

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ
School of Business and Economics

**MEASURING CONSUMER BRAND ENGAGEMENT
ON SOCIAL MEDIA WITH ANNOYANCE AS A
MODERATOR**

Master's Thesis, Marketing

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ABSTRACT

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<p>Abstract</p> <p>Consumer brand engagement (CBE) is indisputably an emerging topic in the marketing literature, yet the amount of research on its antecedents and outcomes is limited. Besides academics, it has also gained traction among practitioners who have started to experiment with new methods to engage consumers with their brands. Most of these marketing efforts have started to take place in social media, as the number of consumers who can be reached with services such as Facebook, Instagram or YouTube is increasing exponentially. While the corporate investments in social media are increasing, many marketing practitioners have trouble reaching the positive outcomes of consumer brand engagement suggested by the academics, such as increase in brand usage intent or spreading of word of mouth between consumers. One of the proposed reasons for this is annoyance experienced by the consumers due to repeated exposure of social media content published by the brands they initially are fond of.</p> <p>This study aims to validate the CBE scale developed by Hollebeek, Glynn and Brodie (2014), while expanding the model by proposing word of mouth as a consequential construct to CBE, in addition to brand usage intent. Furthermore, annoyance is introduced to the research model both as a moderating and predictive factor. Data of 161 responses was gathered with an online survey for quantitative research purposes. The analysis was done with structural equation modelling using SmartPLS 3.2 software.</p> <p>The results of the study demonstrate that consumer involvement precedes CBE, which consists of cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions. On the other hand, CBE positively affects brand usage intent and word of mouth in social media context. Annoyance was not found to moderate the paths between CBE and its outcomes; however, it has a direct negative effect to word of mouth.</p> <p>As a conclusion, this study proposes theoretical and practical implications regarding the subject and the results are in line with previous CBE studies. CBE is proven to drive positive corporate outcomes in social media context, while the possible negative aspects related to social media marketing should also be considered.</p>	
Keywords Consumer brand engagement, Social media, Brand usage intent, Word of mouth, Annoyance	
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research background and context

Customer engagement (CE) has undeniably been one of the major subjects of interest in the realm of 21st century academic marketing literature. Different definitions of CE are numerous and research papers regarding engagement and its related concepts have been published with an increasing pace, although the concept of CE was virtually nonexistent in the marketing literature little over a decade ago (Brodie, Hollebeek, Jurić & Ilić 2011). The reason for the growing interest on CE especially in the field of branding and relationship marketing is that it has been viewed as a means to enhance consumer relationships as well as firm profitability and growth (De Vries & Carlson 2014). Furthermore, engagement plays a key role in understanding corporate performance and customer outcomes (Bowden 2009). These observations have naturally gained traction among marketing practitioners, from whose point of view customer engagement can be defined as repeated interactions strengthening customer's emotional, psychological or physical investments in a brand (Sedley 2010).

Within the wider context of customer engagement, consumer brand engagement (CBE) has been one of the prevailing concepts in the recent marketing literature (Brodie, Ilić, Jurić, & Hollebeek 2013; Hollebeek, Glynn & Brodie 2014; Dwivedi 2015). Besides academics, it seems to be "the new hot topic" also among practitioners who are discussing new ways to engage consumers with their brands (Gambetti, Biraghi, Schultz & Graffigna 2016). This increasing academic and business interest regarding CBE is largely driven by the empirical evidence on brand engagement's positive effect on desired consumer outcomes, such as brand usage intention and self-brand connection (Hollebeek et al. 2014), brand loyalty (De Vries & Carlson 2014; Dwivedi 2015; Leckie, Nyadzayo & Johnson 2016) as well as trust and word of mouth (Islam & Rahman 2016). However, while the rising awareness on CBE has taken root among marketers and business decision makers on a practical level, they are reported to have difficulties in allowing consumers to engage with their brands and only expecting engagement as an outcome of their branding efforts, thus ignoring the underlying consumer centric nature of brand engagement (Gambetti et al. 2016). Such issues not only drive the need for further knowledge on CBE in general, but also more knowledge is required on the possible negative aspects that are related to consumer-brand relationships and one-sided brand management efforts (Knittel, Beurer & Berndt 2016).

Social media has significantly impacted, if not revolutionized the field of marketing communications, as an ever-increasing amount of peer-to-peer communications take place in online social networking platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Youtube (Hutter, Hautz, Dennhardt & Füller 2013). In April 2016, Facebook alone had nearly 2 billion active users (Statista

2017a). With such a vast userbase, interactively generated nature and multidimensional, consumer-to-consumer and business-to-consumer communicational properties, social media is one of the most flourishing environments for CE activities (De Vries & Carlson 2014). From the marketer's point-of-view, this means that the potential exposure to firms' marketing efforts and brand related interactions occur more and more often on social media (Hutter et al. 2013). As companies have rushed into social media with their branded entities, such as brand Facebook pages or Instagram profiles, many marketing practitioners have had trouble understanding the underlying processes which would turn the abundance of online consumer interactions into favorable business outcomes like enhanced sales, profitability or loyalty (Divol, Edelman & Sarrazin 2012).

In brief, CBE has been defined as consumer's psychological state that occurs in interactive, co-creative experiences with a focal brand (Brodie et al. 2011; Leckie et al. 2016). It has been argued to positively affect organizational performance both in offline (Dwivedi 2015; Leckie et al. 2016) and online (Brodie et al. 2013; Islam & Rahman 2016) contexts. However, Hollebeek et al. (2014) state that empirical research on consumer brand engagement has been limited thus leaving the concept and especially its measurement in a need for further research. Although the literature on CBE has been expanding significantly, even the authors of latest studies suggest that while conceptual or exploratory qualitative research on consumer engagement is rather numerous, few studies have applied a quantitative approach and very few have reported valid and reliable measurement scales (Dessart, Veloutsou & Morgan-Thomas 2016). Furthermore, empirical research on engagement drivers and outcomes is an underresearched area (Leckie et al. 2016).

As companies increasingly invest in social media advertising, Knoll (2016) calls for further research on unintended effects of advertising, such as discontent with social media pages. Indeed, 37 percent of Americans who see annoying advertisements encounter them on social media. What is remarkable is that 91 % of the population who has perceived being flooded with online advertisements say that they will take some type of action when it occurs, such as stop using the advertised product, tell their friends about it or even completely boycott the brand. (InsightsOne 2013.) According to Hutter et al. (2013), annoyance towards the content published by brands on social media is a highly relevant topic that needs more research in order to better understand how it affects consumer behaviour in social media environment. Thus, this study aims to apply and validate previously presented CBE measurement scale empirically, but also to introduce annoyance as a moderator and measure its hypothetical effect on CBE outcomes in the context of social media.

1.2 Research objectives and questions

The aim of this study is to gain more insight on how CBE manifests in social media context. The key objective of this study is to test and validate the relationships in the CBE measurement scale developed by Hollebeek et al. (2014), as the authors have called for further scale validation with varying online contexts and applying different brands and other constructs in relation to CBE. This study expands upon this work and proposes word of mouth as a consequential construct to CBE on social media, as also suggested by e.g. Islam and Rahman (2016). The focus is on the relationships between consumer involvement and multidimensional CBE consisting of cognitive, emotional and behavioral constructs, as well as the relationships between CBE and its outcomes. Another objective of this study is to introduce the construct of annoyance to the established CBE framework and measure how it affects and moderates the effect on engagement outcomes. Therefore, the following research questions are utilized as a basis for the research.

Primary research question:

- *How does consumer brand engagement explain brand usage intent and word of mouth in social media context?*

Secondary research questions:

- *How does annoyance affect brand usage intent and word of mouth in social media context?*
- *Does annoyance weaken the relationships between consumer brand engagement and its proposed outcomes, brand usage intent and word of mouth, in social media context?*

Quantitative approach was chosen in this study as it aims to identify causal relationships through structurally collected data and test theory and models (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2009). The hypotheses for the research model and the questions in the online questionnaire that was used for data collection are derived from existing marketing literature. Finally, the data was analysed with IBM SPSS Statistics 24 and SmartPLS 3.2 softwares.

1.3 Research structure

The study is divided into five chapters. While chapter one serves as a high-level introduction to the broader context of this study and presents the research questions, chapter two discusses the theoretical framework in more detail and elaborates the key concepts, such as CBE, its antecedents and outcomes.

Hypotheses regarding each key construct are developed and proposed at the end of their respective sections. Chapter three regards the methodological choices made in this study and discusses the process of data collection. The results of the empirical research are reported in the fourth chapter. Finally, theoretical and managerial contributions are discussed in chapter five, followed by the limitations of this research and considerations for future research. Figure 1 visualizes the structure of the research.

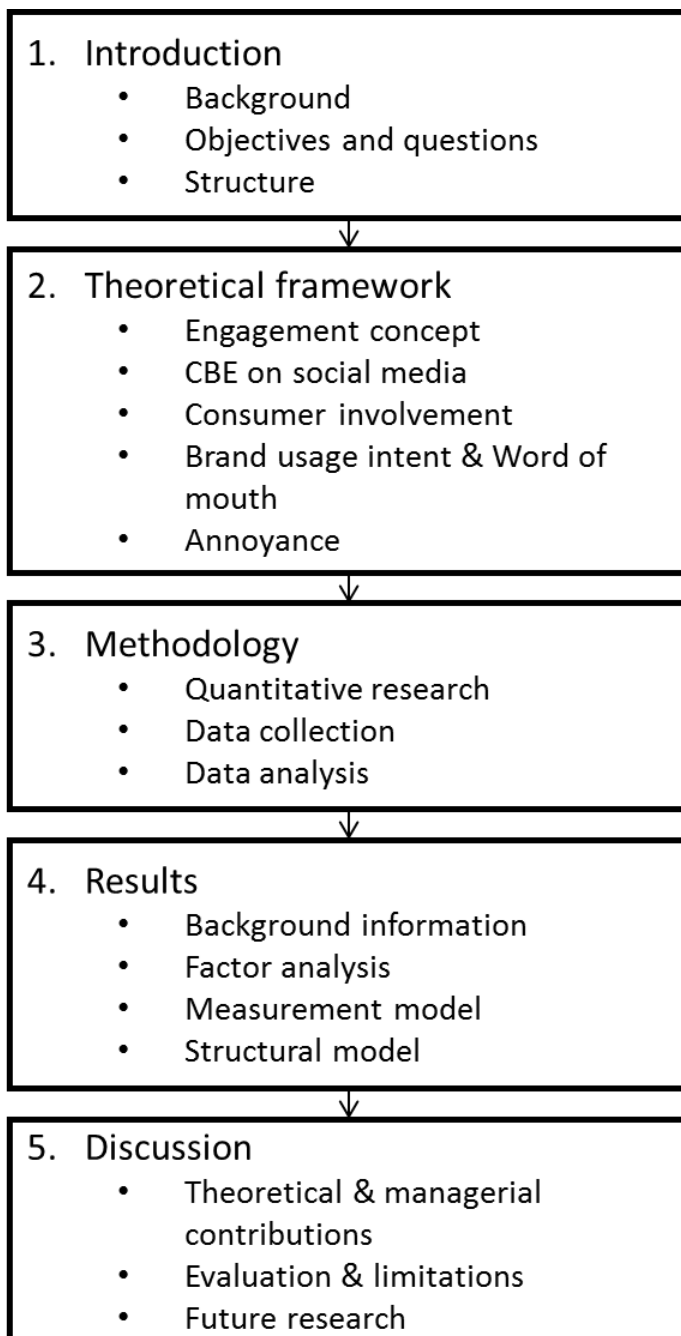


FIGURE 1 Structure of the research

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Engagement concept in marketing literature

Engagement is a motivational state that stems from customers' interactive experiences with objects such as brands and organizational activities (Brodie et al. 2011). Such definition has been widely cited in the marketing literature, in which engagement is considered a fairly new but a steadily expanding field of study (Brodie et al. 2011, Hollebeek et al. 2014). The concept of engagement has been applied to a variety of marketing contexts, thus resulting in an equal variety of engagement definitions: customer engagement, brand engagement, consumer engagement, media engagement and online engagement, with customer engagement being perhaps the cornerstone of all the engagement concepts (van Doorn, Lemon, Mittal, Nass, Pick, Pirner & Verhoef 2010; Brodie et al. 2011). The inconsistency in terms suggests that there may be a certain lack of agreement in the terminology, but also in the conceptualization of engagement and its object; where the subject is often either "consumer" or "customer", the object of engagement has seen significantly more diversity ranging from brands and brand communities to products (Dessart et al. 2016). Nevertheless, the multiplicity of different engagement concepts underlines the growing state of engagement-based research in today's marketing (Hollebeek et al. 2014).

