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**SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING STRATEGIES EFFECT ON  
BRAND LOYALTY: A STUDY OF PAKISTANI CONSUMERS**

Master's thesis

International Business Administration

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Tallinn 2022

I hereby declare that I have compiled the thesis independently and all works, important standpoints and data by other authors have been properly referenced and the same paper has not been previously presented for grading. The document length is 12814 words from the introduction to the end of conclusion.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this study examines the social media marketing activities (SMMA) such as entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and perceived risk on five fashion apparel brands of Pakistan preferred by consumers i.e. Khaadi, Junaid Jamsheed, Sapphire, Bonanza and Gul Ahmed and its effect on component of brand equity i.e. brand loyalty as well as customer response i.e. commitment. In order to prove this two research questions was proposed which states that “Which is the most effective dimension of social media marketing activities done by fashion apparel brands in Pakistan” and “Does these social media marketing activities contribute in building brand loyalty and customers commitment towards fashion apparel brands of Pakistan”, that actively follow social media communication platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram make up the study demographic. The quantitative technique was used in this study, and data was collected via online questionnaires shared on Google Drive. A survey of 300 consumers who frequented social media managed by these brands was conducted, and the results were evaluated using descriptive and inferential statistics using SPSS version 22.0 and Microsoft excel. Trendiness was shown to be the most effective SMMA component, and had a considerable impact on brand loyalty and consumers’s commitment to fashion apparel brands. The findings of this study are likely to be used as foundational data in the development of national fashion apparel brands' SMMA strategies, particularly in terms of determining the relative relevance of each SMMA component and analysing SMMA effects.

Keywords: Social media marketing activities (SMMA), brand equity, brand loyalty, commitment, Pakistan.

## **INTRODUCTION**

From the past few decades social media has increasingly making its own place in all rudiments of our lives for more than billions of people around the world. Now days, human beings more frequently engage themselves by means of the usage of one of a kind social media systems together with Facebook, Google+, Snapchat, YouTube, and Twitter and are attracted towards it (Alalwan, Rana, Dwivedi, & Algharabat, 2017 ; Kapoor et al., 2017; Kim and Kim, 2018 ; Shareef, Mukerji, Dwivedi, Rana, & Islam, 2017). Recent statistics of September 2021 (Statista, 2021) shows 4.54 billion people are actively using internet, which means 59% of the total world population is using internet. 3.6 billion People were active social media users globally in 2020 and is supposed to be 4.41 billion in 2025 (Statista, 2020).

Due to the nature (Web 2.0), as interactive and modern technology social media advertisement represent the cutting edge of firm–customer communication (Logan, Bright, & Gangadharbatla, 2012). In comparison with the traditional mass media (web 1.0) which were use before for marketing and advertisement of the product (Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Palla, Tsiotsou, & Zotos, 2013; Bilgihan, Nusair, & Okumus, 2016; Wu, 2016; Lee and Hong, 2016; Swani, Milne, Brown, Assaf, & Donthu, 2017). Hence, social media advertisement could help enterprises to accomplish many marketing objectives, such as creating customers’ awareness, building customers’ knowledge, shaping customers’ perception, and motivating customers to actually purchase products (Duffett, 2015; Kapoor et al., 2017; Alalwan et al., 2017; Shareef et al., 2017). The use of social media platforms for advertisement also benefits companies in a way that the advertisement cost is precisely low as compared to traditional marketing and easy to achieve their marketing objectives (Ajina, 2019).

The global market of fashion apparel is the largest market with a turnover of 1.39 trillion Euros in 2020 (Statista, 2021) which will likely to increase by roughly 2.08 trillion Euros by 2025. For the purpose of this research study, Pakistan is selected because fashion apparel industry is the largest industry, having a total revenue of 3,936 million Euros in 2021 and average revenue per user is 112.53 Euros (Statista, 2021).

