

## AN EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON CUSTOMER BASED BRAND EQUITY: A STUDY IN MOROCCO

Mehmet SAĞLAM<sup>1</sup>

Mohamed Yassir CHAKNAN<sup>2</sup>

### ABSTRACT

Social media applications are valued as an indispensable marketing channel for every sector. Developing technological and informational processes increase the power of social media and brands use this power to increase their brand equity.

The purpose of this study is to understand how social media marketing affects customer-based brand equity. An online questionnaire was created for the purpose of data collection in order to meet the objectives of this study. The sample of this research includes social media users in Morocco and a simple random sampling method was used as the sampling method.

The fundamental constructs for measuring customer-based brand equity are brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. Whereas, in order to analyze the perceived value of social media marketing activities, entertainment, interaction, trend, e-wom, and customization are considered as key elements.

250 data sets were collected through an online questionnaire and analyzed in SPSS 22 and AMOS 24 Packages Program. Regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses. The results of the empirical study showed that social media marketing has an influence on brand equity dimensions. It has been determined that e-wom (electronic word of mouth) and trend have an effect on brand awareness, entertainment has an effect on brand associations, entertainment, interaction, e-wom and trend have an effect on perceived quality and finally, entertainment, interaction, and e-wom have an effect on brand loyalty.

The findings of this study can help brands better predict their customers' future purchasing behavior and give managers a roadmap for brand and marketing operations.

**Keywords:** Social media marketing, brand equity, customer-based brand equity dimensions

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1 Istanbul Commerce University, Faculty of Business, Business Administration, ORCID: 0000-0002-1909-4284, msaglam@ticaret.edu.tr

2 Istanbul Commerce University, MBA Program, ORCID: 0000-0003-4933-6253, yasser1chaknan@gmail.com  
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## SOSYAL MEDYA PAZARLAMASININ MÜŞTERİ TEMELLİ MARKA DENKLİĞİNE ETKİSİNİN İNCELENMESİ

### ÖZET

Sosyal medya uygulamaları her sektör için vazgeçilmez bir pazarlama kanalı olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Gelişen teknolojik ve bilgilendirici süreçler sosyal medyanın gücünü artırmakta ve markalar bu gücü marka denklğini artırmak için kullanmaktadır.

Bu çalışmanın amacı, sosyal medya pazarlamasının müşteri temelli marka denklğini nasıl etkilediğini anlamaktır. Çalışmanın amaçlarına ulaşmak için veri toplama amacıyla çevrimiçi bir anket oluşturulmuştur. Bu araştırmanın örneklemini Fas'taki sosyal medya kullanıcıları oluşturmaktadır ve örnekleme yöntemi olarak basit tesadüfi örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır.

Müşteri temelli marka denklğini ölçmek için temel yapılar marka farkındalığı, marka çağrışımları, algılanan kalite ve marka sadakatidir. Sosyal medya pazarlama faaliyetlerinin algılanan değerini analiz etmek için ise eğlence, etkileşim, trend, elektronik ağızdan ağıza iletişim ve kişiselleştirme gibi anahtar unsurlar ele alınmıştır.

250 katılımcıdan oluşan veri seti çevrimiçi bir anket aracılığıyla toplandı ve SPSS 22 ve AMOS 24 Paket Programında analiz edildi. Hipotezleri test etmek için regresyon analizi kullanıldı. Ampirik çalışmanın sonuçları, sosyal medya pazarlamasının marka denklği boyutları üzerinde bir etkisi olduğunu göstermiştir. Elektronik ağızdan ağıza iletişim ve trendin marka farkındalığı üzerinde, eğlencenin marka çağrışımları üzerinde, eğlence, etkileşim, e-wom ve trendin algılanan kalite üzerinde etkisi olduğu ve son olarak eğlence, etkileşim ve elektronik ağızdan ağıza iletişimin marka sadakati üzerinde etkisi vardır.

Bu çalışmanın bulguları, markaların müşterilerinin gelecekteki satın alma davranışlarını daha iyi tahmin etmelerine yardımcı olabilir ve yöneticilere marka ve pazarlama operasyonları için bir yol haritası verebilir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sosyal medya pazarlama, marka denklği, müşteri temelli marka denklği boyutları

### INTRODUCTION

In marketing, branding has long been a crucial notion. As firms try to dedicate more resources to establish, enhance, and retain their brand equity, this issue is receiving greater attention. In both the online and offline marketplaces, brand equity is critical, but the number of firms and marketing activities online has been steadily expanding in recent years. It's because of the internet's importance and the growing number of customers who choose to shop online (Tuominen, 1999). Even in the online world, Aaker (1991) and Keller (1998) approaches to customer-based brand equity building are two of the most widely used.

Brand equity is a crucial notion for comprehending the purposes, procedures, and overall effect of marketing campaigns (Reynold & Philips, 2005). Brand equity creates benefit for consumers and assists brands in establishing strong competitive positions that are hard to transfer to other competitors (Pitta & Kastsanis, 1995). In order to build brand equity, brands have used a variety of techniques such as advertisements, public affairs, sales force, concepts, and symbols (Aaker, 1991). In this digital era, Yazdanparast (2015) believe that the activities that are based on social media marketing are efficient techniques for building brand equity.