Although this study focuses on consumer brand engagement in the context of social media, the concept of engagement is first discussed by focusing on customer engagement for two reasons. Firstly, the underlying framework and its context are better understood by focusing on a broader definition. Secondly, both consumer brand engagement and customer engagement share a highly identical conceptual scope despite of the differing names of the concepts (Hollebeek et al. 2014).

Brodie et al. (2011) argue that although "engagement" has been a widely researched subject among psychology, sociology, organizational behaviour and political science academics, "customer engagement" has lacked an accepted definition in the marketing literature. The authors ground the conceptual framework of customer engagement on service-dominant (S-D) logic, a perspective first conceptualized by Vargo and Lusch (2004). S-D logic emphasizes the role of consumers in the co-creation of value and personalized experiences, as they practice proactive and explicit dialogue and interaction with organizations (Vargo & Lusch 2004). The concepts of customer engagement and consumer engagement take into account the interactive consumer-brand dynamics (Hollebeek et al. 2014) which emphasize the behavioral traits of contemporary, active consumers (Javornik & Mandelli 2012). By viewing consumers as value co-creators, S-D logic serves as a theoretical basis for consumer involvement and participation which also affect customer engagement and consumer brand engagement (Leckie et al. 2016).

In order to answer the need for a more rigorous and encompassing definition of customer engagement, Brodie et al. (2011) concluded a multi-discipline literature review followed by an expert panel consisting of customer engagement academics. The outcome was a definition consisting of five fundamental propositions that align the field of customer engagement and are empirically supported by other studies.

“FP1: CE reflects a psychological state, which occurs by virtue of interactive customer experiences with a focal agent / object within specific service relationships” (Brodie et al. 2011)

In accordance with the first proposition, van Doorn et al. (2010) argued that interactive experiences in a service relationship cover more than individual transactions and therefore encompass pre- and post-purchase phenomenological experiences. As such, interactive consumer experiences may extend to interaction between consumers and brands and consumer-to-consumer interaction in brand-related media (van Doorn et al. 2010). Therefore, objects which experiences are associated with may be for example brands, activities and other customers. In fact, brand being the potential object of engagement differentiates customer engagement from the neighbouring concept of customer involvement as the latter requires a consumption object, which is generally defined as a product category. (Mollen & Wilson 2010; Goldsmith & Emmert 1991.)

“FP2: CE states occur within a dynamic, iterative process of service relationships that cocreates value” (Brodie et al. 2011)

Co-created value and service relationships are derived from S-D logic, according to which interactive, co-creative processes are of importance (Vargo & Lusch 2008) and thus the consumer is put at the centre of the value co-creation process (Leckie et al. 2016). Engagement process can be seen as a dynamic cycle where outcomes of customer engagement can act as antecedents in following customer engagement process iteration, with a varying intensity and complexity towards the focal object of customer engagement (Brodie et al. 2011).

“FP3: CE plays a central role within a nomological network of service relationships” (Brodie et al. 2011)

According to Brodie et al. (2011), customer engagement is a relational concept which utilizes other relational concepts associated with a broader network of service relationships, such as “involvement”, “participation”, “trust”, “self-brand connection” and “commitment”. These concepts represent antecedents and consequences of customer engagement; an area where other academic works regarding customer engagement had previously been found lacking. Furthermore, interactive and experiential factors discussed in FP2 differentiate the concept of customer engagement from other relational concepts. (Brodie et al. 2011). However, when the relational concepts are discussed in the context of engagement, engagement and its antecedents and consequences as well as related concepts should be clearly identified. Timing of interactions and

dynamics plays a critical role when such concepts are differed; for example “customer satisfaction” can be viewed as an outcome of an interaction, whereas “engagement” studies the dynamics that take place during interactions with a brand (Hollebeek et al. 2014).

Several customer engagement studies have supported FP3 and Brodie et al.’s view that engagement is anteceded by motivational drivers (e.g. van Doorn et al. 2010; Hollebeek 2011; Muntinga, Moorman & Smith 2011; De Vries & Carlson 2014) and interactive experiences which satisfy different customer needs (Calder, Malthouse & Schaedel 2009; Jahn & Kunz 2012). Studies that have focused on the link between engagement and antecedent motivations have often applied uses and gratifications theory (U&G) introduced by Katz (1959) as a baseline theory. Instead of examining media’s effect on people, U&G focuses on examining how and why people use media (Katz 1959). U&G proposes that media consumption is purposive and media consumers are actively looking for fulfilling their needs via a variety of uses (Luo, Chea & Chen 2011). In past research, the fulfilment of needs via media consumption has often been referred as “motivations”, which has later been conceptualized further as “antecedents” and “consequences” of media behaviour (Muntinga et al. 2011). Rather than being passive recipients, U&G assumes that people are active and selective users of media and therefore it is still viewed as a relevant approach for researching the use of new media, such as the Internet and social media (Jahn & Kunz 2012; Raacke & Bonds-Raacke 2008; Courtois, Mechent, De Marez & Verleye 2009). Perhaps the most well-known categorization of gratifications in the U&G framework has been presented by McQuail (1983), who distinguishes four different gratifications that antecede media consumption: entertainment, integration and social interaction, personal identity and information. Several studies (e.g. Calder et al. 2009; Muntinga et al. 2011; Courtois et al. 2009) have also argued that McQuail’s 1983 framework is applicable to social media context, although it has been originally directed to traditional media consumption.

Despite the rising popularity of gratification-based motivations being used as antecedents of CBE, Hollebeek et al. (2014) adopted an approach focusing on the interactively generated nature of CBE and consequently selected consumer involvement as the key antecedent of CBE. Although consumer media consumption and gratification seeking are active processes, they are not focused on the *interactive* customer-brand relationship where value is *co-created*, as proposed by the FP2. Furthermore, a high level of consumer involvement translates to consumers wanting to feel more connected to the brand in addition to mere consumption (Zaichowsky 1985). Thus, involvement is proposed as the key antecedent of CBE in this study and discussed in further depth in the section “Consumer involvement”.

“FP4: CE is a multidimensional concept subject to a context- and/or stakeholder-specific expression of relevant cognitive, emotional and behavioral dimensions” (Brodie et al. 2011)

Several engagement studies have previously approached the concept by emphasizing a single dimension of engagement: either its cognitive components (Blumenfeld & Meece 1988; Guthrie & Cox 2001), emotional dimensionality (Roberts & Davenport 2002) and/or behavioral aspects of engagement (van Doorn et al. 2010). However, Brodin et al. (2011) argue for aligning the different approaches to engagement under a multidimensional concept where all three are considered due to the rich conceptual scope of engagement in the field of marketing. Hollebeek et al. (2011) defined customer brand engagement as a state of mind that is shaped by certain levels of cognitive, emotional and behavioral activity in brand interactions. Furthermore, Hollebeek et al. (2014) proposed a model where engagement can be measured with concepts derived from cognition, affection and behaviour dimensions. This particular or a comparable multidimensional approach has been utilized in the majority of the recent consumer brand engagement studies (Leckie et al. 2016). Furthermore, the existence of the three main dimensions of engagement have been supported in later studies where the model has been subjected to re-conceptualization (Dessart et al. 2016).

“FP5: CE occurs within a specific set of situational conditions generating differing CE levels” (Brodie et al. 2011)

Situational conditions relate to the contextual and individual nature of the concept where interactive experiences are required between the engagement subject and object. Differing customer engagement levels have been argued to form a continuum, where the state of customer engagement might vary between low and high engagement. The customer may also be in a “nonengaged” state where no cognitive, emotional or behavioral engagement is experienced during specific interactive experiences with a focal engagement object. (Brodie et al. 2011.)

On the basis of these five fundamental propositions, customer engagement can be deemed as comprehensively defined (Brodie et al. 2011). Nevertheless, other authors have contributed to the engagement concept in the marketing literature with their own works. Similarly to Hollebeek et al. (2014), multidimensional approaches to customer engagement have been presented by measuring vigor, dedication, absorption and interaction (Patterson, Yu & de Ruyter 2006) or vigor, absorption and interaction (Dwivedi 2015). These components are derived from psychology literature as customer engagement can be seen as a psychological state, where customer’s physical, emotional and cognitive states in the customer-organization relationship are portrayed by customer engagement (Patterson et al. 2006). Calder et al. (2009) proposed an eight-dimensional view of engagement in their online engagement study, in which the authors measured engagement as a second-order construct which occurs via “first-order experiences”, i.e. beliefs regarding how websites fit the consumer’s life. Although the work of Calder, Malthouse and Schaedel is credited as a valuable study giving insight to engagement in an online context and for its efforts developing an engagement scale, Hollebeek et al. (2014) make

an argument that each of the engagement dimensions is affected in an interactive consumer/brand relationship, rather than engagement existing as an independent dimension. Furthermore, experiences and engagement are viewed as different theoretical entities as the former is not viewed as an emotional relationship concept (Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantello 2009; Hollebeek et al. 2014).

2.2 Consumer brand engagement on social media

As discussed earlier, this study focuses on consumer brand engagement while leveraging the broader theoretical framework related to the concept of engagement and, more specifically, customer engagement. In this study, the following definition of CBE by Hollebeek et al. (2014) is adopted as a basis for the proposed model:

“A consumer’s positively valenced brand-related cognitive, emotional and behavioral activity during or related to focal customer/brand interactions.” (Hollebeek et al. 2014)

Adapting the definition of CE by Brodie et al. (2011), CBE studies service relationships where customer experiences are related, of all the possible focal objects, to a specific brand. Brand, in turn, can be defined as the “totality of all stakeholders’ mental associations about the organization” (Brown, Dacin, Pratt & Whetten 2006) and related objects (Hollebeek et al. 2014). Being derived from the broader CE framework, this adopted definition encompasses the multidimensional nature of engagement discussed in the recent engagement literature (e.g. Dwivedi 2015; Leckie et al. 2016; Dessart et al. 2016). Hollebeek et al. (2014) found empirical support for three CBE dimensions, namely cognitive processing, affection and activation. Cognitive processing regards the level of brand-related thoughts that the customer processes while interacting with a brand. Affection refers to the level of positive brand-related affect in the customer-brand interaction. Lastly, activation describes the level of energy, effort and time spent in the customer-brand relationship. (Hollebeek et al. 2014.)

The concept of brand engagement has also been studied from the point-of-view of consumer psychology and through concepts such as self-brand connection and customer-brand relationships (van Doorn et al. 2010). In this regard, brand engagement has been defined as “an individual difference representing consumers’ propensity to include important brands as part of how they view themselves” (Spratt, Czellar & Spangenberg 2009). However, van Doorn et al. (2010) argue that brand-related customer engagement differs from these psychological concepts in that CE has a behavioral focus and therefore CE is defined as “customer’s behavioral manifestation toward a brand or firm, beyond purchase, resulting from motivational drivers”. These focal activities resulting from engagement are e.g. word of mouth, customer recommendations and customer reviews. (van Doorn et al. 2010.)

