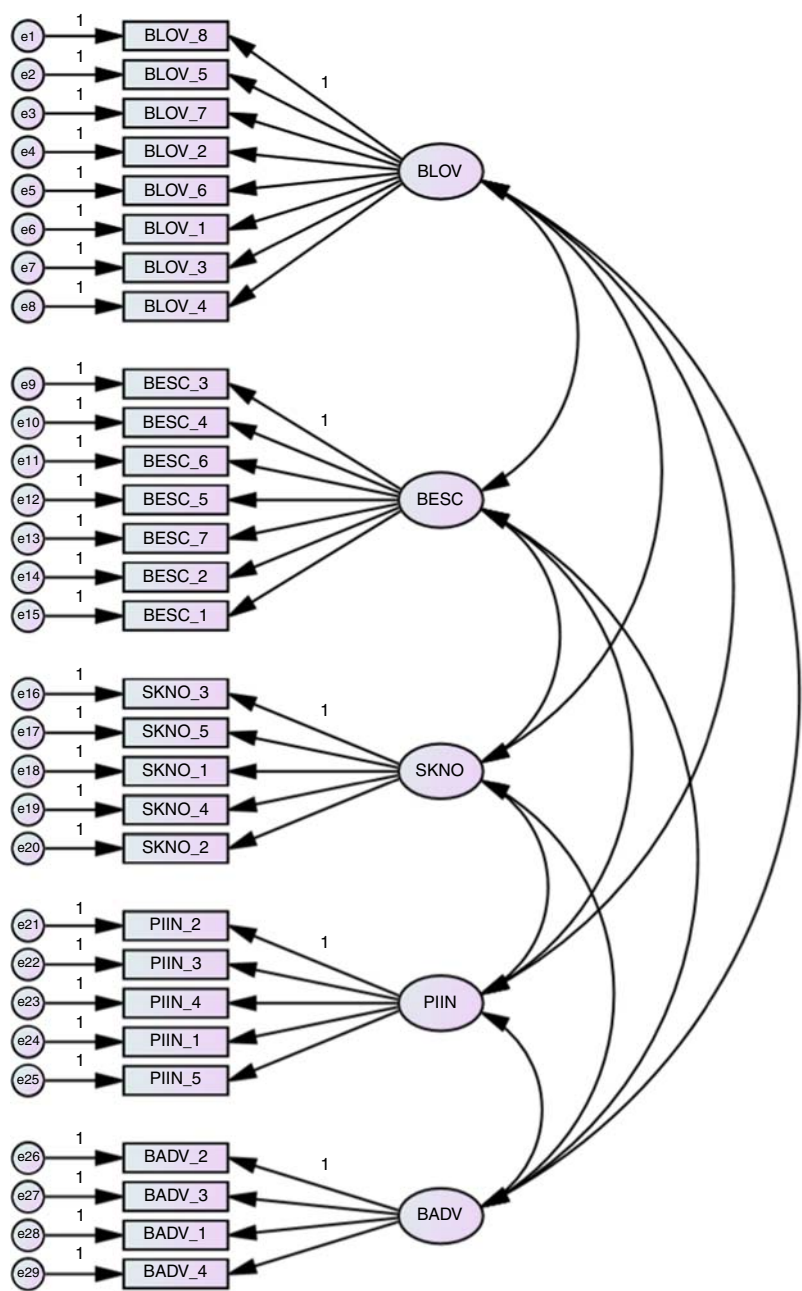


Figure 2.
Measurement model

support the mediating role of BESC with an indirect effect of 0.555. It can be concluded that BESC performs a complementary mediating role between brand love and advocacy as the direction of the direct and indirect effects are in the same positive direction (Zhao *et al.*, 2010). The structural model for mediation is shown in Figure 3.

