

INFLUENCE OF BRAND LOYALTY AND BRAND EQUITY THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON BUYING INTENTION TOWARDS ELECTRONIC HOME APPLIANCES

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ABSTRACT

To grab the consumer base, marketers are devising strategies to integrate their advertising and marketing campaigns across multiple channels. Among these channels of marketing, social media continues to be the most preferred marketing tool. The objective of this paper is to study the impact of social media on consumer buying decisions, considering brand equity and brand loyalty in relation to electronic home appliances. In the present study, 497 respondents are collected through self-structured questionnaires. A model has been developed and tested using structural equation modeling. Thus, the study makes a significant contribution that will be helpful for marketers to improve the quality of their products and attain maximum consumer satisfaction. It is found that brand equity and brand loyalty have both direct and indirect impact through social media marketing on consumer buying intentions.

Keywords: *Social media marketing, buying intention, brand loyalty*

INTRODUCTION

Today, marketers adopt a technological platform to attract consumers and to create an impact on their purchasing behaviour with a view to increase market value in the competitive world. Among all these platforms, social media has a high influence on purchasing behaviour (Kumar et al., 2020). The emerging demand of consumers compelled the industries to change their marketing strategies applying social media. Social media provides a communication channel where people can interact with each other and share their own consumption perspectives, product preferences, opinions, and experiences that affects their purchase decision (Aji et al., 2020). Moreover, social media helps in building relationships with customers and forming a positive image of the brands in the consumers' eyes. It's true for every non-traditional tool of marketing communications; social media is eagerly explored, dug up, and utilized by the companies. Thus, the industry needs to frame effective marketing strategies, using Social Media to rebuild in a positive way (Salem and Salem, 2019).

Social Media could be dynamic or progressive. In this manner, the effectiveness of modern advancement in social media must be measured to discover out and imply best promoting techniques. Finally, the Web 3.0 era, which changes the way of business and characteristics of the social media stage, is almost to arrive both at professionals, academicians and may put into the use of studies to uncover the conceivable impacts of artificial intelligence, cloud computing, online characters and the genuine confluence of web, mobile devices and other supplies on brand (Erdoğan and Cicek, 2012).

Business should ensure use of social media in marketing is measured by its application types, social effects and advanced technologies which will improve brand loyalty and purchase intention. Thus, this will motivate and connect consumer to engage more with social media that force the buying decision (Almohaimmed, 2019). Along with social media marketing (SMM), brand loyalty and brand equity are taken as brand components that may influence consumer buying intention effectively. Brand Loyalty (BL) increases the firm values by strengthening their market share that helps in attracting the potential customers and leads to the overall reduction in marketing cost that nourishes the brand within the competitive market (Atilgan et al., 2005). Brand loyalty towards a single brand retains the customer from the beginning to the end (Zia et al. 2021).

A review of the relevant literature has revealed that previous studies examined the effect of social media marketing and brand attitude towards buying decision (Atilgan et al., 2005, Erdoğan and Cicek, 2012; Abzari

et al, 2014; Boon-Long and Wongsurawat, 2015) from management point of view (Vries and Carlson, 2014) but Electronic Home Appliance (EHA) has not been explored from customers' point of view with regards to SMM and buying intention through brand loyalty (Verma, 2020). While social media activities bring an opportunity to minimize bias and misunderstanding toward brands and create a medium to exchange messages and ideas over the world virtually (Kim and Ko, 2012), it becomes an interesting area for research to understand the impact of brand loyalty and brand equity (BE) on social media and buying intention, which will help to match the changing consumers' behavior (Muchardie et al., 2016). Changes in consumer behaviour caused firms to rethink about their brand marketing strategies within SMM. Presently, a significant research attention focused the consumer more than on the firm (Yazdanian et al, 2019) towards EHA.

Social media is an alluring avenue for future research that might be to trace the dynamism of social media and buying behavior of consumer, considering brand equity (Sohail et al., 2020). So, this research gives a direction for worldwide brand players taking everything in mind using social media for marketing to promote their product and brand (Balakrishnan et al. 2014). Currently, a critical goal of the research is to shift to the consumer rather than to the industry (Yazdanian et al, 2019). The rationale of this research is to analyze the impact of brand loyalty on SMM from customer viewpoint, and the relationship among all constructs. To fill the literature gaps, as found above, this study has developed in the following ways. First, it has

combined the concept of Brand equity, Brand loyalty and SMM, and the objective of the study follows. The next section is a discussion of the literature review to characterize the meaning of the main concepts. Then the conceptual framework is proposed, and the hypotheses are generated. The third section reviews the research methodology, and the fourth section presents the results of the study. Finally, the last section includes the conclusion of the study, theoretical and practical implications, and the limitations of the study with avenues for future research.