Furthermore, van Doorn et al. (2010) argue that changes in engagement options and medium affect CE and the associated customer behavior, and with the Internet and its multitude of services, CE and its consequences in the online context are expected to increase while the perceived cost of customers' engagement activities are expected to decrease, thus creating a self-reinforcing cycle of engagement (van Doorn et al. 2010). One type of such revolutionizing services is social media, which can be defined as a group of Internet-applications which enable individuals to create and exchange user-generated content (UGC) (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). Furthermore, UGC can be defined as content available in publicly accessible media that reflects creative effort and is created non-professionally (Christodoulides, Jevon & Bonhomme 2012). In practice, social media users can follow brand social media pages with one click of a button which also indicates to their social network that they like the brand. This enables interaction with brand-related material, such as liking, sharing and commenting (De Vries & Carlson 2014) as well as distribution of brand-related UGC (Malthouse, Calder, Kim & Vandenbosch 2016). This interaction between social media users is in line with the interactively generated nature associated with the concept of engagement and therefore by enabling communication and content creation, social media drives consumer engagement by connecting consumers and brands (Hollebeek et al. 2014). Social media activities also influence cognitive, affective and behavioral mental stages associated with consumer purchase decision making process (Hutter et al. 2013). Thus, social media has steadily become one of the most important forums for customers to engage with firms (Gummerus, Liljander, Weman & Pihlström 2012). Especially heavy social media users are more likely to engage with brands via social media (Men & Tsai 2013). As social media users are participating in an environment where they are motivated to share their experiences and provide feedback, companies are enticed to develop their brand presence on social media for the possible value added to the firm (Islam & Rahman 2016).

There have been several studies focusing on CE or CBE in an online context, e.g. social media. Gummerus et al. (2012) note that customer engagement acknowledges the fact that consumers now conduct firm-related behaviors of which many did not exist a decade ago and which might have both positive and negative outcomes for the firm. This increased role of social media has further driven the need for conceptualizing CE (Bielski 2008). The interactive online behaviors may present value co-creation and extraction opportunities, such as collaborative product innovation and improved brand meaning, which may further enhance consumer perceptions of CBE in social media environment (De Vries & Carlson 2014). Furthermore, the strength of the consumer-brand relationship is argued to affect both the intensity of CE towards brands (Vivek, Beatty & Morgan 2012) and social media performance of brands (Gensler, Völckner, Liu-Thompkins & Wiertz 2013). This link between brand strength and customer brand engagement is especially attributable to brands that consumers perceive as self-expressive (Leckie et al. 2016).

Brand social media pages that the consumers can follow can be viewed as brand communities, since the brand fan pages revolve around a single brand, product or company (Jahn & Kunz 2012). Besides branding studies, the concept of brand communities has been researched also in the field of customer brand engagement (Hollebeek et al. 2014). Algesheimer, Dholakia and Hermann (2005) studied offline brand communities and argued that identifying with the brand community has positive effect on brand community engagement, which has utilitarian, hedonic and social dimensions. Correspondingly, past engagement studies which have had an online perspective have often approached CE in the context of virtual brand communities. Brodie et al. (2013) presented a three-dimensional model of customer engagement in virtual brand communities that is similar to Hollebeek et al.'s (2014) CBE model. Additionally, the authors identified five sub-processes for virtual brand community engagement, namely learning, sharing, advocating, socializing and co-developing, and found support for several of the fundamental propositions discussed in section 2.1. One of the key findings was that consumer engagement is an iterative process with different antecedents and consequences, the latter being for example loyalty, satisfaction, trust and commitment. (Brodie et al. 2013.) Support for positive monetary consequences was presented by Adjei, Noble and Noble (2010), who reported that online brand communities are effective tools for increasing sales and that sharing of positive information by the community members positively moderates purchase behaviour. However, Jahn and Kunz (2012) argue that although online brand communities and brand social media pages share similar attributes, brand social media pages are embedded in existing, organic social network platforms as opposed to being separate, brand-moderated communities. Therefore, the motivation to engage with brand social media pages may differ from brand communities. In accordance with Brodie et al.'s FP5, customers may in fact interact with brand social media pages without being highly engaged with them. (Jahn & Kunz 2012.) Similar findings have been presented regarding engagement process in virtual brand communities, where consumer dormancy and disengagement are recognized as possible states of engagement (Brodie et al. 2013). This potential lack in cognitive, emotional and/or behavioral engagement in an online context supports the argument that mere participation or frequency of use does not measure engagement as it rather precedes engagement (Vivek et al. 2012). The following sections discuss the antecedent and consequences of CBE on social media that are proposed in this study.

2.3 Consumer involvement

Consumer involvement can be defined as a motivational state that can be used to understand consumer attitudes and measure product or brand significance to the consumer (Guthrie & Kim 2009). Alternatively, involvement is consumer's perceived relevance of an object on the basis of inherent needs, values and interests (Zaichkowsky 1985). As proposed by Brodie et al. (2011), involvement

is a relational concept to engagement as both share the broader network of relationships. However, they are conceptually different from each other as involvement is an antecedent to engagement (Vivek et al. 2012) as opposed to engagement, which measures the dynamics during the consumer-brand interaction (Hollebeek et al. 2014). In turn, involvement can be viewed as a more general inclination for regarding a class of products as important and meaningful, whereas CBE refers to a higher degree of relevance regarding a specific brand (Dwivedi 2015). Involvement and engagement both have cognitive and affective dimensions, but involvement is based on motivation instead of behaviour (Smith & Godbey 1991; Zaichkowsky 1985). In addition, engagement in an online context exceeds involvement as it includes the aspect of active relationship with a brand and requires satisfaction of experiential values in addition to instrumental values (Mollen & Wilson 2010).

Consumer involvement with brands on social media can be discussed also from the point of view of consumers' online brand-related activities. According to Malthouse et al. (2016), these activities can be divided into consumption, contribution and creation, where the level of consumer involvement increases, respectively. In this continuum, consumption refers to passive activities such as viewing, reading and following brand-related content on social media. Contributing is a more active level where the consumer is involved in commenting, rating and sharing the content that the brand produces. Ultimately, consumers may engage in creating brand-related content of their own, such as posting new product reviews, publishing brand-related media or writing brand-related blog posts. (Muntinga et al. 2011.) Vivek et al. (2012) analysed several consumer involvement studies and as a conclusion proposed that individual's level of involvement will be positively associated with the level of engagement intensity. However, the authors differentiated consumer participation from consumer involvement, as involvement is a heightened level of interest towards a focal object without participatory elements. For example, opportunities for risk-free interaction with the brand would drive consumer involvement. (Vivek et al. 2012.) Therefore, a possibility for passive consumption of brand-related content in social media should enable consumers to involve themselves with a brand without a significant investment before the possible engagement with the brand. However, contributing and creating activities such as sharing content, reviewing products or creating UGC require consumer participation and are behavioral in nature (Malthouse et al. 2016), thus being outcomes of CBE rather than its antecedents (van Doorn et al. 2010).

Hollebeek et al. (2014) deployed consumer involvement as a measurable antecedent of CBE on social media and demonstrated a significant positive relationship with all three CBE dimensions, with the effect on "affection" being the greatest. Similar empirical support was reported by Leckie et al. (2016), who studied CBE in an offline context among Australian consumers of mobile phone service providers and found that consumer involvement has a positive effect on cognitive, emotional and behavioral dimensions of CBE. Besides involvement, participation and self-expressive brand were hypothesized to positively

influence CBE and though these antecedents were positively related to certain CBE dimensions, no unanimous support regarding their effect on all three CBE dimensions was found (Leckie et al. 2016). In addition, Dwivedi (2015) measured offline consumer brand engagement and observed that consumer's involvement on product category exerted a significant impact on CBE. Wirtz, den Ambtman, Bloemer, Horváth, Ramaseshan, van de Klundert, Canli and Kandampully (2013) presented that a higher intensity of consumer involvement with the brand drives CBE in the context of online brand communities. Lastly, Islam and Rahman (2016) found full empirical support to customer involvement being positively related to customer engagement on Facebook. Interestingly, they also reported direct effect relationships between customer involvement and CE outcomes, but stated that the indirect relationships between CE antecedent and consequences are twice as influential, further supporting the mediating role of engagement (Islam & Rahman 2016).

Based on the empirical evidence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Consumer involvement has a positive effect on cognitive processing.

H2: Consumer involvement has a positive effect on affection.

H3: Consumer involvement has a positive effect on activation.

2.4 Brand usage intent

Brodie et al. (2011) state that customer engagement should be considered as a strategic imperative as it drives enhanced corporate performance, such as growth in sales, profitability and competitive advantage. These monetary consequences of CBE have often been studied under the concept of purchase intention (e.g. Hutter et al. 2013) or brand loyalty (Vivek et al. 2012; Leckie et al. 2016). As various brands have already established their presence on social media, it is important to increase both academic and practical understanding of the positive financial and business outcomes of online CBE, such as purchase intention, in order to make the made investments pay and increase returns (Islam & Rahman 2016). As this study examines engagement also with brands with non-purchasable products or services, these corporate performance -related outcomes are measured here through the concept of brand usage intent in accordance with Hollebeek et al. (2014). However, it should be noted that there is certain overlap between the concepts of brand loyalty, brand purchase intention and brand usage intention. For example, Jahn and Kunz (2012) deduce that brand loyalty, consisting of attitudinal and behavioral elements, is an outcome of brand's social media fan page engagement as there already is a strong emotional relationship with the fan page community. The behavioral component of loyalty in turn should indicate a higher probability of brand purchase intentions. (Jahn & Kunz 2012.)

Mittal, Kumar and Tsiros (1999) found support for the positive relationship between product or service satisfaction and behavioral intention towards the product or service provider. Given that satisfaction is closely associated with engagement (Mollen & Wilson 2010; Jahn & Kunz 2012), it can be argued that CBE has a positive effect on behavioral intentions towards the brand. Nonetheless, usage and purchase intentions have been studied as explicit outcomes engagement. For example, Algesheimer et al. (2005) demonstrated that European car club members with higher levels of engagement had greater intention to extend their memberships and keep participating in the community activities. Hutter et al. (2013) studied consumer engagement through a CE-like construct, brand Facebook page commitment, and found that engagement with a Facebook fan page has a positive effect on consumers' purchase intentions. Hollebeek et al. (2014) reported that all CBE dimension, excluding cognitive processing, have a significant effect on customer's intent to use a brand. In their research, brand usage intent was measured with an overall brand equity scale developed by Yoo and Donthu (2001), which in turn was substituted with purchase intention measures. However, when testing the model for validity purposes, it was identified that purchase intention correlates highly with brand equity (Yoo & Donthu 2001). Dwivedi (2005) observed that CBE, being a multidimensional concept, has a direct positive effect on consumer's loyalty intentions, such as intent on repeated purchases, also in an offline context. Malthouse et al. (2016) provided support for a sustained increase in subsequent purchases that is due to engaging consumers on Facebook brand pages with UGC creation and elaboration. Lastly, Leckie et al. (2016) prosed that cognitive processing, affection and activation have positive impact on brand loyalty which was measured partly with items regarding repurchase intentions. While finding support that affection and activation influenced brand loyalty positively, the dimension of cognitive processing was surprisingly observed to have a negative effect on brand loyalty, thus raising a need for further research and replication in other contexts. (Leckie et al. 2016.)

Based on the empirical evidence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4: Cognitive processing has a positive effect on brand usage intent.

H5: Affection has a positive effect on brand usage intent.

H6: Activation has a positive effect on brand usage intent.

2.5 Word of mouth

Word of mouth (alternatively word-of-mouth, "WOM") refers to informal, personal communication between a perceived non-commercial communicator and a receiver regarding brands, products, organizations or services (Harrison-Walker 2001). WOM can be either positive or negative, the former being naturally

sought after by marketers. In practice, positive WOM may include making other consumers aware of one's relationship with a brand or giving positive recommendations to other consumers. (Brown, Barry, Dacin & Gunst 2005.) As consumers are often familiar with the source of WOM, the information communicated in the way of WOM is considered to be more reliable in nature and thus WOM is regarded as superior to other marketing communication channels in influencing consumers' decision making (Hutter et al. 2013). This significant effect of WOM on consumption has in fact been acknowledged for more than half a century (Kozinets, de Valck, Wojnicki & Wilner 2010).

