
Customer Engagement in Facebook Brand Pages

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Abstract

This study aims to provide a theoretical model explaining the role of customer engagement in building relationships with customers in the realm of Facebook Brand Pages (FBPs). The data were collected using a convenience sample of 201 undergraduate Facebook users in Sri Lanka. Then, the data were analysed with Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) in AMOS 21 statistical software. The study found that customer engagement with the FBPs was motivated by the information, entertainment, and social interaction values associated with the FBP. Further, the findings highlighted that customer engagement had a positive influence on brand trust. Moreover, the study found a positive linkage between information value and brand trust. Additionally, the data analysis revealed that the relationship between information value and brand trust was partially mediated through customer engagement. Further, findings confirmed a full mediation effect of customer engagement in the relationship between social interaction and brand trust. As such, the study contributes to the literature by providing a model of how values associated with FBPs are likely to result in customer engagement and, further, how customer engagement results in brand trust.

Keywords: Brand trust, Customer engagement, Entertainment, Facebook Brand pages, Information, Social interaction

1. Introduction

Social media has changed how customers interact with the brands. Primarily, customers use social media to connect with the brands and other consumers (Kabadayi & Price, 2014), to share ideas (Dolan, Conduit, Fahy & Goodman, 2016), and to search for the brand-related information (Tsai & Men, 2013). Thus, as a part of a social media marketing strategy, companies strive to connect themselves with customers through Online Brand Communities (OBCs) embedded in social media (Kujur & Singh, 2018). The OBCs/brand pages on social media serve as an ideal platform to receive customer opinions in the form of likes, comments,

and shares (Kujur & Singh, 2017). Brands can receive feedback more easily from their consumers and respond to them quickly through their brand pages (Kabadayi & Price, 2014) so that enabling two-way communication between the brand and the customer (Kang, 2018). As such, these interactive media channels provide social and network values for users and firms in the form of customer comments, reviews, and information sharing (Dolan et al., 2016). Consequently, these brand pages have emerged as another way to engage with customers at a more personal level (Kujur & Singh, 2018).

Customer engagement in OBCs draws much scholarly attention in recent studies as it enables a new means of engaging with customers. While the engagement includes a wide range of activities, behaviours such as liking, commenting or sharing on brands' social media pages continue to grow in popularity (Kabadayi & Price, 2014). Thus, they are now being used as measures of customer engagement in the social media context (Gummerus, Liljander, Weman, & Pihlström 2012; van Doorn et al., 2010). To drive customer engagement, brands have been using Facebook as a key marketing channel during the last few years (Malhotra, Malhotra, & See, 2013; Rohm, Kaltcheva, & Milne, 2013; Gummerus et al., 2012). Facebook, as a marketing communications platform, enables companies to reach and personally integrate with millions of their customers through the Facebook Brand Pages (FBPs) (Kabadayi & Price, 2014). Due to the number of users on Facebook, Facebook is used as a brand management tool for connecting a large pool of customers (Hsu, 2012). As pointed out by Kang (2018), in hotels' online communities, Facebook has become the most used social media platform over those of the others (e.g., Instagram and Twitter). The number of 'likes', 'shares' or 'comments' of a brand page reflect the customer engagement in the context of Facebook (Chauhan & Pillai, 2013; Hoffman & Fodor, 2010; Malhotra et al., 2013). Due to these liking, commenting, and sharing functions on Facebook, it enables the consumers to respond to a brand post easily. One brand post can receive thousands of comments from consumers interacting with the brand and others; thereby providing a solid platform for brands to better understand the consumers (Malhotra et al., 2013). As such, these liking, sharing, and commenting behaviours assist brands in building strong bonds with the consumer (Wallace, Buil, & de Chernatony, 2012). In this ground, the use of FBPs to drive customer engagement is of greater relevance for marketers for building relationships with their customers.