In context to Pakistan, a significant growth in the usage of social media was observed between the years 2020-2022, which was recorded as 82.90 million of the total population in January 2022 mean 36.5% out of total population (Simon Kemp, 2022). According to Pakistan stats counter (February 2022) currently, out of total population, 43.55 million of the active social media users are using Facebook, 71.70 million are using YouTube mean 31.5% active users, 1.5% are using Twitter means 3.40 million active users, 6.0% are using Instagram means 13.75 million users and other social media platforms, and out of which most of them are young generation between 16-40 years of age. Therefore, advertisements using different social media platforms could help enterprises to accomplish numerous marketing aims, such as creating customers' awareness, building customers' knowledge, shaping customers' perception, and motivating customers to purchase products (Alalwan et al., 2017; Duffett, 2015; Kapoor et al., 2017; Shareef et al., 2017).

The research problem of this master's thesis is that, there is limited information regarding the social media marketing strategies adopted by national fashion apparel brands in Pakistan. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify and examine the main social media marketing strategies adopted by national fashion apparel brands that could contribute towards creating brand loyalty and committed customers.

In order to achieve the main purpose of this research, following questions are required which are as follows:

1. Which is the most effective dimension of social media marketing activities done by fashion apparel brands in Pakistan?
2. Does these social media marketing activities contribute in building brand loyalty and customers commitment towards fashion apparel brands of Pakistan?

The quantitative approach is employed to achieve the study's goal, which meant that the survey questionnaires were distributed to respondents via email and other social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. The collected data was than analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Data is analysed by using descriptive statistical methods and inferential statistical methods. The data analysis includes descriptive statistics like mean, mode, and median. In inferential statistical analysis, Spearman correlation matrix and Multiple linear regressions tests are used. To measure that which specific type of social media marketing activities of fashion apparel brands had a major impact on consumer of Pakistan and to

determine the relationship between the independent variables (social media marketing activities) on the national fashion apparel brands and dependent variable (i.e. brand loyalty and consumer's commitment). To determine the reliability of the questionnaire Cronbach's alpha was determined.

For the purpose of this study, five national fashion apparel brands of Pakistan are selected that attract mostly 80% of the customers using social media sites by providing their products and services. Among them are Gul Ahmed, Junaid Jamsheed, Khaadi, Sapphire, and Bonanza.

The remaining part of the research comprises of three chapters literature review, research methodology and data analysis methods and results and findings. All the chapters of this research paper are further divided into subsections. The first chapter consists of a literature review, a brief overview of social media usage, social media marketing strategies, brand loyalty, and commitment will be considered followed by the conceptual framework. The second chapter will describe research methodology which provides a detailed description of how the research was carried out and which method was used to conduct the study like research philosophy, research methods and approaches in social sciences, data collection, sampling, measures, data analysis. Furthermore, in the third chapter findings and data analysis will be done in detail using statistical tools like pre-test, reliability test, descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis. The complete summary of the analysis will be done in this chapter aswell, i.e. discussion which includes theoretical and practical implications.



# **1. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The theoretical framework, as well as a review of the literature and associated research, are presented in this chapter. The aim is to demonstrate the conceptual framework and theoretical basis of the study. The use of social media is introduced first, followed by a discussion of social media marketing activities. Brand loyalty is discussed in this chapter, as well as the relationship between social media marketing activities and brand loyalty. This chapter also discusses the customer's response i.e. commitment, and how it relates to brand loyalty. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the fashion apparel brand studies conducted in Pakistan.

## **1.1. Social media usage**

The term "social media" refers to several new online information sources that are generated, initiated, shared, and used by customers who want to educate one another about products, companies, services, personalities, and concerns. It is the interaction of people in networks and virtual communities who create, share, exchange, and comment on the shared content (Toivonen, 2007).

In the year 1979, Tom Truscott and Jim Ellis of Duke University, has created a network Usenet, a discussion system that allowed Internet users to post messages. The era of Social Media began in the year 1997, a year later in 1998 Bruce and Susan Abelson developed "Open Diary in", an early social networking platform that forms into one community for online diary writers (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The term "weblog" was coined about the same time, and a year later, when a blogger converted the noun "weblog" into the sentence "weblog," it was shortened to "blog." The popularity of this concept grew even more as Internet access and availability increased, leading to the emergence of social networking websites like MySpace (in 2003) and Facebook (in 2004). As a result, the phrase "Social Media" was coined, contributing to its current prominence.