Whereas traditional, offline WOM has considerably affected consumer buying decisions, the Internet has enabled consumers with increasing opportunities to publish their, and access others', consumption-related advice online and engage in what is referred as electronic word of mouth (eWOM) (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh & Gremler 2004). Hutter et al. (2013) argue that the wish to communicate with others is in fact one of the key reasons for using social media, thus positively affecting the sharing of both positive and negative eWOM along with other online communication. Besides consumers, also companies have increasing interest in the growing potential of reaching customers with WOM principles on social media (Cvijikj & Michahelles 2013). Although marketers often exclusively seek positive WOM, negative WOM may increase the credibility of WOM found in online context (Kozinets et al. 2010). Furthermore, Liu (2006) argues that the volume of eWOM alone is the best predictor of product success, be it either positive or negative. Although customer interactions including WOM have been shifting towards online environments in the recent years, it is worthwhile to note that market research surveys demonstrate that offline WOM may still have a larger effect on consumption-related interactions between consumers in comparison to eWOM (Libai, Bolton, Bügel, de Ruyter, Götz, Risselada & Stephen 2010).

The link between CBE and WOM can be derived from S-D logic, as CBE is argued to drive relational outcomes such as WOM through value co-creation and customer-brand interactions (Leckie et al. 2016). Both online and in-person WOM are consequential to engaged customers and their engagement behaviors. Traditional and electronic WOM differ in terms of intensity and reach, but both have financial and reputational outcomes for the firm, such as a more favourable customer purchase behaviour and better customer acquisition and retention rates in the long run. (van Doorn et al. 2010.) Following this view, this study does not define the nature of WOM as neither offline nor online in the proposed model, despite the study's general online focus on CBE.

Based on their recapitulation of previous studies, Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) suggest that increased level of engagement with brand communities on social media could lead to greater volume of WOM and more favourable consumer attitudes regarding the brand. Brodie et al. (2011) argue that engaged customers contribute to viral marketing activities by providing referrals and recommendations on products, services and brands to other consumers. Also, Vivek et al. (2012) propose that customer engagement will positively affect one's

positive WOM activities towards the brand that is the object of engagement. Dwivedi (2015) found empirical evidence that CBE, consisting of cognitive, emotional and behavioral aspects, has a positive effect on consumer's loyalty intentions, such as spreading of positive WOM. De Vries and Carlson (2014) drew on the work by van Doorn et al. (2010) by empirically testing the link between CE and customer engagement behaviors with brand Facebook pages. Their findings demonstrated positive influence when measuring both brand loyalty through intentions to recommend the brand to other people and CE behaviors through intentions to like, share and comment the Facebook content published by the brand. (De Vries & Carlson 2014.) Islam and Rahman (2016) demonstrated that customer engagement undeniably affects customer WOM activities positively within the context of online brand communities. Furthermore, Hutter et al. (2013) found full support for their proposition that consumer's engagement with a brand fan page in Facebook is an indicator of positive WOM activities.

Based on the empirical evidence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H7: Cognitive processing has a positive effect on WOM.

H8: Affection has a positive effect on WOM.

H9: Activation has a positive effect on WOM.

2.6 Annoyance

Social media platforms and how they can be leveraged for marketing purposes are one of the key areas of interest to marketing managers and e.g. social media marketing expenditure in the United States has recently increased approximately two billion USD a year (Statista 2017b). However, online advertising has been found to have similar possible negative effects as traditional advertising, where intrusiveness has been recognized as one of the major factors undermining the effectiveness of advertising and even causing annoyance in consumers (McCoy, Everard, Polak & Galletta 2007). Intrusiveness is related to consumer perceptions of irritation or invasiveness when their goal-oriented behaviors are interfered by advertisements. This negative interference may be even greater on social media, as online behaviour is highly goal-oriented. (Taylor, Lewin & Strutton 2011.) Besides intrusiveness, repetitiveness of advertisements or excess exposure to the branded content has been shown to turn the recipients' cognitive response against the brand's message (Cacioppo & Petty 1979). These negative effects have been discussed in the marketing literature through the concepts of "information overload" (Jacoby 1977), "junk mail" or "information glut" (Denning 2006) and more recently, "annoyance" (Hutter et al. 2013). In this study, the following definition of annoyance is adopted and further proposed as a moderator between CBE and its consequences:

“Annoyance is the unpleasant emotional reaction to subjective overexposure to a certain kind of media.” (Hutter et al. 2013)

In terms of annoyance, social media marketing has been evolving from one-way online advertising to a less intrusive alternative as consumers have more control over the content they expose themselves to. This may result in less experienced annoyance but at the same time emphasizes the companies’ need to deliver entertaining marketing efforts to their customers in order to maintain their attention. However, brands may unintentionally cause annoyance by posting content to their social media pages too often, thus flooding the social media feeds of consumers and turning them against the brand. (Hutter et al. 2013.) When studying so-called “Generation Y” consumers, Knittel et al. (2016) found out that advertising is one of the possible reasons for the phenomenon titled brand avoidance, where “consumers deliberately choose to keep away from or reject a brand” (Lee, Conroy & Motion 2009). Advertisement’s content, exposure and the choice of media may all cause negative emotions in the recipients’ minds, such as annoyance or irritation (Knittel et al. 2016). This suggests that marketing communication efforts may lead to brand avoidance under improper conditions, thus negatively affecting the desired marketing outcomes.

One important feature of online environments according to the marketing literature is interactivity and how consumers perceive it (Song & Zinkhan 2008; Labrecque 2014). Quick response times and personated responses from companies’ online presences are found to positively influence perceived interactivity, which is a subjective perception of being involved in a two-way communication. Similar to CBE, the positive consequences of perceived interactivity are suggested to include repurchase behaviour, loyalty intentions and WOM. (Song & Zinkhan 2008.) However, brands are increasingly using pre-approved employee responses or automated software when they are communicating with their social media followers in order to enhance the perception that the consumer receives messages directly from the brand itself, and not from its individual employees. Both the standardized conversations with the brand’s employees or replies from programmed scripts are more one-sided than two-sided in nature and thus consumer-brand interactions on social media are shaping out to be perceived as less interactive, potentially limiting WOM and purchase intentions. (Labrecque 2014.)

Recently, social media platforms have taken traditional advertising methods further by monetizing on the voluntary WOM activities practiced by their users. For example, Facebook utilizes “Page Post Engagement” advertisements, where free of charge posts of a brand which is followed by one Facebook user are made visible in the content feeds of friends of that one user, while the brand’s posts are introduced as being endorsed by that particular user (Facebook 2017). Another type of purchasable advertising in Facebook are “Sponsored Stories”, where WOM-related posts by the users are turned into advertisements by brands who pay for the transformation, thus the end result appearing as a highlighted peer referral of the brand. These examples of commodification of user-generated data can be viewed as positive developments

from the recipients' point of view, as this type of social media advertising allows the audience to segment itself voluntarily and have control over the marketing medium. (Fisher 2015.) In addition, advertisements such as Page Post Engagement and Sponsored Stories which are in line with the other content of the page (e.g. user's individual Facebook feed) are perceived as a less intrusive form of online advertising, although consumers in general are bound to have more negative intentions when they are subjected to online advertising (McCoy et al. 2007).

Knoll (2016) summarized several empirical studies regarding online advertising and concluded that in general, social media users are not annoyed by excessive advertising if they view it necessary to keep the use of social media platforms free of charge. However, there are contexts and services on social media where empirical evidence shows that advertisements are perceived irritating and they have a negative impact on consequent online behaviour, thus highlighting the need for further research on the negative effects of advertising on social media (Knoll 2016). Taylor et al. (2011) measured advertising attitudes and found out that advertising that is perceived as invasive, distracting or irritating is negatively related to attitudes toward social media advertising. Leckie et al. (2016) observed in their empirical study that the dimension of cognitive processing may have a negative effect to CBE outcomes. The authors theorize that there might be an optimal level of customer engagement and once that level has been exceeded, highly engaged customers may in fact demonstrate lesser attitudinal loyalty towards the brand due to fatigue or burnout in consequence of repetition. (Leckie et al. 2016.) Lastly, Hutter et al. (2013) found that annoyance with the brand Facebook page and its content negatively affects overall commitment with the brand fan page, as well as engagement outcomes such as WOM. The authors also hypothesized that annoyance weakens purchase intentions. They elaborate the findings by stating that annoyance has in fact become an issue for all marketing communication activities. Thus, the possible consequences of perceived annoyance when committing to a Facebook brand page may carry over to the purchase decision making process where the brand is excluded from the consideration set. In addition, annoyance can unfold as negative WOM. (Hutter et al. 2013.)

As annoyance is a concept which has seen only limited operationalization in engagement measurement, in this study it is proposed both as a moderator affecting the relationships between CBE and its outcomes, but also as an independent variable which directly affects brand usage intent and WOM negatively. Thus, based on the empirical evidence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H10: Annoyance with the social media content published by the brand weakens the relationship between activation and WOM.

H11: Annoyance with the social media content published by the brand weakens the relationship between activation and brand usage intent.

H12: Annoyance with the social media content published by the brand weakens the relationship between affection and WOM.

H13: Annoyance with the social media content published by the brand weakens the relationship between affection and brand usage intent.

H14: Annoyance with the social media content published by the brand weakens the relationship between cognitive processing and WOM.

H15: Annoyance with the social media content published by the brand weakens the relationship between cognitive processing and brand usage intent.

H16: Annoyance with the social media content published by the brand has a negative effect on brand usage intent.

H17: Annoyance with the social media content published by the brand has a negative effect on WOM.

2.7 Research model

Figure 2 illustrates the research model utilized in this study and illustrates the hypotheses presented earlier. The research model is applied from presented CE literature, with the greatest influence being CBE scale developed by Hollebeek, Glynn and Brodie (2014). Consumer brand engagement is defined as a multidimensional concept consisting of cognitive processing, affection and activation dimensions. CBE is anteceded by consumer involvement and it has positive effect on word of mouth and brand usage intent, as also proposed by the marketing literature. In addition, annoyance with brand's published social media content is a novelty in the CBE scale and it is proposed to have both direct negative effects to CBE outcomes and indirect negative effects to the relationships between CBE and its outcomes as a moderating factor.

Age, gender and brand type were chosen as control variables in this study. Age and gender were included as a general controls of CBE outcomes in order to measure whether demographical factors would have any effect on WOM or brand usage intentions. Brand type was chosen as a control variable on the basis of the study by De Vries and Carlson (2014), who analysed differences in Facebook brand engagement between product and service brands and reported differences between the two brand types. Similar division to product and service brands was utilized also in this study to measure whether it would affect the positive CBE outcomes.

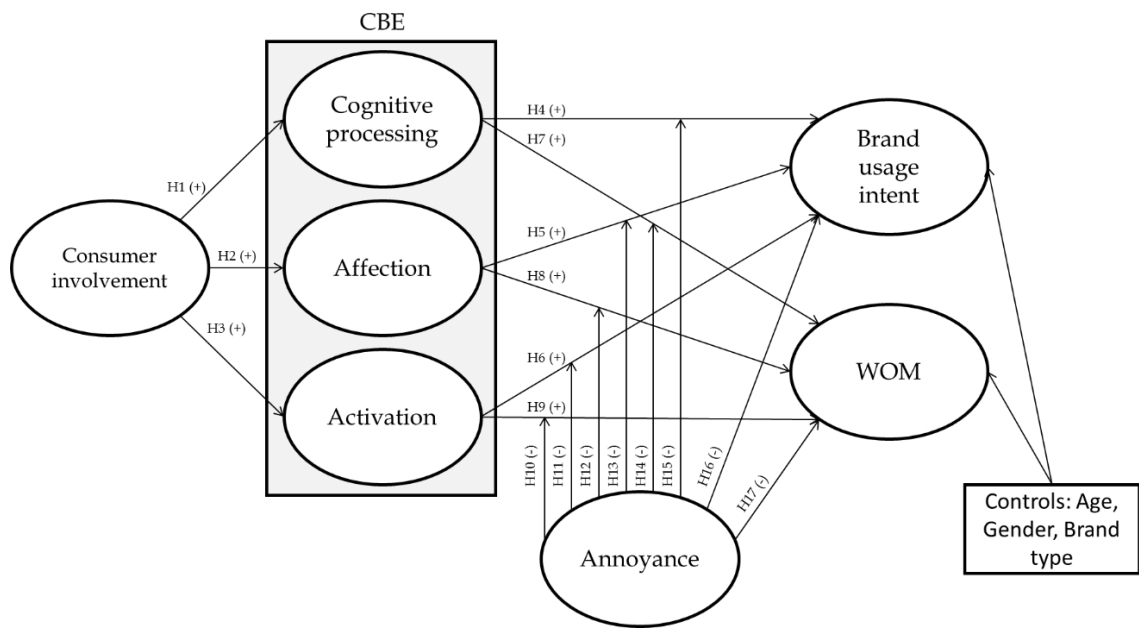


FIGURE 2 Research model

3 METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the general approach and methodological choices made while conducting this study. The study aims to provide accurate descriptions of persons, events and situations, as well as to document key features and interesting aspects of a phenomena (Hirsjärvi et al. 2009). First, quantitative approach is discussed briefly as it forms the baseline for the practical implementation of the proposed theoretical framework. Secondly, data collection, survey methodology and choices regarding used measures are described. Lastly, the analysis of collected data is discussed.