Customers can engage with each other through social media platforms, according to Bernoff and Li (2011), implying that firms are not the key source of brand communication any longer. Furthermore, customers are progressively shifting aside from traditional media such as radio, television, and magazines in order to find information on social networking platforms (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Marketers' authority over brand management has been weakened as a result of this phenomena (Berthon et al., 2007). As a result, it is critical to recognize that customers' opinions of brands are no longer driven solely by what firms convey, but also by what other customers are saying about the brand.

The purpose of this study is to look into how businesses may take use of the opportunities that social media offers to build and increase brand equity through social media marketing, as well as the obstacles that they face in this environment. The findings of this study can assist managers in developing appropriate strategies for enhancing their brand equity through social media marketing. This study looks at brand equity from the standpoint of customers, and Aaker's customer-based brand equity dimensions will be utilized.

## **1. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **1.1. Social Media Marketing**

With the introduction of social media, a new digital area and grid of connections has established, allowing brands and consumers to communicate without regard to time or place, the use of social media has helped in the transformation of firms' activities from transactional to social (Bashar, et.al, 2012). It is the new marketing concept that has given business organizations plenty of space to establish and sustain, long-lasting, and value-added relationship with their customers. It enables a company to interact with current and new customers, engage with them, and build a feeling of community around the company's products and services (Mangold & Faulgd, 2009). Hennig-Thurau, Hofacker and Bloching, (2013) explained that social media from a marketing standpoint is a marketplace where both merchants and customers exist with numerous facilities and engage in a variety of ways (Hennig-Thurau, et. al, 2013). The concept of how social media marketing functions in practice is strongly linked to the definition of social media itself, wherein marketers can develop customer contact through social media (Chary, 2014).

Consumers are more willing to share viral videos, generate extra brand-related content, tweet about the brand, and publish their experiences in a well-designed social media campaign (Miller & Lammas, 2010). Furthermore, because social media is the worldwide voice of customers, it provides users with a customer-based social media engagement point of contact, allowing them to communicate and share their experiences with any brand or person anywhere in the world (Chung et al., 2016). According to Foux (2006), traditional marketing tools are considered to be less reliable than social media as a source of information. Therefore Social media helps enhance communication by allowing users to easily communicate with hundreds or thousands of other consumers in a short period of time (Mangold & Faulds, 2009), while on the other hand, it allows brands to share and exchange information with their customers (Sashi, 2012).

## 1.2. Social Media Marketing Dimensions

Social media marketing indicators that will be employed in this study are based on dimensions of social media marketing that include: Interaction, Trendiness, Entertainment, Customization and E-wom (Kim & Ko, 2010). These dimensions are defined as next:

**Interaction:** Interaction is the process of brands and customers exchanging information (Gallaugher, & Ransbotham, 2010). By disseminating up-to-date, consumer-relevant content, social networking sites promote more interaction with the online community (Fischer, & Reuber, 2011). Because of the subjective nature, interactions become more social and noticeable, improving customers' social presence and, as a result, brand interaction.

**Trendiness:** Trendiness refers to the most recent issues that have piqued interest of the audience, as well as trendy information that brands find relevant and fascinating to provide with their clients (Naaman et al, 2011). According to Muntinga et. al, (2011), trending information on social media is used for four reasons: Observation, awareness, pre-purchase information, and motivation.

**Entertainment:** Entertainment is known as the ability to deliver an exciting and dynamic mood in order to boost engagement and customer experience. It enhances brand-consumer connection, which encourages active participation and customers to enjoy their activities according to their own time (Netemeyer, et. al., 2004), In addition, the experience that customers require can be obtained through a variety of methods.

**Customization:** Allowing customers to build and customize products is an efficient way for businesses to enhance relationships with customers. Louis Vuitton and H&M for example, give a comparable service to the consumers. Customization is the way a service is developed to meet the customer's preferences (Schmenner, 1986).

**E-WOM:** Electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) has been described as all informal communications addressed at customers via Internet-based technologies about the usage or qualities of certain products and services, or their suppliers (Arndt, 1967). In the online context, social media allows for consumer-to-consumer WOM communication.

Given that customers are becoming more reliant on their social networks when making purchasing decisions (Hinz, et.al., 2011), electronic word-of-mouth among consumers is important for firms because it is quicker and more widespread than traditional word-of-mouth.

### 1.3. Customer-Based Brand Equity

In today's business world, brand equity has become a major topic. Christodoulides et. al, (2006) defined customer-based brand equity as a set of perceptions, attitudes, knowledge, and behavior of consumers that yield beneficial results by enabling them to generate as much volume or more profit as possible. Keller (1993) examined customer-based brand equity from a purely consumer psychology perspective and defined it as "different effects of brand awareness on the response of the brand to its marketing to the customer".

Brand equity has become an important topic in the business world

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According to Aaker (1992), a brand's name and symbol are related to its equity. It is composed of brand awareness, associations, loyalty, and perceived quality. This research conceptualizes brand equity according to Aaker (1991) based on consumer perceptions. The following sections provide an explanation of the four dimensions of customer-based brand equity examined in our study.

**Brand Loyalty:** Brand loyalty is defined as the repeated purchase or patronization of a preferred product or service over time (Aaker, 1991). Consumers who are loyal to a specific brand believe that brand to be their preferred option, and they are less likely to be targeted by price wars and are less likely to switch to other brands (Mark et al., 2007).

**Brand Awareness:** According to Aaker (1996), brand awareness plays a significant role in branding research and it is an important but often overlooked aspect of brand equity. Brand awareness is based on the progression of brand awareness from an uncertain sense and emotion to the surety that it is the only one in the product category (Aaker, 1991).

