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ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON BRAND AWARENESS AND PURCHASE INTENTION

THESIS

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To my father, mother, my wife and my lovely daughter "Asya". To all who encourage, support, and help me I dedicate this research.

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MARKA BİLİNCİLİĞİ VE SATIN ALMA GİRİŞİNDE SOSYAL MEDYA'NIN ROLÜ

ÖZET

Bu çalışmanın temel amacı, çeşitli unsurların satın alma niyeti üzerindeki etkisini, özellikle perakende kahve mağaza endüstrisinin iki bilinen markasının Facebook ve Instagram hesabı üzerinden bilgi toplayarak incelemektir. Araştırma hedefine ulaşmak ve hipotezleri test etmek için çevrimiçi bir anket tasarlanmış ve iki bilinen markanın takipçilerine gönderilmiştir. Hipotezleri test etmek için yapısal eşitlik modellemesi SPSS paket programının AMOS 18 eklentisi üzerinden gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Ampirik çalışmaların sonuçları, bir Facebook veya Instagram ile etkileşimin, marka bilinirliği, sözlü-konuşma ve satın alma niyeti üzerinde olumlu bir etkisi olduğunu göstermiştir. Sonuçlar ayrıca marka bilinirliğinin ağızdan çıkan sözleri olumlu etkilediğini gösterdi. Yeni pazarlama iletişimi, tüketicilerin sosyal medya ile etkileşimlerini giderek daha fazla etkileyen zorluklara ve fırsatlara sahiptir. Sosyal medyanın tüketici davranışlarına etkisi günden güne tüketici satın alma kararında büyük ölçüde sosyal medyaya bağımlı olduğunu göstermektedir. Bununla birlikte, sosyal medya aracılığıyla pazarlamayı daha iyi anlamak için daha fazla araştırmaya ihtiyaç vardır.

Bu çalışma, marka bilinirliği ve satın alma niyeti açısından sosyal medyayı geniş bir şekilde anlamaya çalışmış, ancak bu çalışma, iş dünyasında iki markanın üzerinde odaklanmıştır. Bu nedenle, sonuçlar tüm vakalara uygulanamadığından, benzeri daha fazla araştırmaya ihtiyaç vardır. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları, bir pazarlama aracı olarak sosyal medyanın öneminin anlaşılmasına işaret etmekle birlikte, marka için başarılı bir stratejik ortak olabileceğini vurgulamaktadır.
Anahtar kelimeler: *Sosyal medya, Satın alma niyeti, Marka bilinirliği, Ağızdan ağza*

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON BRAND AWARENESS AND PURCHASE INTENTION

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to analyze and understand the impact of social media on brand awareness and purchase intention, in specifically the Facebook page and Instagram account of two brands of a retail coffee and snacks store industry.

In order to reach the research goal and test the hypotheses, an online survey was designed. The questionnaire was sent to followers of two brands via Facebook and the Instagram. To test the hypotheses, the structural equation modeling was applied with AMOS 18.
The results of empirical studies showed that engagement with a Facebook or Instagram has a positive effect on brand awareness, word-of-mouth, and purchase intention. The results also showed that brand awareness positively affects word-of-mouth.

New marketing communications have challenges and opportunities, which increasingly influenced by consumers interactions with social media. Therefore, impact on consumer behavior. Day by day consumer heavily dependent on social media in the purchase decision. Nevertheless, more research is still needed to better understanding of marketing through social media. This study tried to a broad understanding of social media in terms of brand awareness and purchase intention, but this study focused on two brands within a single business sector, which is why the results can not apply to all cases, more researches are needed in this study area. The results of this study contribute to understanding the importance of social media as a marketing tool, and the importance of a two-way relationship between consumer and brand, where the consumer can become a successful marketer for the brand.
Keywords: *Social media, Purchase intention, Brand awareness, Word of mouth*

1. INTRODUCTION

Marketing is the key to the success of companies, marketing concepts are evolving day by day, previously marketing channels have been limited, such as television, newspapers, and magazines, today the marketing channels have become more extensive and included new types, therefore online marketing has become one of the most successful marketing channels.

One of the most important characteristics of the online marketing environment, compared to the offline marketing environment, is the opportunity to create the appropriate content and direct it to the appropriate audience (Wind and Rangaswamy, 2001). One of the most important features of online marketing environment is accessibility to the audience anywhere and at any moment.

Social media can be used as a successful marketing channel, and most companies today communicate with their audience through social media sites to identify their products and services and stay in touch with them. 87 percent of companies use social media as a marketing channel, while five years ago they were 10 percent (MediaRoom, 2018).

Through social media it can be reached to a wide of an audience, this makes social media to be one of the types of mass media (Sjöberg, Rosenbröijer and Oy, 2017). In 2019, it is estimated that the number of social media users will be around 2.77 billion around the world, and it will reach to 3.02 billion in 2021 (billions, 2018). Companies have become more interested in marketing through social media than before, Furthermore, social media marketing became one of the most important marketing strategies. Social media has a variety of platforms, the primary objective of social media is to collect people together in one place, some of social media platforms have shifted into commercial platforms.

The primary goal of social media is to bring users together in one place, and the main goal for the user may have fun or entertainment, as well as to follow the brands they love and keep in touch with those brands. This is one of the reasons why brands are present in social media platforms and connect with an audience. Due to a large number of social media users, brands have stimulated to build community across social media platforms, stay in touch with them and increase their awareness of the brand name.

Some business sectors have a greater reason to take a place in social media platforms than other sectors, also the nature of the work of the company is imposing the importance of participate in social media platforms or not (Economics and Marketing, 2012).

1.1 Background

A successful brand is that can raise the consumers' awareness of the brand. Successful brands seek to reach a greater number of users to make them more aware of the brand, also to increase the purchase intention. Brand awareness is one of the most important marketing strategies. Social media platforms can be used to build a community and increase brand awareness, with a huge number of social media users, competition has become fierce among brands to get a larger community even when brands paid for advertising in social media sites. Social media platforms are developing rapidly and continuously, brands must keep up with this development, to benefit from the services of platforms, these services can increase brand awareness for brands.

Word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing plays an important role in marketing techniques, it is a great challenge for brands to make users speak positively about the brand and make others experiment a new product. When users of social media talk about the brand positively or negatively it called electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM). Brands have to communicate effectively with their community and make them talk positively about the brand to others. Brands can use social media platforms to motivate the audience to talk about the brand positively, so social media become a good tool for word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing.

Audience can contribute to content creation, some business sectors where audiences are more involved in content creation than other sectors, for example, retail coffee and snacks store industry, it can be seen a lot of shared images from brands customer in their personal accounts in Facebook or Instagram, for example a cup of coffee beside to open book and a logo of brand in the background, this image motivate others to drink a cup of coffee from this brand, also it will increases the brand awareness.

Brands can communicate with the brand community very easily through social media, by conveying the news to them, launch a new product, and even entertain them. Maintain the current audience and trying to increase the number of this audience is a difficult marketing task, due to intense competition among brands. For this reason, brands must know their audience better.

1.2 Research Problem

Social media platforms are constantly evolving, it may a difficult task for brands to exploiting all advantages of services, take advantage of a huge number of social media users to increase brand awareness, and keeping pace with the benefits of social media. There are always questions about how important social media platforms are to increase brand awareness.

There are also other questions about how they affect to change consumer behavior and stimulate consumer to buy. The importance of social networking sites in creating a two-way communication channel between consumer and brand. How worthwhile is for start-ups and small-sized companies to use Instagram and Facebook in community building. And to what extent it is possible to move from traditional marketing to online marketing especially using social media.

The possibility of Instagram and Facebook to build community with the same characteristics and bring them together in one place to open up a space for debate to serve the brand and be like a WOM marketing.

This research seeks to find out how useful using of Instagram and Facebook are to increase brand awareness and purchase intention in retail coffee and snacks store industry in the Gulf region.

1.3. Aim of The Study

The main purpose of this study is to measure the impact of social media activities to brand awareness, and purchase intention, besides its impact on word-of-mouth (WOM). This study will contribute to understanding how social media especially Facebook and Instagram enhancing the brand awareness, word of mouth (WOM) and purchase intention, also contribute to understanding the effect of brand awareness and WOM to purchase intention.

The aim of this study is to examine the impact of Facebook and Instagram in brand awareness and purchase awareness in retail coffee and snacks store industry in the Gulf region.

The outcome of this research is to know the importance of social media marketing in influencing to word-of-mouth positively, in addition, to test the importance of social media marketing as a tool to brand awareness and purchase intention. Moreover, the study will provide broader information on the characteristics of marketing through the social media in retail coffee and snacks store industry, in terms of platforms Facebook and Instagram.

To reach the goal of the research, research hypotheses have been developed to test the impact of social media on the consumer. Through a questionnaire distributed to the Gulf region, and two famous brands were selected for the questionnaire.