REVIEW OF LITERATURES

Brand Loyalty and Buying Intention

Loyalty to a brand was found to be one of the most important drivers of customer purchase intention. It influences the consumer to repurchase a particular brand and even they are ready to buy at a higher price for its characterized brand. Thus, loyalty is considered as a huge asset for a company, so it becomes important for the marketer to determine the antecedents of brand loyalty (Sohail et al., 2020). A customer always goes with an optimistic, preferential, and behavioral affinity within the course of a perceived, marked, and labelled substitute or development choice of their brand (Salem and Salem, 2019; Zia et al., 2021). When consumers have a positive mentality towards a particular brand, their commitment to that brand increases, and they will resist changing to an alternate brand. Brand loyalty encourages customer buying intention. Accordingly, Brand loyalty is connected to the consumers' recurring buying behaviours subsequently over time (Almohaimmed, 2019). Brand

loyalty has a significant effect on customer purchase intention (Sasmita and Suki, 2014). Almohaimmed (2019) classified buying intention as a deliberate act of consumers to buy one of the items and their cognitive attitude that how a person intends to buy a particular brand. Thus, buying intention is strongly affected by customers' attitude toward brand loyalty (Yazdanian et al. 2019)

Brand Loyalty and Social Media Marketing

SMM plays a vital role in E-marketing strategies that connect and build customers relationship which has a positive influence on buying behavior and enhance brand performance (Ebrahim, 2019). SMM became an important tool to build brand loyalty (Godey et al., 2016). Social media focuses Brand loyalty that helps to retain the customer and foster business sustainability (Sasmita and Suki, 2015) that results in improving brand loyalty and buying decisions, moderated on SMM application types, its social effects, and enabling technologies (Almohaimmed, 2019). SMM channels especially online communities and online advertisements are the key measures for promoting brand loyalty (Balakrishnan et al., 2014). The study upholds and describes the important role of brand loyalty to appreciate the buying behavior of consumers through SMM activities. People who tend to be more dedicated towards the brand are more loyal ones and they are mentally attached to the brand influencing through SMM (Salem and Salem, 2019). Erdoğan and Cicek (2012) examined the effects of communication and campaigned through social media and concluded a positive effect of these on brand loyalty. Thus, Social media marketing has a significant positive effect

on brand loyalty (Bilgin, 2018; Yazdanian et al., 2019; Sohail et al., 2020) and vice versa brand loyalty has positively been affected by social media marketing activities (Seo and Park, 2018).

Salem and Salem (2019) argued that SMM has an indirect significant impact on various stages of brand loyalty. So, there is a need for marketers to develop effective marketing strategies in order to build brand loyalty.

Brand Equity and Buying Intention

Buying behaviour of consumers is a complex process that relies on their buying attitude and perceptions (Imtiaz et al, 2021). So, there is a need to make a marketing strategy focusing on brand equity that builds and attracts potential customers to buy the products, by understanding their buying behaviour (Zia, et al., 2021). Along with this, marketers should be engaged in social communication to build brand equity to improve buying intention (Kim and ko, 2012). Brand equity generates customer involvement that motivates and increases their buying intention (Imtiaz et al., 2021; Verma, 2020). Brand equity describes as not only consumer preference but also include more favoured towards marketing response (Raji et al., 2018). Creating strong brand equity of products and services, positively affect consumer attitude. Brand Equity encompasses a noteworthy impact on buying intention and attracts potential buyers (Rizwan et al., 2021). Brand equity has a positive influence on customers' purchase intention (Aji et al., 2020).