**Perceived Quality:** Another essential element of brand equity is perceived quality. Perceived quality can be described as a customer's overall impression of a product's or service's competitive performance when compared to competing offers (Aaker, 1991). To put it another way, perceived quality is the acknowledgement of a product's potential to bring consumer satisfaction in comparison to other competing alternatives. As a result, Baldauf et al. (2003) consider that good product quality can provide a competitive advantage and is a critical source for businesses.

**Brand Associations:** Brand association is explained as "everything related in memory to a brand" and a representations of what a brand represents to a consumer (Aaker, 1991). Any interaction or experience a customer has with a brand has the ability to generate, modify, reinforce specific positive or negative connotations (Keller, 2008).

Thanks to brand associations, it aims to develop attitudes and direct purchasing behavior by creating positive images in the minds of consumers.

## **2. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

### **2.1. Relationship Between Social Media Marketing and Brand Equity**

In generally, interaction activities will aid in building brand trust and removing confusion while making a purchase (Khadim et al., 2018). Firms can use entertainment to produce feelings of pleasure in their clients, which would encourage them to keep following up with the brands (Kang, 2005). Firms can use customization to promote individuality and personalization, which will increase brand trust and user familiarity. This unique marketing action allows organizations to approach their target customers, resulting in increased trust and purchase intent (Martin & Todorov, 2010). Information about firms, customer reviews and suggestions, upcoming trends, and other factors that contribute to customer trust and brand awareness are examples of trendiness (Godey et al., 2016). From the viewpoint of customers, e-wom can be characterized as the act of spreading information about a certain product or brand to other users on digital networks (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2013).

According to Agozzino's (2012) research, social media marketing activities have a major impact on sustaining awareness of the brand, reputé, online traffic, and search rankings. As a result, it's crucial to consider whether social media marketing activities can enhance a company's brand in terms of monetary worth. We must also comprehend the aspects that influence consumer brand equity for a specific brand (Aaker, 2001). Therefore, the following hypothesis has been developed.

#### **H1: Social media marketing dimensions have an effect on brand awareness**

Developing a favorable brand connection is impossible without first building trust in consumers' minds about online brands (Rios & Riquelme, 2008). According to Khajuria & Rachna (2017)'s research, social media marketing activities can have a huge effect on brand associations. The reason for this is that users of social media platforms can view posts about the brand. This encounter can occur as a result of a company advertisement, a user's friend's "Likes," or comments on a brand's post. As a result, social media users will learn more about the brand, and the company's brand association will improve as customers discover more about the brand on social media (Khajuria & Rachna, 2017). Based on these results, the following hypothesis was proposed.

#### **H2: Social media marketing dimensions have an effect on brand associations**

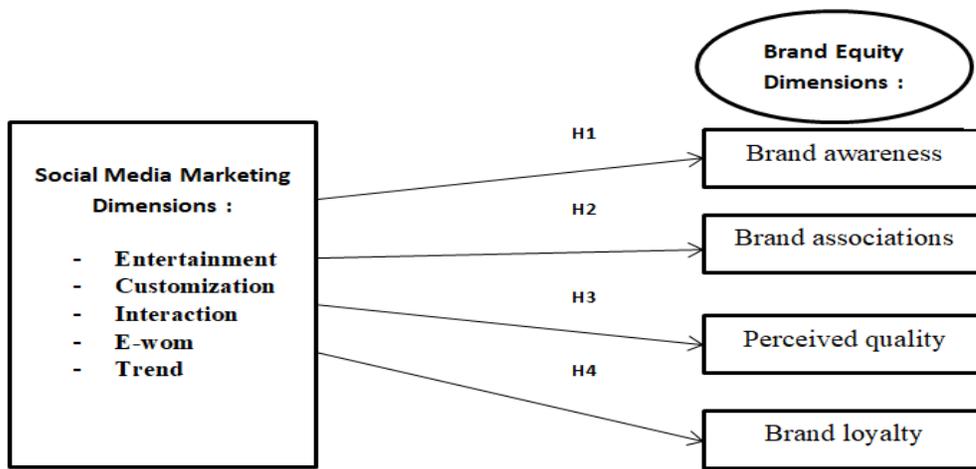
The study by Indrawati (2020) revealed that company-created social media communication and user-generated social media communication have a significant impact on perceived quality. Thus, by focusing more on social media communication, a company will not only increase awareness of its products and services, but will also be able to improvise on quality using feedback from customers and increase the level of perceived quality (Indrawati, 2020).

This result can be interpreted as social media shares will have an impact on consumers' perceived quality levels for the brand. In this context, the following hypothesis has been developed.

**H3: Social media marketing dimensions have an effect on perceived of brand quality**

Marketers have used a variety of ways to maintain consumer brand loyalty, including social media marketing (Keller, 2008). Social media marketing affects brand loyalty, and this concept is receiving increasing attention by academics and marketing practitioners (Zarella, 2009; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2009). Consumers who like and follow companies' social media posts can be loyal customers of the brand. Therefore, the following hypothesis has been developed.