3.1 Quantitative research

Quantitative research emphasizes the relationship between theory and research as well as testing of theoretical models (Bryman & Bell 2007). Also, Hirsjärvi et al. (2009) note that preceding conclusions from earlier studies, proposed theories and hypotheses, construct definition, carefully planned data collection, modifying variables to be statistically analysable, and conclusions made via statistical analysis are key aspects in quantitative studies. As a baseline, quantitative research methodology views that reality is built on facts that are objectively discoverable. Consequently, the data should be the more comprehensive the more reliable the research results are sought to be. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2009.) In addition, quantitative approach necessitates comprehensive knowledge on the phenomenon from the researcher before accurate conclusions can be made (Alkula, Pöntinen & Ylöstalo 1994).

According to Hirsjärvi et al. (2009), research objectives can be classified into four types: explorative, descriptive, explanatory, and predictive objectives. In this study, explanatory approach is chosen as it an appropriate method for researching causal relationships (Hirsjärvi et al. 2009). Besides causality, quantitative method supports the study's replicability (Bryman & Bell 2007). Most importantly quantitative approach allows the study's results to be generalized to the whole population from which the representative sample of respondents is picked, provided that the context of the study is taken into account (Bryman & Bell 2007).

Quantitative research is often utilized as a methodology when the study aims to gather comparative data from a larger population. While being a worthwhile method for such an objective, certain limitations can be associated with quantitative methods. Alkula et al. (1994) note that with pre-formatted questions or fixed alternative answers, unique characteristics or underlying phenomenon are often not captured, as respondents' thoughts on the subject may be more complex and therefore poorly identified with a straightforward questionnaire. Other critique has been presented as well. According to Bryman

and Bell (2007), measurement process in quantitative studies can be viewed as artificial; while causality can be considered to be accurate in theoretical sense, in everyday life relationships are often more dynamic and thus quantitative studies can result in a static view of social phenomena (Bryman & Bell 2007).

3.2 Data collection

Survey research was chosen as a means to data collection in this study. With this method, a large amount of data is collected from multiple respondents in a standardized format at a given time (Bryman & Bell 2007). In this manner, every respondent is presented with identically formatted questions. The main advantage of survey research is the possibility for large scale data-gathering, in terms of amount of both respondents and questions per questionnaire or interview (Hirsjärvi et al. 2009). However, drawbacks regarding the use of survey research include the possible lack of understanding or knowledge that is required from the respondents to answer the questions (Bryman & Bell 2007). Furthermore, the honesty and carefulness regarding the respondents' answers cannot be ensured. Lastly, factors such as respondent fatigue and low response rate may negatively affect survey data collection, especially in cases where the questionnaire is deemed to be too long. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2009.)

As this study aims to generalize its conclusions, a representative sample is picked from the defined population (Hirsjärvi et al. 2009). Of all alternative sampling methods, convenience sampling method was chosen for this study for its handiness, although when compared to other sampling methods the extent to which conclusions may be generalized is more limited (Bryman & Bell 2007). Likewise, data collection in this study is carried out with online questionnaire on the basis of its advantages, such as cost-effectiveness, quickness, and easiness to answer when the respondents have time for it (Bryman & Bell 2007). However, Couper (2000) has pointed out that an online survey tends to result in a biased sample, as the Internet users often are wealthier, younger and more educated. Nevertheless, online survey is a pertinent data collection method given the study's online-focused context.

3.2.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed in a way that it is easy to complete, of moderate length and contains clear instructions, since respondents fill in the questionnaire independently and have limited energy regarding answering the questionnaire. The questionnaire was comprised of structured claims and multiple-indicator measures in order to enhance reliability. (Bryman & Bell 2007.) In addition, all questions in multiple-indicator measures are derived from prior studies in which the instruments have been built around theory, tested and proven to work. Due to being based on already validated scales, the questionnaire was not tested holistically in this regard. Questionnaire was distributed in English with few

adjustments to the original wording of the questions to have them better correspond with the context of this study. The questionnaire was then revised by third persons and on the basis of feedback, minor improvements to wording were made. A total of 35 questions were included to the questionnaire. The questionnaire was preceded by a complementary cover letter, in which the respondents were encouraged to answer the survey with a raffle prize.

Firstly, respondents were asked to nominate one brand social media page which they follow and on the basis of which they would answer the following questions. They were also asked to classify the type of the chosen brand either as product, service or as other, the last alternative being subject to manual coding in a later phase. The following multiple-indicator items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale that ranged from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. The option to answer “I don’t know” was excluded from the scale as the questions were related to experiences of each respondent. The questions were grouped to smaller groups and, where applicable, randomized in order to enhance the reliability of the survey by not presenting all the questions in a row per underlying instrument.

Consumer brand involvement (INV) was measured using a 10-item differential scale developed by Zaichkowsky (1994) and further applied by Hollebeek et al. (2014) in the CBE context. Cognitive processing (CP), affection (AF) and activation (AC) which form the 10-item CBE scale were adopted from Hollebeek et al. (2014). Similarly, the four questions measuring brand usage intent (BUI) applied by Hollebeek et al. (2014) were adopted from the study by Yoo and Donthu (2001). The other proposed CBE outcome, word of mouth (WOM), was captured with the 4-item scale that was applied from Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) by Hutter et al. (2013). The final multiple-indicator item regarded the moderating effect of annoyance (ANN) and was measured with three questions adopted from Hutter et al. (2013). Demographical questions regarding respondent’s age and gender were asked at the end of the questionnaire. The complete list of questionnaire items in English is provided in the Appendix 1.

3.2.2 Practical implementation

The survey was conducted in March 2017 using Webropol 3.0 online survey software and the corresponding link to the questionnaire was shared via Jyväskylä School of Business and Economics’ student mailing list. In addition, the questionnaire was shared in Facebook with the researcher’s connections in order to attract respondents who are familiar with brand social media content. The questionnaire was preceded by a cover letter which informed respondents about the purpose of the study as well as the raffle to which everyone who completed the questionnaire could participate. Between 28th of March and 14th of April 2017, 161 complete responses were received. The questionnaire was opened 444 times in total, thus leading to an effective response rate of 36.3 %. The respondents took 8 minutes in average to complete the questionnaire.

3.3 Data analysis

After the data was collected with Webropol 3.0 software, it was transferred to IBM SPSS Statistics 24. The data was then cross-checked for any missing or insufficient responses. There were no missing or insufficient responses as all questions were mandatory. The brand type classifications were manually coded either as products or services where “other” had been selected by the respondents. In addition, the classifications per brand were manually unified in cases where certain brands had been classified as product brands by some respondents and service brands by others. Using the SPSS Statistics software, certain basic statistical analyses, such as frequencies and distribution percentages, were conducted for the demographic factors. Furthermore, the data was tested to assure that preconditions for confirmatory factor analysis are met. Different variables were also named after the corresponding factor names that were derived from the study’s theoretical background.

Exploratory factor analysis aims to explain how different variables load to certain factor by grouping these variables into groups wherein the variables correlate more strongly with themselves than with other variables. In other words, factor analysis tries to explore common patterns with multiple variables and thus mutual factors to these variables that are proposed by theory or practice. Exploratory factor analysis is applicable when the researcher has knowledge on how different variables are related. (Metsämuuronen 2006.) Confirmatory factor analysis is typically carried out with structural equation modelling and it aims to test theory by examining whether the hypothesized factors are in line with variable correlations (Tabachnick & Fidell 2014). Structural equation modelling is related to causal modelling, simultaneous equation modelling and analysis of covariance structures and it is best used when the researcher has knowledge on the factor structure proposed by the theory (Metsämuuronen 2006). In addition, multidimensional and complex phenomena can be studied as the method allows the researcher to test the models’ relationships simultaneously (Tabachnick & Fidell 2014).

In this study, an exploratory factor analysis was run in the SPSS statistics for pre-analysis purposes, such as testing the proposed factor structures and for identifying variables that would be unsuitable for further analysis and thus eliminated. After this, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted through partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) by using SmartPLS 3.2 software.

4 RESULTS

The results of the study are presented in this chapter. First, demographic information regarding the respondents and details regarding chosen brands and their types are discussed. Next, exploratory factor analysis and information on factor loadings are presented. Lastly, the research model and hypotheses in the structural model are empirically tested with structural equation modelling.

4.1 Demographic and background factors

Of 161 total respondents, 55.9 % were female and 44.1 % male. Majority of the respondents, 65 percent, were between 26 and 35 years of age, which is most likely due to the convenience sampling method and targeted respondent groups discussed earlier. Table 1 illustrates demographic factors of the respondents.

TABLE 1 Demographic information

	N	%
Gender		
Female	90	55,9
Male	71	44,1
Total	161	100,0
Age		
Under 18	0	0
18-25	36	22,4
26-35	105	65,2
36-45	11	6,8
46-55	7	4,3
Over 55	2	1,2
Total	161	100,0

When respondents were asked to choose a brand which they follow in social media, a total of 111 different brands were named. As only 18 brands were named more than once, the variety in responses was rather significant. The three most frequently chosen brands among the respondents were sports apparel manufacturer Nike (5.6 % of responses), military surplus store Varusteleka (4.3 %) and delicacy brand Fazer (3.7 %). As shown in Table 2, 60.2 % of respondents had chosen a product brand and 39.8 % a service brand that they follow in social media and which their answers were based on.

TABLE 2 Brand type

	N	%
Brand type		
Product	97	60,2
Service	64	39,8
Total	161	100,0

4.2 Factor analysis

An exploratory factor analysis was run in order to pre-analyse the data prior to the confirmatory factor analysis. The required sample size for factor analysis should be over 100 (Karjaluoto 2007). However, Tabachnik and Fidell (2014) state that in general, sample size should be over 300 for factor analysis purposes, or around 100 given that communality levels of the variables are high. In this regard, sample size (N=161) can be deemed sufficient for factor analysis as communality was overall on a high level, as discussed below.

With the exploratory factor analysis, the hypothesized factor model could be tested without any presumptions regarding which variables are associated with each factor. In addition, variables which fit poorly into the model could be eliminated before the confirmatory factor analysis is conducted. First, Kaiser-Meyer Olkin's (KMO) test was run to ensure that the preconditions for factoring with the selected variables are met. The KMO test resulted in 0.834, indicating good conditions for further analysis. Second, Bartlett's test was run to examine whether there would be enough correlation between the variables for conducting factor analysis. The Bartlett's test resulted in a significance value of 0.000, thus the value being less than 0.01, the result suggest that factor analysis can be performed. (Karjaluoto 2007.) Lastly, communality levels of the variables were measured to see to what extent the variance of the variables can be explained by the factors (Metsämuuronen 2006). Communality exceeding 0.30 can be deemed sufficient for factor forming purposes (Karjaluoto 2007). The variable communalities were all above the criterion and therefore no variables were removed at this phase of the study.

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted to observe whether the chosen variables would load to different latent constructs, i.e. factors which represent the phenomenon that the variables measure (Metsämuuronen 2006). In other words, a factor consists of variables which correlate strongly with each other, but little with other variables. Principal axis factoring and varimax rotation methods were utilized in order to minimize the number of variables with high loadings per factor, as suggested by Karjaluoto (2007). The number of factors was not predetermined and eigenvalue threshold of 1.0 was used for factor determination. After rotation, the exploratory factor analysis extracted 8 factors which in total explained 61.4 % of the cumulative variance of the variables. In general, the resulting factors corresponded well with the constructs derived from theory.