This has a significant impact on our interactions with friends, as well as private and public organizations. Indeed, social media platforms constitute a new space where individuals, businesses, and even governments can interact commercially, socially, politically, and educationally while exchanging information, ideas, products, and services (Hawkins and Vel, 2013; Usher et al., 2014; Zeng and Gerritsen, 2014; Zhu and Chen, 2015; Rathore, Ilavarasan, & Dwivedi, 2016).

Spending time on social networking sites appears to be a daily activity for young individuals, with an average of 30 minutes spent on Facebook. According to one survey, over half of twelve to seventeen-year-olds log on to social networking sites on a daily basis: 22 percent log on several times per day, 26 percent once a day, 17 percent three to five days per week, 15 percent one or two days per week, and only 20 percent every few weeks or fewer (Lenhart, A., and Madden M, 2007).

On the other hand, (Nancy, 2009), forecasted that in the next years, social media usage will continue to rise across all demographics and generations.

Developing a business using various social media platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and various blogs is been considered. As a result, businesses all over the world are considering how these platforms may help them acquire clients and develop profitable marketing relationships with them (Oh, Bellur, & Sundar, 2015; Braojos-Gomez, Benitez-Amado, & Llorens-Montes, 2015; Alalwan, Rana, Algharabat, & Tarhini, 2016; Lin and Kim, 2016; Kamboj, Sarmah, Gupta, & Dwivedi, 2018).

The rapid growth of social media has melted down barriers to information flow, but the effects have yet to be realised. Targeting achieve its goals, marketing to the Facebook generation will not be limited to using digital means; it will change the way the company communicates (Danny Meadows-klue, 2008). Because the Internet has made it simpler for marketers to engage directly with consumers and target audiences than ever before, it's critical that PR (Public relation) and marketing strategies be drastically altered to enhance the success of direct consumer communication (Scott David, 2007).

People can interact with products or companies on those sites when they join those sites. Because of their previous connections with social networking sites, individuals perceive this interaction as

personal. Individual followers can "retweet" or "repost" remarks made by the product being marketed on social networking sites like Twitter, Facebook, Google Plus, YouTube, Pinterest, and blogs. By repeating the message, every one of the user's contacts will be able to see it, resulting in a larger audience.

More traffic is attracted to the product/company since knowledge about it, is passed about and repeated on social networking sites. Through social networking sites, products/companies may have dialogues and build relationships with individual followers. As a result, of this close interaction, followers and future customers may develop a sense of loyalty.

As a result, the goal of this research is to identify and investigate the primary social media marketing tactics that can help create favourable attitudes, and brand loyalty in Pakistan.

## **1.2. Social media marketing activities**

Different marketing practices that businesses can use on social media platforms include entertaining, trending, interactive, tailored advertising, and the risk that comes with it, all of which will lead to brand equity, e-WOM, customer relationship management, and branding (Alalwan et al. 2017). However, from both researchers' and practitioners' perspectives, the significant interest in social media marketing has been in terms of advertising (Braojos-Gomez et al., 2015; Duffett, 2015; Jung, Shim, Jin, & Khang, 2016; Kamboj et al., 2016; Alalwan, Dwivedi, Rana, & Williams, 2016; Alalwan et al., 2017).

### **1.2.1. Entertainment**

Social media activities which cause fun and enjoyment results in entertainment (Agichtein et al., 2008). People who engage themselves in social media only in the hunt for entertainment, fun and pleasure and the virtual community for them is the primary and focused way of their interests (Bagozzi and Utpal 2002; Manthiou et al., 2013). A person who gets everything of their interest and got entertained will contribute in social media activities (Park et al., 2009). Contents shared by the brands on social networking sites are perceived by the consumers as a part of enjoyment and refreshing their minds (Muntinga et al., 2011). Social media sites give enjoyment, which increases a person's desire to participate more actively and use the network more frequently (Kang,

2005). Consumer behaviour is significantly influenced by the messages delivered to them through the usage of emotions.

