Original Article

Impact of User Participation in Online Social Networking on their Response to Social Media Marketing

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Abstract

Social media marketers frequently use two types of marketing communications namely interactive digital advertising and virtual brand communities. This study examines how different types of motivation among users towards involvement in social media networks affect their responses en route to these marketing communications. The data was collected from students at various colleges and universities in Karachi. A paired t-test was conducted to compare user responses to Facebook advertising and the virtual brand community. Multiple regression analyses were led to examine the effect of user motivation on user response to advertising. The findings show that users tend to respond more favorably to marketing communication in virtual brand communities like online social capital positively influences trust, entertainment value, as well as user's attitudinal response. Moreover, the need for online bridging influences trust measures and users' intention to participate in the virtual brand community. In addition, online bonding negatively influences users' attitudes toward advertising and intention to participate in the virtual brand community. Moreover, implications are presented based on the outcomes of the study.

Keywords: Online Networking, Social Media Marketing, User Participation, Social Networking

1. INTRODUCTION

In the era of digitization, social media popularity is gaining momentum day by day which eventually encourages marketers to focus their attention on putting effort interested in communities by executing online social networking which helps in attracting and keeping current and potential customers. Moreover, social media (SM) particularly social networking sites (SNS), allow users of SM in the direction of managing, maintain as well as uphold others by building social relations, along with cultivating their social profiles (Arora & Sanni, 2019; Casaló, Flavián, & Guinalíu, 2008; Li, Larimo, & Leonidou, 2021; Nasir, Keserel, Surgit, & Nalbant, 2021).

In this background, marketers use endorsed communication time and again via employing its two kinds: firstly, interactive digital advertising, and secondly virtual brand community. This research explains how users of social media react to messages related to brands in the context of community-based and advertised-based content; however, these trends linked to social media marketing correspondingly tend to arouse apprehensions on the way to optimize the marketing message influence in the milieu of SNS. Thus, in SNS the intentions and social coherence at the social level in online networking sites perhaps lead to forming perceptions of promotion communication. Subsequently, SM relates principally to online networking among its users, so promotional messages are communicated in a user-tailored way with likes of their preferences as its social networking context reflects the views of optimized marketing practices.

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The most current promotion approach in social networking emphasizes the medium skin tone, for instance, social connections renovate into brand community channels intended for brand communication. Therefore, SM provides fitting podiums for viral promotions as well as marketing this standpoint disregards the motivations that encourage users to accept social media, along with the associated impact of social networks on the perception of users and responses (Beer, 2008; Kaur, Sharma, & Bhardwaj, 2022). The latest research in the context shows that experiencing social network sites impacts user response to shopping online and promotion through Social Network Sites (SNS).

Conventionally, it has been measured that participation in a brand's social media platform contributes to progressing the association between the brand and its customers (Andersen, 2005; (Molina-Prados, Munoz-Leiva, & Prados-Peña, 2021). Some researchers like Casaló Ariño, Flavian, and Guinalíu (2007) & Lima, Irigaray, & Lourenco(2019) have also proposed that involvement in these communities may nurture customer allegiance to the brand and community towards which it revolves. In these platforms, a vital result of participation is the aim of acquisitions and usage of the brand products in the coming time (Algesheimer, Dholakia, & Herrmann, 2005). More precisely, after customers participate energetically in a brand, fallouts in creating association as well as emotional bonds for the brand will rise (Casaló et al., 2008; Kaur, Paruthi, Islam, & Hollebeek, 2020). These emotional bonds arise due to having strong transactions (exchanges) with other participants in the community, and they are principally grounded on subjects connected to that particular brand for instance discussions regarding the accurate usage of the products or their specifications related to that preferred brand. Lastly, the accomplishment of these may well favor greater levels of customer affective allegiance to the brand and virtual community around which it is developed. For that reason, keeping all these deliberations, numerous researchers have considered that trust answers the landscape of a relationship. Indeed, according to the trust-commitment theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), a relationship having the trust of each user forms ample value so that the users will be loyal for a long time in the future. Furthermore, the larger value creation is due to the presence of trust while trust primarily is seen as a result of the portion of trust because of declining the doubt of an association. So, trust is delineated as a means by which involved parties will think in a social exchange that one will not abuse the weaknesses of another get-together (Chi, 2011).