Moderated-mediation model

After confirming the mediating role of BESC, the moderating role of Involvement and Knowledge is tested as hypothesized in *H5* and *H6*. According to Hayes (2015), a moderated-mediation is said to exist when the indirect (mediating) effect on an outcome varies with different levels of a moderator. Since in the structural model, we have already provided the support of BESC being a mediator positively influencing the relationship between brand love and brand advocacy, we consider this model as moderated-mediation in consensus with the definition of Hayes (2015). To test the hypotheses *H5* and *H6*, the study used Hayes's (2013) procedure to conduct

	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV	PIIN	BLOV	BESC	SKNO	BADV
PIIN	0.831	0.622	0.350	0.257	0.789				
BLOV	0.831	0.553	0.334	0.224	0.403	0.744			
BESC	0.801	0.502	0.276	0.228	0.516	0.444	0.708		
SKNO	0.816	0.527	0.334	0.245	0.498	0.578	0.415	0.726	
BADV	0.772	0.533	0.350	0.264	0.592	0.448	0.525	0.477	0.730

Table II.
Data validity results

	Effect (s) of independent variable on dependent variable			
	Standardized regression estimate	SE	Critical ratio	Probability (significance)
<i>H1</i> : BESC → BADV	0.175	0.070	3.604	***
<i>H2</i> : BLOV → BESC	0.260	0.034	5.166	***
<i>H3</i> : BLOV → BADV	0.601	0.055	10.758	***
<i>H4</i> : BLOV → BESC → BADV	0.555	0.054	9.995	***

Note: *** $p \leq 0.001$

Table III.
Structural model results

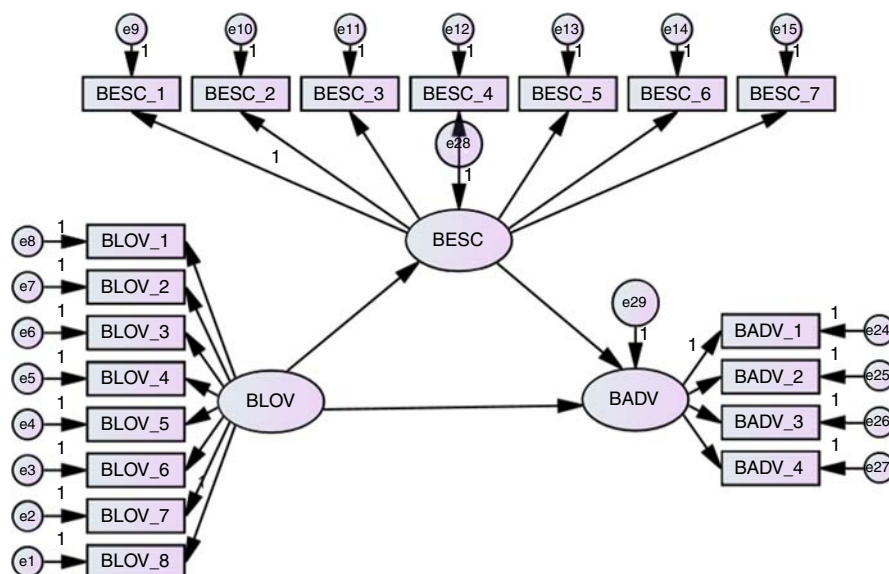


Figure 3.
Structural model

Figure 4.
Involvement
as a moderator

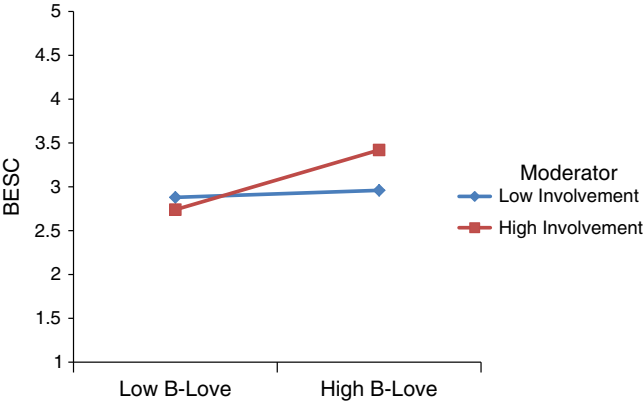
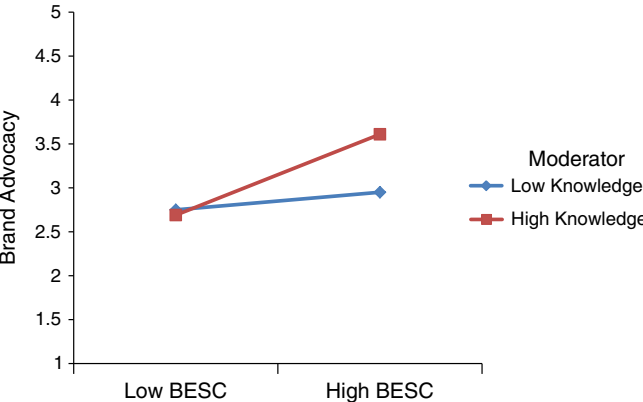