Central to the discussion about building relationships with customers through brand communities, the term 'engagement' is used to describe the nature of participants' specific interactions and/or interactive experiences (Brodie, Hollebeek, Juric, & Ilic, 2011). In a study conducted by Algesheimer, Dholakia, and Herrmann (2005) in offline brand communities, they used the term 'engagement' over fifty times. Despite the increasing usage of the term

'engagement,' still, little attention has been paid to the concept of customer engagement in the online context (Brodie et al., 2011; Dolan et al., 2016; Kujur & Singh, 2018).

1.1. Research Problem

Since the Marketing Science Institute (MSI) has identified consumer engagement as a key research priority (Bolton, 2011), scholars have begun to pay attention increasingly on understanding consumer activity and engagement in social media. Although recent studies have endeavoured to explore antecedents and outcomes of customer engagement (e.g., van Doorn et al., 2010; Gambetti, Graffigna, & Biraghi, 2012; Kujur & Singh, 2018), studies that consider engagement in the context of social media are still at infancy (Dolan et al., 2016). Notably, there is a dearth of research on customer engagement and relationship building in the social media context (Kujur & Singh, 2018). Hence, still, there is a need for understanding the nature of engagement behaviours in the realm of social media (Sashi, 2012; Dolan et al., 2016).

Moreover, research on customer engagement across different contexts is still lagging (Islam & Rahman, 2016; Vohra & Bhardwaj, 2017). Most of the customer engagement research had been conducted in the Anglo-Saxon cultures (Mahrous & Abdelmaaboud, 2017), while a few studies focused on the Indian sub-continent (Islam & Rahman 2016). Furthermore, in terms of measuring success in OBCs, there exists a gap between what is measured and what the firm is expected to achieve (Habibi, Laroche, & Richard, 2014). In Sri Lanka, engagement rates on FBPs continue to drop although the Cost Per Mile (CPM) is going up (Ragulan, 2016). Further, FBP marketers in Sri Lanka are paying much attention to increase the fan base by offering them promotional contents instead of using the community to building relationships (Mark & Comm Limited, 2011). Customers with higher levels of engagement in an OBC may build strong relationships with the elements in the community, and the establishment of brand trust is considered to be a key goal of a community (Habibi et al., 2014).

Stemming from the aforementioned gaps, the present study attempts to provide a theoretical model explaining the role of customer engagement in contributing to the relationship building in the context of FBPs. In order to identify the antecedents of customer engagement, this study is theoretically grounded in the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), which is one of the widely used theories within the extant literature (see, Jahn & Kunz, 2012; de Vries & Carlson, 2014; Dolan et al., 2016). As such, the study identifies three motivational factors as antecedents (informational value, entertainment value, and social interaction value) of customer engagement and anticipates engagement to lead to the relational outcome of brand trust.

2. Review of the Relevant Literature

2.1. Online Brand Communities (OBCs)

Recently de Valck, Van Bruggen, and Wierenga (2009, p. 185) define an OBC as "a specialized, non-geographically bound, online community, based on social communications and relationships among a brand's consumers." Members in an OBC are connected with the other community members and striving to separate themselves from people outside the community (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006). Brand communities encourage members to share information about their favourite brands and help other members (McAlexander, Schouten, & Koenig, 2002). As such, brand communities provide an ideal platform for customer engagement behaviours (Dholakia, Bagozzi, & Pearo, 2004; Brodie et al., 2011). The engagement within an OBC determines the success of the community through a positive attitude, commitment, word-of-mouth promotion, and loyalty to the community (Leung & Baloglu, 2015; Leung & Tanford, 2016).

FBPs provide a medium through which the customers share interests about brands (McWilliam, 2000). When the customer is provided with valuable information and social interaction with the other members in the community, they are more likely to feel confident in their decision of joining with the community (Qu & Lee, 2011). Thus, given the social nature of FBPs; connecting hundreds of thousands of consumers who share similar interests about the brand (McWilliam, 2000), and consistent with the past research on the area (e.g., McCarthy, Stock, & Verma, 2010; Kang, Tang, & Fiore, 2014; Kang, 2018) the present study considers the FBPs as OBCs.