### **1.2.2. Interaction**

People use social media to communicate and interact with one another, as well as to exchange information (Gallaughner and Ransbotham, 2010; and Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Consumers can connect, discuss, and share their ideas and comments on social media platforms, as well as make suggestions for specific products or services offered by a brand (Muntinga et al., 2011). Interaction on social media platforms influences firms to develop content that reflects the perceptions of their customers (Daugherty et al., 2008). These interactions are altering the brand-customer relationship, resulting in the creation of user-generated content (UGC) on social media (Daugherty et al., 2008; Gallauter and Ransbotham, 2010; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). The main goal of this shared information is to provide information to social media users and keep them informed about the brand's products and services. The customer is the main focus, and how they interact with shared knowledge is the main focus.

Brands engage their customers in a variety of methods, such as posting content where customers may discuss and express their thoughts on a specific topic (i.e. on Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram). The information shared by a given brand should be distinct from that of competitors so that customers can easily interact and connect with it. The brand's appeal and trustworthiness increase as a result of the interaction between the brand and its customers (Muntinga et al., 2011).

### **1.2.3. Trendiness**

It is described as the most recent and up-to-date information offered to customers about the brand's products and services (Bruno et al., 2016). Furthermore, social media gives consumers with all of the most recent and up-to-date news and information about firms, making it a tool for product research (Naaman et al., 2011). Consumers place a higher value on information obtained via social media platforms than on traditional promotional marketing initiatives. As a result, firms that provide the most up-to-date information about their products and services via various forms of social media tend to gain trustworthiness (Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Vollmer and Precourt, 2008).

When they see others wearing their preferred brand's clothes, most customers are drawn to it. This is especially true of apparel brands (Bruno et al., 2016). Consumers are motivated by the

information supplied by brands that are trending on social media because it provides them with knowledge, inspiration, surveillance, and pre-purchase information (Muntinga et al., 2011). Knowledge is all about gathering information from other consumers about a brand's product or service, which eventually leads to profit through the use of other people's knowledge. Inspiration is defined as a person's perception of information offered by a brand on a social media community and the extraction of a unique concept from that knowledge that inspires other customers. Consumers desire up-to-date information about the brand that they have witnessed, therefore surveillance is a gauge of the brand's whole social environment. Pre-purchase information on the goods and services supplied by other consumers on social media networks aids consumers in making judgments prior to actually purchasing from that brand.

#### **1.2.4. Customization**

Customization is a concept that describes how services are given to clients from their perspective. Customization is defined as the extent to which social media platforms deliver customized information and services. Customization is critical for any company since it represents the needs of the customer, resulting in customer loyalty (Schmenner, 1986). Customization is simpler with social media since it allows you to approach each customer individually, which is impossible with traditional media marketing and advertising. This customized method, which is supplied to individual customers via many sources, creates a positive brand perception and leads to consumer satisfaction (Ding and Keh, 2016; Nam and Yeo, 2011). Customization on social media demonstrates the firm's individuality to consumers, hence improving customer preferences and loyalty to the brand (Martin and Todorov, 2010). The messages that brands post on social media are divided into two categories: broadcast and tailored messaging. The broadcast messages are the one that are general to everyone there is no target participants and every individual who uses social media platforms view those messages but on the other hand customized messages are for the small group of people or particular group of people to which the particular and customized services are provided to them specifically according to their requirements (Sangar, 2012).

#### **1.2.5. Perceived risk**

It is a measure of the implications of a customer's activity, because each customer behaves differently (Bauer, 1960). These uncertainties are reduced to some extent by social media platforms, which allow customers to instantly communicate with brands and check for new

information (Sano, 2014). Perceived risk has the power to alleviate consumer fears and anxiety about a brand's products and services.

### **1.3. Brand loyalty**

According to literature, brand loyalty is described as a customer's ability to prioritize and favor a brand over time. Brand equity plays a vital part in fostering customer loyalty, as it is entirely dependent on the consumer's impression and image of the brand. The term "brand loyalty" was coined in the 1920s (Bennett 2001). "A function of psychological processes is the biased (non-random) behavioural reaction (purchasing) manifested over time, by some decision-making unit in relation to one or more alternative brands from a group of brands" according to the most generally used definition of brand loyalty (Jacoby 1971). Consumer brand equity is built and maintained by marketing strategies, resulting in increased brand loyalty (Fournier and Yao, 1997). Higher levels of brand loyalty and favorable word-of-mouth are connected with brand love (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). In the sense that a brand requires positive brand equity from customers when they respond positively to the product, brand equity is different from brand loyalty (Heckler & Houston, 1998). A facet of brand equity is brand loyalty, which is a measurement of the firm's outcome (Aaker, Kumar & Day, 2007).

