A Moderation and Mediation Model of Social Media Marketing and Brand Loyalty Among Smartphone Users in Egypt

Omnia A. Hilal, Faculty of Commerce, Zagazig University, Egypt

iD https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6757-0428

ABSTRACT

Social media are being extensively used as a platform to conduct marketing and advertising activities. However, there is always a challenge in how organizations can figure out the results of social media marketing. Therefore, this study aimed to study the effect of social media marketing on brand loyalty among smartphone users in Egypt and to identify the effect of some demographics and psychographics on this relationship. A cluster sample consisting of 502 smartphone users has been surveyed using a questionnaire that has been designed and validated. Ex-post facto design was employed to achieve the research objectives. Multi-group analysis and path analysis were employed to test research hypotheses. Results showed that social media marketing significantly affects brand loyalty, and smartphone users' age and education significantly affect this relationship. Finally, smartphone users' psychographics significantly affected this relationship.

KEYWORDS

Brand Loyalty, Demographics, Ex-Post Facto Design, Psychographics, Smartphones, Social Media Marketing

INTRODUCTION

Social networking is providing a whole new level of communication between marketers and consumers (Shareef et al, 2019). Indeed, 4.20 billion are on social media out of 4.66 billion on internet (Annual Digital Report, 2021), therefor, countless consumers and potential consumers can be reached through various digital channels: emails, social networking sites, blogs and micro-blogs, peer review or referral sites, and social content sites. Hence, more companies are encouraged to use social media as an important part of their online marketing strategies (Chen & Lin, 2019) as more people are joining social network sites suggesting to conduct a new business platform in e-commerce, known as social commerce (Abdelsalam et al, 2020).

Many organizations use social media to promote their products, as well as simply share information (Golijan, 2011) as it is an ideal form of communication to reach a large audience as well as specific targeted audience that do not require any financial resources (Michaelidou et al, 2011). Social media bring an interesting dynamic to the sales and marketing interface at which customers want to voice

their concerns and want to be educated on products and services as a move from passive to active presence, (Liu, 2012; Marshall et al., 2012).

Stephen, (2016) assured that most of consumer marketing in the future will be carried out in digital settings, particularly social media. With the increased use of social media marketing by several types of brands, it has become crucial to study and analyze this phenomenon. The value of social media data is rarely discovered, analyzed and visualized (Hajli & Laroche, 2019). Thus, studying the consequences of social media marketing is the main purpose of this research targeting to spot more light on this new technological marketing communication strategy through investigating the effect of social media marketing on brand loyalty.

Smartphones have become an inseparable part of our daily lives. Nowadays, smartphones and social media go hand in hand as 92.6% of global browsing social media is through smartphones (Annual Digital Report, 2021). In recent years, mobile devices have taken social media marketing to a whole new level as users continually choose to access their networks remotely, via smartphones, tablets, and laptops. Therefore, studying the effect of social media marketing on brand loyalty among smartphone users in Egypt will enhance marketers' understanding and knowledge about consequences of social media marketing and factors affecting this relationship.

The scientific contribution can be presented through several points. Based on the challenge of how organizations can figure out the results of Social media marketing (Costa et al, 2018) especially in the light of the scientific gap represented in the contradiction between previous researches' results, this study is among the first to fill the gap through testing the consequences of social media marketing in terms of brand loyalty among smartphone users in Egypt. Moreover, in a trial to extent the theoretical contribution, the current study different from previous studies, investigated the role of demographics and psychographics in the relationship between social media marketing and brand loyalty among smartphone users in Egypt.

The causal research design has been used as it is the only research design that enables exploring the cause-effect relationships through executing experiment (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016, El-Assi, 2019). Ex-post facto experimental design, different from previous studies, has been chosen to achieve the research objectives. It hasn't been studied in social media marketing context in Egyptian or foreign contexts which will support the causality of the relationships and enhance the scientific contribution of the current study.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

Social Media Marketing and Brand Loyalty

The old way of branding and marketing a product through one-way media such as newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and direct mail is now unconventional and outdated especially in the new age of information and new technologies, (Alkhas, 2011). Marketers are now are now required to compete with new marketing strategies which are based on interaction, information, education, and choice (Scott, 2007). The feedback from customers has also become vital for businesses because customers are not able to share opinions on the web where other customers can also see this feedback (Alkhas, 2011).

Social media users are active to share, interact and participate in producing online content (Ioakimidis, 2010). Social networks also provide opportunities to marketers including the ability to listen to fans, respond to them, discuss issues, reach common understandings, and in due course, strengthen long-term relationships (Williams & Chinn, 2010). The more an organization or brand are trustworthy, or responsible, or insightful from publics point of view, the more they are perceived as credible. When publics are talking about these features, they create electric-word-of-mouth which is one of the strengths of social media marketing.

Related Content

Purchase Intention of Males and Females Through Social Media
Chih-Chin Liang (2017). *International Journal of Customer Relationship Marketing and Management (pp. 1-17).*
www.irma-international.org/article/purchase-intention-of-males-and-females-through-social-media/185517

Applications of Customer Relationship Marketing in the UK Hospitality Industry
Geoff Lancasterand Diana Luck (2010). *International Journal of Customer Relationship Marketing and Management (pp. 1-21).*
www.irma-international.org/article/applications-customer-relationship-marketing-hospitality/48195

Managing Service Consumer Behavior and Relationship Dynamics in Asia
Nelson Oly Ndubisiand Siti Haryati Shaikh Ali (2015). *Handbook of Research on Managing and Influencing Consumer Behavior (pp. 493-505).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/managing-service-consumer-behavior-and-relationship-dynamics-in-asia/121973

A Novel Heuristic Rule for Job Shop Scheduling
Shahid Maqsood, M. Khurshid Khan, Alastair Woodand I. Hussain (2013). *International Journal of Customer Relationship Marketing and Management (pp. 28-40).*
www.irma-international.org/article/novel-heuristic-rule-job-shop/76280

Do Managerial Strategies Influence Service Behaviours?: Insights from a Qualitative Study
Anna-Lena Ackfeldtand Neeru Malhotra (2012). *Successful Customer Relationship Management Programs and Technologies: Issues and Trends (pp. 174-187).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/managerial-strategies-influence-service-behaviours/63706