2.2. Customer Engagement

The concept of engagement in social media has become a key focus among academics and practitioners with the rapid development of social media (Brodie, Ilic, Juric, & Hollebeek, 2013). Social media provides users with an interactive platform to create value and engage with the firm (Gummerus et al., 2012; Brodie et al., 2013). Due to the lack of agreement in terminology, the literature consists of several theoretical definitions for the concept of customer engagement in the field of marketing. Brodie et al. (2013) define customer engagement as a multidimensional construct which includes cognitive, affective, and behavioural components. Vivek, Beatty, and Morgan (2012) define customer engagement as "the intensity of an individual's participation in and connection with an organization's offerings and/or organizational activities, which either the customer or the organization initiate" (p. 133). Hollebeek (2011, p. 790) defines customer 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 behavioural activity in direct brand interactions." Van Doorn et al. (2010, p. 254) define customer engagement as "behaviours that go beyond transactions and may be specifically defined as a customer's behavioural manifestations that have a brand or firm focus, beyond purchase, resulting from motivational drivers."

Cognitive and emotional components of customer engagement ignore the specific types of engagement behaviours with the FBPs (Zheng, Cheung, Lee, M & Liang, 2015; Oh, Roumani, Nwankpa, & Hu 2017). Ross, Orr, Susic, Arseneault, Simmering, and Orr (2009) suggested that focusing on specific behaviours may be of greater importance in understanding social networking site (SNS) use. Due to the interactive nature of social media, engagement could be measured based on the key social media usage metrics such as likes, comments, and shares (Barger & Labrecque, 2013; Kabadayi and Price, 2014; Gutiérrez-Cillán, Camarero-Izquierdo, & San José-Cabezudo, 2017). In this ground, focusing on specific behaviours such as liking, commenting, and sharing in FBPs seems to be more useful in understanding customer engagement behaviours. Thus, being consistent with the previous studies on customer engagement (see, Gummerus et al., 2012; Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013; Azar, Machado, Vacas-de-Carvalho, & Mendes, 2016; Gutiérrez-Cillán et al., 2017), the present study operationalizes customer engagement based on the liking, commenting, and sharing behaviours.

2.3. Information Value

According to UGT, information can be identified as one of the main gratifications derived from the use of social media (de Vries & Carlson, 2014). In the context of FBPs, functional/information gratification encompasses one's ability to access to helpful, functional, practical and useful content (Jahn & Kunz, 2012). Casalo, Flavia'n, and Guinali' u (2011) speculated that when consumers were participating in an online community, they would become more knowledgeable and aware of the provider's offering as a result of information they receive.

2.4. Entertainment Value

As per the UGT, entertainment is among the main motivations for customers to engage with the online brand-related content (Muntinga, Moorman, & Smit, 2011). In the online context, entertainment can be seen as an experiential value that customers derive from using online services (Nambisan & Baron, 2009), and generally includes feelings such as pleasure, fun, and entertainment (Wang & Fesenmaier, 2004). In the context of FBPs, entertainment/hedonic gratification is obtained through accessing to fun, entertaining and exciting content (Jahn & Kunz, 2012).

2.5. Social Interaction Value

The desire for social interaction in UGT can be identified as a key motivation for consumers to be engaged in content generation activities in online environments (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004; Muntinga et al., 2011). In the context of social media, social interaction gratification is fulfilled from one's ability to connect and communicate with like-minded people (Jahn & Kunz, 2012). OBCs offer several potential sources of social benefits such as customers engage in discussions with peers, giving and receiving help (Gummerus et al., 2012). FBPs provide members with a fertile opportunity to interact with each other, thus, leading to attaining social value (de Vries & Carlson, 2014).

2.6. Brand Trust

In the online context, Horppu, Kuivalainen, Tarkiainen, and Ellonen (2008, p. 405) describe online trust as "an attitude of confident expectation in an online situation of risk that one's vulnerabilities will not be exploited." Brand trust refers to "the willingness of the average consumer to rely on the ability of the brand to perform its stated function" (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001, p. 82). According to trust theories (Holmes, 1991), trust is built as a result of increased interactions and long-term relationships between the brand and the consumer. In OBCs, interactions occur between the members who play a key role in shaping users' trust in the community and its members (Vohra & Bhardwaj, 2017). OBCs provide members with a trusted place where members can learn the consumption experience of others, thereby serving as an important source of trust (Drury, 2008).