Hence, the decline observed in the perceived risk seems to be a transaction or an association, a significant outcome from the course of trust creation. Users' obligation and involvement in an association will merely be probable if they have faith in the other party. So, if our consideration remains on virtual communities, henceforth trust can lead to favor integration of associates along with rising exchanges among the masses. Trust has placed a crucial influence when users experience social media messages on one side, without having complete information concerning the other user especially when the incomplete information is in hand on the other side. Therefore, this perhaps is the important aspect that exists in communities at the virtual level because a person or user generally does not have access en route for complete information to a major extent regarding all users. In these circumstances, trust assists in reducing some aspects of information unevenness that occurs between associates. Accordingly, bearing in adherence to all these concerns, it is realistic to consider that in a virtual community trust as well as members of that community may well be the most important predecessor of the user's intent to contribute in the direction of a virtual community (Coleman, 1988; Martínez-López et al., 2021).

Yet, the association between satisfaction and trust has not been examined in a virtual municipal, many researchers have claimed that in the circumstance of B2C associations; satisfaction has been seen as a factor having a positive impact on trust throughout the internet. According to the Disconfirmation of Expectations Model, satisfaction reflects the point to which prospects produced on prior events have been met. Satisfaction with the virtual community is established as users have definite potential related to the trustworthiness that exists among virtual community associates who are part of it. They recognize in what way the anticipations are encountered or not. So, if they are encountered, users will be motivated and feel more self-confident and will primarily sense that the presence of free members is trustable as well as proficient in meeting its assertions.

Even though social media marketing is growing, experiential study into its success is still inadequate. So, this research intends to see the efficacy of social media marketing utilizing connecting customer enthusiasm towards participating in online social networks through promotional interactions with social media (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; Nasir et al., 2021). Social capital along with psychological well-being are two types of user motivations that drive users to online social networking. Moreover, interactive digital publicity and virtual brand communities are two types of interactive online promotions. The above-mentioned factors are the aim of this research. Interactive digital publicity and virtual brand communities

are initially matched from the users' responses and then examined discretely. This study has examined the relationship between user motivations to use social media and compared user responses to marketing to interactive digital advertising and virtual brand community. For this study, Facebook was the study setting.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

User Motivation for Participation in Social Media Sites

Social Networking

The notion of Social networking sites (SNS) allows consumers in the direction of expressing, institute, as well as retain social relations with other like-minded users and acquaintances; and form their social networks (Zeng, Huang, & Dou, 2009; Borges-Tiago et al., 2019). That involves sharing day-to-day activities as well as communicating with members of the network; reacting to other users' stories and brand communications. In addition, a few researchers also present their arguments about social network usage that eventually enables users on the way to manage and participate in public communication taking place on the various brand platforms within the network (Gangadharbatla, 2008; Lin & Chu, 2021). Others also advocate that the fame of social media is the outcome of friends, keeping in touch with their old friends, or finding their old friends. To enhance and maintain a brand community and encourage brand loyalty, Social Networking is seen as an essential platform for the success of any company.