However, there were a few cross-loadings which exceeded 0.300 (Karjaluoto 2007). The primary factor loadings and cross-loadings are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3 Rotated factor matrix

ITEM	FACTORS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
AF3		0,834							
AF2		0,802							
AF1		0,790							
AF4		0,614			0,301				
CP2		0,562							0,424
CP1		0,474							0,472
INV1			0,763						
INV3			0,720						
INV10			0,695						
INV8			0,617						
INV5			0,523			0,352			
WOM4				0,748					
WOM3				0,743					
WOM1				0,693					
WOM2				0,647					
BUI2					0,728				
BUI3					0,703				
BUI1					0,690				
BUI4		0,348			0,527				
INV4						0,768			
INV7						0,760			
INV2						0,589			
INV6						0,546			
ANN1							0,795		
ANN2							0,771		
ANN3							0,767		
AC3								0,822	
AC2					0,392			0,792	
AC1								0,418	
INV9									0,485
CP3		0,378							0,427

The first factor explained 11.8 % of the total variance and consisted of items related to affection (AF) and cognitive processing (CP), while the latter items overlapped with the eighth factor. Interestingly, variables regarding consumer involvement (INV) were distributed between factors number two and five, the former explaining 9.0 % and the latter 7.5 % of the total variance. Factors consisting of variables regarding word of mouth (WOM), brand usage intent (BUI), annoyance (ANN) and activation (AC) explained 8.2 %, 8.2 %, 6.5 % and

6.0 % of the total variance, respectively. Lastly, the eighth factor consisting of INV9 and CP3 explained 4.0 % of the total variance. As these two variables were identified having low factor loadings, INV9 was eliminated due to the poor fit regarding the model. CP3 was combined with variables CP1 and CP2 for confirmatory factor analysis purposes, in order to measure cognitive processing as a separate phenomenon, as suggested in the theoretical framework and further implied by the cross-loadings between the CP variables.

4.3 Measurement model

Confirmatory factor analysis was carried out with partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 3.2. A two-step method was utilized by first focusing on the measurement model and evaluation of reliability and validity, and then on the structural model and testing of the hypotheses (Anderson & Gerbing 1988). On the basis of the exploratory factor analysis, one item (INV9) was excluded from the analysis. In addition, consumer involvement was modelled as a second-order construct as the variables intended to measure involvement, as proposed by Zaichkowsky (1994), loaded on two distinct factors. This step is further justified by the fact that when the measurement model was tested, these two involvement-related factors had a low correlation as seen in Table 5. By looking at the wording of the questions, the factor consisting of items INV1, INV3, INV5, INV8 and INV10 was named as utilitarian involvement, as the variables regarded words such as “important”, “relevant”, “valuable” and “needed”. Correspondingly, the factor consisting of items INV2, INV4, INV6 and INV7 was labelled as hedonic involvement, as it was associated with the terms “interesting”, “exciting”, “appealing” and “fascinating”. Thus, for confirmatory factor analysis purposes, consumer involvement is proposed to be a second-order construct reflected by the first-order constructs of utilitarian involvement and hedonic involvement.

Besides involvement, other factors structures were modified only slightly to have them better fit the theory. In the final factor structure drafted in SmartPLS 3.2, the factors were as follows: 1) consumer involvement (INV) consisting of a) utilitarian involvement (UINV; INV1, INV3, INV5, INV8, INV10) and b) hedonic involvement (HINV; INV2, INV4, INV6, INV7), 2) cognitive processing (CP; CP1, CP2, CP3), 3) affection (AF; AF1, AF2, AF3, AF4), 4) activation (AC; AC1, AC2, AC3), 5) brand usage intent (BUI; BUI1, BUI2, BUI3, BUI4), 6) word of mouth (WOM; WOM1, WOM2, WOM3, WOM4) and 7) annoyance (ANN; ANN1, ANN2, ANN3).

TABLE 4 Factor loadings, Cronbach's alphas, composite reliabilities and t-values

Factor	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Item	Standardized loading	t-value
Consumer involvement	0,817	0,861			
Utilitarian involvement	0,832	0,882	INV1	0,850	31,880
			INV3	0,824	29,912
			INV5	0,732	15,343
			INV8	0,710	9,843
			INV10	0,749	17,728
Hedonic involvement	0,773	0,855	INV2	0,742	15,370
			INV4	0,822	23,567
			INV6	0,690	11,410
			INV7	0,830	23,501
Cognitive processing	0,808	0,886	CP1	0,830	24,863
			CP2	0,907	59,073
			CP3	0,810	24,397
Affection	0,887	0,922	AF1	0,874	38,541
			AF2	0,890	45,024
			AF3	0,888	44,246
			AF4	0,803	18,395
Activation	0,810	0,889	AC1	0,746	13,678
			AC2	0,906	55,220
			AC3	0,901	39,395
Brand usage intent	0,850	0,899	BUI1	0,849	32,239
			BUI2	0,877	51,368
			BUI3	0,810	27,602
			BUI4	0,786	17,828
Word of mouth	0,842	0,894	WOM1	0,857	28,469
			WOM2	0,783	18,751
			WOM3	0,830	29,039
			WOM4	0,823	20,437
Annoyance	0,820	0,888	ANN1	0,858	7,508
			ANN2	0,787	7,329
			ANN3	0,905	7,385

The reliability of the measurement model and internal consistency of each factor were assessed by measuring Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability and factor loadings. Cronbach's alpha estimates reliability on the basis of how closely a set of variables correlates internally (Metsämuuronen 2006). Composite reliability functions similarly to Cronbach's alpha but utilizes actual factor loadings instead of assuming equal factor loadings. Therefore, it is a more preferred indicator of measures' reliabilities in structural equation modelling. Values exceeding 0.7 can be deemed satisfactory for both measures. (Bagozzi & Yi 2012.) In this study, Chronbach's alpha and composite reliability values of all

factors had acceptable levels, thus indicating a good reliability of measures. Furthermore, reliability of individual variables was assessed based on their loading to the respective factor and the statistical significance of each loading. Standardized factor loading represents the strength of equivalency of latent constructs and their indicators, where loadings exceeding 0.6 can be viewed as satisfactory (Bagozzi & Yi 2012). Statistical significance was assessed through *t*-values. All factor loadings were statistically significant ($t > 1.96$) implying that measurement indicators are adequately reliable. Reliability values are presented in Table 4.

TABLE 5 AVE, square root of AVE (diagonal), mean and standard deviation

	AVE	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.
1. AC	0,73	0,85											
2. AF	0,75	0,38	0,86										
3. AGE	n/a	0,13	0,08	n/a									
4. ANN	0,73	0,04	-0,02	0,04	0,85								
5. BUI	0,69	0,60	0,50	0,15	-0,05	0,83							
6. CP	0,72	0,36	0,63	0,07	-0,13	0,43	0,85						
7.UINV	0,60	0,27	0,31	0,13	-0,06	0,34	0,38	0,77					
8.HINV	0,60	0,00	0,26	-0,04	-0,08	0,18	0,34	0,36	0,77				
9. INV	0,60	0,19	0,35	0,07	-0,09	0,33	0,44	0,89	0,76	0,77			
10. GENDER	n/a	0,04	-0,05	0,12	-0,13	0,13	0,04	0,03	0,09	0,07	n/a		
11. BTYPE	n/a	0,17	-0,16	0,12	0,08	0,10	-0,02	0,07	-0,16	-0,03	0,10	n/a	
12.WOM	0,68	0,15	0,40	0,13	-0,29	0,38	0,46	0,31	0,16	0,30	-0,01	0,09	0,82
Mean		5,07	5,37	n/a	4,58	5,19	4,49	5,36	5,64	5,48	n/a	n/a	4,51
s.d.		1,54	1,23	n/a	1,79	1,33	1,57	1,19	1,06	1,15	n/a	n/a	1,70

Note: n/a = not applicable; BTYPE = brand type

The convergent validity of the measurement model was evaluated with average variance extracted (AVE). According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), AVE should exceed 0.5 meaning that the factor explains more than half of its variables' variance. In other words, less than half of the variance is due to measurement error. Consumer involvement being a second-order construct, the AVE value was calculated averaging the square of each first order variable's standardized loading on the second-order construct (MacKenzie, Podsakoff & Podsakoff 2011). Thus, every AVE value was greater than 0.5 indicating a good level of convergent validity. In addition, the discriminant validity of the measurement model was assessed with Fornell-Larcker (1981) criterion, where the independence of a factor is determined on the basis of whether the square root of factor's AVE value exceeds the correlation between the factor and other factors. All except one of the square roots of AVE highlighted in Table 5 were higher than the respective factor correlation values. However, as this deviation is due to correlation between first-order (utilitarian involvement) and second-order (consumer involvement)

constructs and typically only first-order constructs are examined from the point of view of discriminant validity in the marketing literature, the model in this study can be viewed as adequate for discriminant validity purposes.

4.4 Structural model

After the reliability and validity of the measurement model have been evaluated and accepted, the second step in confirmatory factor analysis is hypothesis testing with a structural model evaluation (Anderson & Gerbing 1988). The hypotheses regarding the relationships between factors were examined by executing a PLS algorithm and a consequent bootstrapping run in order to obtain path coefficients, their statistical significance and coefficients of determination. Confirmatory factor analysis was run in SmartPLS 3.2 using path weighting scheme and 300 maximum iterations. For significance evaluation, a bias-corrected and accelerated, two-tailed bootstrapping run with 500 subsamples was utilized.

4.4.1 Direct effects

Path coefficients (β) represent the strength of relationships between factors in the structural model. Values may range between -1 and 1, where 1 suggests a highly positive relationship, -1 a highly negative relationship and 0 a weak or non-existing relationship. In addition to β value, the statistical significance of the relationships was tested with bootstrapping to evaluate the accuracy of the path coefficients. Coefficient of determination (R^2) represents the ratio of variance explained to total variation in a dependent construct, where variance explained is the amount of variance that is explained by all independent constructs which are linked to the dependent construct. In general, R^2 values can be evaluated with a scale of substantial (0.75), moderate (0.50) and weak (0.25) accuracy on variance explained (Hair, Hult, Ringle & Sarstedt 2014.) However, Vock, van Dolen and de Ruyter (2013) argue that there is no generally acceptable threshold for R^2 . For example, an R^2 of 0.2 can be considered high in consumer behaviour studies (Vock et al. 2013). Lastly, Cohen's effect size (f^2) measures independent construct's effect on the R^2 value of the dependent construct. The effect size can be classified as large (≥ 0.35), medium (≥ 0.15) or small (≥ 0.02). (Hair et al. 2014.) The path coefficients and effect sizes are presented in Table 6 and coefficient of determination values in Table 7.

In this study, consumer involvement explained 19.6 % of variance in cognitive processing, 12.4 % in affection and 3.6 % in activation. Thus, involvement may be deemed to have a weak predictive accuracy on CBE. All utilized constructs explained 47.7% of variance in brand usage intent and 33.1% in WOM. With given R^2 interpretation suggestions, it can be argued that the model explains the variance in CBE outcomes rather well. Furthermore, consumer involvement explained 78.4 % and 57.0 % of its first-order constructs'

variances, respectively utilitarian involvement and hedonic involvement. Thus, utilitarian and hedonic involvement dimensions can be viewed to reflect consumer involvement well.