2.7. Hypothesis Development

Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) found that informational contents led customer engagement through liking, commenting and sharing the brand's posts. Brand posts on FBPs with a higher information value drive user to use the page intensively (Jahn & Kunz, 2012), user engagement (Gutiérrez-Cillán et al., 2017), and customer engagement (Kujur & Singh, 2018). Thus, the study hypothesizes as,

H1a: FBPs with a higher information value will contribute to a higher level of customer engagement

Hajli, Shanmugam, Papagiannidis, Zahay, and Richard (2017) argue that, if customers are provided with more information through an OBC, they are more likely to trust the brand. Laroche, Habibi, and Richard (2013) note, if a particular situation presents uncertainty or fear of opportunism, in this ground, trust plays a crucial role in reducing the uncertainty and

the lack of information. Because trust usually becomes an issue of information asymmetry and opportunism (Habibi et al., 2014), one way to make the brand more trustworthy is to provide consumers with necessary information about the brand (Chiu, Huang, & Yen, 2010; Gefen, Karahanna, & Straub, 2003). Thus, the researcher argues, larger the amount of quality information an FBP provides, then, it will lead customers to perceive the brand as more trustworthy.

H1b: FBPs with a higher information value will contribute to perceive the brand as more trustworthy

Hedonic value was found to be a key driver for online brand community participation (Madupu & Cooley, 2010) and, if a user perceives that a particular FBP is higher in hedonic value, it is more likely to lead the user to use the page more intensively (Jahn & Kunz, 2012; de Vries & Carlson, 2014). Further, Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) found that entertainment led customer engagement behaviours through liking, commenting, and sharing behaviours. Similarly, Kujur and Singh (2018) highlight the importance of entertaining contents for driving customer engagement in FBPs. Based on the evidence, the study hypothesizes as,

H2: FBPs with a higher entertainment value will contribute to a higher level of customer engagement

The research suggests that social interaction is of paramount importance in attracting users to FBPs (Jahn & Kunz, 2012), creation and contribution of online brand-related content (Muntinga et al., 2011) and consumer engagement (Gummerus et al., 2012). Moreover, de Vries and Carlson (2014) showed that customers were more likely to use FBP intensively and become highly engaged with FBP if the FBP provides a higher perception of social-interaction value. Accordingly, the study hypothesizes as,

H3a: FBPs with a higher social interaction value will contribute to a higher level of customer engagement

In the social media context, consumers connect with other members and, these social interactions may lead members to develop brand trust (Habibi et al., 2014; Kujur & Singh, 2018). Further, Hajli et al. (2017) argued that social interactions in an OBC positively contributed to the establishment of trust. Thus, the study hypothesizes as,

H3b: FBPs with a higher social interaction value will contribute to perceive the brand as more trustworthy

In the social media context, highly engaged consumers are frequently exposed to the brand elements (Habibi et al., 2014), so that more likely to result in a higher level of trust (Holmes, 1991). In the context of Facebook fan pages, Kang et al. (2014) found that member participation had a positive influence on brand trust. Similarly, Casaló, Flavián, and Guinaliú (2007) highlight that participation in an OBC enhances brand trust. Further, past studies have already acknowledged that brand trust as a consequence of customer engagement (Brodie et al., 2011; van Doorn et al., 2010). Thus, the study hypothesizes as,

H4: Customer engagement positively influences brand trust

The conceptual framework exhibiting the hypothesized relationships is depicted in Figure 1.