**H4: Social media marketing dimensions have an effect on brand loyalty**



**Fig. 1: Research Model**

**Hypotheses:**

H<sub>1</sub>: Social media marketing dimensions (entertainment, customization, interaction, e-wom and trend) have an effect on brand awareness

H<sub>2</sub>: Social media marketing dimensions (entertainment, customization, interaction, e-wom and trend) have an effect on brand associations

H<sub>3</sub>: Social media marketing dimensions (entertainment, customization, interaction, e-wom and trend) have an effect on perceived of brand quality

H<sub>4</sub>: Social media marketing dimensions (entertainment, customization, interaction, e-wom and trend) have an effect on brand loyalty.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Purpose and importance of study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate how firms might take use of the opportunities provided by social media to create and improve brand equity through social media marketing.

The findings of this study can help managers establish effective strategies for building brand equity through social media marketing. The customer-based brand equity characteristics developed by Aaker will be used in this study to look at brand equity from the perspective of customers.

#### **3.2. Sample and data collection process**

The sample of this study consisted of all Moroccan customers who are active in the brand's social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter. Simple random sampling method was used in the selection of the participants. Primary data was collected using an online questionnaire created with Google Form and distributed via social media. They were asked to rate the importance of each criterion in the scales (1 lowest, 5 highest). Data were collected from online surveys between 1-20 October 2021. A total of 250 online questionnaires out of 300 distributed questionnaires were used for analysis.

Online questionnaire contains three different sections of questions, the first section named social media marketing scale items and the second section named brand equity scale items, while the last section named demographic questions. Variables in the section 1 evaluating five social media marketing dimensions (entertainment, customization, interaction, word of mouth and trendiness) with 19 questions adopted from Hennig-Thurau, et.al, (2002) and Ju & Chung, (2002). In the second section Yoo & Donthu's (2001), Lassar et al. (1995) and Pappu et al. (2005) scales are used for measuring brand equity dimensions, including brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand awareness, and brand association using 12 questions. The last section is about demographic characteristics with 4 questions asking for gender, age bracket, marital status and education level.

#### **3.3. Data Analysis and Findings**

In this study, SPSS 22 and AMOS Packages Program is used for Statistical Analysis. Socio demographic features is examined about participants as descriptive statistics. Because it is the validation of each scales, it was carried out only confirmatory factor analysis and Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for scale validation and reliability. After validation, reliability results and correlation analysis, Hypotheses are tested with regression analysis. Results are evaluated in %95, %99 confidence interval and  $p < 0,05$ ,  $p < 0,01$  significance levels.

##### **3.3.1. Frequency Analysis and Descriptive Statistics on Socio Demographic Features**

Socio-demographic data is comprised of five questions about gender, age, marital, education level and brand for participants in Table 1. Gender of participants are 52,40% female, 47,60% male. Age of participants are 40,00% under 20, 46,40% 21-30, 9,60% 31-40, 3,60% 41-50 and 0,40% 51 above. Marital status of participants are 4,40% divorced, 32,40% married, 62,00% single and 1,20% widowed. Education level of participants are 52,00% high school, 38,00% undergraduate, 8,40% graduate(master's), 1,60% graduate(PhD/doctoral).

Top five social media brands followed by participants are 20,00% Gucci, 18,00% H&M, 18% Louis Vuitton, 12,80% Nike and 10,80% Zara respectively.

**Table1: Frequency Analysis about Socio Demographic Features of Participants**

Variables		Frequency (N=250)	Percent (%)
Gender	Female	131	52,40
	Male	119	47,60
Age	21 – 30	116	46,40
	31 – 40	24	9,60
	41 – 50	9	3,60
	51 above	1	0,40
	Under 20	100	40,00
Marital Status	Divorced	11	4,40
	Married	81	32,40
	Single	155	62,00
	widowed	3	1,20
Education Level	Graduate (Master’s)	21	8,40
	Graduate (PhD/Doctoral)	4	1,60
	Undergraduate	95	38,00
	High school	130	52,00
Brand	Adidas	10	4,00
	Asel fashion	1	0,40
	Bang	1	0,40
	Decathlon	1	0,40
	Defacto	7	2,80
	Gucci	51	20,40
	H&M	45	18,00
	IPhone	1	0,40
	Kiabi	13	5,20
	La roche posay	1	0,40
	LC Wakiki	3	1,20
	Lenovo	1	0,40
	Louis Vuitton	45	18,00
	Mango	1	0,40
	Nike	32	12,80
	Puma	2	0,80
	Razana	1	0,40
	Samsung	1	0,40
	Shein	1	0,40
	Vans	4	1,60
Yves Rocher	1	0,40	
Zara	27	10,80	

### 3.3.2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Reliability Analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis(CFA) tests hypotheses among relationships, and that aims confirmation of relationships. In this process, CFA examines relationships of factors among itself, before which was created with relations, therefore firstly researcher must be knowledge about structure of variables in model. So that the model provides strong structure as basis of theoretical and experimental (Çokluk et al.). In CFA, latent variables can be exogenous or endogenous. While exogenous variables are not effected by other latent variables, endogenous variables are effected by other latent variables. In this meantime, exogenous variables describe as independent variables, endogenous variables describe as dependent variables (Jöreskog ve Sörbom, 1996; Brown, 2015).

Reliability, that is described stability of the measuring tool under the same conditional reproduced measurements to obtain values. An unreliable scale is useless and Scale reliability is evaluated with Alpha(Cronbach) coefficient to developed by Cronbach(1951). Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient provides a measure of the internal consistency of a test or scale, that is expressed as a number between 0 and 1 (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

If Correlation is negative among questions, Alpha Coefficient to calculated with Alpha method is negative. Because this coefficient is negative, model of reliable is degenerate. In the other words, it is described to degenerate of additive of used scale. According to Alpha Coefficients, scale reliability interpretation show in below (Kalaycı, 2006).