Figure 5.
Subjective knowledge
as a moderator



Conclusion

The main aim of the study was to investigate the role of BESC, involvement and subjective knowledge of millennials with respect to fashion products. The major reason to select millennial as a subject respondent is their higher association with fashion. The millennials' current generation has more access to technology and social media, and therefore have a lot of updates about fashion and its trend. On the other hand, higher availability and increased choice of brands made millennials more prone to fashion brands. Millennials tend to exhibit self through the brands they wear. Expressing their self through brands has become more prominent in social media. They like to express their self on social media by talking about and exhibiting about the fashion brands they use. Hence, the present study considers millennials as an appropriate group to investigate BESC, involvement and knowledge.

The results of the study confirm the mediating role of BESC between brand love and advocacy. Customers who love a particular fashion brand like to talk and spread positive information about the brand, and the underlying reason for this is the BESC. The other results of the study provide the evidence for the moderating role of involvement and subjective knowledge. The level of involvement enhances the positive relationship between brand love and BESC, i.e., the positive effect of brand love increases as the level of involvement increases. The results show that the positive relationship between love and BESC increases more when a customer is highly involved with his/her brand. It can be concluded that when customers love the brand and exhibit high involvement in the purchase decision, those customers engage with the brand and relate to self-concept. Similarly, a customer with low involvement with the brand also exhibit increasing in BESC but not as high as the customer with high involvement.

The study results support the moderating role of subjective knowledge of the customers strengthening the positive effect of BESC on brand advocacy. Subjective knowledge is what customer thinks he knows about the brand. The higher he thinks he knows more about the brand, he feels as an expert with higher knowledge. At the same time along with his higher knowledge about the brand, he also has a higher BESC, then the customer would advocate more strongly for the brand. Customers with lower knowledge have less impact of BESC on advocacy than customers with higher knowledge. This can be often seen on social media that customers tend to talk more positive about the brand when they have a higher association of self-concept with the brand and have higher knowledge. Hence, a customer who is more engaged with the brand and possesses good knowledge should be retained by the brand marketers, since this category of customers become strong advocates of the brand.

Discussion

The results of the study empirically contribute to the existing literature of BESC through self-schema theory. The uniqueness of the study is examining the concepts of self-concept, information processing and involvement theory together. However, these concepts in the marketing and consumer behavior context are closely related, the influencing factor of one on the other in the purchase related behavior of the customers is interesting. The study contributes to understanding the self-concept behavior of the unique group called millennials, which is the major profitable segment for fashion brand marketers.

The study aimed at demonstrating the mediating nature and importance of brand engagement with brand-related variables and millennials behavior toward their favorite brands. Consumers engage themselves with their favorite brands and get connected with their self-concept. According to self-schema theory customers tend to organize their knowledge to help others with related information. This the study conceptualized as the brand love toward brand and BESC would motivate the customer to become an enthusiastic advocate of the brand. The customers engage with the brand in various ways, for example, talking about the brand on social media, express their opinion or provided necessary

relevant related information about the brand based on their prior knowledge. However, brand engagement in self-concept is primary and has the intrinsic motivational impact to engage with the brand socially. Since when a customer is self-connected with a brand, he tends to organize the knowledge structures about the brand which would be disseminated to others, and the platform of social media facilitates discussion regarding the brands.