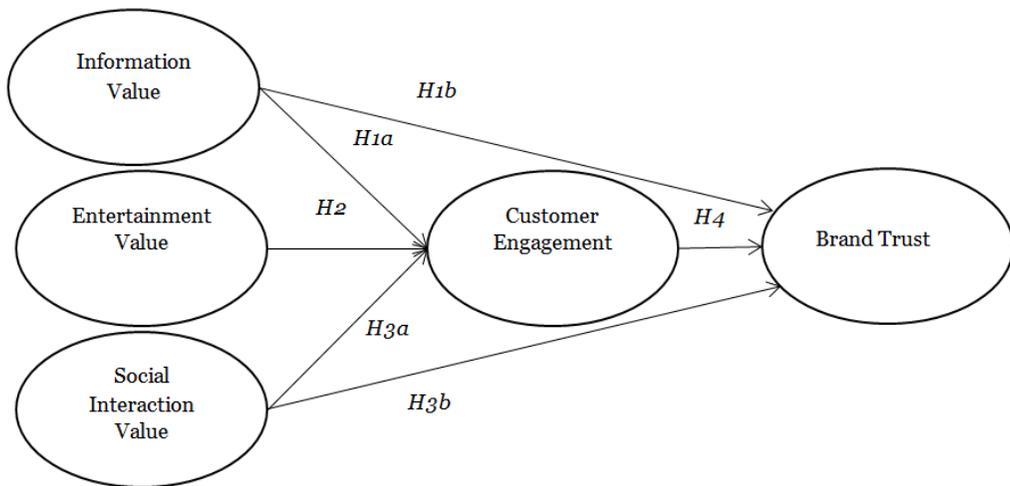


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3. Methods

3.1. Sampling and Data Collection

Facebook is the most popular SNS among the young college students of Sri Lanka (Jayarathna & Fernando, 2014). Thus, the data were collected from a convenient sample (Kujur & Singh, 2018) of undergraduate Facebook users at two state universities; the University of Ruhuna and the University of Kelaniya in Sri Lanka who have been following at least a single FBP during the last three months. The study used a self-administered printed questionnaire to collect the data. Respondents were instructed to answer the scale items in the survey instrument by keeping in mind the most important FBP for them. A similar

procedure can be found in the literature (e.g., Habibi et al., 2014; Kujur & Singh, 2018). The questionnaire was pre-tested with ten undergraduates at the University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka, and resulted in the exclusion of a few items. Further, the content validity of the constructs was ensured by two academics. Overall, 245 responses were collected. After excluding unusable responses, 201 effective responses were considered for data analysis. Among the respondents, 103 were male while 98 were female. Of the sample of 201 respondents, the majority belonged to the age group of 22-25 years old (92.5%). In terms of Facebook usage frequency, the majority of the respondents (86.1%) logged into Facebook daily. The majority of the respondents (58.2%) spent less than one hour per log-in. Further, the majority of the respondents (34.8%) had subscribed to more than twelve FBPs. The study sample size aligned with the guidelines in the literature. A sample of 200 or more was deemed to be sufficient for covariance-based SEM (Garver & Mentzer, 1999).

3.2. Measures

The scale items were borrowed from the previous studies and modified to fit the context. Customer engagement was operationalized with an established scale (Gutierrezcilln et al., 2017) consisting of three items. Information value was operationalized with three items borrowed from de Vries and Carlson (2014). The entertainment value was measured with three items adapted from de Vries and Carlson (2014). Social interaction value was operationalized with an established scale (de Vries & Carlson, 2014) consisting of four items. In operationalizing brand trust, the study used an established scale (Kang et al., 2014) consisting of four items. Study constructs were measured on five-point Likert scales, ranging from 'strongly disagree (1)' to 'strongly agree (5)'.

4. Data Analysis

4.1. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) provides "an excellent starting point" to subsequent multivariate techniques (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2014, p. 98). Thus, data were factor-analysed with SPSS version 21 to better understand the underlying structure of study constructs. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure was 0.744, which exceeded the minimum acceptable value of 0.5 (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999), and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($p < 0.05$). All the study items loaded separately on respective constructs. Table 1 shows the mean, standard deviation (SD), and factor loadings of the study constructs.