Brand Loyalty and Brand Equity

Loyalty is a core dimension of brand equity, Brand loyalty is considered as the attachment

that a customer towards brand (Balakrishnan et al., 2014). Brand loyalty is a centre measurement of brand equity and is described as a leading consequence that guides the improvement of brand equity (Zia et al., 2021). Thus, brand loyalty is considered as an effective tool of brand equity (Atilgan et al., 2005). In addition to this, brand loyalty is one of the assets of brand equity (Rizwan et al. 2021) because consumers developed brand loyalty by creating a positive output of brand equity which significantly choose of brand preference over other brands (Zhang et al., 2014). Brand loyalty has an important and positive effect on Brand Equity (Zia et al., 2021; Sasmita and Suki, 2015). Brand equity is also affected by factors such as brand association and brand loyalty. Hence, brand association and brand loyalty are the other vital factors for consideration by marketers and practitioners in gaining young customer positive acceptance of the product or brand (Sasmita and Suki, 2014). Sasmita and Suki (2014) described brand loyalty as a link in the chain of effects that indirectly connects with brand equity.

Brand Equity and Social Media Marketing

Brand equity serves as an overall set of liabilities and assets related to a brand. Brand equity is studied as an emerging aspect in social media marketing to reach consumer satisfaction (Imtiaz et al, 2021). Social media marketing should always be active and proactively influence consumer attitudes toward choosing a brand (Kumar et al., 2020). Strong brand equity can spread messages and influence more consumers through SMM that affect the buying decision of potential consumers. SMM proves a platform that will provide interactive

information related to brands equity in trends. Product promotion through social media marketing creates and builds brand equity in the mind of consumer effectively (Aji et al., 2020). The administration of social media marketing will develop the brand equity upon which customers rely as an important source of information in decision-making (Ebrahim, 2019). As so, brands equity should engage in social media activities to expect positive commitments to improve consumer values (Kim and Ko, 2012). Thus, social media offer different values to businesses by enhancing brand popularity (Manzoor et al., 2020). Social media interactivity and rewards help build stronger brand equity (Barreda et al., 2020).

Social Media Marketing and Buying Intention

Social Media marketing provides scope for effective interaction that builds the confidence of a potential consumer and result in influencing their buying decision (Abzari et al., 2014; Aji et al., 2020). As SMM is more trustworthy and influences consumer buying intention, social media help to compare variety and differentiate brand (Sanny et al., 2020). Social media is an important source of information that influences consumers' purchasing decisions (Ebrahim, 2019), a combination of their interests and the possibility of buying a product. The development of social media improves connecting people in real-time that other media cannot do (Manzooret al., 2020).

SMM channels especially online communities and online advertisements are the key measures for promoting buying intention (Balakrishnan et al., 2014). Thus, its components progressively impact the fundamentals of purchase intention, creating a new marketing communication style as mediating factor. Highly accessible information via social media does not have a positive implication on consumers' purchasing behaviour (Kumar et al., 2020).

Past studies have assessed the effect of social media marketing on purchasing behaviour still these have been in limited context. For example, indifferent research work, the effect of SMM on brand trust and brand loyalty for hotels (Tatar and Erdogmus, 2016), brand equity impact purchase intention on health insurance industry (Rizwan et al. 2021), brand equity impact in beverage industry (Atilgan et al., 2005), SMM impact on buying decision in tea industry (Aji, et al. 2020), social media marketing of airline products (Moslehpour et al., 2020) have been studied. Still, there are no sufficient reviews that give marketers with data on how social media marketing affects consumers buying intentions especially towards electronic home appliance products.

This research work will examine the impact of brand loyalty and brand equity on buying intention through SMM focusing over electronic home appliance from customer point of view in Western Odisha. Similar study was also conducted by Verma (2020).

This study proposes the research framework as shown in Figure 1.

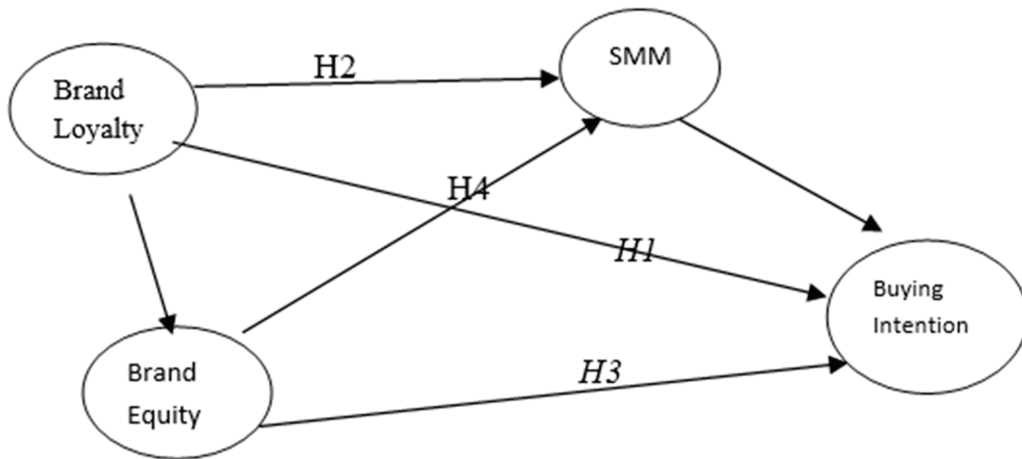


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Sources: Authors own findings