Since the fashion brands are which more directly associate with the self-concept of customers, marketers should focus on those features of the brand which engage millennials more related to self-concept rather than just engage millennials on social media. It is clearly evident that customer with higher knowledge exhibits higher brand advocacy, marketers should consistently increase the activities in improving the product subjective knowledge of the customers by disseminating the relevant brand-related updated information. Marketers should simultaneously increase the efforts to increase the involvement of the customers in the purchase, as the study suggests that the increase in involvement with higher BESC would improve the brand advocacy of the customers. Customer WOM has been a major influencing factor in attracting and generating new customers.

With the increased technology, brand marketers are closely reaching and getting more connected with the target customers. It is even higher if the target group is tech savvy and social media presence, like millennials. Enchasing on these characteristics of millennials, marketers should use innovative activities like more customized information, promotions and referral programs to increase customer's brand-related knowledge and involvement, which in return increase their loyalty through their advocacy toward their favorite fashion brands. Though it may be little bit complex to perform on these enhancing factors, it should not be very difficult by integrating and aligning with the latest technology. An effective use of online sales, social media activeness and mobile apps can increase the customer involvement and brand-related knowledge.

Limitations and future directions

When a customer is more brand engaged with self-concept, he would consequentially engage more on brand pages of social media. Since higher BESC results in higher advocacy and social media are the facilitator, the customer who talks and advocates more about the brand has to engage with it on social media. The same argument can be investigated with a relevant methodology in the future studies, i.e., customers with higher BESC also engage highly in brand online communities. Though the present study considered subjective knowledge alone of customers, it would also be interesting to study objective knowledge also along the subjective knowledge of the customers and the variations in the same due to different levels of brand experience of the customer.

Besides contributing to the existing knowledge of literature and managerial implications, the study encounters few limitations in terms of sample size and methodology. Though the sample size is justified with regard to the statistical techniques used, an increase in sample size would increase the generalizability of the results. The study considered millennials as respondents, a general category of customer group could be used in the future studies.

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Questionnaire for Study – 1

A Questionnaire on "Your Engagement levels with Myntra on Facebook Page."

Dear Respondents,

This survey is anonymous and strictly confidential. The questionnaire is designed to collect data which will be used purely for the academic (Doctoral Research) purpose only.

Completing this questionnaire will help me to study your engagement levels with Myntra brand that you follow on Facebook. I request you to answer the below mentioned questions based on your experience. You are requested to provide the responses, which are best as per your understanding.

I thank you very much for your valuable time and patience.

Do you shop online? Yes ☐ No ☐

Do you use mobile apps for shopping? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how often you shop online?

☐ One in a month ☐ 2-4 times in a month ☐ Occasionally ☐ Whenever required

What category of products you buy online?

☐ Apparel and Accessories ☐ Electronic Goods ☐ Mobile Phones and Accessories
☐ Books ☐ Groceries Others: _____

Among the below mentioned, which online brand/brands you use to buy Apparel & Accessories?

☐ Myntra ☐ Jabong ☐ Americanswan
☐ Koovs ☐ Craftsvilla

Do you have a Facebook account? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, since how long you are active on Facebook?

☐ More than 3 years ☐ between 3 – 1 year ☐ less than 1 years

Did you ever purchase anything on Myntra? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How often you purchase products on Myntra?

☐ Never ☐ once in six months ☐ once in a year
☐ Occasionally ☐ Whenever required

How much do you spend for shopping on Myntra? (Approximately in Rs.)

☐ Less than 1000 ☐ between 1000 to 5000 ☐ more than 5000 ☐ Nothing

Do you follow/like Myntra Page on Facebook? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Since how long you are following/like Myntra Page on Facebook?

☐ More than 3 years ☐ between 3 – 1 year ☐ less than a year ☐ Never

1. I let Myntra know of ways that it can better serve my needs.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

2. I make constructive suggestions to Myntra on how to improve its offering.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

3. I spent a lot of time sharing information with others about Myntra.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

4. If I have a useful idea on how to improve Myntra, I give it to them on Facebook.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

1. Using Myntra gets me to think about Myntra.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

2. I think about Myntra a lot when I'm using it.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

3. Using Myntra stimulates my interest to learn more about Myntra.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

4. I feel very positive when I use Myntra.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

5. Using Myntra makes me happy.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

6. I feel good when I use Myntra.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

7. I'm proud to use Myntra.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

8. I spend a lot of time using Myntra, compared to other apparel brands.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