Social Capital

The results of all communications and relationship building take place in a social network between people and brands which eventually creates value and benefits for the members of the community. The social capital is produced by social connections and user engagement which are bridging, bonding, and maintained. The social capital is initiated by bridging the gap between users and their interests by offering them a community in which members share a few common interests and beliefs hence bonding is made between the communities on those common grounds that are finally maintained throughout the exchanges (Golan & Zaidner, 2008; Ghorbanzadeh, Khoruzhy, Safonova, & Morozov, 2021). Several researchers have identified that customers before interacting with social media brands are required to have felt like they have faith in the firm and like they are conversing with trust. Therefore, providing adequate data related to items has massive significance. Certainly, consumers also have the perception that the desire related to a product is required regarding the interaction with the company over social media platforms (Guha, Mandal, & Kujur, 2021; Hampton & Wellman, 2003). Additionally, identified consumers towards a specific degree, feeling associated with the product after getting involved with it through social networks, though, is not seen as the one leading towards interaction Close ones give references, views, and assessments are seen as the rising cause of customers to using social media. It consists of the greater influence over social media, which is experienced each time a person tweets again or shares on their Facebook feed. It has been argued that Social Networking does not increase bonds but enables the formulation and preservation of weak bonds, which boosts user social capital. In a research study of Social Networking Sites (SNS) conducted between students, a robust relationship exists between Facebook use as well as all three forms linked to social capital (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004; Venter, 2019). Moreover, a thorough predicted social capital buildup by the usage of Facebook, particularly linking social capital. Therefore the usage of Social Networking Sites allows for strong social associations and also inflates the measure and room of the experiences related to the user's social networks throughout usage. Firms need to benefit from the techniques and encourage consumers to share their views with other people. Creating a better program of advertising over social networks influences users to get motivated towards liking and inviting their acquaintances to the brand's community.

Psychological Well-Being (PSYWB)

The term psychological well-being is delineated by Diener, Suh, and Oishi (1997) & Johri and Anand (2022) as hedonic, eudaimonic happiness, and resilience which also includes the aspect of self-esteem as well as life satisfaction. According to Huppert (2009), positive emotions can be produced in an individual when there is good psychological well-being. An individual's social capital also produces a positive influence on psychological well-being (Helliwell & Putnam 2004). Internet use also enhances an individual's social capital and psychological well-being as explained by researchers like Bargh and

McKenna (2004); Chong, Zhang, Mak, & Pang (2015); Hampton and Wellman (2003) & Rideout and Fox (2018). The use of social media also improves users' psychological well-being (Gangadharbatla, 2008; Zywica & Danowski, 2008). It can be said that psychological well-being is a motivation for the use of social media sites that influences how the user uses social media sites.

Social Media Marketing

Brand Communication in Social Networking Sites

In the contemporary environment, according to Henning-Thurau et al. (2004) & Sheehan and Morrison (2009), social media is an innovative avenue for communication in marketing that predominantly creates more active user roles. Mulhern (2009); Kitchen and Burgmann (2015) & Kang (2021) propose that marketing communication practices should focus on understanding consumers rather than just communicating brand messages. Sheehan and Morrison (2009) note that marketers need to be creative in their marketing communication given that user-generated content is popular and dominating on social media sites. Winer (2009) proposes that brand messaging on social media should act as a personal communication channel to connect with users. Advertisers should strive to establish meaning and connection between brands and consumers. Social media sites can combine users' social interaction with emotional involvement (Cha,2009; Leite & Baptista, 2022).

Social connectivity

The success of a brand on social networking sites, to a large extent, depends on the kind of consumption experience it provides to users (Arya, Paul, & Sethi, 2022). A brand needs to customize its marketing communication that allow for consumer engagement and connectivity with the brand. This marketing communication must show how users, their connections, communities, and brands relate to each other.

User interactivity

In the Social Networking world, user interactivity refers to the interaction that takes place between an online user with other users, machines, and messages (Liu & Shrum, 2002). Particularly in SNS, users' actions on Social Media Platforms i.e.: Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, etc. when they share their activity in news feed space which encourages participation of their friends, brand communities, or even everyone on that platform to comment or react to that activity or vice versa (Hill & Moran, 2011).

Interactive Digital Advertising Versus Virtual Brand Community

Relating to the Digital revolution era, more and more brands are extending their reach on digital platforms to promote their brands by designing online promotion programs to employ consumer engagement and retain loyal customers (Holliman & Rowley, 2014). Specifically, user interactivity and social connectivity create a prolonged association between brands, and consumers are encouraged by brands through two means of marketing.