1.4. Research Relevance

The use of social media is not totally new, but social media are developing significantly and rapidly, previously there were blogs in the 1990s, nowadays the number of users of social media has in a continuous increase (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

This research will focus on two different brands in retail coffee and snacks store sector: brand A is an International brand with a strong market share and brand B with a strong market share within the Gulf region. The conceptual model and hypothesis development are based on a study by Hutter, K. et al. (2013), with a small change. It will test the impact of social media especially Facebook and Instagram to brand awareness and purchase intention.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the theoretical framework of the study will be presented. This study will focus on the impact of social media on brand awareness and purchase intention, and how social media can be as a marketing tool. Social media, platform types, and brands in social media will be presented in this chapter. This thesis is based on theories of previous studies. Hierarchy of effects (HOE) will be explained in this study which is created by Robert J Lavidge and Gary A Steiner in 1961, it suggests six steps to consumer buying behavior. Also, the different levels of brand awareness which based on Aaker (1991) will be explained in this chapter. It will also explain how the consumer can co-create of the brand, as well as word of mouth (WOM) marketing, and WOM through social media. The structural model was built, with Six hypotheses, all of them will be explained in this chapter.

2.1 Introduction

Traditional marketing views consumers as rational and makes decisions based on functional features and benefits (Schmitt, B., 1999). Traditional marketing is any type of promotion or campaign used by companies for years ago, different forms of traditional marketing it can be one or more of these forms: face-to-face meetings, telemarketing, mail marketing, print marketing (newsletters, billboards, flyers and newspaper print ads), broadcast marketing, guest posting, and radio spots advertising a business (YEC, 2018; Smallbusiness.chron.com, 2018). There are many benefits and advantages of traditional marketing, including: it can easily reach the target local audience by radio or mailbox, for example, the consumer can keep advertising material and read the ad many times (Digital Doughtnut, 2018).

Marketing through social media platforms, snooping and harassment is less than traditional marketing because consumers have the ability to control the amount and quality of content they get (Hutter et al., 2013). When the consumer in the car on the road he will see a lot of ads, these ads may be annoying him, but he cannot remove

them from his eyes or keep his eyes away from them easily. One of the most important advantages of marketing through social networking sites is that there are many opportunities for interaction and content customization (Wind and Rangaswamy, 2001). Many consumers have become indifferent to traditional marketing, and many of them compare the products they see online with those offline to get the best product which meets the needs for them (Island, n.d.). The purpose of websites is varied, the consumer browses the Internet for fun, to read information or watch and buy products (Wang and Fesenmaier, 2004). In the online community, the collection of recommendations, comments, and opinions is constantly increasing(Baird and Parasnis, 2011). Brands can reach consumers in different ways, and by using social networking sites, the brand can make the communication to be more strong and stay in touch with consumers (Economics and Marketing, 2012). Social media combines of technology and social interaction, which allows the brand to communicate and interact with consumers, also helps to make the consumer contribute to shaping the brand image (Stern 2010; Island, n.d.). Not every brand active on social networking sites, and building a community in social media is important and interesting to brands, it is very useful for some business sectors to be active in social media and communicate with their customers (Economics and Marketing, 2012).

The first chapter will begin with introduces social media and social media platforms, purchase intention and the decision-making process, and brand awareness. How social media can be effect to brand awareness, purchase intention, and word-of-mouth. The role of brand awareness in the purchase intention, and how word-of-mouth effect to purchase intention will also be discussed in this chapter. All hypotheses will be presented in this section.

2.2 Social Media

Haenlein & Kaplan (2010:61), define social media as: "Social Media is a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content."

From this definition It can be understood the difference between the content of social media sites and the other of the contents in the internet, in social media platform users can create and consume the content, a lot of people connect to internet and communicate with friends, family, and companies, it does not require an expensive equipment, just a connection to the Internet and a device to connect such as a smartphone, laptop, tablet or personal computer (Hellberg, 2015).

A recent study by Global Web Index (WeAreSocial 2018a) says that more than half of the world's population now connect to internet, statistics say that the numbers of global internet users in 2017 are 3.819 billion, with more than 3.028 billion global active social media users, the number of users increases day by day, the rate of change continued to accelerate. These statistics show us the great importance of social media in our daily lives, so the opportunity is increasing for companies to show up their brands (Hellberg, 2015).

The revolution of social media greatly influenced in marketing, this encourage brands to take a place on social media platforms, with an indirect way some of social media users transformed to be marketers, because of the ability of engaging and interacting with account of brand in social media sites, (Hutter et al., 2013). Traditional marketing is one-way communication but it is transformed now into two-way communication (Berthon et al., 2008).

Social media platforms play a good role in consumer decision-making because many consumers see other consumer reviews and read their comments on social media brand page (Hutter et al., 2013).

2.2.1 Social media platforms

Different categories can be described in social media, it can be categorized into five main categories as follows:

1) Blogs is an online personal page or firm that can contain images, videos, and links, 2) Social network is a place where people can meet and interact each other online, share common things, and can build their personal pages, 3) Content

communities is where the person's multimedia materials can be placed and shared with others, 4) Forums, 5) Content aggregators (Constantinides and Fountain, 2008).

Brand behavior and the way of interacting with its consumers through social media varies according to the social media platform itself, each kind of social media platform almost different from other (Hellberg, 2015).

Two different social media platforms have mentioned by Mangold and Faulds (2009) that is social network sites and creativity works sharing sites. Social network sites is a web-based services which allow users to create a profile, view a list of other users, and view and move contact lists (Boyd and Ellison, 2008). Social networking sites are useful to consumers, businesses, so it can create a brand community and brand page (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001; Kozinets, 2002).

Creativity works sharing sites is a web-based services that allowed users to post a content or interact with it, the content can be video, images or texts, it can be access to this content from any user who has an Internet connection (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

In this study it has been preferred to select two platforms from the social media platforms, they are widely used, these platforms are Facebook and Instagram.

2.2.1.1 Instagram

It is a free sharing of visual social media content, that allows adding filters to photos or videos before publishing it. Content appears for who following the poster, every post can contain tags users, put a location of the post, and write a caption for the post that could be included hashtags and mentions (SimplyMeasured 2015; Walter & Giolgio 2014).

The basic concept of Instagram is sharing photos and video, in a simple way it is sharing of visual content with friends and followers (Hellberg, 2015).

Statistic says that the monthly active user in Instagram had reached to 1 billion active users in 2018 (billions, 2018). There is no higher number than Facebook and YouTube (Hootsuite Social Media Management, 2018).

2.2.1.2 Facebook

Facebook is a social networking website which allows users to share photos and content, post comments, publish news, play games, chat, stream videos, and follow friends' news feed (Nations, 2018). Facebook makes connecting with friends and family easier. Facebook was created in 2004. In 2006, anyone could be joined to Facebook when he over 13 years old with a valid email. Facebook is the largest social network around the world (GCFGlobal.org, 2018). Facebook has 2 billion daily active users, in figure 1 shows that the increase of a monthly average of active users during the years 2004 through 2017 (Osman, 2018; Newsroom.fb.com, 2018).

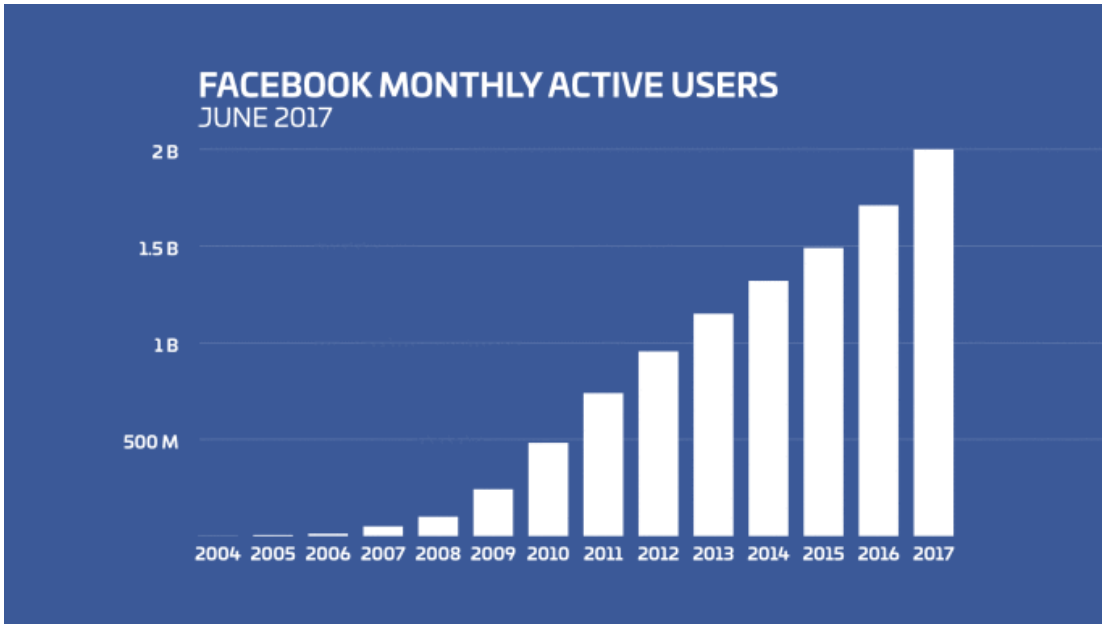

Figure 1: Facebook monthly active users

There are tools in Facebook that can determine who can view user postings, which is one of a privacy option (GCFGlobal.org, 2018). Companies also can create their own account to connect with consumers and stay in touch with them, by this page it can it can make a community building (Templeman, 2018).

2.2.2 Brand in social media

Brand should develop its page on social media platform, in order to encourage consumers to interact with the brand in a positive way, this happens when brand understand its customers and knows them well (Woodcock, Green, and Starkey,

2011). Social media platforms can be used for different purposes, the brand can use social media to market their products or services, to communicate with customers and give them the latest brand news. The brand should choose the right social media platform, depending on the nature of its business and the nature of its audience (Jackson, 2018).