OBJECTIVES

The research work is conducted with the following objectives.

1. To study the impact of brand loyalty on buying intention.
2. To analyze the impact of brand loyalty on buying intention with the mediation effect of social media marketing.
3. To measure the impact of brand equity on buying intention
4. To diagnose the impact of brand equity on buying intention with the mediation effect of social media marketing.

HYPOTHESES

H01: There is no impact of brand loyalty on buying intention.

H02: There is no effect of brand loyalty on buying intention with the mediation effect of social media marketing.

H03: There is no impact of brand equity on buying intention.

H04: There is no effect of brand equity on buying intention with the mediation effect of social media marketing.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data and Measuring Tool

The study is based on a quantitative survey using self-administrated questionnaires. Out of 502 questionnaires distributed and restrained among the customers buying electronic home appliance, influenced from social media marketing and brands composition in western Odisha. 497 questionnaires were collected. Data were analysed using structural equation modelling to examine the effects of independent variables (Brand loyalty, brand equity, and social medial marketing) on dependent variable (i.e.,Buying intention) along with mediating role of brand equity and SMM towards buying intention.

Further, structural equation modelling (SEM) helped in examining the hypothesized relationships among the constructs in this research (Suki and Suki, 2013).

Reliability and Validity Test

Following measures are adopted for reliability and validity test.

Reliability

Cronbach's Alpha > 0.70 (Cronbach, 1951; Cortina 1993; Taber, 2016)

Composite Reliability > 0.70 (Bagozzi& Yi, 1988, Dragan &Topolsek, 2014)

Convergent Validity Bagozzi& Yi, 1988)

Discriminant Validity AVE > MSV >ASV (Fornell&Larcker, 1981; Dragan &Topolsek, 2014)

Table 1: Reliability and Validity Estimates.

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	C.R.	AVE	MSV	ASV
Brand Equity	.909	.911	.720	.711	.600
Social Media Marketing	.879	.882	.652	.504	.459
Buying Intention	.931	.933	.776	.607	.557
Buying Loyalty	.950	.951	.830	.741	.574

Source: Authors' own findings

Note:CR: Composite Reliability; AVE: Average Variance Extracted, MSV: Maximum Shared Variance; ASV: Average Shared Variance.

Table 2: Inter Construct Correlation.

Constructs	Brand Equity	Social Media Marketing	Buying Intention	Brand Loyalty
Brand Equity	0.848			
Social Media Marketing	0.672	0.807		
Buying Intention	0.779	0.710	0.881	
Brand Loyalty	0.861	0.648	0.749	0.911

Table 3: Model Fit Indices.

Model	Recommended Value	Obtained value
Normed Chi-Square (Hinkin,1995)	< 3	2.406
GFI (Hooperet.al., 2008; Bagozzi& Yi, 1988)	> 0.90	0.944

AGFI (Muenjohn&Armstrong, 2008)	> 0.80	0.922
CFI (Browne and Cudeck,1992; Byrne, 2016)	> 0.80	0.981
RMSEA (Bollen,1989; Browne and Cudeck,1992)	< 0.08	0.053
TLI (Browne and Cudeck,1992; Byrne, 2016)	> 0.95	0.977

Source: Authors' own findings

The table 1 and 2 above reflects the reliability and validity parameters of four constructs. The present study satisfies all the parameters of reliability and validity. Model fit indices are also within the recommended criteria.

Note: GFI: Goodness of Fit Index; AGFI: Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index; CFI: Comparative Fit Index; RMSEA: Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; TLI: Tucker Lewis Index.

Analysis of Demographic Profile

Table 4: Sample Characteristics (n=497).