Interactive digital advertising

Various researchers suggest that most users tend to avoid advertisements placed on digital platforms and consider them relevant and have negative experiences. The 6 main beliefs of digital advertisement exist, and 5 of them correspond to knowing consumers and having insights into them before showing them any advertisement. Those 6 principles include the aspects of privacy as well as trust, along with relevance and experiential values of interactivity together with entertaining advertisement (Hoy & Milne, 2010). Thus, human-to-computer behavior is different from human-to-human behavior as well as gender differences also play an important role in digital advertisement as this differential behavior results in the distinctive experience of online shopping and social networking. With advances in technology and advertisement adaptability, digital advertisement gives control to brands in customizing the content of ads and targeting the relevant audience, but it still lacks one communication channel between users. The users' attitudinal and behavioral responses are influenced by the observed relevance and significance of the advertisement to the online communities.

Virtual brand community (VBC)

Rheingold (1993) initially circulated the idea of a virtual community (VC) and delineated it as a social group that is formed when some people communicate over the internet further elaborated that a VC is viewed as a community where a cluster of people with a mutual interest in a well-thought-out way

over the internet that interacts regularly. Therefore, having virtual communities created the possibility of getting rid of the barriers of space and time after the introduction of the Internet (Pavot & Diener, 1993). Hagel (1997) specifically argues that these communities assist brands in fulfilling four kinds of user needs, i.e.: partaking in resources, forming relationships as well as trading, and creating fantasies. Hence, building a virtual brand community enables brands to effectively communicate their messages to each user who willingly shows interest in the community. Members part of the communities and brands can perhaps use communities to update and sway their fellow members concerning products as well as brands by recognizing the needs and demands of existing customers (Kozinets, 2002). The active brand community will also lead to higher brand loyalty from members who are part of that community (Pempek, Yermolayeva, & Calvert, 2009). Virtual brand communities are powerful marketing communication tools because they enable two-way communications help the brand understand the needs of its customers and encourage brand loyalty (Casaló et al., 2008). In a virtual brand community, brand-consumer relations as well as connections between members are also an integral part of that community which enables long-term association between all members; eventually benefits the brand itself.

Research Questions

This study contributes to the existing but limited empirical literature on the measurement of social media marketing effectiveness. Additionally, this study measures this effectiveness by establishing a link between the type of motivation users have to participate on social network sites and two types of marketing communication used on social media sites. The following are the research questions of this study:

RQ1: Are there any differences in the way users of social networking sites respond to interactive digital advertising vs virtual brand communities?

RQ2: Does user motivation to participate in social media sites affect the user's responses to interactive digital advertising in social media?

RQ3: Does user motivation to participate in social media sites affect the user's responses to a virtual brand community in social media?

Conceptual Framework

Based on the available literature on user motivation for social media and marketing communication in social media, a conceptual framework was developed. User motivation to participate in social media sites motivates users' consumption of social media content. Perceived self-esteem and life satisfaction motivate a user's use of social networking sites to generate social ties. Social media marketing can be defined as brand communication on social networking sites. This study targeted two types of social media marketing: social media advertising and virtual brand communities. The former enables user interaction with marketing communication while the latter is focused on brand-oriented social relations and two-way communication with consumers. Both are distinctive platforms of brand communications. Users' response to social media marketing is influenced by their motivation to participate in social media sites. To measure users' responses, this study used multiple measures including trust, global perception of marketing related to social media, user's attitude to social media marketing as well as brand, and user participation intention.

3. METHODOLOGY

The data was collected from students at various colleges and universities in Karachi. Facebook was the most popular social media site used by the students. The data was collected using an online questionnaire. All data were collected for one month (October 1 to October 30, 2023). The final sample consisted of 293 participants. Of the participants, 52.5 % were male and 47.5% were female. Therefore, the sample was balanced concerning gender participation. In terms of age distribution, a wide majority belonged to 18 to 25 years (58.5%) and 26 to 35 years (31.3%).