Consumer could trust in a brand name which is one of the reasons that encourage consumers to buy from one brand instead of another, when the brand uses social media platforms to communicate with customers and exchange ideas with them, thus becoming a two-way relationship, this creates consumer trust towards the brand (Neil Patel, 2018). Statistics says that about 92 percent of North American marketers use social networking sites as part of marketing tactics (Statista, 2018). It is easy to communicate with audience via social media sites, direct messages to them, and make them express their opinions about their products.

2.3 Purchase Intention

Purchase Intention is the mental stage that makes the consumer think about preparing to actually buy a product or a specific brand (Wells et al., 2011; Dodds et al., 1991). Making a consumer think or planning to buy a product is the most important goal of marketing communications (Hutter et al., 2013). The previous memories, and experiences that in the mind of the consumer drive consumers to purchase products or services (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). By studying intentions, consumer behavior can be further understood, the study of intentions one of the most common methods of marketers (Blackwell, Miniard, & Engel, 2006; Ghalandari & Norouzi, 2012). There is a strong relationship between consumer behavior and intention, and that intention purchase can be an alternative to measuring consumer behavior (Haque et al., 2015).

Consumers do a purchase in countless times, consumers have to make a purchase decision with this overload of information that flowing to him in everyday life (Hutter et al., 2013). consumer develop certain habits and rules that can help him to deal with this overloaded information which can help him to make a decision (Jacoby, 1984; Hutter et al., 2013).

(Hutter et al., 2013). The brand is a collection of experiences, satisfaction, and knowledge, all accumulated over time, the brand have a number of attributes that distinguish them from the rest of competitors, all of that helps the consumer in decisions making (Kapferer, 2008).

2.4 Hierarchy of Effects Theory

Hierarchy of effects (HOE) composed of different stages namely awareness, knowledge, liking, preference, conviction and purchase, HOE was created in 1961 by Robert J Lavidge and Gary A Steiner, the job of marketer is to encourage consumer to pass through these six stages and finally make the purchase (see Table 1) (Learnmarketing.net, 2018). This model will be discussed to see the role of social media that played in all of these stages of the model.

Table 1: Hierarchy of effects (HOE) model

Consumer Behaviour	Hierarchy of Effects Theory	Marketing Objectives
Cognitive (To think, to understand and remember)	1- Awareness	Make the customer aware.
	2- Knowledge	Make information about the product easy to find.
Affective (To feel, to experience)	3- Liking	Ensure that the customer likes your product, if not, understand why and fix the problem.
	4- Preference	Make consumers focus on the product.
Conative (Behave/Action)	5- Conviction	Create the desire to purchase.
	6- Purchase	Make the customer purchase.

The consumer firstly begins with awareness of the product and then has knowledge about it, later, develop a positive or negative feelings to the product, finally make a decision purchase or rejecting product (Kotler and Bliemel, 1999).

The first and second stage called cognitive (thinking), the consumer must be aware of the brand and have sufficient knowledge of the product, this can be achieved through successful advertising plan, the role of social media platform here is to reach

customers and deliver a clear message to consumer about the brand or product, marketer may should give the consumer sufficient information about the product and that can be useful in comparing process.

The third, and the fourth stage called effective (feeling), liking stage focuses mainly on the liking of the brand or product for the consumers, also make sure that the customer love this product, and encourage the customer to love the product (Learnmarketing.net, 2018). The degree of love or liking can be measured through watch the number of LIKE at brand posts in social media or by seeing the number of followers. In preference stage consumers may want to try other products or brands, the role of the marketer is to try to make the consumer stay away from competitor brands (Learnmarketing.net, 2018). Communicating directly with the customer in social media platform, by focusing on product features or by answering consumer questions, increases the opportunity to keep competitors away from consumers.

Finally, the fifth and sixth stage called conviction (behavior), conviction is all about makes the consumer satisfied enough to buy the product, and make the consumer clearly intend to purchase intention, To increase consumer conviction, marketers resort to making the consumer to try the product, for example, test drive sessions or offering a free sample of a food product (Learnmarketing.net, 2018; Blog.essaycorp.com, 2018).

2.5 Consumer Decision-Making Process

The previous popular hierarchy models are shown in Table 2 (Barry and Howard, 1990). The consumer decision-making process consists of five steps, first step is to identify your goal or need recognition, it means knowing the problem and how to solve it, the second step is to gather or search information, consumers have to gather and look for all the information that meet their needs, search engines help consumers to get information, friends, family, and community play a strong role in gathering information (Stankevich, 2017; Professional Academy, 2018). Social networking also plays a role today, consumers also can access to YouTube and get information and experiences from users, all of the information that collected from different resources affects in the consumer decision making (Jensen, 2018). The third step is Evaluating Alternatives, after collecting the information, the consumer now knows the kind of product that meets his desire, the consumer will search for the best deal

based on price, quality or other factors, friends, family, and community play a strong role in consumer decision. Social networking also plays a role in evaluating products by reading opinions and experiences of other users (Nyagucha, 2017).

The fourth step is Purchase Decision, it is one of the most important steps, this step comes after collecting all the information related to products that meet his needs, and now he is ready to buy, fifth Step is Post-Purchase Evaluation it comes after purchasing, which is an important step and plays a role in developing decision-making skills. It may also help others to make a decision, also consumer may share his personal experience in social media platforms and it plays a role in influencing consumers behavior (Gray, 2018).

Table 2: A summary of popular hierarchy models.

Year		Model	Developer
1898	AID	Attention, Interest, Desir	E. 8t Elmo Lewis
1900	AIDA	Attention, Interest, Desire, Action	E. 8t Elmo Lewis
1910	AICA	Attention, Interest, Conviction, Action	Printers Ink Editoria
1911	AIDAS	Attention, Interest, Desire, Action, Satisfaction	Arthur F. Sheldo
1915	AICCA	Attention, Interest, Confidence, Convicti9n, Action	Samuel R. Hall
1921	AIDCA	Attention, Interest, Desire, Caution, Action	Robert E. Ramsa
1921	AIDCA	Attention, Interest, Desire, Conviction, Action	Harry D. Kitson
1922	AIJA	Attention, Interest, Judgement, Action	Alexander Osborn
1940	AIDCA	Attention, Interest, Desire, Conviction, Action	Clyde Bedel
1956	AIDMA	Attention, Interest, Desire, Memory, Action	Merrill Devo

2.5.1 Role of social media in consumer decision-making

The process consists of five steps, the first step is Identify the goal or need recognition, it means knowing the problem and how to solve it (see Figure 2) (Gray, 2018). Social Media platforms play a good role in introducing consumers to new inventions or to new needs, creating awareness through promotion (Jensen, 2018).

Figure 2: consumer decision-making

The second step is to gather information or search for information, consumers have to gather and look for all information that meets their needs, search engines help consumers to get information, friends, family, and community play a strong role in gathering information (Gray, 2018). Social media also plays a role today in gathering information, consumers can access YouTube, Facebook, Instagram...etc. To get information and experiences from users, all of the information that collected from different resources affects in the consumer decision making. Some consumers prefer to access social media brand page to get the information about the product (Jensen, 2018).

The third step is evaluating alternatives, after collecting the information, the consumer now knows the kind of product whether or not meets his desire. The consumer will search for the best deal based on price, quality or other factors, friends, family, and community also play a strong role in consumer decision (Gray, 2018). Social media in this step also plays a role in evaluating products by reading the opinions and experiences of other users. Also brands can use a social media platform to keeping their products in the top of consumer mind, associate the relevant benefits to the product, and engaging with the consumers (Jensen, 2018).

The fourth step is purchase decision, it is one of the most important steps, this step comes after collecting all the information related to products that meet his needs, and now he is ready to buy. Social media platforms play a great role in the purchase process, for example, a call to action button, or by placing exclusive coupons for who is coming from the brand page in social media (Jensen, 2018).

The fifth Step is post-purchase evaluation it comes after purchasing, which is an important step and plays a role in developing decision-making skills. It may also help others to make a decision, also consumer may share his personal experience in social media platforms and it plays a role in influencing consumers behavior (Gray, 2018; Process, 2018). Consumer after purchasing the product and feels comfortable with it, he may go and tell others in social media about his own experience, and this motivates others to buy this product.

Brand account commitment (BAC) refers to the psychological involvement of the consumer with the activities of the brand in its social media account (Hutter et al., 2013). The main objective of marketing communication is to encourage consumers to purchase. The brand account in social media should have a positive influence on consumers and encourage them to purchase (Kapferer, 2008). Hence, this hypothesis was formulated:

H1: Brand Account Commitment have a positive effect on the Purchase Intention.

2.6 Definition of a Brand

Basically and simply It is a product or service distinction from other competitors, In this way, it can be identified and distinguish a product or service from other products or services in the market (Sjöberg, Rosenbröijer, and Oy, 2017). According to (BusinessDictionary 2018) brand defines as “Unique design, sign, symbol, words, or a combination of these, employed in creating an image that identifies a product and differentiates it from its competitors.“

The brand can be distinguished from the eyes of the public, it is like the face of a company, the brand has a great value and is considered as an asset, also it is an

important element in valuing the company (Alhaddad 2015 p. 74). For instance, a brand can be described as the ability that the company can create a specific perception for its consumers, the consumer greatly influenced by personal experiences with products or services (Jeffery 2010 p. 53-54). Also, It can be expressed the consumer perception as a set of elements that interconnected in consumer's brain, which together form the image of the brand (Kapferer 2008 p.10).