Measure		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	225	45.41
	Male	272	54.59
Age	less than 25	135	27.10
	25-35	203	40.84
	35-45	45	8.96
	45-55	29	5.78
	more than 55	85	17.32
Education	High school	7	1.40
	Under-graduate	64	12.94
	Graduate	140	28.09
	Post Graduate	226	45.42
	Doctorate/Professional	54	10.86
	Other	6	1.29
Occupation	Student	174	35.08
	Working	241	48.59
	Self employed	52	10.56
	Retired	30	5.77

Marital status	Married	117	23.50
	Unmarried	377	75.89
	Others	3	0.61
Income level (per month in rupee)	Less than 15000	173	34.86
	15001-25000	60	12.15
	25001-35000	53	10.75
	35001-45000	33	6.57
	More than 45000	178	35.67
Social media platforms	Facebook	50	10.16
	WhatsApp	195	39.24
	Instagram	94	18.92
	Youtube	113	22.71
	Twitter	23	4.58
	LinkedIn	19	3.78
	Snapchat	3	0.61
Social media influenced	Yes	266	53.58
	No	104	20.92
	May be	127	25.50
Preferable brand	Philips	79	15.93
	Whirlpool	45	9.16
	Samsung	163	32.87
	LG	97	19.52
	Haier	12	2.39
	Bosch	5	0.99
	Sony	54	10.96
	Others	42	17.18
Preferable product	Cooking and food preparation appliances (microwave oven, grinder etc.)	109	21.91
	Cleaning appliances (washing machine, Vacuum etc.)	27	5.57
	Entertainment appliances (TV, speaker, headphone etc)	290	58.36
	Other appliances (AC, Refrigerator, printer etc.)	71	14.16

Sources: Authors' own findings

The demographic analysis portrays that a greater number of male respondents participated in the survey. Youth are the major participants and large numbers of respondents belong to highest income level category. WhatsApp and youtube are the largely used social media platforms and a greater number of respondents like to purchase entertainment appliances (TV, speaker, headphone etc.) of Samsung brand. The demographic features of respondents match the study requirements.

MODEL AND DISCUSSION

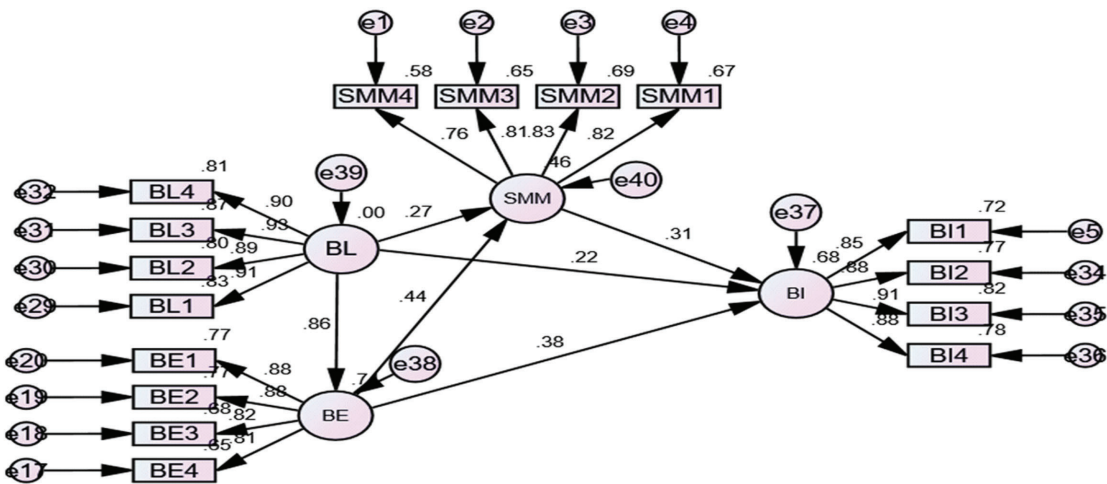


Figure 1: Path Analysis of the Structural Model

Source: Authors’ own findings

Table 5: Parameters Estimates.

Hypothesis	Estimate	S.E	C.R.	P	Remark
BE <--- BL	.746	.037	20.320	***	Supported
SMM <--- BE	.439	.092	4.752	***	Supported
SMM <--- BL	.233	.078	3.007	.003	Supported
BI <--- SMM	.341	.052	6.551	***	Supported
BI <--- BE	.419	.083	5.039	***	Supported
BI <--- BL	.209	.067	3.132	.002	Supported

Source: Authors’ own findings

Note: Estimate: standardized beta co-efficient; SE: standardized error; CR: critical ratio; P: P value; ***: P < 0.001).