Measures

This study adapted established scales to measure the variables in the conceptual model of this study. The research instrument was divided into two types of responses: the response to the user's need for social capital and physiological well-being and the user's response to social media marketing. The term "online" was added because this study focused on online social networking (Williams, 2006), and the term "virtual brand community" was replaced with "Brand's Facebook Page" as it was easy for the target

audience to understand as these communities are also called the brand "brand pages", "fan pages", "groups" or "profile pages" etc. (Rosenthal & Brito, 2017). Participants' online social capital needs and physiological well-being were assessed on 5- a 5-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree) and the scale included a total of 31 items. Likewise, participants' response towards Facebook advertising and virtual brand community was measured using 3 categories: perceptions, attitudes, and intention to participate. The user's perception was measured using the same 5-point Likert scale. For measuring dimensions of trust (Reliability, Usefulness, Affect, Willingness to rely on) we adapted the ADTRUST scale (Soh, Reid, & King, 2009) and for measuring dimensions of global perception (Informative, Entertaining, Irritating) we adapted the scale of Cheng et. al., (2009). To measure attitudinal responses, we used a 7-point semantic differential scale (Mau, Silberer, & Constien, 2008) whereas intention to participate in Advertising and Brand Community was measured using the 7-point differential scale as well.

Table 4. User Responses to Social Media Marketing- Canonical Analysis of Measures

Construct	Cronbach's alpha		No. of Items
	Advertising	Virtual Brand Community	
Perception			
Reliability	.80	.75	6
Usefulness	.82	.73	3
Affect	.84	.62	3
Willingness to rely on	.84	.76	4
Informative	.91	.80	6
Entertaining	.87	.76	6
Irritating	.77	.87	5
Attitude Toward			
Advertising / virtual community	.92	.94	7
Brand	.94	.94	7
Participation Intention	.90	.91	5

Results

A paired t-test was conducted to compare user responses to Facebook advertising and the virtual brand community. The results are summarized in Table 5. The overwhelming number of respondents responded to the virtual brand community more favorably than an interactive digital advertisement. The analysis suggests that the respondents thought that brands' Facebook pages were more reliable, useful, affective, informative, entertaining, and less irritating than a Facebook advertisement. In addition, their attitude towards advertisements was less favorable than their attitude towards Facebook pages. The users' intention to participate in the advertisement was less likely than virtual brand communities for advertising (Mean) was 3.12, virtual brand community (Mean) was 4.43, paired t = -9.668, p=0.000). Therefore, the results propose that perceived advertising among users as well as the virtual brand community in the milieu of SM marketing is displayed contrarily.

Table 5. Facebook Advertising VS Virtual Brand Community (VBC)- Comparisons Linked To User Responses (UR)

	Advertising		VBC			
UR	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Paired t	P-value
Perceptions						
Trust						
Reliability	3.29	.69	3.75	.62	-9.668	.000
Usefulness	3.25	.83	3.67	.71	-6.137	.000
Affect	3.14	.87	3.62	.69	-14.664	.000
Willingness to rely on	3.17	.77	3.68	.70	-8.580	.000
Global	3.18	.82	3.57	.64	-6.717	.000
Informative	3.18	.75	3.57	.60	-7.190	.000
Entertaining	3.41	.71	2.99	.88	7.626	.000
Irritating	3.29	.69	3.75	.62	-9.668	.000
Attitudes Toward						
Advertising/virtual community	3.62	.93	4.54	.83	-10.334	.000
The brand	3.79	.87	4.32	.74	-10.497	.000
Participation Intention	3.12	1.17	4.43	1.13	-9.668	.000

I*p (< .05) and **p (< .01).