World became more crowded with competitors, it is necessary to create a competitive advantage that made the company different from others, will survive who has a strong and clear competitive advantage, for example very low price or very high quality, a brand can gain an audience through paid marketing procedures (Sjöberg, Rosenbröijer, and Oy, 2017).

A good mental image of the brand can be created through brand interaction with its audience on social media platforms (Kapferer 2008 p. 2). Gardner (2018), states that brand can be earned a good reputation when the company working hard in building a good relationship with its audience. Hence, in a competitive marketplace, the high value of a brand can be created through a brand relationship with the consumer (Sjöberg, Rosenbröijer and Oy, 2017). Using social media can create an effective communication between the brand and the users of social media. In social networking sites, the brand can communicate with customers, and customers can communicate with each other, all of that can contribute greatly to brand building.

2.6.1 What is brand awareness?

Awareness refers to the knowledge that the product or services exist, a person can consciously distinguish something through his previous experience and information (Cambridge University Press 2018). Expressing the audience's knowledge of a particular product, brand, or firm, when launching a new product to the marketplace, creating awareness is the most important goal of marketing campaigns, and is a measure how well known a company or product (BusinessDictionary.com, 2018). Brand awareness, therefore, is the ability to make a specific audience distinguish a specific product under different conditions, also it is a process of linking brand

elements such as logo, slogan, and name with the product category (Sjöberg, Rosenbröijer and Oy, 2017).

Therefore brand awareness is the extent of the customer knows the brand, and how well he aware of it, which makes the decision-making process easier (Sjöberg, Rosenbröijer, and Oy, 2017).
People tend to buy brands that already know. Brand awareness is also related to the power of consumer memory about the brand, making the consumer remember the brand in different situations, and the consumer's mind linked to a memory node with the product category (Sjöberg, Rosenbröijer and Oy, 2017). When a consumer becomes aware of the brand name, it is easy to memorize it, marketers have to know how to make a brand name immediately comes to consumer mind when he thinking in a product category.

Brand awareness cannot make a customer buy products directly. For most customers, other considerations affect the purchase of products, such as meaning or brand image, on purchase decisions as well (Keller 2008 p. 373).

In purchase process the search times will be less when the customer is aware of the brand, the marketer may have to make the customer trust to product, Consumers may consume less time in purchasing process when the brand becomes more popular and top of minds, as this also depends on consumer confidence in the brand (Keller 1993 p. 8-9). Different levels of brand awareness can be identified. These levels are presented in figure 3.

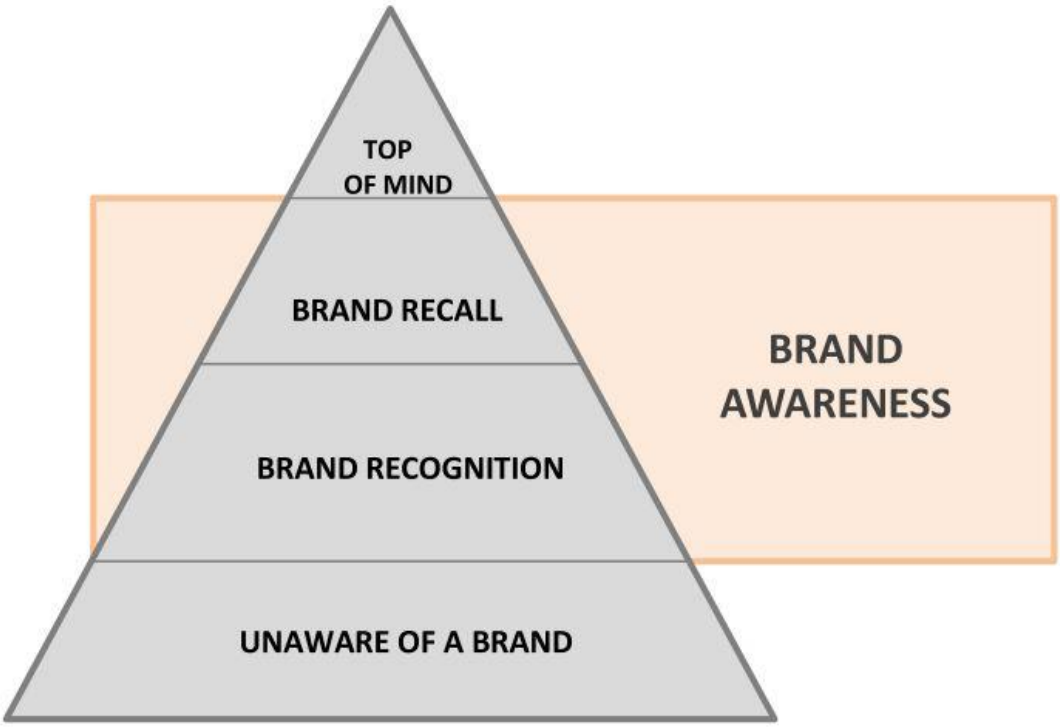

Figure 3: Different levels of Brand Awareness (based on Aaker 1991, 62)

2.6.1.1 Brand recognition

Brand Recognition also can be named as an aided recall. Refers to the consumer's ability to recognize the brand when giving it a cue, emphasizing that the consumer has been exposed to the brand before, in other words, consumers can discriminate in different situations, that the brand has been seen or heard before in the past (Sjöberg, Rosenbröijer and Oy, 2017; Aaker, 1999). Brand recognition so important in the store when a consumer wants to make a purchase decision (Aaker, 1999). When a consumer walks inside the store and sees many kinds of brands, it will be remembered the brands and distinguished them from other brands, and the opportunity to buy products that the consumer knows more than products he does not know before.

Brand Recognition, it is not necessary to remember the brand name, the consumer can only remember what the brand's needs are, how it differs from other brands, and the brand's association with the product category (Keller 1993 p. 3; Keller 2008 p. 374-375; Aaker 1996 p. 10).

Brand recognition can be measured by aided recall test, testing customer memories by making the consumer hear or see advertising material related to the brand, and

then ask the consumer whether anything has been seen or heard about this brand before (BusinessDictionary.com, 2018).

One of the ways that consumers remember the brand is to make them exposed to the brand, and this is can be achieved through e-mail, blogging, or social media, small and large businesses can also use social media to make their names and products or services stay in consumer's mind (Investopedia, LLC 2018).

2.6.1.2 Brand recall

Refers to the ability of the consumer to name the particular brand from the memory when given them a product category or can call back the brand name when a consumer reminder needs or similar signs such as the logo (Liu et al., 2010; Aaker, 1999; Keller 1993 p. 3). Brand recall, also can named as unaided recall or spontaneous recall (Keller 1993 p. 3; Sjöberg, Rosenbröijer and Oy, 2017).

It easily to recall the brand from memory, and is invoked on unaided recall, brand recall more difficult than brand recognition (Aaker, 1999). The task of the marketer is to make the consumer remember the brand name before entering the store, and make a purchase decision outside the point of sale. The idea is to make consumers store a range of emotions, information and past experiences about the brand, which will help to make the purchase decision (Wijaya 2012 p. 80).

Brand recall more difficult than brand recognition because brand recall requires recalling more details from memory while brand recognition it just remembering the brand (Sjöberg, Rosenbröijer, and Oy, 2017). Brand recall more deeper level in brand awareness than brand recognition. With unaided recall test, it can be measured the level of brand recall, it is a test of how effective advertisements are, and how much brand knowledge, using a limited number of cues, brand recall also plays a role in products that are frequently purchase (Sjöberg, Rosenbröijer, and Oy, 2017). Top of mind awareness the highest level in brand awareness (Aaker 1991 p. 62).

When a brand has a page on Facebook or an account in Instagram, the brand can puts products, latest news, and communicates continuously with its audience, it makes them remember the brand, so Social media plays an great role in brand awareness. Also, when the brand name sticks in consumers' minds, it increases the purchase intention. From these ideas these two hypotheses were drawn as following:

H2: Brand Account Commitment have a positive effect on the Brand Awareness.

H3: Brand Awareness have a positive effect on the Purchase Intention.

2.7 Consumers as Co-Creators of Brands

During the nineteenth century the focus was great on the production of tangibles products, and over time the focus changed to intangible assets, such as skills, information, and knowledge, also the orientation became to the consumer rather than the product, intangible resources are dynamic and continuous (Vargo and Lusch, 2004).

Human nature loves social ties and social relationships, this encourages a consumer to interact with brands and interact with all who around brands (Fuller et al., 2012). A brand is a social nature, and the community play a great role in building the value of the brand, this makes us think that the consumer play clearly role in shaping the value of the brand, consumer has become aware of what is happening around him, especially communication and media technologies, now he can use these tools to be a creative creator (Fuller et al., 2012; Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001).

Brand value is, therefore "also co-created through network relationships and social interactions among the ecosystem of all the stakeholders", the new logic of brand value requires understanding of collective insights and takes in consideration stakeholders, further building a strong customer relationship network increases the chance for the customer to co-create brand value, thus giving benefit to the firm, firms can try to encourage consumers to become a brand value co-creation (Merz et al., 2009). It is important to know that one of the firms' activities is to helping customer to co-creating brand value, consumer can also contribute to the develop the business model of services or goods, furthermore, firms may have to move from focusing on production and products to focus on consumer, also encourage customer to co-creating brand value (Pop, 2018).