- 0.00 ≤ α < 0.40; The scale is unreliable.
- 0.40 ≤ α < 0.60; The scale is low reliable.
- 0.60 ≤ α < 0.80; The scale is pretty good reliable.
- 0.80 ≤ α < 1.00; The scale is high reliable.

Validity and reliability values of Social Media Marketing scale is examined into Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient for dataset of participants in Table 3. Social media marketing Scale’s standardized Beta is found as (0,19-0,46). On the other hand, entertainment, customization, interaction, e-wom and trend are statistically significance (p<0,01). Also Cronbach’s Alpha coefficients are pretty good reliability for sub dimensions as 0,616(Entertainment), 0,751(Customization), 0,761(Interaction), 0,766(e-wom) and 0,665(Trend) respectively.

**Table 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis about Social Media Marketing Scale**

Sub Dimension	Items	Standardized B	Standard Error	t	p	R <sup>2</sup>	Cronbach’s Alpha
Entertainment	E1	0,415				0,172	0,616
	E2	0,419	0,217	4,574	0,000**	0,175	
	E3	0,301	0,185	3,675	0,000**	0,091	
	E4	0,422	0,266	4,596	0,000**	0,178	
Customization	C1	0,575				0,331	0,751
	C2	0,351	0,146	4,701	0,000**	0,123	
	C3	0,545	0,145	6,704	0,000**	0,297	

	C4	0,443	0,152	5,718	0,000**	0,196	
	C5	0,32	0,154	4,33	0,000**	0,102	
Interaction	I1	0,283				0,08	0,761
	I2	0,433	0,413	3,803	0,000**	0,188	
	I3	0,457	0,422	3,868	0,000**	0,208	
	I4	0,463	0,377	3,886	0,000**	0,215	
E-wom	W1	0,365				0,134	0,766
	W2	0,522	0,36	4,211	0,000**	0,273	
	W3	0,526	0,316	4,22	0,000**	0,276	
Trend	T1	0,472				0,222	0,665
	T2	0,191	0,146	2,829	0,005**	0,036	

Social media marketing scale about CFA Model Fit Indexes are examined in Table 3. In CFA model, while  $GFI(0,00)$ ,  $CFI(0,845)$ ,  $NNFI(0,810)$ ,  $NFI(0,706)$ , is not acceptable fit,  $Chi-square/df(cmin/df)(1,716)$ ,  $RMR(0,000)$ ,  $RMSEA(0,054)$  are good and acceptable fit so that CFA Model is provided the validation.

**Table 3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model Fit Indexes about Social Media Marketing Scale**

Fit Indexes	Good Fit*	Acceptable Fit**	Model
$\chi^2/df$	$0 \leq \chi^2/df \leq 2$	1-5	1,716*
GFI	$0,95 \leq GFI \leq 1$	$0,90 \leq GFI \leq 0,95$	0,000
CFI	$0,97 \leq CFI \leq 1$	$0,95 \leq CFI \leq 0,97$	0,845
NNFI/TLI	$0,97 \leq NNFI \leq 1$	$0,95 \leq NNFI \leq 0,97$	0,810
NFI	$0,95 \leq NFI \leq 1$	$0,90 \leq NFI \leq 0,95$	0,706
RMR	$0 \leq RMR \leq 0,05$	$0,05 \leq RMR \leq 0,08$	0,000*
RMSEA	$0 \leq RMSEA \leq 0,05$	$0,05 \leq RMSEA \leq 0,08$	0,054**

**Kaynak:** Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1996; Schermelleh-Engel, et. al, 2003; Schumacker and Lomax, 2004.

Validity and reliability values of Brand Equity Scale is examined into Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for dataset of participants in Table 4. Brand Equity Scale's standardized Beta is found as (-0,183-0,658). On the other hand, brand Loyalty, perceived quality, brand awareness and brand associations are statistically significance ( $p < 0,01$ ). Also Cronbach's Alpha coefficients are pretty good reliability for sub dimensions as 0,626(*Brand Loyalty*), 0,724(*Perceived Quality*), 0,799(*Brand Awareness*) and 0,609(*Brand Associations*) respectively.

**Table 4: Confirmatory Factor Analysis about Brand Equity Scale**

Sub Dimension	Items	Standardized B	Standard Error	t	p	R2	Cronbach's Alpha
Brand Loyalty	B_L1	0,564				0,318	0,626
	B_L2	0,658	0,194	6,086	0,000**	0,433	
	B_L3	0,57	0,185	5,792	0,000**	0,325	
Perceived Quality	P1	0,398				0,158	0,724
	P2	0,481	0,237	4,723	0,000**	0,232	
	P3	0,443	0,235	4,532	0,000**	0,197	
Brand Awareness	B_AW1	0,478				0,228	0,799
	B_AW2	0,389	0,206	4,113	0,000**	0,151	
	B_AW3	0,62	0,275	5,158	0,000**	0,385	
Brand Associations	B_AS1	0,596				0,355	0,609
	B_AS2	0,397	0,159	4,245	0,000**	0,158	
	B_AS3	-0,183	0,163	-2,227	0,026*	0,034	

Brand Equity scale about CFA Model Fit Indexes are examined in Table5. In CFA model, while,  $CFI(0,895)$ ,  $NNFI(0,856)$ ,  $NFI(0,799)$  is not acceptable fit,  $Chi-square/df(cmin/df)(1,78)$ ,  $GFI(0,945)$ ,  $RMR(0,036)$ ,  $RMSEA(0,056)$  are good and acceptable fit so that CFA Model is provided the validation.