9. Whenever I'm using apparel & accessories, I usually use Myntra.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

10. Myntra is one of the brands I usually use when I use apparel & accessories.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

Your Trust & Satisfaction with Myntra on Facebook

1. Myntra can be relied on to keep its promises.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

2. Myntra puts the customer's interest first.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

3. Myntra usually keeps the promises that it makes to me.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

4. I can count on Myntra to provide a good service.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

5. I did the right thing when I bought from this Myntra.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

6. I am satisfied with my Myntra.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

7. My Myntra meets my expectations.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

8. My choice is a wise one about buying from Myntra.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

Your Commitment & Loyalty with Myntra on Facebook

1. I am committed to my relationship with Myntra.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

2. I really care about my relationship with Myntra.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

3. The relationship that I have with Myntra is something I am very committed to.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

4. The relationship that I have with Myntra deserves my maximum effort to maintain.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

5. Say positive things about Myntra to other people.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

6. Recommend Myntra to someone who seeks your advice.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

7. Encourage friends and relatives to do business with Myntra.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

8. Complain to Myntra's employees if you experience a problem with Myntra's service.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

Name: _____

Gender: Male ☐

Female ☐

A Questionnaire on "Your Engagement levels with your favorite brand on Twitter Page."

Dear Respondents,

This survey is anonymous and strictly confidential. The questionnaire is designed to collect data which will be used purely for the academic (Doctoral Research) purpose only.

Completing this questionnaire will help me to study your engagement levels with the brand that you follow on Twitter. I request you to answer the below mentioned questions based on your experience. You are requested to provide the responses, which are best as per your understanding.

I thank you very much for your valuable time and patience.

Do you shop online? Yes ☐ No ☐

Do you use mobile apps for shopping? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how often you shop online?

☐ One in a month ☐ 2-4 times in a month ☐ Occasionally ☐ Whenever required

What category of products you buy online?

☐ Apparel and Accessories ☐ Electronic Goods ☐ Mobile Phones and Accessories
☐ Books ☐ Groceries Others: _____

Which favorite fashion online brand/brands you use to buy Apparel & Accessories? (Select any one)

☐ Raymonds ☐ Manyavar
☐ Americanswan ☐ Craftsvilla

Did you ever purchase anything online from your favorite brand? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How often you purchase fashion products from your favorite brand online?

☐ Once in a six months ☐ once in a year ☐ occasionally
☐ Whenever required ☐ never

How much do you spend for shopping online from your favorite brand? (Approximately in Rs.)

☐ Less than 1000 ☐ between 1000 to 5000 ☐ more than 5000 ☐ Nothing

Do you have a Twitter account? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, since how long you are active on Twitter?

☐ More than 3 years ☐ between 3 – 1 year ☐ less than 1 years

Do you follow your favorite fashion brand page on Twitter? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Since how long you are following your favorite fashion brand page on Twitter?

☐ More than 3 years ☐ between 3 – 1 year ☐ less than 1 year ☐ Never

Dear Respondent, please consider your most favorite fashion brand that you buy products and also follow on TWITTER before you start answering the next sections. This is really important. Kindly co-operate.

Your Participation on your favorite fashion brand page on Twitter.

5. I let [my favorite brand] know of ways that it can better serve my needs.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

6. I make constructive suggestions to [my favorite brand] on how to improve its offering.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

7. I spent a lot of time sharing information with others about [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

8. If I have a useful idea on how to improve [my favorite brand], I give it to them on Twitter.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

Your Engagement with your favorite fashion brand page on Twitter.

11. Using [my favorite brand] gets me to think about [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

12. I think about [my favorite brand] a lot when I'm using it.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

13. Using [my favorite brand] stimulates my interest to learn more about [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

14. I feel very positive when I use [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

15. Using [my favorite brand] makes me happy.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

16. I feel good when I use [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

17. I'm proud to use [my favorite brand].

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Strongly Disagree

--	--	--	--	--

 Strongly Agree

18. I spend a lot of time using [my favorite brand], compared to other apparel brands.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

--	--	--	--	--

 Strongly Agree

19. Whenever I'm using apparel & accessories, I usually use [my favorite brand].

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

--	--	--	--	--

 Strongly Agree

20. [My favorite brand] is one of the brands I usually use when I use apparel & accessories.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

--	--	--	--	--

 Strongly Agree

Your Trust & Satisfaction with your favorite fashion brand page on Twitter.