Several multiple regression analyses were led to examine the effect of user motivation on user response to advertising. For user responses, aspects of online social capital need and PSYWB were cast off as regressors. Separate analyses were conducted to examine the variance of the executed advertisement on Facebook related to factors such as trust perception as well as global perception along with attitudinal responses, and participation intention. Moreover, table 6A displays the summary of the analyses.

User motivation significantly influenced all measures of trust, especially for online bonding needs as well as maintained social capital. However, bridging had no impact on trust perceptions. For psychological well-being, life satisfaction significantly impacted trust perceptions. However, usefulness (β = .039) and affect (β = .033) had no impact. Life satisfaction positively influenced trust perceptions of Advertising reliability (β = -.102), affect (β = -.029), and willingness to rely on (β = -.059) did not influence trust perceptions of advertising. It seems that respondents with higher self-esteem considered Facebook advertising as not a more reliable platform.

From the perception of the global side, the findings show that the motivation of users had a noteworthy influence on all global measures including informative, entertaining, and irritating values. In addition, the effect of psychological well-being was of special interest and has been tested on three global perception aspects. Life satisfaction significantly affected the irritation of participants (β = .161, p<.01). The need for online social capital significantly affected all three global measures. Bonding affected all three global measures while bridging and maintaining social capital significantly affected irritating and informative/entertaining respectively.

The study found the mixed effects of user motivation on users' attitudinal response and intention to participate. User motivation influenced attitudes toward advertising and intention to participate. The need for maintained social capital had not influenced attitudes in the direction of advertising brands. Bridging had not been an influencing factor that influenced attitudes toward advertising.

Table 6: Facebook Advertising- Related to Regression Analysis of User Responses

	Need for online Social Capital (β)			PSYWB (β)			
User Responses	Bridging	Bonding	Maintained	Self-esteem	Life satisfaction	R2	F
Perceptions							
Trust							
Reliability	.137*	.193**	.196**	-.102	.197**	.240	18.079
Usefulness	.035	.267**	.214**	.007	.039	.194	13.745
Affect	-.083	.235**	.214**	-.029	.033	.121	7.910
Willingness to rely on	.041	.312**	.245**	-.059	.155**	.292	23.575
Global							
Informative	-.034	.168*	.236**	.095	.031	.150	10.119
Entertaining	.056	.227**	.145*	.046	.065	.152	10.282
Irritating	.132*	.216**	.118	-.046	.161**	.182	12.694
Attitudes							
Toward advertising/virtual community	.129	-.164*	.111	-.221**	-.026	.115	7.432
Toward the brand	.262**	-.279**	.074	-.162*	.091	.171	13.006
Participation Intention	.207**	-.036	-.159*	-.208	.245**	.091	5.717

Note: *p (< .05), **p (< .01), ***p (.001)

Furthermore, the effect of user motivation on user response to advertising through multiple regression analyses was examined. For user response, the aspects of the need for online social capital as well as PSYWB were used as regressors. Separate analyses were conducted to examine the variance in the virtual brand community related to trust perception as well as global perception, and attitudinal responses, along with participation intention. The results are shown in Table 7.

User motivation significantly influenced all four dimensions of trust. The need for online bridging influenced reliability, usefulness, and readiness to depend on the VBC. Therefore, the need for preserved social capital had a positive and significant influence on reliability and readiness to rely on it. Moreover, online bonding needs did not influence any trust measure. The need for maintained social capital enhanced reliability and willingness to rely on but did not affect reliability and influence perceptions. Furthermore, reliability perceptions were influenced by the need for online social capital except bonding. Affect perceptions were not affected by the need for online social capital.

Psychological well-being affected the measures of trust in the virtual brand community with few

exceptions. Self-esteem had a negative and significant effect on usefulness and willingness to rely on it. Life satisfaction enhanced all trust perceptions except affected perception of the virtual brand community on Facebook. For global perception, the effect pattern was somewhat similar. The need for online social capital did not affect all global measures. Specifically, bridging enhanced entertaining perception, and bonding enhanced irritation perception. The need for online social capital significantly and positively influenced the user's perceived entertainment of the virtual brand community. In addition, the need for online social capital did not influence the informative value of the virtual brand community. Self-esteem significantly and negatively influenced the user's perceived irritation i.e., users with high self-esteem considered the VBC less irritating (β = -.180, p<.05). Furthermore, users experiencing greater life satisfaction perceived the VBC as informative and more (b= .353, p<.01) and entertaining (b= .157, p<.01).