Brand communities affect four components of the brand that is: perceived quality, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and brand associations (Olsen 1993; Sherry 1998; Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). Furthermore, relationship marketing can develop from

the brand community, relationship marketing focusing on attracting with customers in the long-term instead of focusing on short-term, and building strong channels of communication with them (Berry 1995; Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001).

Companies need to be broad-minded, that can get a benefit from the company's followers who are not buyers, those followers can encourage them to co-creating a brand value (Merz et al., 2009). The role of the consumer not only buy products, the process does not end with the purchase and consuming the product, now he began to express his experience of use and tell others about his opinion (Pop, 2018; Fuller et al., 2012). It can be called as word-of-mouth marketing.

Nature of social media helped consumers to interact directly with brand, also social media platforms have made strong links between consumers and brand on one hand, and between consumers and other customers on another hand, as a result of this, the control of brand is divided between company and consumers (Fuller et al., 2012; Constantinides and Fountain, 2008). When social media platforms give a power to consumers to co-create brand value, this means that brand managers must be aware of the opportunities and challenges, day by day the importance of social media is growing up, challenges and opportunities of brand marketing increases as well (Hutter et al., 2013).

2.8 Word of Mouth

The nature of the consumer makes him talk to others about his experience with a product or service (Kozinets et al., 2010). Word of mouth (WOM) refers to the communication between consumers, to transferring the experience and knowledge (positive or negative) about the product or brand (Arndt, 1967; Goyette et al., 2010). When a consumer feels his need for a product or service, he begins to search for information relevant to that need and how it can be met (Darban and Li, 2012). In order to find information related to the product or service, there are two sources of information, the first one is internal, which is the information that the consumer himself knows as a result of previous experience or information. The second one is external, which comes from searching on the internet or visiting stores or word of mouth (Kardes, Cronley and Cline, 2011; Darban and Li, 2012).

Social media provide information related to products or services by looking at the real experiences of other customers, this information that comes from consumers called word of mouth (Foux 2006). In a social media environment, individuals can share their knowledge and experience with each other, and this interaction has an impact on consumer behavior, internet, and social media contribute to making a purchase decision, and the Internet is a simple tool to search for information (Darban and Li, 2012). Word of mouth on social media offers a great power of information for the new marketing, where consumer experiences move to social networking sites so that this information is useful to others and influential in decision-making (Nail & Jim, 2005). Marketers want to advertise their products or services, in order to create a good relationship with customers and make word of mouth marketing in social media (Dehghani, 2013). Word of mouth is the most effective marketing methods because it is sustainable (Misner, Ivan R., 1999). Marketers pay an attention to the study of word of mouth marketing, for deeper understanding, therefore the effective use of this method, because the usual forms may be less effective (Nail 2005). Brands may have to motivate consumers to contribute to building the brand image, motivate them to talk positively about the brand, and pass their positive experiences to other customers. The nature of social media helps brands to create a page or an account in social media to interact with their customer, and these pages or account helps to activate the word of mouth marketing when the consumer interacts with the page and tell others about his experiences.

The level of commitment to the brand in social networking sites, such as the brand page on Facebook or the Instagram, as well as brand awareness, are indicators of positive of WOM, this means that the consumers who follow the brand in social networking sites are motivated to speak positively about the brand (Hutter et al., 2013). Therefore, it can be assumed in the following hypothesis:

H4: Brand Account Commitment have a positive effect on the Word-Of-Mouth.

The relationship between a brand and a consumer has become a two-way relationship rather than a one-way relationship, so marketers have become interested in consumer opinion (Sjöberg, Rosenbröijer and Oy, 2017). When a consumer has a loyalty to a

product or brand, he wants to talk about the brand positively, and thus turns him to as an ambassador to the brand, and starts to persuade others to buy the product (Hutter *et al.*, 2013).

It is important that the consumer sufficiently aware of the brand, so the consumer can talk about the brand better. When a brand name stuck in the consumer's mind and is sufficiently aware of the brand, it makes the consumer think and talk to others about the brand (Hutter et al., 2013). It can be argued this hypothesis:

H5: Brand Awareness have a positive effect on the Word-Of-Mouth.

WOM is one of sources of information that is useful in purchasing decision making because it is the result of an experience about product performance (Mooradian et al., 2012; Brown et al., 2007). Therefore, WOM is more effective source of information than other marketing communication channels (Kozinets et al., 2010). Therefore, the following hypothesis was developed:

H6: Word-Of-Mouth have a positive effect on the Purchase Intention.

2.9. Structural Model

From the theoretical study It can be concluded six hypotheses see Figure 4 which is:
H1: Brand Account Commitment have a positive effect on the Purchase Intention.
H2: Brand Account Commitment have a positive effect on the Brand Awareness.
H3: Brand Awareness have a positive effect on the Purchase Intention.
H4: Brand Account Commitment have a positive effect on the word-of-mouth
H5: Brand Awareness have a positive effect on the word-of-mouth
H6: Word-Of-Mouth have a positive effect on the Purchase Intentio

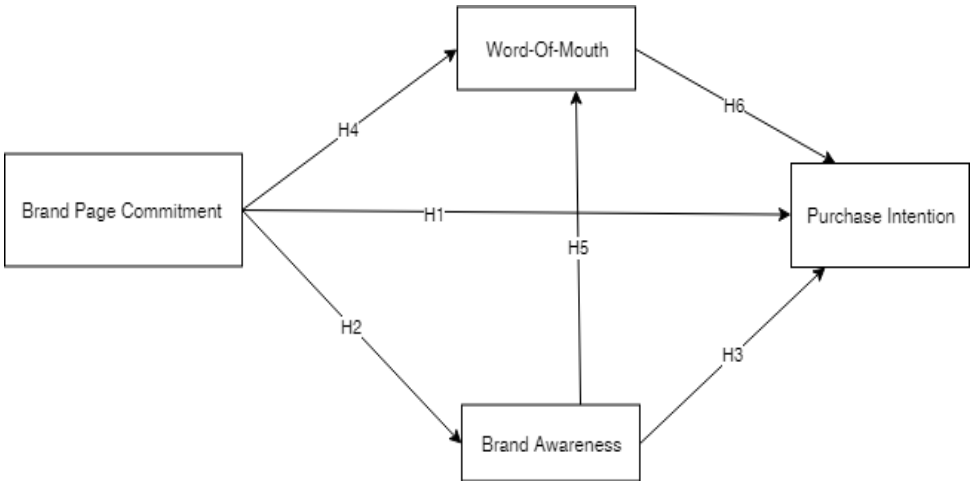

Figure 4: The research model

3. METHODOLOGY

The literature review chapter focused on the role of social media on brand awareness and purchase intention, and creating links between them. In this research, the quantitative research methodology was used to reach the goal of the research, the reasons to choose quantitative method were to describe the characteristics of a large number of society, there are no geographical boundaries, the Internet can be used, and several questions can be asked in one survey. The information was collected by an online questionnaire that published to target group who use social media sites and following the two brands which selected.

In the first section, I will talk about the collection of data and the target group, and the second section will be on the questionnaire.

3.1. Selection of Social Media Platforms

Social media are made up of alot of different social media platforms, and it is not impossible to achieve all of them (Sjöberg, Rosenbröijer, and Oy, 2017).

It has been used two platforms were easy to access to followers to send private messages and asking them to answer the questionnaire.

Facebook users in the Gulf region (United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman and Kuwait) have more than 35 million users in 2017 (Internet World Stats.com, 2018). And the number of Instagram users is around 23 million in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in 2018 (Globalmediainsight.com, 2018; Blogger, 2018).

It can be browsed both Facebook and Instagram account for brand A and brand B without having to register or sign in to Facebook or Instagram.

3.2. Brands and Industry Selection

It is not possible to cover all types of business sectors, one business sector was selected, which is retail coffee and snacks store industry, the reason is that there is

not much research in this sector that covers the impact of social networking sites in brand awareness and purchase intention. The other reason is that some business sectors have more interaction than other sectors in social networking sites.

Two brands were selected for research, the first one (Brand A) is a global brand that distributed in almost all countries of the world and has more than 27 thousand branches around the world, including the Gulf region. The second one (Brand B) is a brand located in the Gulf region with 60 branches. Both of them have accounts in the Facebook and Instagram platform, and their accounts are active and interact continuously with followers.

3.3. Data Collection and Group Target

The questionnaire collected with an online questionnaire. It is easy to create and spread an online questionnaire, also the result can be handled more easily. The questionnaire included two parts and totally 16 questions. The questionnaire designed in the Arabic language, because the target population is from the Gulf region (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates) and speak Arabic.

When they view the questionnaire in their own language, it is easy to answer and does not take a long time. Two different surveys were designed, one for brand A, and one for brand B, it was sent messages to followers of the brand A and also to brand B for their followers in social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram), It was sent almost 1,000 as a personal messages for both brand A and brand B. The number of responses was 200 responses from the brand A, and 91 responses from the brand B.

The basic condition for accepting responses was that he lived in the Gulf region, spoke Arabic, also had at least one social networking account (Facebook or Instagram), and follow brand A or brand B in social media.
There was no rejection of any response based on gender, age, educational attainment, or annual income.