Brand loyalty is thought to be the most essential factor in determining brand equity. Brand loyalty is defined as a behavior in which a customer purchases a product on a regular basis, has a good attitude, and prefers to use the brand's services/products in the event of a necessity (Gremler and Brown, 1996). A consumer's buying response to one or more alternative brands over time is used to measure brand loyalty (Jacoby, 1971). Customers that are loyal to a brand will always speak highly of it and will not accept the marketing methods used by competitors (Dick and Basu, 1994). Consumers who have a strong association with a brand are more likely to be loyal to that brand (Naghbi & Sadeghi, 2011). Brand loyalty refers to a customer's desire to purchase a product from a specific brand over and over again, despite the fact that other companies may offer the same product and services (Rajagopal, 2010). However, consumer behavior varies widely across countries, with some nations being more brand aware than others (Mooij & Hofstede, 2011). The essence of brand equity is brand loyalty. (Tong & Hawley 2009). Consumers' purchasing decisions for the same goods are influenced by their devotion to that particular brand (Wahid et al., 2011). According to a study, a devoted consumer may be willing to accept any price offered by the brand,

and the brand has a grasp over the customers, preventing them from switching to another brand (Ling et al., 2014). As a result, in order to improve brand equity, one should increase loyalty (Mishra & Datta, 2011). As a result, establishing a relationship between a customer and a company is critical to establishing effective brand loyalty.

One of the firm's key aims is to enhance revenue and market share by creating and maintaining brand loyalty (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016). Because they keep their strong inclinations towards a brand through confidence, brand loyalty represents the status of loyal consumers. This leads to the ultimate step of buying and rebuying (Erdomuş & ipek, 2012). Social media marketing activities are one of the most widely used marketing methods. It is even regarded as a successful method for enhancing a brand's individuality. Another study that found that when it comes to social media engagement and brand equity factors, only brand loyalty works (Algharabat et al., 2020). According to Hutchinson (2016), the majority of marketers spend their money on advertising. In their study, Ismail (2017) found that the amount of money spent on promotion was positively related to brand loyalty on social media.

Furthermore, the majority of social media studies focused on brand loyalty in comparison to other components of brand equity (Dessart, 2017; Hollebeek et al., 2014; Leckie et al., 2016; Plume & Slade, 2018). As a result, the author chose to investigate the role of brand loyalty using brand equity theory. Brand loyalty, according to the author, provides the ability to explain customers' attitudes and purchase intentions. As a result, brand loyalty has been used in the majority of IS studies to measure consumers' behavioural intention towards social media (Algharabat et al., 2020; Dwivedi, 2015; Hollebeek et al., 2014; Laroche et al., 2013; Leckie et al., 2016; Nyadzayo et al., 2020; Vivek et al., 2012).

#### **1.4. Customer's commitment**

The commitment to the brand is used to assess consumer behavior toward the brand (Amine, 1998). Commitment is categorized as emotional response of the consumer towards the brand which makes the consumer brand loyal.

It is a psychological state of mind that is internally tied to other people or things, as well as a desire to form and sustain long-term relationships with them (Lee and Sung, 2000; Moorman et al., 1992).

Customers who are dedicated build a special bond with the brands, goods, or companies they choose, and form a community that influences other customers. The brand's commitment to the customers creates a sense of belonging in them. Committed customers are vital for any brand or company because they share their values and provide resources for them, which in turn generates profit for the company, the ultimate objective of any organization. They desire to be corporate members in order to build an interdependent relationship between the individual and the company (Gundlach et al., 1995; Ulrich, 1989).