Concerning the impact of user motivation on users' attitudinal response and intention to participate in the virtual brand community, the need for online bridging had a significant and positive influence on both attitudinal response and intention to participate. In contrast, the need for online bonding had significant but negative influences on both responses. The need for maintained social capital had no impact on both attitudinal response and intention to participate. Contrary to previous findings, self-esteem had a significant negative influence on users' attitudinal response and intention to participate. Life satisfaction did not influence the user's attitudinal response but did enhance the intention to participate.

Table 7. User Responses Regression Analysis - VBC

User Responses	Need for online Social Capital (β)			PSYWB (β)		R2	F
	Bridging	Bonding	Maintained	Self-esteem	Life satisfaction		
Perceptions							
Trust							
Reliability	.197**	.000	.177**	-.096	.307**	.261	20.174
Usefulness	.210**	-.074	.067	-.120*	.342**	.220	16.162
Affect	.046	-.028	-.108	.050	.044	.010	.571
Willingness to rely on	.166**	-.089	.138*	-.133*	.297**	.199	14.228
Global							
Informative	.069	-.019	.033	-.103	.353**	.147	9.879
Entertaining	.322**	-.074	.111	-.044	.157**	.194	13.736
Irritating	.018	.159*	.086	-.180**	.090	.062	3.781
Attitudes							
Toward advertising/virtual community	.242**	-.198**	.104	-.331**	.074	.253	19.393
Toward the brand	.262**	-.279**	.074	-.162**	.091	.185	13.006
Participation Intention	.298**	-.236**	.072	-.185**	.217**	.244	18.748

Note: *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p = .001

4. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The results of our study indicate that the responses of users towards advertising vary from their replies to virtual brand communities. The results of the paired t-test showed users' responses were more favorable towards virtual brand communities than advertising displayed on Facebook. Users perceived virtual brand communities as more trustworthy and less irritating. Users also have a better attitude towards virtual brand communities and brands these communities present. However, it is still not clear whether this difference in users' response toward brands can be attributed to the type of social media marketing and the communication platform used. In any case, users of social media appear more favorable towards virtual brand communities and are willing to participate in them. One possible reason behind this user response could be the content provided in these communities. Users use this content to satisfy their different needs (Gangadharbatla, 2008; Lin & Chu, 2021). Some such needs could be the need to socialize and information seeking (Dickey & Lewis, 2012). The most significant reason for user participation in social media sites is social networking. As such, users may respond differently to advertising as well as brand communities. Moreover, the findings of our study indicated that user motivation had mixed effects on user responses to SM marketing efforts.

The online bonding need was the most significant regressor of users' response to advertising. It was followed by maintaining social capital and the need for online bridging. One explanation for this finding could be that users' participation in social media is motivated by their need for online social capital. To maintain social capital, users can rely on user-generated content that is considered credible and reliable.

Users may generally ignore advertising content since it is developed by the advertisers and considered less reliable and credible. This content might attract users looking for social bonding regardless the content is reliable and credible or not. The findings of this study show that social media users seeking online bonding and social capital perceive advertising as more trustworthy and entertaining. Social media users seeking online bridging appear to have a higher intention of participation in advertising. One interesting finding was that the need for bonding social capital had a negative influence on users' attitudes toward the parent brand of advertising. One plausible explanation for this user attitude could be that its advertisement and not the brand that is valued by users for social bonding and emotional engagement.