3.4. The Questionnaire

The questionnaire was created to achieve the main goal of this study. With an online questionnaire, it is easy to reach respondents with no geographical boundaries and It is also low cost. Google Forms was used to collect the result of the questionnaire.
Two different questionnaires were created, the difference was just in brand name (Brand A, Brand B), So that the results of the questionnaire for Brand A does not overlap with the results of the Brand B also to keep the questionnaire short and easy to respond. The questionnaire consists of two main sections, the first one is the demographic questions, the second one is about brand account commitment, brand awareness, word of mouth, purchase intention. Personal messages were sent out to Brand A and Brand B followers in social media (Facebook, Instagram). The demographic part contained questions about gender, age, education, questions on how often respondents sitting in coffee shop, how often respondents using or checking your account in social media (Facebook or Instagram)?.

The second part included questions about the brand account commitment, brand awareness, word of mouth, purchase intention regarding Brand A or Brand B. This section was based on a five-point Likert-scale, 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree). The different statements in the survey for this part can be found in Table 3. The statements are taken from studies and articles of Hutter, K. et al. (2013), Yoo, B., Donthu, N. and Lee, S. (2000), Villarejo-Ramos, A. F. and Sánchez-Franco, M. J. (2005), with small changing in some statements. The value indicates the level of brand account commitment, brand awareness, word of mouth, purchase intention.

A five-point Likert-scale was chosen to reduce options for the participant. The options for respondents to choose is: totally disagree, disagree, neither agree or disagree, agree, totally agree. The different statements and scales are presented in Table 3 which used for the questionnaire.

Table 3: Statements and scales of variables for part II

Statement	Scale
Brand account commitment	
[BAC1] I feel as a part of the [brand]-Instagram or Facebook Community	1= Totally disagree, 5= Totally agree
[BAC2] I participate in activities on [brand] Instagram or Facebook posts very often	1= Totally disagree, 5= Totally agree
[BAC3] I miss something if I do not see [brand] Instagram or Facebook posts regularly	1= Totally disagree, 5= Totally agree
Brand awareness	
[BA1] I can recognize this [brand] quickly among other competing brands	1= Totally disagree, 5= Totally agree
[BA2] Several characteristics of [brand] instantly come to my mind	1= Totally disagree, 5= Totally agree
[BA3] I can quickly remember the symbol or logo of [brand]	1= Totally disagree, 5= Totally agree
Word of mouth	
[WOM1] I talk very positive about [brand]	1= Totally disagree, 5= Totally agree
[WOM2] I recommend [brand] to my friends and relatives	1= Totally disagree, 5= Totally agree
[WOM3] It is fun for me to inspire others about [brand]	1= Totally disagree, 5= Totally agree
Purchase intention	
[PI1] I'm excited to go to [brand] when I see posts of [brand]	1= Totally disagree, 5= Totally agree
[PI2] When I plan to meet my friends, I'm think to sitting at [brand]	1= Totally disagree, 5= Totally agree

3.5 Structural Equation Modeling

SEM, is a statistical modeling technique, can be used in the behavioral sciences, It is likely a collection of regression or path analysis and factor analysis (Livote, 2009). Structural equation modeling is a measurement model for the endogenous variables and exogenous variables, and a structural model, all of them are measured at one time (Golob, 2003). A statistical modeling tool to test hypotheses related to the relationships between observed variables and latent variables (Hoyle, 1995). Path analysis invented by Sewall Wright, which become a basic root for structural equation modeling (Wright, 1921).

Path diagram made up of squares and circles which can connect them by arrows. In SEM the theoretical constructs can be represented, by latent factors it can be represented that. Also, it can be represented the relations between theoretical concepts by regression or path coefficients. Bollen (1989) proposed three primary analytical for SEM: path analysis, latent variable modeling, and general covariance estimation methods. Many of the traditional multivariate procedures provided by structural equation modeling which appropriate framework for statistical analysis, for example, factor analysis, regression analysis, discriminant analysis, canonical correlation (Livote, 2009). SEM can be represented in a set of matrix equations, also it can be visualized as a graphical path diagram.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) deals with measurement model, CFA is a type of structural equation modeling, All CFA models contain all or one of the parameters of factor loadings, unique variances, and factor variances (Moore, 2014). One of the purposes of CFA is to psychometric evaluation, construct validity and the evaluation of measurement. it is also used to examine the estimation of scale reliability. Factor loadings are the indicators from the factor. Through confirmatory factor analysis, it can be evaluate the validity of the convergent and discrimination. The propose of convergent validity is to measure the correlation between indicators for the same construct. Discriminant validity referring to the level of difference between constructs.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSES

4.1 Demographic Statistics of The Respondents

The first part of the questionnaire was about demography. The questionnaire was available for two months. The questions were about sex, age, education, and how many times using/checking Facebook or Instagram. Messages were sent to people who followed one of the two brands as a personal message via Facebook and Instagram. After these two months, 291 responses were collected, 200 responses answered the brand A survey and 91 responses answered the brand B survey, as shown in Table 4. Incomplete questionnaires have been deleted.

Table 4: Demographical statistics for brands respondents

	N	%
Brand A	200	68.7
Brand B	91	31.3
Total	291	100

The sample consists of 81.4% women and 18.6% men. The demographics of respondents' gender for two brand A, B are stated in Table 5.

Table 5: Demographical statistics for gender

Gender	**BOTH**		**Brand A**		**Brand B**	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	54	18.6	23	11.5	31	34.1
Female	237	81.4	177	88.5	60	65.9
Total	**291**	**100**	**200**	**100**	**91**	**100**

51.9% of all respondents' ages were between 18- 24, and 25.1% between 25-34, The demographics of respondents' age for two brand A, B are stated in Table 6.

Table 6: Demographical statistics for age group

Age Group	BOTH		Brand A		Brand B	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Under 18 years	19	6.5	14	7	5	5.5
18 to 24 years	151	**51.9**	126	63	25	27.5
25 to 34 years	73	25.1	49	24.5	24	26.4
35 to 44 years	32	11	7	3.5	25	27.5
45 to 54 years	11	3.8	2	1	9	9.9
55 to 64 years	5	1.7	2	1	3	3.3
Total	**291**	**100**	**200**	**100**	**91**	**100**

Most of the respondents have a bachelor's degree by 46.7%, The demographics of respondents' Education level for two brand A, B are stated in Table 7.

Table 7: Demographical statistics for Education level

Education level	BOTH		Brand A		Brand B	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
No schooling completed	6	2.1	3	1.5	3	3.3
Nursery school to 8th grade	32	11	27	13.5	5	5.5
High school graduate, diploma or the equivalent	98	**33.7**	73	36.5	25	27.5
Bachelor's degree	136	**46.7**	94	47	42	46.2
Master's degree	18	6.2	3	1.5	15	16.5
Doctorate degree	1	0.3	0	0	1	1.1
Total	**291**	**100**	**200**	**100**	**91**	**100**

Over 30 percent of the respondents checking Instagram or Facebook Hourly or more also over 40 percent of the respondents checking Instagram or Facebook Daily. The demographics of respondents' checking Instagram or Facebook for two brand A, B are stated in Table 8.

Table 8: Demographical statistics for Checking Instagram or Facebook

Checking Instagram or Facebook	BOTH		Brand A		Brand B	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Hourly or more	99	**34**	48	24	51	56
Daily	122	**41.9**	90	45	32	35.2
Monthly	39	13.4	31	15.5	8	8.8
Once for every two months	31	10.7	31	15.5	0	0
Total	**291**	**100**	**200**	**100**	**91**	**100**

4.2 Reliability and Validity

Before running structural equation modeling to test the hypothesis, Cronbach's alpha used to measure the internal reliability. Cronbach's alpha has been applied and is an appropriate indicator of independent and dependent variables using the SPSS 23.0 program. All questions were based on previous research studies in order to have a good Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha using to ensure internal consistency (Cronbach, 1970). It is a method of checking whether the elements measure the same variable. An alpha coefficient is between 0 and 1, and when it is greater than 0.70, the item will be reliable, although it may decrease to .60 (Hair et al., 2010).

The result of the Alpha coefficient test for items can be seen in Table 9, and all numbers are not less than 0.80, meaning that all variables are reliable and the result is very good (Janssen et al. 2008). Cronbach's alpha has been applied to four group of items, first one is BAC1, BAC2, BAC3, the second one is BA1, BA2, BA3 the third one is WOM1, WOM2, WOM3 and the last one is PI1, PI2. Also, all items were calculated together. In order to ensure that the reliability is so good, Cronbach's alpha was applied for three datasets once to brand A, once to brand B, and once to both brand A and B together.

Table 9: Cronbach's Alpha

Items	Cronbach's Alpha			N
	Both Brand	**Brand A**	**Brand B**	
BAC1, BAC2, BAC3	0.86	0.87	0.86	3
BA1, BA2, BA3	0.88	0.86	0.86	3
WOM1, WOM2, WOM3	0.93	0.92	0.94	3
PI1, PI2	0.83	0.84	0.81	2
ALL	0.93	0.93	0.94	11

It can be seen that in Table 9 that all the results are above 0.80. Therefore, the result is considered 'very good' (Janssen et al. 2008). No item has been deleted because all the results are very good. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was calculated in Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) Version 18.0 in order to establish confidence in the measurement. The psychometric properties shown in Table 10, all indicating to an appropriate structure. As it shown in the Table 10 all of factor loadings exceeded the required reliability of 0.70, it means that all factor loadings have a good factor loading as suggested (Hair et al., 2010).The measurement model is shown in Figure 5.