Consumers have a tendency to avoid participation in activities that are considered to be worthless to them, and commitment is an integral aspect of any interaction between companies and consumers (Dwyer et al., 1987; Moorman et al., 1992). In the same way that people build relationships with other people in daily life, consumers form personal ties with brands in the way that they purchase (Forunier et al., 1998). Committed customers form relationships with brands in which they are fully aware of the brand, the purchases they make, the products and services they utilize, and the experiences they have with it. Commitment is the engagement of a consumer and a brand as though they are two separate individuals.

### **1.5. Social media studies in Pakistan**

This research adds to previous research on brand marketing efforts on social media platforms and how they shape their image in the minds of their customers. Previous research has focused on fashion apparel firms' social media marketing efforts across several social media channels. Consider the following: Do social media marketing activities enhance customer equity? An empirical study of luxury fashion brand (Kim, A.J.; Ko, E, 2012), Social media marketing efforts of luxury brands: Influence on brand equity and consumer behavior (Godey, B.; Manthiou, A.; Pederzoli, D.; Rokka, J.; Aiello, G.; Donvito, R.; Singh, R, 2016).

This research focuses on how social media sites impact individuals' purchasing intentions. Prior research has concentrated on luxury brands, specifically how social media marketing activities influence consumer response through building brand equity, but this study looks at Pakistani national brands and how their marketing efforts influence consumer response. The purpose of this study is to see how social media marketing activities affect brand loyalty and customer response to such marketing initiatives.



## 1.6. Conceptual Framework and development of hypothesis

Firstly conceptual framework will be proposed and then hypothesis will be developed with justification from the literature.

The proposed framework is concerned with the connection between social media marketing operations and consumer responses. These activities have the impact on brand loyalty, which leads to increased brand equity. It also investigates further into effect of commitment, as measured by brand loyalty.

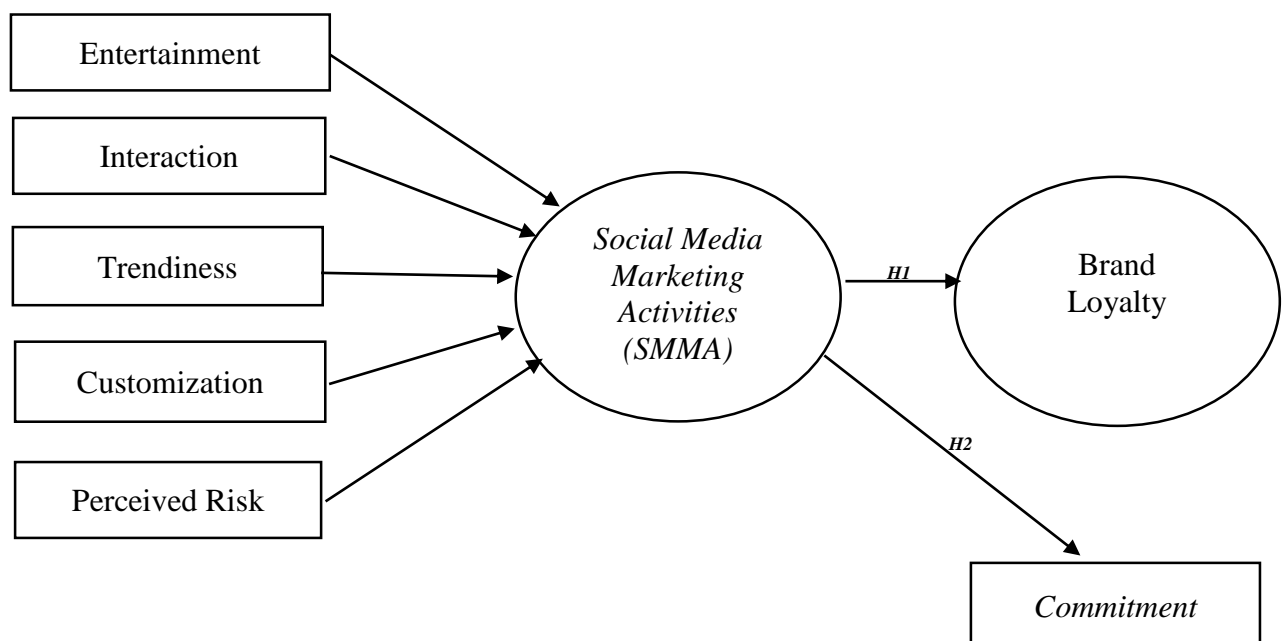


Figure 1. Research model  
Source: Researcher's own generated

Social media marketing is thought to be a useful strategy for building customer relationships (Choi, Fowler, Goh, & Yuan, 2016; Ismail, 2017). Furthermore, such conversations will foster confidence