This section of the study discusses the results of hypothesis testing; along with the direct and mediating effect. All the variables are significant at 1% level as the P value is .000. Results show that the first hypothesis (H1) is that “BL is a significant impact of BI with highest estimation of .746 which is consistent with the work of Yazdanian et al., (2019); Salem & Salem, (2019) and Sohail et al., (2020).

H2 is the hypothesis of the mediating role of SMM (Panigyrakis et al. 2019) between BL and BI. Brand loyalty has an optimistic and substantial effect on buying intention through SMM (Almohaimmeed 2019). The analytical evidence reveals that SMM plays an important mediating role between BL with BI (Yazdanian et al, 2019; Balakrishnan et al., 2014).

H3 is also supported and indicates that BE has a positive and significant impact on BI which matches the finding of Rizwan et al., 2021. Brand equity has a significant impact towards consumers' purchase intention (Aji et al., 2020; Atilgan et al., 2005; Verma, 2020; Jeon and Yoo, 2021).

H4 is the hypothesis of the mediating role of SMM on BE and BI. Result of the analysis shows that SMM acts as a significant mediating variable, and this finding is consistent with the previous study of Verma (2020).

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This study contributes to existing research on SMM, which has theoretical and policy implications. The study provides comprehensive framework to prior literature, which demonstrates the dimensions of SMM and its influence on brand components and purchase intention (Langaro et al., 2015; Balakrishnan et al., 2014;

Salem and Salem, 2019). While previous studies determine the elements of SMM (Kim & Ko, 2012), This research integrates brand loyalty and brand equity with equal importance to SMM for consumer buying decision.

This study suggests a roadmap for managing effective SMM activity and guides marketers to improve the use of social media for building brand loyalty in turn to leads a great market share (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). Its marketers' responsibility to gather all relevant information and incorporate into their marketing strategies to attract consumer using social media marketing in promoting brand loyalty and brand equity (Atilgan et al., 2005; Rizwan et. al, 2021). This research, therefore, provides marketers with strategies that improve brand loyalty, results in purchase intent which was also recommended by Almohammad (2019).

CONCLUSION

Brand loyalty is considered as huge asset of business (Sohail et al., 2020). Brand loyalty encourages customer buying intention (Almohaimmeed, 2019) through SMM, became an important tool to build brand loyalty (Godey et al., 2016). The purpose of conducting this study is to analyse how brand loyalty and brand equity impact buying intention directly and through SMM as mediating factor. The findings indicate that the proposed model has better fit to the data sample. Results of the entire constructs of the proposed model (BL, BE, SMM, BI) are positively related with each other's and all the findings are positively significant with the proposed model. Observing the results, brand loyalty is highly correlated with buying intention specify that participants

attentive to the brand loyalty and obtain information available in social media for buying the electronic home appliances.

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The scope of the research work is limited to western Odisha and has been covered only to

the electronic home appliance only which can be expanded. The study is conducted with four factors like brand loyalty, brand equity, buying intention and social media marketing. The number of variables can be increased. Similarly, the number of sample size can be increased substantially to get robust result.

APPENDIX 1: SELECTION OF CONSTRUCTS.

Construct	Codes	Factors
Social Media Marketing (Salem and Salem, 2019; Sohail et al., 2020; Cheung et al., 2019; Kumar et al., 2020)	SMM1	Social media provide customized information.
	SMM2	Advertisements reviews on social media influence to buy.
	SMM3	Interesting contents in social media about particular brand.
	SMM4	Entertaining to spend time using social media.
Brand Loyalty (Vries and Carlson, 2014)	BL1	Recommend this brand to other people.
	BL2	Say positive things about this brand to other people.
	BL3	Support for favorite brand.
	BL4	Loyal to preferable brand.
Brand Equity(Memon et al., 2019).	BE1	Want to be engaged with favorite brand.
	BE2	Willing to go for positive word of mouth.
	BE3	Active Community feeling for favorite brand.
	BE4	Recognize the characteristics of my favorite brand.
BI(Moslehpur et al., 2020)	BI1	Information through social media influence to buy.
	BI2	Consider buying in future.
	BI3	Plan to purchase.
	BI4	Positive influence on purchase intention

Source: Authors' own compilation

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