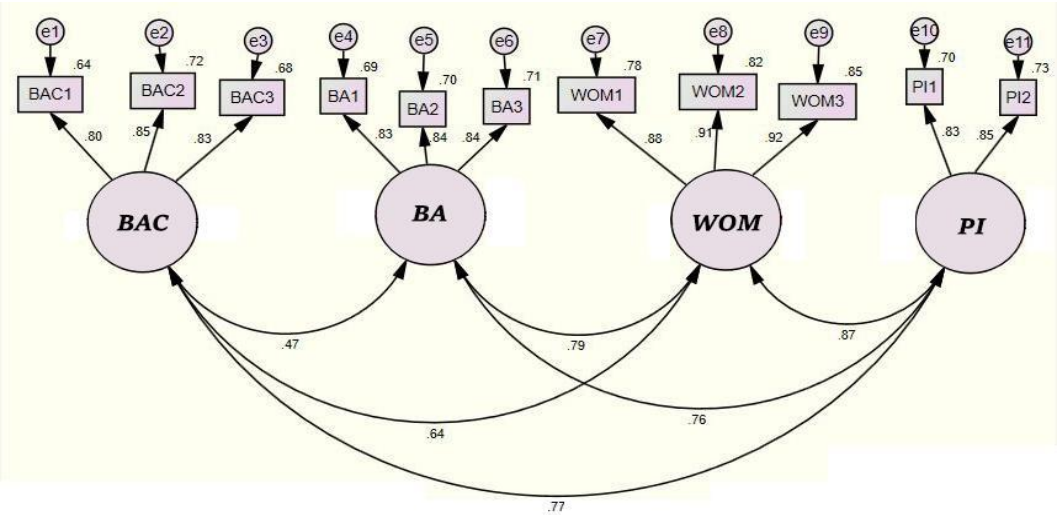

Figure 5: Measurement Model

To establish convergent validity, the following measures were used: composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), maximum shared squared variance (MSV) and average shared squared variance (ASV). The composite

reliability (CR) values ranged from 0.83 to 0.93,Which is higher than 0.70 which is the recommended number (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988). The AVE showed that the results higher than the recommended value of 0.50 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), which range from 0.68 to 0.81. All the CR values were greater than the AVE values.

The values of MSV and ASV were lower than the AVE values (Hair et al., 2010), with the exception of MSV of item PI which scored 0.75, It is slightly larger than the AVE of PI which is 0.71.

Table 10: Psychometric properties of the applied scales

Construct	Item	Loading	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV
(BAC) Brand Account Commitment			0.86	0.68	0.59	0.40
	[BAC1]	0.79				
	[BAC2]	0.85				
	[BAC3]	0.83				
(BA) Brand Awareness			0.87	0.7	0.62	0.47
	[BA1]	0.83				
	[BA2]	0.83				
	[BA3]	0.85				
(WOM) Word-Of-Mouth			0.93	0.82	0.75	0.59
	[WOM1]	0.89				
	[WOM2]	0.90				
	[WOM3]	0.92				
(PI) Purchase Intention			0.83	0.71	**0.75**	0.64
	[PI1]	0.83				
	[PI2]	0.85				

To evaluate the validity construct, multiple fit indices were examined: the ratio of chi-square to degrees of freedom (df)= 2.826, Comparative fit index (CFI)= 0.972,

Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)= 0.079, Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) = 0.959, Goodness of fit index (GFI)= 0.938, Normed fit index (NFI) = 0.957, Adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI)= 0.892. All values within the range of the acceptable values (Hair et al., 2010).

To evaluate the discriminant validity, the Fornell-Larcker-Ratio was calculated (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The average variance extracted (AVE), the correlation coefficients between the constructs, and the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE), all are summarized as in Table 11. Referring to Table 11, the discriminant validity was calculated by using Fornel and Larcker through comparing the square root of each AVE (in bold) with the correlation coefficients for each latent constructs (in the relevant rows and columns).

With the exception of WOM-PI construct. The difference is too small, which is 0.04, so it can be ignored (Rahim and Magner, 1995). Overall, discriminant validity can be accepted for this measurement model.

Table 11: The square root of AVE and correlations between constructs.

Latent constructs	**AVE**	**BAC**	**BA**	**WOM**	**PI**
BAC	0.68	**0.82**			
BA	0.70	0.47	**0.84**		
WOM	0.82	0.64	0.79	**0.91**	
PI	0.71	0.77	0.76	*0.87*	**0.84**

4.3 Variables

There are four main variables that are Brand Account Commitment (BAC), Brand Awareness (BA), Word of Mouth (WOM) and Purchase Intention (PI). Each variable consists of a set of questions, and the questions are consists of statements with a five-point Likert-scale. As mentioned before the number of the dataset is 291 for both brand A and brand B.

Brand account commitment (BAC)

It consists of three items, first item is: I feel as a part of the [brand] Instagram or Facebook Community (BAC1), the second item is: I participate in activities on [brand] Instagram or Facebook posts very often (BAC2), the third item is: I miss something if I do not see [brand] Instagram or Facebook posts regularly (BAC3). The mean of Brand account commitment test was 2.2875 with SD=0.99279.

The mean, SD, and the number with percent for all five-point Likert-scale for each BAC1, BAC2, and BAC3 mentions in Table 12.

Table 12: Mean, SD for BAC1 BAC2 BAC3 BAC for brand A and Brand B

Item	BAC1		BAC2		BAC3		BAC
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Strongly Disagree	87	29.9	85	29.2	114	39.2	
Disagree	69	23.7	58	19.9	84	28.9	
Neither	96	33	79	27.1	64	22	
Agree	31	10.7	59	20.3	23	7.9	
Strongly Agree	8	2.7	10	3.4	6	2.1	
	291	100	291	100	291	100	
Mean	2.33		2.488		2.05		**2.29**
Std. Deviation	1.09		1.20		1.05		**0.99**

Brand awareness (BA)

It consists of three items, first item is: I can recognize this [brand] quickly among other competing brands (BA1), the second item is: Several characteristics of [brand] instantly come to my mind (BA2), the third item is: I can quickly remember the symbol or logo of [brand] (BA3). The mean of Brand Awareness test was 3.1054 with SD=1.22942.

The mean, SD, and the number with percent for all five-point Likert-scale for each BA1, BA2, and BA3 mentions in Table 13.

Table 13: Mean, SD for BA1 BA2 BA3 BA for both brand A and Brand B

Item	BA1		BA2		BA3		BA
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Strongly Disagree	55	18.9	59	20.3	59	20.3	
Disagree	43	14.8	36	12.4	37	12.7	
Neither	55	18.9	75	25.8	48	16.5	
Agree	84	28.9	85	29.2	89	30.6	
Strongly Agree	54	18.6	36	12.4	58	19.9	
	291	100	291	100	291	100	
Mean	3.13		3.0103		3.1718		**3.10**
Std. Deviation	1.39		1.31		1.42		**1.23**

Word of mouth (WOM)

It consists of three items, first item is: I talk very positive about [brand] (WOM1), the second item is: I recommend [brand] to my friends and relatives (WOM2), the third item is: It is fun for me to inspire others about [brand] (WOM3). The mean of Word Of Mouth test was 2.89 with SD=1.10802.

The mean, SD, and the number with percent for all five-point Likert-scale for each WOM1, WOM2, and WOM3 mentions in Table 14.

Table 14: Mean, SD for WOM1 WOM2 WOM3 WOM for brand A and B

Item	WOM1		WOM2		WOM3		WOM
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Strongly Disagree	55	18.9	49	16.8	55	18.9	
Disagree	36	12.4	36	12.4	51	17.5	
Neither	108	37.1	98	33.7	105	36.1	
Agree	69	23.7	84	28.9	62	21.3	
Strongly Agree	23	7.9	24	8.2	18	6.2	
	291	100	291	100	291	100	
Mean	2.89		2.99		2.78		2.89
Std. Deviation	1.19		1.19		1.16		1.11

Purchase intention (PI)

It consists of two items, the first item is: I'm excited to go to [brand] when I see posts of [brand] (PI1), the second item is: When I plan to meet my friends, I'm think to sitting at [brand] (PI2). The mean of Purchase Intention test was 2.89 with SD=1.10802.

The mean, SD, and the number with percent for all five-point Likert-scale for each PI1, and PI2 mentions in Table 15.

Table 15: Mean, SD for PI1 PI2 PI for both brand A and B

Item	PI1		PI2		PI
	N	%	N	%	
Strongly Disagree	60	20.6	79	27.1	
Disagree	52	17.9	75	25.8	
Neither	78	26.8	75	25.8	
Agree	82	28.2	46	15.8	
Strongly Agree	19	6.5	16	5.5	
	291	100	291	100	
Mean	2.82		2.47		2.64
Std. Deviation	1.235		1.20		1.12

Three sets of data can be compared, the first dataset is brand A, the second one is brand B, the third dataset is both of brands. A comparative results of mean and SD between three sets of data mentioned in Table 16. It can be seen that the mean

between datasets mostly close to each other, the highest mean of BAC is in brand B, it means that the degree of brand account commitment of brand B more than brand A, but the mean of BA, WOM, and PI for brand A higher than brand B, it means that the degree of Brand awareness, Word of mouth and Purchase intention of brand A are more than brand B.