and remove any doubt that may deter customers from engaging with the brand (Khadim et al., 2018), as well as facilitate online transactions (Chahal & Rani, 2017). Consumers regard social media as a source of information, and its reliability is critical to marketing strategies. Social media marketing attributes have a beneficial impact on brand trust (Tatar and Eren-Erdogmus 2016). Companies are using social media to communicate, interact, and engage with customers, providing value and experiences, and improving their behavioral responses to the brand. Consumers' opinions of marketing activities carried out in an online context can help them feel more secure. The favorable impact of social media marketing on brand loyalty has been scientifically shown (e.g., Ismail, 2017). These online activities are brand stimuli that shape consumers' experiences and enhance their relationships with brands, influencing their preferences, intents, and loyalty (Laroche, Habibi, Richard, & Sankaranarayanan, 2012). The authors (Charo, N.; Sharma, P.; Shaikh, S.; Haseeb, A.; Sufya, M., 2015) examined the impact of social media on brand image and customer purchasing intent. In a similar study, another researcher found that social media activities have a beneficial impact on brand equity and customer behavior (Godey et al., 2016). The relative importance of SMMA was investigated, and it was discovered that each marketing activity had a considerable impact on consumer loyalty and readiness to pay a price premium (Seo and Park, 2018). The use of social media marketing has a significant and favorable impact on a company's ability to increase customer loyalty and purchasing intentions (Crofton and Parker, 2012). The following theories about SMMA effects are gathered from the literature for this investigation and following hypothesis is generated.

H1: Social media marketing strategies provide positive impact on brand loyalty.

Companies can communicate with their customers more easily and swiftly via social media marketing. From a business standpoint, simply being present on social media has the same beneficial impact as traditional advertising. Companies are able to communicate through interactions with potential and existing customers. Product and social media marketing, on the other hand, can result in true word-of-mouth marketing and an influx of new customers, demonstrating that social media is an effective communication medium (Bae, 2002).

Consumers have a long-standing tendency to shun participation in activities that are viewed as useless, and commitment is indeed an important component in the interaction between companies and consumers (Dwyer et al., 1987; Moorman et al., 1992). Consumers create personal relationships with the brands they buy, in the same manner that they do with other individuals in their daily lives (Forunier et al., 1998). Committed customers form relationships with brands by

becoming aware of, purchasing, using, and experiencing them. Commitment is the engagement of a consumer and a brand as though they are two separate individuals. Based on the above discussion and previous literature following hypothesis is generated.

H2: Social media marketing strategies provide positive impact on consumer commitment.

Conclusively, this chapter review all the aspects regarding the research according to the literature in detail. The social media marketing activities i.e entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization and perceived risk were discussed. What is brand equity and its components was discussed briefly, but for this research only one component of brand equity were discussed in detail i.e. brand loyalty and the effect of consumer response on brand loyalty were discussed i.e. commitment. Furthermore, why the researcher have selected Pakistan was discussed and lastely the conceptual framework and hypothesis development was defined.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

The approaches and methodology employed are described in greater detail in this section. It contains information about research philosophy, research methodologies and their justifications, research design selections, and the rationale for using them in the study. It also discusses population, samples, sampling methodologies, data collection methods, reliability, validity, and ethical aspects. The following headings have detailed descriptions of all of the content.

### 2.1. Research philosophy

It is defined as a conviction or notion that guides study design, data collecting, and analysis (Saunders et al. 2016). According to Easterby-Smith et al. (2002), in social science and business studies, a well-defined philosophy helps lead the clarity, efficacy, and exploration of emerging research approaches (Bahari, 2010).