**Table 5: Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model Fit Indexes about Brand Equity Scale**

Fit Indexes	Good Fit*	Acceptable Fit**	Model
$\chi^2/df$	$0 \leq \chi^2/df \leq 2$	1-5	1,78*
GFI	$0,95 \leq GFI \leq 1$	$0,90 \leq GFI \leq 0,95$	0,945**
CFI	$0,97 \leq CFI \leq 1$	$0,95 \leq CFI \leq 0,97$	0,895
NNFI/TLI	$0,97 \leq NNFI \leq 1$	$0,95 \leq NNFI \leq 0,97$	0,856
NFI	$0,95 \leq NFI \leq 1$	$0,90 \leq NFI \leq 0,95$	0,799
RMR	$0 \leq RMR \leq 0,05$	$0,05 \leq RMR \leq 0,08$	0,036*
RMSEA	$0 \leq RMSEA \leq 0,05$	$0,05 \leq RMSEA \leq 0,08$	0,056**
<b>Kaynak:</b> Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1996; Schermelleh-Engel, et. al, 2003; Schumacker and Lomax, 2004.			

### 3.3.3. Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis is used to describe the strength and direction of the linear relationships between two variables (Pallant, 2001). The correlation coefficient(r) is described the magnitude of the association between the two variables.

Moreover r value interprets with helpful guide like these  $\pm 0,80$  to  $1,00$  (very strong)  $\pm 0,60$  to  $0,79$  (strong)  $\pm 0,40$  to  $0,59$  (moderate)  $\pm 0,20$  to  $0,39$  (weak)  $\pm 0,00$  to  $0,19$  ( very weak) (Dunn & Mannes, 2001).

There is examined relationship between variables in Table 6. In this results these were determined that;

Entertainment and brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand awareness, brand associations are statistically and separately significance correlated. Also there have a positive correlation among variables.

Customization and brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand awareness, brand associations are statistically and separately significance correlated. Also there have a positive correlation among variables.

Interaction and brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand awareness, brand associations are statistically and separately significance correlated. Also there have a positive correlation among variables

E-wom and brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand awareness are statistically and separately significance correlated. Also there have a positive correlation among variables. Also E-wom and brand Associations are not statistically significance correlated.

Trend and brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand associations are not statistically and separately significance correlated. Trend and brand awareness are only statistically significance correlated. Also there has a positive correlation among two variables.

**Table 6: Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficients and Correlation Analysis Results Among Variables**

Spearman's rho Coefficient	N	Mean	SD	Brand Loyalty	Perceived Quality	Brand Awareness	Brand Associations	Social Media Marketing	Brand Equity
Entertainment	250	4,30	0,43	0,270**	0,232**	0,133*	0,125*	0,536**	0,255**
Customization	250	4,21	0,47	0,258**	0,147*	0,226**	0,082	0,649**	0,294**
Interaction	250	4,23	0,48	0,287**	0,207**	0,205**	0,035	0,529**	0,269**
E-wom	250	4,16	0,60	0,235**	0,209**	0,303**	0,029	0,564**	0,311**
Trend	250	4,14	0,57	0,068	0,108	0,175**	0,006	0,470**	0,126*
Social Media Marketing	250	4,22	0,36					1,000	0,428**
Brand Equity	250	4,04	0,40						1,000
**p<0,01;*p<0,05									

**3.3.4. Regression Analysis**

The estimated model 1 was tested by using ANOVA. According to test results given in Table 7, the estimated model is statistically significant (p<0.05)

**Table 7: Regression ANOVA Results on Social Media Marketing Dimensions Effect On Brand Awareness**

ANOVA	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	p
Regression	21,021	5	4,204	15,161	0,000**
Residual	67,665	244	0,277		
Total	88,686	249			

\*\*p<0,01; \*p<0,05

The model 1 can be evaluated in Table 8 for each variables. Entertainment, customization, and interaction have not statistically effect on brand awareness ( $p > 0,05$ ). On the other hand e-wom and trend are found statistically significant ( $p < 0,05$ ). So it can be said that, 1-unit change in e-wom will be increased brand awareness by 0,251 unit, 1-unit change in trend will be increased brand awareness by 0.139.  $R^2$  (Determination Coefficient) of Model is a 0.237, approximately %23,7 of the brand awareness variable can be explained by e-wom and trend. Furthermore Collinearity, Autocorrelation are tested for Model. Because Tolerance values are higher than 0.2 and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values are lower than 10, there is not collinearity problem, also Durbin Watson value is found 1.718, which is near 2 therefore there is not autocorrelation.