Table 1: Mean, SD, and Factor Loadings

Items	Factor Loadings	Mean	SD
<i>Information Value</i>			
The information on this FBP is helpful for me	.838		
The information on this FBP is useful for me	.760	4.22	.77
The information on this FBP is practical	.787		
<i>Entertainment Value</i>			
The FBP is fun	.841		
The FBP is exciting	.871	3.19	1.09
The FBP is entertaining	.788		
<i>Social Interaction Value</i>			
I can meet people like me on this FBP	.773		
I can meet new people like me on this FBP	.807		
I can find out about people like me on this FBP	.716	3.20	.92
I can interact with people like me on this FBP	.745		
<i>Customer Engagement</i>			
I take part in this FBP with 'likes'	.737		
I comment on this FBP	.851		
I share the content on this FBP	.769	3.71	.90
<i>Brand Trust</i>			
What this brand says about its products/service is true	.742		
I feel I know what to expect from this brand	.822		
This brand is very reliable	.691	3.53	.80
This brand meets its promises	.724		

Source: Author developed (2019)

4.2. Reliability, Validity, and Common Method Bias (CMB)

The Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) values for all constructs exceeded the threshold level of 0.7 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988), thus, establishing the reliability. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for all constructs except for the social interaction and brand trust exceeded the threshold level of 0.5 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). Malhotra and Dash (2011) argued that the researcher could establish the convergent validity which was based on the CR alone due to AVE was a more conservative measure, thus, establishing the convergent validity of the study constructs. The discriminant validity of the constructs was assessed by comparing the

square root of the AVE with its correlations with other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The square roots of the AVE for all the constructs were above the inter-construct correlations, thus, establishing the discriminant validity. Table 2 shows the Cronbach's alpha, CR, AVE, and inter-construct correlations. The researcher used Harman's single factor test to assess the CMB. The results revealed that no single factor explained the majority of the variance, and hence, common method bias was not a pervasive issue in the present study (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Only 22.45 percent of variance was explained by all items loaded into a single factor, which was below the minimum acceptable value of 50 percent.

Table 2: Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE	INF	ENT	SI	CE	BT
Information (INF)	0.766	0.769	0.528	0.726				
Entertainment (ENT)	0.793	0.797	0.567	-0.132	0.753			
Social Interaction (SI)	0.777	0.709	0.449	-0.030	0.142	0.670		
Customer Engagement (CE)	0.759	0.766	0.525	0.249**	0.189*	0.451***	0.725	
Brand Trust (BT)	0.774	0.776	0.470	0.547***	0.043	0.166	0.368***	0.685

Notes: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Bold diagonal elements represent the square root of AVE

Off-diagonal elements represent the inter-construct correlations

Source: Author developed (2019)

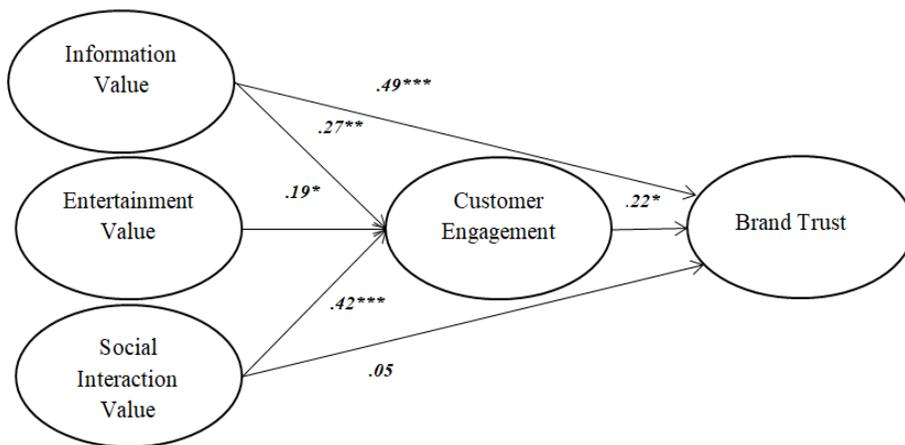
4.3. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

The SEM was used with AMOS version 21 by following the two-step approach suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). As such, the measurement model was assessed before testing the structural model. The measurement model indicated acceptable model fit ($\chi^2/df=1.476$, GFI=.918, IFI=.951, TLI=.937, CFI=.949, RMSEA=0.049). Before testing the hypothesized relationships, the proposed structural model was tested for goodness-of-fit indices. The fit statistics indicated an adequate fit of the structural model ($\chi^2/df=1.464$, GFI=.918, IFI=.951, TLI=.938, CFI=.950, RMSEA=0.048). The results revealed that Information Value ($\beta = .27$, $p < 0.01$), Entertainment Value ($\beta = .19$, $p < 0.05$), and Social Interaction Value ($\beta = .42$, $p <$