TABLE 6 Direct effects model path coefficients and effect sizes

	β	f^2
H1: Involvement → Cognitive processing	0,443***	0,244
H2: Involvement → Affection	0,352***	0,142
H3: Involvement → Activation	0,190**	0,038
H4: Cognitive processing → Brand usage intent	0,066 ^{ns}	0,005
H5: Affection → Brand usage intent	0,308***	0,097
H6: Activation → Brand usage intent	0,442***	0,291
H7: Cognitive processing → WOM	0,295***	0,074
H8: Affection → WOM	0,245***	0,048
H9: Activation → WOM	-0,074 ^{ns}	0,006
H16: Annoyance → Brand usage intent	-0,042 ^{ns}	0,003
H17: Annoyance → WOM	-0,274***	0,106
Age → Brand usage intent	0,041 ^{ns}	0,003
Age → WOM	0,103 ^{ns}	0,015
Gender → Brand usage intent	0,106 ^{ns}	0,020
Gender → WOM	-0,072 ^{ns}	0,007
Brand type → Brand usage intent	0,062 ^{ns}	0,007
Brand type → WOM	0,162**	0,035
Involvement → Utilitarian involvement	0,885***	3,629
Involvement → Hedonic involvement	0,755***	1,328

Note: *** $p \leq 0.01$; ** $p \leq 0.05$; ns - not significant

TABLE 7 Direct effects model coefficients of determination

	R^2
Utilitarian involvement	0,784
Hedonic involvement	0,570
Cognitive processing	0,196
Affection	0,124
Activation	0,036
Brand usage intent	0,477
Word of mouth	0,331

As presented in Table 6, consumer involvement was found to be a strong predictor of all three CBE dimensions, the relationship between it and cognitive processing being the strongest ($\beta = 0.443$, $f^2 = 0.244$, $p < 0.01$). Therefore, H1, H2 and H3 are supported. Affection and activation had a strong positive effect on

brand usage intent, with activation having the strongest effect ($\beta = 0.442$, $f^2 = 0.291$, $p < 0.01$). Thus, hypotheses H5 and H6 are supported, whereas H4 is not supported as the relationship between cognitive processing and brand usage intent had a weak path coefficient and the effect was not significant. Also, hypotheses H7 and H8 are supported as WOM was predicted by cognitive processing and affection, with cognitive processing being the most positively associated with WOM ($\beta = 0.295$, $f^2 = 0.074$, $p < 0.01$). However, H9 is not supported as the relationship between activation and WOM was not significant.

Annoyance had a negative direct effect on both brand usage intent and WOM, as proposed in hypotheses H16 and H17, though H16 is not supported as annoyance's effect on brand usage intent was not significant. However, H17 is supported as the negative path between annoyance and WOM was significant ($\beta = -0.274$, $f^2 = 0.106$, $p < 0.01$). Regarding the control variables in this study, the results did not support any significant effect that consumer's age or gender might have on brand usage intent or WOM. However, brand type was observed to have a moderately significant effect on WOM ($\beta = 0.162$, $f^2 = 0.035$, $p < 0.05$). Thus, WOM is a more predictable outcome of CBE for service brands than product brands, which is in accordance with previous empirical studies (De Vries & Carlson 2014).

The path coefficients and t-values for direct effects are visualized below in Figure 3.

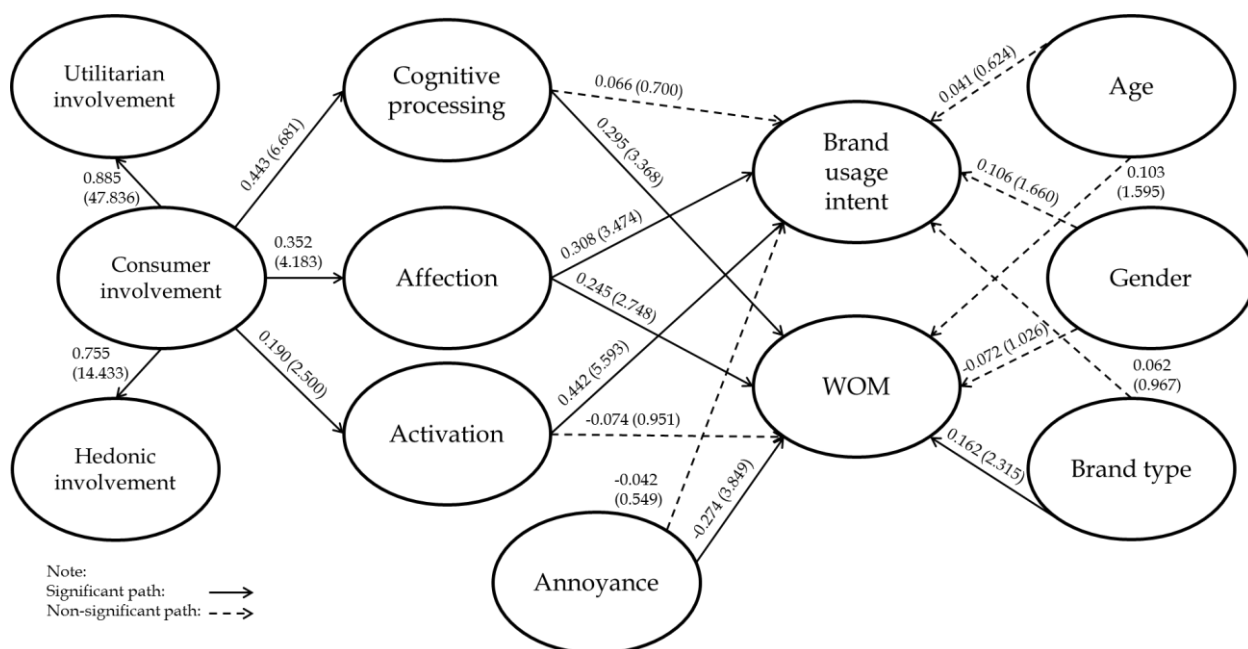


FIGURE 3 Structural model (t-values in parentheses)

4.4.2 Total effect

Total effect refers to the sum of indirect and direct effect and by measuring it, the effect of different predictive constructs on dependent constructs can be examined (Hair et al. 2014). Besides the direct effects discussed in section 4.4.1, consumer involvement had indirect effects on brand usage intent and WOM. While the total effect path coefficients presented in Table 8 were significant, in general, they are not as strong as the relationships regarding CBE dimensions. Thus, brand usage intent and WOM are better explained through the concept of engagement as opposed to consumer involvement alone.

TABLE 8 Total effects

	BUI	WOM
Consumer involvement	0,222***	0,203***

Note: *** $p \leq 0.01$; ** $p \leq 0.05$; ns - not significant

4.4.3 Moderating effects

Moderation refers to an indirect effect where a moderating variable affects the direction and strength of relationship between an independent and dependent construct (Hair et al. 2014). In this study, annoyance was proposed as a moderator between CBE dimensions and CBE outcomes in order to test its fit into the CBE framework both as a predictive and a moderating factor. The moderating effects and respective significances were measured with product indicator method and a consequent bootstrapping run. However, annoyance was not found to have any significant effect on the paths between the three CBE dimensions and brand usage intent or WOM. Thus, hypotheses H10, H11, H12, H13, H14 and H15 are not supported. The results regarding moderating effects are presented in Table 9.

TABLE 9 Moderating effects

	Moderating effect
H10: Annoyance*Activation→WOM	0,174 ^{ns}
H11: Annoyance*Activation→BUI	0,163 ^{ns}
H12: Annoyance*Affection→WOM	-0,031 ^{ns}
H13: Annoyance*Affection→BUI	-0,071 ^{ns}
H14: Annoyance*Cognitive processing→WOM	0,014 ^{ns}
H15: Annoyance*Cognitive processing→BUI	-0,075 ^{ns}

Note: *** $p \leq 0.01$; ** $p \leq 0.05$; ns - not significant

5 DISCUSSION

The final chapter concludes the study by discussing the empirical findings and how they contribute to the theoretical framework and marketing literature in general. Further, the research questions are answered. Besides theoretical contributions, managerial implications that can be derived from the empirical findings are proposed for marketing practitioners. Lastly, the research and its limitations are evaluated and suggestions for further research are given.

5.1 Theoretical contributions

The amount of research papers regarding customer brand engagement has been limited, but the contributions thus far have established CBE as a pivotal construct among consumer-brand relationships (Dwivedi 2015). It is also of importance to validate the CBE scale in varying nomological networks and geographic settings (Leckie et al. 2016). This research aimed to gain more insight on how CBE can be measured in social media context. The key objective was to answer the call regarding further validation of the CBE measurement scale developed by Hollebeek et al. (2014). As an additional objective, this research sought to expand the nomological framework by proposing WOM as an outcome of CBE and annoyance as a negative predictor of outcomes and/or a moderator affecting the relationships between CBE and its outcomes in social media consumer-brand interactions. Especially studying the role of annoyance in the CBE framework was seen as a worthwhile endeavour, given the limited empirical focus on constructs which affect the consumer-brand relationships negatively on social media (Knoll 2016). Thus, the following research questions were identified at the beginning of the research:

Primary research question:

- *How does consumer brand engagement explain brand usage intent and word of mouth in social media context?*

Secondary research questions:

- *How does annoyance affect brand usage intent and word of mouth in social media context?*
- *Does annoyance weaken the relationships between consumer brand engagement and its proposed outcomes, brand usage intent and word of mouth, in social media context?*

Hollebeek et al. (2014) had found out that brand usage intent is one of the outcomes of CBE in social media context. Moreover, the dimensions of affection

and activation were reported to have almost similar significant effects, while cognitive processing had little effect on brand usage intent (Hollebeek et al. 2014). Results that are similar in kind were provided by Leckie et al. (2016), who found support only for the dimensions of affection and activation being associated with brand loyalty. The results of this study are alike; the slight difference being that activation has a stronger relationship with brand usage intent in comparison to affection, while the cognitive processing dimension's effect is not supported. Thus, this supports the supposition by Leckie et al. (2016) that highly engaged consumers with intense cognitive exposure to the brand's communication may very well experience fatigue and consequently have less positive intentions towards the brand. Of all the formative constructs, the structural model explained best brand usage intent, as almost half of the variance was explained ($R^2 = 0.477$).

Regarding word of mouth, the results demonstrate that the dimensions of cognitive processing and affection are most positively associated with it, cognitive processing having the stronger effect. Thus, the results are in line with previous studies where CBE has been found to positively affect WOM (Islam & Rahman 2016; Dwivedi 2015). Surprisingly, activation had no significant path with WOM. There are some plausible explanations; for example, De Vries and Carlson (2014) reported that brand Facebook page usage intensity alone had less impact on WOM-related outcomes in comparison to customer brand engagement in Facebook. As usage intensity is a highly behavioral construct, it can be argued that consumer behaviour alone has little to no association with word of mouth. In this regard, the multidimensionality of engagement is highlighted as consumer-brand interactions on social media should stimulate also cognitive and affective elements, such as enthusiasm, enjoyment, attention and absorption, so that favourable business outcomes such as WOM can be reached (Dessart et al. 2016). Overall, the structural model explained approximately one third of the variance in WOM ($R^2 = 0.331$).

The results suggest that annoyance acts only as an independent construct in the nomological network, weakening the outcomes of CBE directly. Only the negative effect on WOM was found to be significant, while the negative association with brand usage intent was unexpectedly insignificant. Furthermore, the moderation hypotheses were not supported by the empirical evidence. The results are in accordance with the findings of Hutter et al. (2013), who found that while annoyance with social media content published by the brand weakens WOM intentions, it does not directly affect purchase intentions. The lack of effect on brand usage intent might be explained by looking at the earlier steps in consumer purchase decision-making process. As the authors found that annoyance affects purchase intentions indirectly through brand awareness, it can be argued that annoyance does not predict consumer behaviour close to purchase, but during earlier steps where a consumer becomes aware of the brand or includes it into the consideration set (Hutter et al. 2013). Finally, the fact that the moderating effects of annoyance are not supported suggests that brand usage intent and WOM are not affected if consumers experience annoyance with the

social media content published by the brand, as long as the positive outcomes stem from consumers being engaged with the brand.

In addition, the results are in line with previous studies where involvement was found to exert a positive effect on CBE (Islam & Rahman 2016). Hollebeek et al. (2014) observed that involvement impacted the affection construct the most. This was further confirmed by Leckie et al. (2016), who reported involvement having the strongest path coefficient with affection and an almost equal path with activation. Although all paths between involvement and CBE dimensions are also supported in this study, involvement is observed to have the strongest path coefficient with cognitive processing. Interestingly, the construct of involvement loaded on two distinct factors in this study, suggesting that the 10-item scale developed by Zaichkowsky (1994) may not be the most applicable measure for involvement that antecedes consumer brand engagement on social media.