**Table 8: Regression t Test Results of Social Media Marketing Dimensions Effect On Brand Awareness**

Model 1	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p	Collinearity Statistics		R <sup>2</sup>	Durbin Watson
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF		
(Constant)	0,960	0,403		2,379	0,018*			0,237	1,718
Entertainment	0,177	0,095	0,126	1,865	0,063	0,687	1,456		
Customization	0,038	0,090	0,030	0,424	0,672	0,612	1,634		
Interaction	0,160	0,088	0,128	1,829	0,069	0,641	1,561		
E-wom	0,251	0,066	0,250	3,806	0,000**	0,725	1,379		
Trend	0,139	0,065	0,134	2,137	0,034*	0,799	1,252		

\*\*p<0,01; \*p<0,05

The estimated model 2 was tested by using ANOVA. According to test results given in Table 9, the estimated model is statistically significant ( $p < 0,05$ )

**Table 9: Regression ANOVA Results on Social Media Marketing Dimensions Effect on Brand Associations**

ANOVA	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	p
Regression	4,697	5	0,939	4,602	0,000**
Residual	49,801	244	0,204		
Total	54,498	249			

\*\*p<0,01; \*p<0,05

The model 2 can be evaluated in Table 10 for each variables. Customization, interaction, e-wom and trend have not statistically effect on brand associations ( $p>0,05$ ). On the other hand entertainment is found statistically significant ( $p<0,05$ ). So it can be said that, 1-unit change in entertainment will be increased brand associations by 0,188 unit.  $R^2$  (Determination Coefficient) of Model is a 0.086, approximately %8,6 of the brand associations variable can be explained by entertainment. Because tolerance values are higher than 0.2 and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values are lower than 10, there is not collinearity problem, also Durbin Watson value is found 1.718, which is near 2 therefore there is not autocorrelation.

**Table 10: Regression t test Results of Social Media Marketing Dimensions Effect on Brand Associations**

Model 2	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p	Collinearity Statistics		$R^2$	Durbin Watson
	B	Std. Error				Tolerance	VIF		
(Constant)	1,874	0,346		5,415	0,000**			0,086	2,088
Entertainment	0,188	0,081	0,171	2,314	0,022*	0,687	1,456		
Customization	0,058	0,077	0,059	0,756	0,451	0,612	1,634		
Interaction	0,071	0,075	0,072	0,942	0,347	0,641	1,561		
E-wom	0,044	0,056	0,056	0,778	0,437	0,725	1,379		
Trend	0,022	0,056	0,027	0,393	0,695	0,799	1,252		

\*\*p<0,01; \*p<0,05

The estimated model 3 was tested by using ANOVA. According to test results given in Table 11, the estimated model is statistically significant ( $p<0,05$ ).

**Table 11: Regression ANOVA Results on Social Media Marketing dimensions effect on Perceived Quality**

ANOVA	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	p
Regression	19,467	5	3,893	19,616	0,000**
Residual	48,430	244	0,198		
Total	67,897	249			

\*\*p<0,01; \*p<0,05

The model 3 can be evaluated in Table 12 for each variables. Customization has not statistically effect on perceived quality ( $p>0,05$ ). On the other hand, entertainment, interaction, e-wom and trend are found statistically significant ( $p<0,05$ ). So it can be said that, 1-unit change in entertainment will be increased perceived quality by 0,215 unit, 1-unit change in entertainment will be increased perceived quality by 0,215 unit, 1-unit change in Interaction will be increased perceived quality by 0,261, 1-unit change in e-wom will be increased perceived quality by 0,198 unit, 1-unit change in e-wom will be increased perceived quality by 0,113 unit.  $R^2$  (Determination Coefficient) of Model is a 0.287, approximately %28,7 of the perceived quality variable can be explained by entertainment, customization, e-wom and trend. Because tolerance values are higher than 0.2 and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values are lower than 10, there is not collinearity problem, also Durbin Watson value is found 1.977, which is near 2 therefore there is not autocorrelation.

**Table 12: Regression t test Results of Social Media Marketing Dimensions Effect on Perceived Quality**

Model 3	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p	Collinearity Statistics		$R^2$	Durbin Watson
	B	Std. Error				Tolerance	VIF		
(Constant)	1,122	0,341		3,288	0,001**			0,287	1,977
Entertainment	0,215	0,080	0,175	2,685	0,008**	0,687	1,456		
Customization	-0,044	0,076	-0,040	-0,581	0,562	0,612	1,634		
Interaction	0,261	0,074	0,237	3,510	0,001**	0,641	1,561		
E-wom	0,198	0,056	0,226	3,553	0,000**	0,725	1,379		
Trend	0,113	0,055	0,124	2,051	0,041*	0,799	1,252		

\*\*p<0,01; \*p<0,05

The estimated model 4 was tested by using ANOVA. According to test results given in Table 13, the estimated model is statistically significant ( $p<0,05$ ).

**Table 13: Regression ANOVA Results on Social Media Marketing Dimensions Effect on Brand Loyalty**

ANOVA	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	p
Regression	33,234	5	6,647	21,676	0,000**
Residual	74,821	244	0,307		
Total	108,056	249			

\*\*p<0,01; \*p<0,05

The model 4 can be evaluated in Table 14 for each variables. Customization and trend have not statistically effect on brand loyalty ( $p>0,05$ ). On the other hand, entertainment, interaction, e-wom and are found statistically significant ( $p<0,05$ ). So it can be said that, 1-unit change in entertainment will be increased brand loyalty by 0,362 unit, 1-unit change in Interaction will be increased perceived quality by 0,361 unit, 1-unit change in e-wom will be increased brand loyalty by 0,205 unit.  $R^2$  (Determination Coefficient) of Model is a 0.308, approximately %30,8 of the brand loyalty variable can be explained by entertainment, interaction and e-wom. Because tolerance values are higher than 0.2 and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values are lower than 10, there is not collinearity problem, also Durbin Watson value is found 1.701, which is near 2 therefore there is not autocorrelation.