0.001) had a positive impact on customer engagement, supporting *H1a*, *H2*, and *H3a*. Moreover, the findings highlighted that customer engagement had a positive influence on Brand Trust ($\beta = .22, p < 0.05$), supporting *H4*. Additionally, Brand Trust was found to be positively influenced by Information Value ($\beta = .49, p < 0.001$), supporting *H1b*. However, the results did not support the *H3b*, suggesting social interaction value had no positive influence on brand trust ($\beta = .05, p > 0.05$). Figure 2 depicts the results of the hypothesized relationships.

4.4. Mediation Analysis

Mediation analysis was conducted using bootstrapping re-sampling with 2,000 samples in AMOS version 21 to test whether the customer engagement mediates the relationship between Information Value and brand trust, and social interaction value and brand trust. The results revealed that customer engagement partially mediated the relationship between information value and brand trust. Further, the results indicated a full mediation of customer engagement between the social interaction value and brand trust. Table 3 presents the results of the mediation analysis.



Notes: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

$n=201$, CMIN/DF= 1.464, GFI=.918, IFI=.951, CFI=.950, TLI= .938, RMSEA=.048

Figure 2: Hypothesis Testing Results

Table 3: Mediation Analysis

Path	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Mediation
Information Value → Brand Trust	0.492***	0.061*	Partial
Social Interaction Value → Brand Trust	0.046	0.093*	Full

Notes: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$ *** $p < 0.001$

Source: Author developed (2019)

5. Results and Discussion

The study highlighted that FBPs associated with a higher information value contributed to a higher level of customer engagement. Therefore, if an FBP provides users with the information they are looking for, they will be more likely to engage with the FBP through liking, commenting, and sharing behaviours. Thus, marketers need to ensure that their FBPs are higher in information value so that customers will be more inclined to engage with the page. The study findings were consistent with the past studies (Enginkaya & Yilmaz, 2014; Gutierrezcilln et al., 2017; Kujur & Singh, 2018) in which a positive impact of information value on customer engagement was inferred. Additionally, the study proved that information value had a positive influence on brand trust. Chiu et al. (2010) stressed the importance of providing customers with brand-related information to make the customers feel brand as trustworthy. Further, as per the theory of media richness, the purpose of any communication was to avoid uncertainty (Gummerus et al., 2012). OBCs reduced the uncertainty by transmitting a larger volume of information (Gummerus et al., 2012), thus resulting in brand trust (Habibi et al., 2014). Thus, the task of marketers is to provide customers with quality information thereby they will perceive the brand as more trustworthy in the context of FBPs.

Further, the study found a positive influence of entertainment value on customer engagement, which was aligned with the past studies in the context of FBPs (Civijikj & Michahelles, 2013; Kujur & Singh, 2017; Kujur & Singh, 2018). Thus, if an FBP is associated with higher entertainment value, customers will be more likely to reflect the engagement behaviours. Additionally, the findings revealed that customer engagement was positively influenced by social interaction value associated with FBPs. Similarly, Kujur and Singh (2018) argued that social interactions in FBPs were likely to encourage more customer likes, comments, and shares. Further, Dolan et al. (2016) argue that brand posts which drive users

to interact with other like-minded people may lead to positively-valenced customer engagement. Therefore, marketers need to provide users with social interaction value so that they will be likely to engage with the FBP. For instance, marketers can come up with creative polls with contemporary significance in their FBP. The present study further provided evidence on the influence of customer engagement on brand trust. Thus, the findings were consistent with Kang et al. (2014) in which they highlighted the role of active participation in restaurant FBPs in contributing to the formation of brand trust. Moreover, Kujur and Singh (2018) found that customer engagement was likely to result in the establishment of trust between the customer and the organization. The results did not indicate a relationship between social interaction value and brand trust. As noted by Wallace, Buil, & de Chernatony (2014), consumers connected with brands in the context of social media to interact with others on the brand's network, rather than to connect with the brand itself. Thus, one possible explanation for the absence of the relationship is that the customers may develop trust in the community members as a result of interactions, instead of trust on the brand. Additionally, the findings highlighted the mediation effect of customer engagement in the relationships between information value and brand trust, and social interaction value and brand trust.