9. [My favorite brand] can be relied on to keep its promises.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

--	--	--	--	--

 Strongly Agree

10. [My favorite brand] puts the customer's interest first.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

--	--	--	--	--

 Strongly Agree

11. [My favorite brand] usually keeps the promises that it makes to me.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

--	--	--	--	--

 Strongly Agree

12. I can count on [my favorite brand] to provide a good service.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

--	--	--	--	--

 Strongly Agree

13. I did the right thing when I bought from this [my favorite brand].

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

--	--	--	--	--

 Strongly Agree

14. I am satisfied with my [my favorite brand].

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

--	--	--	--	--

 Strongly Agree

15. My [my favorite brand] meets my expectations.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

--	--	--	--	--

 Strongly Agree

16. My choice is a wise one about buying from [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

Your Commitment & Loyalty with your favorite fashion brand page on Twitter.

9. I am committed to my relationship with [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

10. I really care about my relationship with [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

11. The relationship that I have with [my favorite brand] is something I am very committed to.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

12. The relationship that I have with [my favorite brand] deserves my maximum effort to maintain.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

13. I say positive things about [my favorite brand] to other people.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

14. I recommend [my favorite brand] to someone who seeks your advice.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

15. I encourage friends and relatives to do business with [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

16. I would buy more products from [_____] in next few years.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

Perceived Value of your favorite fashion brand page on Twitter.

1. Products purchased from [my favorite brand] are very good value for money.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

2. I get what I pay for [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
--	---	---	---	---	---	--

Strongly Disagree

--	--	--	--	--

 Strongly Agree

3. Products purchased from [my favorite brand] are worth the money paid.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

--	--	--	--	--

 Strongly Agree

4. Compared to other brands, [my favorite brand] charges me fairly for similar products.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

--	--	--	--	--

 Strongly Agree

Your Involvement with your favorite fashion brand page on Twitter.

Whenever I browse [my favorite brand] page on Twitter, I feel _____

	1	2	3	4	5	
Important	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	Unimportant
Boring	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	Interesting
Exciting	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	Unexciting
Relevant	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	<table border="1" style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></table>	Irrelevant

Name: _____

Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Age: ☐ Under 25 ☐ 25-30 ☐ 31-35 ☐ 36-40 ☐ 41 and above

Qualification: ☐ Intermediate ☐ Graduation ☐ Post-Graduation

Occupation: ☐ Student ☐ Government Employee ☐ Private Employee ☐ Business ☐ Others

Income: ☐ less than 10000 ☐ 10000 - 25000 ☐ 25000 - 50000 ☐ 50000 and above

Current Residence: ☐ India ☐ outside India

A big thank you for your responses and patience.

Questionnaire for Study – 3

A Questionnaire on "Your Engagement levels with your favorite brand."

Dear Respondents,

This survey is anonymous and strictly confidential. The questionnaire is designed to collect data which will be used purely for the academic (Doctoral Research) purpose only.

Completing this questionnaire will help me to study your engagement levels with the brand that you follow on any Online Brand Community (OBC) or Social Networking Site (SNS) . I request you to answer the below mentioned questions based on your experience. You are requested to provide the responses, which are best as per your understanding.

I thank you very much for your valuable time and patience.

Do you shop online? Yes ☐ No ☐

Do you use mobile apps for shopping? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how often you shop online?

☐ One in a month ☐ 2-4 times in a month ☐ Occasionally ☐ Whenever required

What category of products you buy online?

☐ Apparel and Accessories ☐ Electronic Goods ☐ Mobile Phones and Accessories
☐ Books ☐ Groceries Others: _____

Which is favorite fashion (Apparel & Accessories) brand:

Please write here: _____

Did you ever purchase anything online from your favorite brand? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How often you purchase fashion products from your favorite brand online?