Table 16: Comparing the mean and SD between groups of dataset

Group	N	BAC		BA		WOM		PI	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Brand A	200	2.27	0.99	**3.40**	1.15	**3.03**	1.07	**2.79**	1.11
Brand B	91	**2.31**	1.00	2.45	1.15	2.59	1.12	2.32	1.09
Both	291	2.29	0.99	3.10	1.23	2.89	1.11	2.64	1.12

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

To test the hypotheses, structural equation modelling was applied with AMOS 18. The summary of statistics Presented in Table 17 which is a related to the estimations and Hypothesis Testing. Brand Account Commitment showed to positively influence to Purchase Intention, which confirmed hypothesis *H1* (Beta= 0.37; p-value= ***(<0.000); t-value= 6.33). Therefore, this type of Brand Account Commitment showed a positive influence on a Brand Awareness, which supported *H2* (Beta= 0.47; p-value= ***(<0.000); t-value= 7.10). Brand Awareness had a positive effect on the Purchase Intention, which supported *H3* (Beta= 0.23; p-value= ***(<0.002); t-value= 3.13). Brand Account Commitment showed a positive influence on a Word-of-Mouth, which confirmed hypothesis *H4* (Beta= 0.35; p-value= ***(<0.000); t-value= 6.72). Also, Brand Awareness had a positive effect on the Word-of-Mouth, which confirmed hypothesis *H5* (Beta= 0.62; p-value= ***(<0.000); t-value= 11.02). Finally, Word-of-Mouth showed to positively influence to Purchase Intention, which supported *H6* (Beta= 0.45; p-value= ***(<0.000); t-value= 5.12). Figure 6 presents the parameter estimates for the final structural model.

Table 17: Standardized structural coefficients of the model

Hypothesis	Beta	p-value	t-value	Acceptance or rejection
H1: BAC -> PI	0.37	***	6.33	Accepted
H2: BAC -> BA	0.47	***	7.10	Accepted
H3: BA -> PI	0.23	0.002	3.13	Accepted
H4: BAC -> WOM	0.35	***	6.72	Accepted
H5: BA -> WOM	0.62	***	11.02	Accepted
H6: WOM -> PI	0.45	***	5.12	Accepted

NOTE: *<0.05; **<0.01; ***<0.000; CMIN/DF=2.826; GFI=0.938; AGFI=0.892; CFI =0.972; NFI=0.957; TLI = 0.959; RMSEA = 0.079

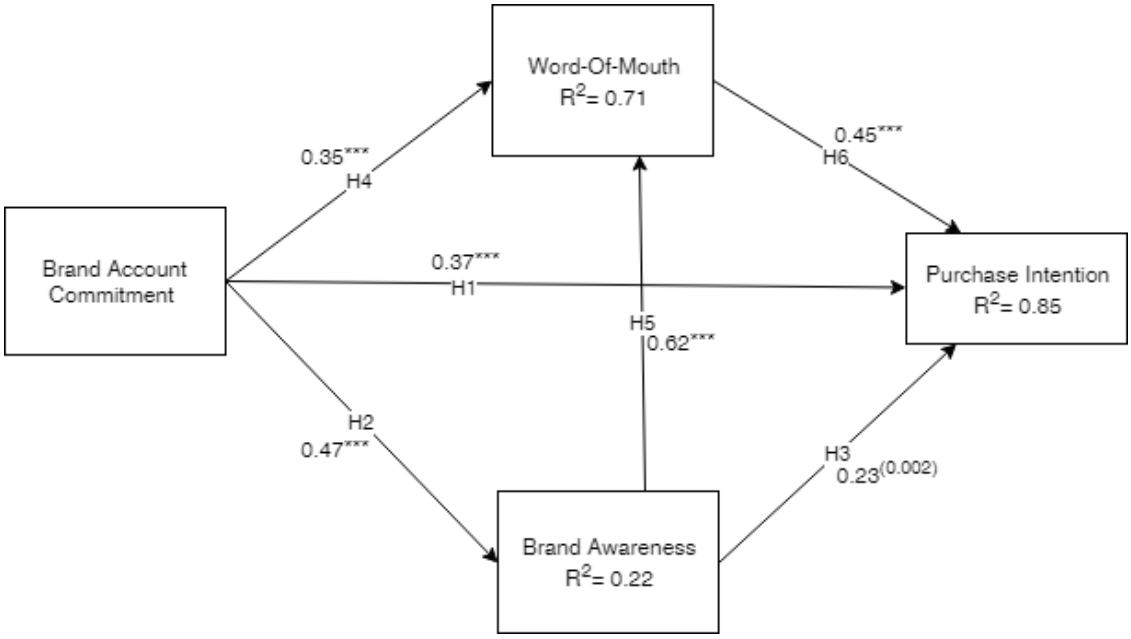

Figure 6: Parameter estimates for final structural model

In total the model is able to explain 22 per cent of variance in Brand Awareness, 85 per cent of variance in Purchase Intention, and 71 per cent in WOM.

5. CONCLUSIONS

After studying the literature review, research methodology, and reading the results and analyzes, this chapter provides a summary of the research, the implication of the results, the limitations and the future research.

In this thesis, the aim of the study was the impact of social media on brand awareness and purchase awareness in retail coffee and snacks store industry in the Gulf region.

The literature review section was composed of a set of previous studies. Traditional marketing and online marketing successfully working together for brands or products marketing, marketing through social media creates greater opportunities for the consumer to interact with other consumers and brands, and the relationship between the consumer and brand becomes a two-way relation. Brands can benefit from consumer feedback to evaluate its products and services.

The business sector that chosen for this study was retail coffee and snacks store industry. The study was applied to the Gulf region, based on a questionnaire consisting of several questions. Most of the brands in this business sector have one or more accounts in social media platforms. Two brands chosen to the study, Brand A is a globally with a larger market share, Brand B is a brand located just in the Gulf region. Research results showed that the difference was very slight between the two brands.

All the hypothesis that explained in the theoretical framework were tested, and the results indicate that all hypothesis was accepted. The findings were demonstrated that the consumer commitment to the brand page in social media Facebook or Instagram has positive effects on consumers' brand awareness, WOM activities, and purchase intention. The findings also indicate that brand awareness leads to positive effects on the purchase intention and WOM, also WOM has a positive effect on the purchase intention. The study proved that social media really affect to the different

phases in the hierarchy of effects model (Smith et al., 2008). Therefore, social media effects on the three mental stages: the cognitive phase, the effective stage, and the cognitive stage.

There is an impact of social media in the search for information about the product, and comparison of alternatives in the decision-making process of the consumer (Nyagucha, 2017). The study proved through one of the hypotheses that the social media have a positive effect on the purchase intention. Research has revealed that using social media as a marketing tool increases the chance of increasing brand awareness and increase the consumer engagement with the brand. All respondents in the study, are active in social media, 34% of respondents are checking Instagram or Facebook hourly.

5.1 Implications of the Research

All hypotheses have been proven, therefore brands must be more aware of the importance of benefits of social media as a marketing tool, and be more involved in where the customer segments are located among social media platforms in order to engage with them. Brands not only seek to sell products and increase profits but also to increase brand awareness and community building, social media play a big role in it. Consumers have a desire for searching and finding product information, buy it, try it and tell others about this experience, social media platforms play an important role in all of these stages.

This study recommends that all brands of retail coffee and snacks store need to invest heavily in social media strategy as a way to increase sales, brand awareness, and increase the positive of word-of-mouth. The quality of information and the quality of content creating in social media plays a great role in persuading the consumer to buy the product.

It is good for brands to think about creating an interesting content and publishing it on a brand page on social networking sites to encourage consumers to interact with it, thereby increasing brand awareness. The consumer likes to watch entertainment content, which is why brands must create entertaining useful content (Economics and Marketing, 2012).

5.2 Limitations of the Research

Like other surveys thesis, this research also has limitations, so it has to be aware that the results in this study not applicable to each case, therefore the results cannot be generalized to all business sectors or all brands. One of the limitations was that a lot of respondents did not respond at all, some of the respondents think that this questionnaire was for advertising purpose. The sample size is relatively small, the results may be better if the number of respondents was more.

One of the obvious limitations of this study is the high number of female respondents and the low number of male respondents, the questionnaire was sent equally to female and male, but the female response was more than male. The reason may be that males are more bored than females, with regard to the answer to the questionnaire. In order to send the questionnaire to brand followers, only Facebook and Instagram were selected, and all social networking platforms were not covered. The research did not cover the effects of annoyance content of brands in social media platforms and what are the causes of annoyance to social media environment. There is a positive WOM and negative WOM, in this study the focus was only on the positive one.

5.3 Further Research

Due to some limitations in research, it is recommended to further research to get more useful results. It is also recommended that the sample size be larger, the number of males and females approximately equal, and the age groups more diverse, also with a different culture. The results will be more comprehensive if the study includes different business sectors and many brands, not only one business sectors and two brands. The questionnaires were sent to followers on Facebook and Instagram only, so it is suggested that to try other social networking platforms. This study further recommends to study the impact of negative word-of-mouth on purchase intention and brand awareness. Some consumers may be annoyed by some of the content of brands on social networking sites, therefore it is recommended that

to study the effects of annoyed content to brand awareness and purchase intention. There is no doubt that the use of social media influencers for marketing has an impact on the consumer, for this reason, it is recommended to study this impact.

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