6. Conclusion

The study provided a model of antecedents of customer engagement and resulting brand trust. The study found that customer engagement with FBPs was motivated by the values associated with the FBP; information, entertainment, and social interaction. Further, the study highlighted the role of customer engagement in influencing brand trust. Additionally, the study confirmed an additional linkage between the information value and brand trust, which was yet to be empirically tested in the context of FBPs. While the majority of the past research in the area measured customer engagement as an objective figure (e.g., Civijikj & Michahelles, 2013; Azar et al., 2016), the present study measured the customer engagement as a subjective figure based on customer perceptions of their actual liking, commenting, and sharing behaviours. Further, while past studies focused on customer engagement with the brand posts (e.g., Civijikj & Michahelles, 2013; Kujur & Singh, 2018), the present study focused on the customer engagement with the FBPs. Accordingly, the focal engagement object was different from the prior work in the area.

6.1. Implications

From a theoretical perspective, the study provides an effective framework for developing customer-brand relationships through customer engagement in FBPs. As such, the study extends the generalizability by focusing on a few brands in the context of FBPs. Moreover, the

study highlights the importance of using engagement measures, including liking, commenting, and sharing for measuring customer engagement as a behavioural manifestation.

From a practical perspective, the study provides valuable implications for FBP marketers. Effective use of FBPs will accelerate business success as it helps brands to develop strong relationships with the customers. The study highlighted the significant role of information value in contributing to customer engagement and brand trust. Thus, marketers can provide customers with useful and up-to-date information in order to keep them engaged and attract new customers. Customers will be more inclined to reflect engagement behaviours as long as the FBP provides them with valuable brand-related information. While analyzing the entertainment value, the study reveals that customer engagement is motivated by the entertainment value associated with the FBP. Further, the study proves that entertainment value contributes to the establishment of brand trust. Hence, marketers should provide customers with entertainment (e.g., music videos, memes), so that they will be engaged with brand-related activities in the FBP. Further, social interaction value can be identified as instrumental in influencing customer engagement. Thus, providing customers with social interaction value through the FBP can be viewed as an effective strategy for FBP marketers. Delivering contents which bring people into a discussion forum may be of greater importance for marketers as it spurs interactions among the customers within the FBP. Moreover, marketers can provide virtual places within the FBP thereby facilitating more interactions among the members within the community. Moreover, the study depicts that customer engagement contributes to the formation of brand trust. Therefore, marketers should encourage customers to engage with the FBP by offering them values they expect by continuously uploading the useful contents on the page.

6.2. Future Research Directions and Limitations

The study has several limitations. The study used a convenient sample of undergraduates in Sri Lanka. Use of convenient student samples is likely to be affected by alleged bias (Peterson & Merunka, 2014). Thus, future work can focus on some other sample elements to test the same framework across different cultural backgrounds. The study focused only on brand trust as an outcome of customer engagement. Constructs such as brand commitment (Kang et al., 2014), and brand loyalty (Brodie et al., 2011; Jahn & Kunz, 2012) can be further validated in future research as relational outcomes of customer engagement to better understand how likely they are to be influenced by customer engagement. The study tested the framework in general without focusing on a specific category of FBPs. Customers may place different values for the same gratification based on the nature/type of the FBP (Vohra & Bhardwaj, 2019). Thus, future research can focus on different categories of FBPs to gauge if customer

engagement is likely to be varying depending on the type of FBP. The study measured customer engagement as a subjective evaluation of the user's actual behaviour in the context of Facebook. Further scholarly scrutiny is required to understand the nature of customer engagement as a subjective measure across multiple social media platforms.

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