**Table 14: Regression t test Results of Social Media Marketing Dimensions Effect on Brand Loyalty**

Model 4	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p	Collinearity Statistics		$R^2$	Durbin Watson
	B	Std. Error				Tolerance	VIF		
(Constant)	0,201	0,424		0,474	0,636			0,308	1,701
Entertainment	0,362	0,100	0,234	3,637	0,000**	0,687	1,456		
Customization	0,094	0,095	0,067	0,989	0,324	0,612	1,634		
Interaction	0,361	0,092	0,260	3,910	0,000**	0,641	1,561		
E-wom	0,215	0,069	0,194	3,107	0,002**	0,725	1,379		
Trend	-0,083	0,069	-0,072	-1,204	0,230	0,799	1,252		

\*\*p<0,01; \*p<0,05

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The results of the empirical study showed that social media marketing has an influence on brand equity dimensions.

Entertainment, Customization and Interaction have not statistically effect on Brand Awareness. On the other hand e-wom and trend are found statistically significant. Those dimensions have a major impact on sustaining awareness of the brand, repute, online traffic, and search rankings and can enhance a company's brand in terms of monetary worth.

Customization, Interaction, e-wom and trend have not statistically effect on Brand Associations. On the other hand Entertainment is found statistically significant. The reason for this is that users of social media platforms can view posts about the brand. And the company's brand association will improve as customers discover more about the brand on social media.

Customization has not statistically effect on Perceived Quality. On the other hand, Entertainment, Interaction, e-wom and trend are found statistically significant. Thus, by focusing more on social media communication, a company will not only increase awareness of its products and services, but will also be able to improvise on quality using feedback from customers and increase the level of perceived quality.

Customization and Trend have not statistically effect on Brand Loyalty. On the other hand, Entertainment, Interaction, e-wom and are found statistically significant,. Consumers who like and follow companies' social media posts can be loyal customers of the brand.

### Theoretical Implications

The purpose of this study is to investigate how social media marketing affects brand equity. The current study provides insight into the success of SMMA, showing how social media marketing activities effectively improve brand equity by providing consumers with new values that traditional marketing media typically do not provide. It also contributes to various fields, including helping businesses and customers establish new communication channels.

According to the findings of the research, social media marketing activities have a large and significant effect on brand equity, and there is a high correlation between social media marketing dimensions and brand equity dimensions. As a result, the brand equity of brands that successfully implement social media marketing will increase. So brands with strong brand equity will often be the most successful brands in the market.

Hypotheses were developed and tested to answer the research questions. The hypotheses were inspired by various studies and theories in the field of marketing, namely social media marketing, in which the authors somehow evaluated the impact of social media marketing and the brand.

### **Practical Implications**

When asked to "specify a brand you follow on social media?" a considerable percentage of the respondents recalled "Gucci" (20%) and "H&M" and Louis Vuitton (18%), which is an interesting finding. Needless to say, these and other brands are among Morocco's best-performing firms, with high profits and a big base of committed and loyal consumers. This means that, as a result of their well-organized social media marketing, they have a higher brand equity, which leads customers to prefer these brands over others in the relevant product categories.

In the study, it has been determined that social media marketing has effects on brand equity. This is a critical step in the study because marketers must comprehend the benefits of effective social media marketing for their brands. Customers are flooded with constant targeted advertisements and new brands entering the market on a daily basis. Given Morocco's socioeconomic background, this is especially true. In order to receive a good return on their investment, brands must effectively express their values to customers. Given that reaching your target groups at reduced costs has never been easier, marketers must engage in social media marketing activities and include it into their marketing plan. Finally, this study demonstrates that social media marketing has a direct and considerable impact on brand equity.

### **Limitations and suggestions**

The writer thinks that this research is still far from ideal, and he acknowledges some limitations that he faced while performing it, which may have an impact on the research's result. During the data collection process, the writer became aware of the risk of respondent dishonesty. It's possible that some respondents were hesitant to complete the questionnaire completely. As a result, some responders may not have read all of the questions carefully, resulting in a dishonest answer. This circumstance may have an impact on the data gathering process and, as a result, on data analysis.

Furthermore, the outcomes of this study may vary depending on the industry and product category. Further research could look into specific social media sites, as different social media platforms have distinct features, and by looking into all of a company's accounts, researchers will have a greater knowledge of the true influence of social media marketing on brand equity. Furthermore, analyzing a broader range of businesses could provide more specific insight into the types of marketing required in various marketplaces. The outcome of one industry may differ from that of others. Given the numerous limitations related in conducting this study, the writer thinks that it can be enhanced further in order to develop better and more precise results. To begin, it may be more beneficial to provide incentives for hesitant respondents in future study in order to persuade them to change their minds. Incentives could come in the shape of gift cards or prizes. It will entice the respondent to fully participate in filling out the questionnaire. They are expected to answer all of the questions carefully because they are willing to fill out the questionnaire completely. As a result, the research will have more accurate data. Second, this research study focuses on only five aspects of social media marketing: entertainment, customization, interaction,

e-wom, and trendiness. The writer advises that in future research, the researcher should consider other associated criteria such as content sharing, accessibility, and credibility. The inclusion of additional elements could provide different research results and provide additional insight into the impact of social media marketing on brand equity. In conclusion, the current study shows that social media is becoming more popular in recent times. Individuals and businesses, in particular, are becoming more successful in their attempts to influence diverse consumers through social media and social networks.

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