Demographical control variables age and gender are found not to have any effect on brand usage intent or WOM. However, brand type had a significant impact on WOM. Thus, WOM may be considered a more likely outcome of social media engagement with service brands. This finding supports the remark by De Vries and Carlson (2014) that consumers may be guided by different relationship principles depending on the brand's type regarding consumer brand engagement on social media.

5.2 Managerial implications

Regarding marketing practice and managerial decision making, this study provides further insights on how the concept of consumer brand engagement manifests on social media. Especially the positive business outcomes which are driven by consumer engagement are worth recognizing, given that brands are in any case investing in social media efforts due to the potential in reaching consumers with relative ease (Divol et al. 2012). Overall, the results of this research support many positive relationships that have been previously demonstrated and discussed in empirical studies regarding the CBE framework. However, it also discusses the aspects that may affect CBE negatively by examining how annoyance fits into the framework and measuring whether it affects negatively the outcomes related to corporate performance or customer loyalty.

Of the three CBE dimensions, affection was found to be positively associated with both brand usage intent and WOM. Thus, marketing practitioners who seek enhancing consumers' word of mouth and brand purchase or usage intentions via social media should focus on affective elements of CBE, such as delivering enjoyable social media content and fostering enthusiasm by encouraging consumers to interact with each other and develop the brand social media page towards a community (Dessart et al. 2016). Comic strips, videos and photos which promote consumers' positive feelings have been suggested as examples of affective content (Gummerus et al. 2012).

Activation and affection have the strongest influence on brand usage intent. In other words, consumers who are experiencing positive emotions and are actively consuming the content or products provided the brand are more likely to exhibit intention to use the brand in the future. In turn, cognitive processing and affection are the dimensions which are positively associated with WOM. This study therefore promotes the suggestions by Islam and Rahman (2016), who advise companies to provide relevant and informative online content to customers and entice them to visit brand communities enthusiastically. The more consumers demonstrate active thinking towards the brand and seek further brand-related information, the more likely they are to act as advocates for the brand and spread word of mouth (Islam & Rahman 2016).

Contrary to what was hypothesised, annoyance has a rather low overall impact on the CBE framework. The results lead to a few suggestions for marketing practitioners. On the one hand, the negative effect of consumers' annoyance with the brand's social media content exists and should be considered when social media marketing strategies are developed. If neglected, interruptive advertising or consumer's social media feed being flooded with branded content may negatively affect the desired corporate outcomes, as demonstrated with word of mouth intentions in this study. On the other hand, the lack of support for the moderating effect of annoyance implies that consumers, once engaged, are rather indifferent regarding being repeatedly exposed to the brand's social media content. Thus, by engaging consumers on social media, brands need to be less concerned with the potential negative reactions towards their social media marketing efforts. Instead of mere advertising, companies should be better off creating content that is engaging, interactive and co-creates value.

5.3 Evaluation of the research

In this section, reliability and validity are evaluated in order to assess the overall quality of the study. Reliability regards whether the study can be repeated with the same results, while validity refers to the accuracy and applicability of the measures that are used (Bryman & Bell 2007). Both validity and reliability of the measurement model were analysed with SmartPLS 3.2 software as a part of the confirmatory factor analysis.

All of the measurement scales and their items were adopted from studies where the measures were designed to fit the theoretical framework and which had been published in peer-reviewed marketing journals. Accordingly, all the measures have already been analysed and found acceptable from the point of views of reliability and validity. In addition, all measures had been tested originally with larger sample sizes than in this study and most of the measurement scales have also been utilised in multiple studies since their introduction. As the results of this study are in line with studies by Hollebeek et al. (2014) and Hutter et al. (2013), the reliability of the measures can be considered as satisfactory. Furthermore, the step by step documentation regarding how the

empirical research was carried out and the utilised survey form are both found in this research paper in order to make the research transparent and enable its replication.

Reliability was also observed with certain formulas described earlier in this study. The values for Chronbach's alpha and composite reliability all exceeded 0.7, which is the satisfactory level for both measures (Bagozzi & Yi 2012). The highest value for composite reliability was 0.922, which was below the threshold of 0.95, which, if exceeded, could indicate that the items are measuring exactly the same phenomenon and might form a poor measurement scale for the construct (Hair et al. 2014). As the factor loadings also passed the suggested level of 0.6, the internal reliability of the measurement model can be deemed as adequate.

Validity of a research can be evaluated through the concepts of external validity and internal validity. External validity regards the extent of generalisation that can be made on the basis of the results (Metsämuuronen 2006) and it is analysed in greater detail in the following section. However, the sample size being relatively limited ($N = 161$), the extent to which the results can be generalised is also rather limited. Internal validity discusses the researcher's ability to explain the causality of relationships between different constructs while minimising the error affecting the measurement. Thus, failure in defining theoretical constructs undermines internal validity. (MacKenzie et al. 2011.) In this study, theoretical constructs were all derived from previous marketing literature and causal relationships between the constructs were either directly replicated from existing frameworks or hypothesised in a transparent manner. Furthermore, measurement error and convergent validity were analysed with AVE values, according to which less than half of the variance was due to measurement error in the case of all factors. On the basis of the Fornell-Larcker (1981) criterion, all first-order constructs met with discriminant validity requirements, the only exception being the second-order construct, consumer involvement. Overall, the validity of the research can be considered as satisfactory.

5.4 Limitations of the research

As is the case with every research, also this study has several limitations. First, quantitative research typically aims for generalisation of results by choosing a representative sample from the population (Bryman & Bell 2007). The generalisation of results of this study is limited by both the sample size and sampling method. While the sample size was sufficient for confirmatory analysis purposes (Tabachnik & Fidell 2014), it is rather small for substantial generalisation. Furthermore, as convenience sampling method was utilised due to its practical attributes, it is safer to assume that the survey was answered by only the most active and interested recipients. Thus, generalising the results to represent the population of Finnish consumers might be disputable, as the

sample was not randomized. (Bryman & Bell 2007.) Furthermore, the group of respondents was reasonably homogeneous, as can be seen from Table 1 where the demographic information regarding the respondents is presented. Ages from 18 to 35 years represent over 87 % of the total sample, which suggests that Couper's (2000) statement that online surveys tend to result in a biased sample consisting of educated and rather young Internet users might affect the results and their generalisation. However, when the study's social media context is considered, the bias towards young adults and students is typical in social media researches (Knoll 2016).

Secondly, with electronic surveys, it cannot be known how prudently and seriously the respondents have answered the questions and how honest they have been with their responses (Hirsjärvi et al. 2009). Additionally, the questions might have required knowledge to answer them or capability to distinct the causality within the questions, such as "*Because I follow the Brand in social media, I talk very positively about the Brand.*" This is due to the fact that the causality modelled in quantitative research is hypothetical in nature, whereas in everyday life the relationships between the constructs are more dynamic and unpredictable (Bryman & Bell 2007). Therefore, there may be differences between actual consumer behaviour and proposed theoretical outcomes, such as brand usage intent and word of mouth intentions.

5.5 Future research suggestions

Consumer brand engagement, although being an emerging topic in the field of academic marketing, is still a framework of varying constructs and definitions and thus in need of further research. This research has answered the call for validating one of the prevailing CBE scales in a new research setting and contributed to the CBE literature by providing empirical results regarding the relationships between common constructs that either precede or are driven by CBE. However, one of the unexpected findings that warrants further research is consumer involvement and its division into two distinct factors in this study, namely utilitarian and hedonic involvement. Therefore, involvement being the sole antecedent of CBE dimensions might need further justification. Alternatively, the antecedents of CBE might be better approached by using a different measure of involvement (Islam & Rahman 2016) or expanding the number of possible antecedents with other constructs like participation and self-expressive brand (Leckie et al. 2016). In addition, there are several studies where the authors have utilised uses and gratifications theory and studied different gratifications, such as enjoyment, information and social interaction, as antecedents of online CBE (Jahn & Kunz 2012; De Vries & Carlson 2014). Therefore, future studies could focus more on the antecedents of consumer brand engagement.

Furthermore, the model used in this research could be tested in other contexts and geographical settings. Replicating the study with a larger and more heterogenous sample could be carried out to further validate the research model

and the corresponding hypotheses, as well as to make the results more generalisable. A longitudinal research might be another worthwhile endeavour to validate the model further. In addition, this study did not specify the social media service but considered the model equal in every context. Future research should try to pinpoint differences between the different social media services, such as Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, as it is likely that consumer engagement plays out differently in each of the services. Lastly, the negative constructs such as annoyance should be studied as a part of the CBE framework, as it is evident that such phenomena affect the outcomes of engagement, yet few studies have tested any negative relationships taking place within the CBE framework.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: SURVEY IN ENGLISH WITH CODING AND REFERENCES ADDED

1. Think of a brand (e.g. product, service, company, organization) that you follow in social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn...). Please type the name of the Brand below. In the following questions, you are asked to reflect your attitudes and relationship with this brand.

2. Please choose a classification below that best fits the Brand you have chosen.

Product

Service

Other

3. Evaluate the Brand you have chosen in the question 1 with the following propositions. In my opinion, the brand is...

Consumer involvement (INV) Zaichkowsky (1994)

INV1 Unimportant-important

INV2 Boring-interesting

INV3 Irrelevant-relevant

INV4 Unexciting-exciting

INV5 Means nothing-means a lot to me

INV6 Unappealing-appealing

INV7 Mundane-fascinating

INV8 Worthless-valuable

INV9 Uninvolving-involving

INV10 Not needed-needed

4. Evaluate your attitudes and relationship with the Brand you have chosen in the question 1 with the following propositions.

Cognitive processing (CP) Hollebeek et al. 2014

CP1 Using the Brand gets me to think about the Brand.

CP2 I think about the Brand a lot when I'm using it.

CP3 Using the Brand stimulates my interest to learn more about the Brand.

Affection (AF) Hollebeek et al. 2014

AF1 I feel very positive when I use the Brand.

AF2 Using the Brand makes me happy.

AF3 I feel good when I use the Brand.

AF4 I'm proud to use the Brand.

Activation (AC) Hollebeek et al. 2014

AC1 I spend a lot of time using the Brand, compared with other brands.

AC2 Whenever I'm using products or services in this category, I usually use the Brand.

AC3 The Brand is one of the brands I usually use when I use products or services in its category.

Brand usage intent (BUI) Yoo and Donthu (2001)

BUI1 It makes sense to use the Brand instead of any other brand, even if they are the same.

BUI2 Even if another brand has the same features as the Brand, I would prefer to use the Brand.

BUI3 If there is another brand as good as the Brand, I prefer to use the Brand.

BUI4 If another brand is not different from the Brand in any way, it seems smarter to use the Brand.

5. Evaluate your actions regarding the Brand you have chosen in the question 1 with the following propositions. Because I follow the Brand in social media...

Word-of-Mouth (WOM) Hutter et al. 2013

WOM1 ...I talk very positively about the Brand.

WOM2 ...I can recommend the Brand to my friends and relatives.

WOM3 ...I try to win my friends and relatives as fans of the Brand.

WOM4 ...it is fun for me to inspire others about the Brand.

6. Evaluate your attitudes regarding the branded social media content published by the Brand you have chosen in the question 1 with the following propositions. I think it is disturbing if...

Annoyance (ANN) Hutter et al. 2013

ANN1 ...my social media feed is overloaded with social media content published by the Brand.

ANN2 ...the same content of the Brand is brought forward multiple times.

ANN3 ...the Brand posts advertisements all the time.

7. Age?

Under 18

18-25

26-35

36-45

46-55

Over 55

8. Gender?

Female

Male

9. If you want, you can fill in your contact information below in order to participate in a raffle. Your answers will not be connected with your identity and contact information will not be used for any other purpose other than notifying the winners. The prize is three sets of two tickets to Finnkino, one set per winner.

Note: Consumer involvement (question 3) was measured with a 7-point differential scale. Cognitive processing, affection, activation, brand usage intent, word of mouth and annoyance (questions 4-6) were measured with 7-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.