Concerning the impact of the need for online social on users' response to virtual brand communities, the findings of this study suggest that the need for online social capital positively influences trust, and entertainment value, as well as users' attitudinal response. Moreover, the need for online bridging was the most significant influencer of trust measures and users' intention to participate in the virtual brand community. One important finding was the negative influence of online bonding on users' attitudes towards advertising and intention to participate in the virtual brand community. One possible explanation of this finding is that users looking for online bonding tend to be inclined to use virtual brand communities aimed at building emotional engagement nonetheless are not gratified with the content offered by the community. This dissatisfaction may arise because the content is not good enough to endure personal relevance along with that creation related to value for social bonding (Kimmel & Kitchen, 2014). It can be said that the sort of social media marketing (SMM) and the provided content complicates the effect of the need for online social capital on users' responses to the virtual brand community.

The user's psychological well-being had mixed effects on the responses of users toward advertising as opposed to virtual brand communities. Therefore, user self-esteem influences the user's response to the virtual brand community with few exceptions. Users with high self-images perceive virtual brand communities as less useful and show a lower willingness to rely on them. Users with high self-esteem consider the virtual brand community less irritating and exhibit unfavorable attitudes towards advertising and intentions to participate in the community. Life satisfaction influences users' trust perceptions of advertising and evaluation of advertising. The life satisfaction of users positively impacts their perception of the reliability and usefulness of virtual brand communities, and they are more willing to rely on these communities. Consumers with high levels of life satisfaction find marketing in virtual communities more informative and entertaining and exhibit favorable intention to participate.

The findings of this study show that psychological well-being has less impact on users' evaluation of advertising and their intention to participate in it. However, psychological well-being is more influential in predicting user response in the virtual brand community. Users' self-esteem negatively influences users' response to the virtual brand community while life satisfaction generates a positive effect. A high level of self-esteem negatively influences trust perception because users perceive social media marketing in the virtual brand community as less useful. High self-esteem also negatively influences users' evaluation of the community and brand and reduces their intention to participate in the community. These findings imply that the use of collaborative content in virtual communities can attract users looking for more control over the content provided by the community (Daugherty et al. 2011; Prince 2011)

Limitations

Like other studies we also have some limitations such as the sample executed in our study was comprised of students at various colleges and universities in a single city i.e., Karachi. Another sample limitation pertains to the age group as most of the respondents were 35 or below years of age. Students of colleges and universities usage of social media to attain bridging social capital that is associated with weak bonds among old connections as explicated by Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe (2007). In addition, older users are in search of social as well as emotional support on social media by interacting with other users. As such, the results of this study may not be generalizable.

Implications

For social media marketing practice as well as research our study findings have implications. The sample recruited for this study was balanced in terms of gender and therefore minimized the threat of bias in a sample toward one (gender) group. According to Chi (2011), for social media use, female users might vary from male users in their motivation. As such, female users are expected to behave and

respond to social media marketing in a social networking context differently from male users. This study extends the work of Chi (2011) to advance our knowledge of gender differences in advertising media consumption.

The marketers must also focus on the way interactive (digital) advertising along with brand communities that exist virtually can primarily do for users and potential customers. Users use both marketing communication platforms differently when seeking to create and maintain online social networks. Since the brand community offers two-way communication, users perceive and use its content differently. In addition, users eagerly show trust as well as contribute to a community link to the brand. Users' motivation to participate in social media significantly influences their responses to advertising and brand communities. Users have different needs aimed at online social capital and well-being at a psychological level and behave differently to advertising and the brand community. Therefore, marketers should make content that is specific to advertising and virtual brand communities, and that content should be relevant to the needs and wants of users.

Future Research Areas

Future research in the same context will enable researchers to further investigate the effectiveness of interactive digital marketing and virtual brand communities. Future studies can also investigate how users of all age groups differ in their points of view by having a larger sample size. Future studies can also use this study's conceptual framework to apply in different geographical and contextual settings to examine its generalizability. Moreover, future research could also inspect the nature and type of content that these advertisers and brand communities should offer to the users.

Competing Interests

The authors did not declare any competing interest.

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