☐ Once in a six months ☐ once in a year ☐ occasionally
☐ Whenever required ☐ never

How much do you spend for shopping online from your favorite brand? (Approximately in Rs.)

☐ Less than 1000 ☐ between 1000 to 5000 ☐ more than 5000 ☐ Nothing

Are you active on any Social Networking (SNS) platform like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, since how long you are active on the mentioned SNS?

☐ More than 3 years ☐ between 3 – 1 year ☐ less than 1 years

Do you follow your favorite fashion brand page on the mentioned SNS? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Since how long you are following your favorite fashion brand page?

☐ More than 3 years ☐ between 3 – 1 year ☐ less than 1 year ☐ Never

Dear Respondent, please consider your most favorite fashion brand that you buy products and also follow on any OBC or SNS before you start answering the next sections. This is really important. Kindly co-operate.

Your Participation on your favorite fashion brand page.

9. I let [my favorite brand] know of ways that it can better serve my needs.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

10. I make constructive suggestions to [my favorite brand] on how to improve its offering.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

11. I spent a lot of time sharing information with others about [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

12. If I have a useful idea on how to improve [my favorite brand], I give it to them.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

Your Engagement with your favorite fashion brand page.

21. Using [my favorite brand] gets me to think about [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

22. I think about [my favorite brand] a lot when I'm using it.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

23. Using [my favorite brand] stimulates my interest to learn more about [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

24. I feel very positive when I use [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

25. Using [my favorite brand] makes me happy.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

26. I feel good when I use [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

27. I'm proud to use [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

28. I spend a lot of time using [my favorite brand], compared to other apparel brands.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

29. Whenever I'm using apparel & accessories, I usually use [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

30. [My favorite brand] is one of the brands I usually use when I use apparel & accessories.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

Your Trust & Satisfaction with your favorite fashion brand page.

17. [My favorite brand] can be relied on to keep its promises.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

18. [My favorite brand] puts the customer's interest first.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

19. [My favorite brand] usually keeps the promises that it makes to me.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

20. I can count on [my favorite brand] to provide a good service.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

21. I did the right thing when I bought from this [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

22. I am satisfied with my [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

23. My [my favorite brand] meets my expectations.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

24. My choice is a wise one about buying from [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

17. I am committed to my relationship with [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

18. I really care about my relationship with [my favorite brand].

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

--	--	--	--	--	--

19. The relationship that I have with [my favorite brand] is something I am very committed to.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree
-------------------	--	--	--	--	--	----------------

20. The relationship that I have with [my favorite brand] deserves my maximum effort to maintain.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

21. I say positive things about [my favorite brand] to other people.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

22. I recommend [my favorite brand] to someone who seeks your advice.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

23. I encourage friends and relatives to do business with [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

24. I would buy more products from [_____] in next few years.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Perceived Value of your favorite fashion brand page

5. Products purchased from [my favorite brand] are very good value for money.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

6. I get what I pay for [my favorite brand].

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

7. Products purchased from [my favorite brand] are worth the money paid.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

8. Compared to other brands, [my favorite brand] charges me fairly for similar products.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

Your Involvement with your favorite fashion brand page.

Whenever I browse [my favorite brand] page, I feel _____

	1	2	3	4	5	
Important						Unimportant
Boring						Interesting
Exciting						Unexciting
Relevant						Irrelevant

Name: _____

Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Age: ☐ Under 25 ☐ 25-30 ☐ 31-35 ☐ 36-40 ☐ 41 and above

Qualification: ☐ Intermediate ☐ Graduation ☐ Post-Graduation

Occupation: ☐ Student ☐ Government Employee ☐ Private Employee ☐ Business ☐ Others

Income: ☐ less than 10000 ☐ 10000 - 25000 ☐ 25000 - 50000 ☐ 50000 and above

Current Residence: ☐ India ☐ outside India

A big thank you for your responses and patience.

Customer-Brand Engagement by Fashion Brands through Online Brand Communities in India: A Multimethod Approach

by Samala Nagaraj

Submission date: 28-Jun-2019 03:12PM (UTC+0530)

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