The study used research onion to identify the researcher's research process. (Saunders et al., 2016). The layers of the research onion are depicted in the diagram below.

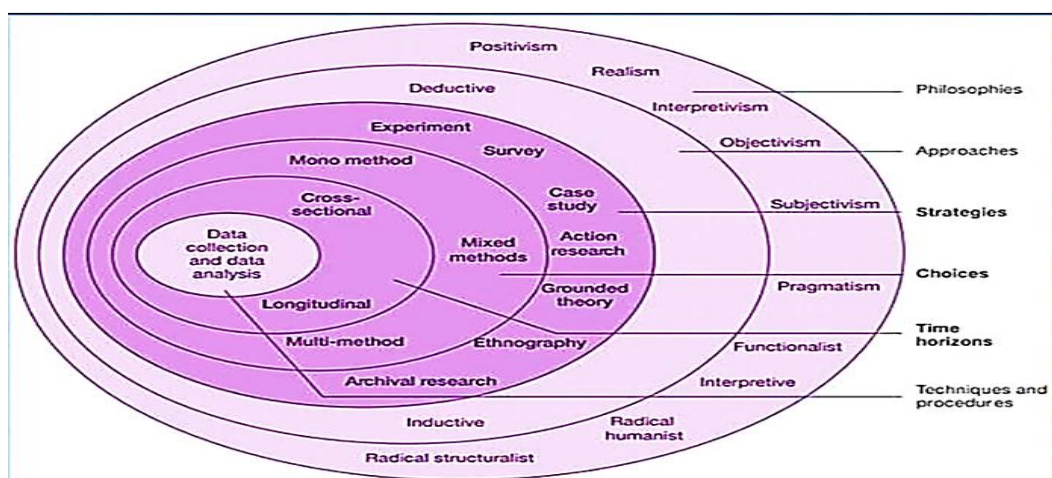


Figure 2: Research onion  
Source: Saunders *et al.* (2016)

This study followed positivist philosophy because it intended to discover customers' acceptable preferences based on a theoretical framework with facts and findings. It is also evident from the research which supports positivist, backs up the positivism approach (Tucker 2011; Nilsson et al. 2018).

The researcher intended to test a number of hypotheses and objectively evaluate the impact of fashion apparel brands' social media marketing methods on brand loyalty, all of which influence customer response to the brand. The succeeding procedures were chosen with this positivism in mind. The objectivism of the researcher's perception of the aggregated information overwhelmed individual differences and context (Antwi and Hamza 2015).

## **2.2. Research methods in social science**

In order to obtain findings that are true to reality and appropriately represent the community, selecting the appropriate research method is critical. The research methodologies vary largely depending on the research situation and the research subject (Lo et al., 2020).

Quantitative, qualitative, and mono techniques are the three types of research methods. The mono technique uses either qualitative or quantitative methodologies, and quantitative data is in numerical form, followed by a qualitative collection of vast descriptive data (Saunders et al. 2016; Creswell 2017). This study uses quantitative research method was used to answer the questions

There are four types of study designs in quantitative research: descriptive, correlational, experimental, and quasi-experimental design research. The current master's thesis employs a descriptive study approach to investigate the relationship between customer commitment and brand loyalty, as well as specific SMMA aspects and brand loyalty.

The descriptive research design is appropriate for investigations that aim to determine the degree of correlation between multiple variables (Shiu et al., 2009, 62). The descriptive research approach is unique in that it allows for the examination of multiple variables, whereas other approaches only allow for one (Borg and Gall, 1989). The three types of descriptive research methodologies are observational, survey, and case study. A survey technique is commonly used in exploratory and descriptive research to investigate the reasons for connections between particular variables and to construct models based on these findings (Saunders et al. 2009). The survey approach is employed to collect data for this study, and it is based on a specified and well-structured questionnaire. The

data was collected via web-based self-completion surveys (Appendix A). The majority of respondents were approached via social media and other e-mail distribution lists. The research is not confined to a particular brand because the current master's thesis aims to address the perspective of SMMA performed by fashion apparel brands in Pakistan. Inferential statistics are ideally matched to the study approach because the current master thesis employs existing aspects of social media marketing to further evaluate the data.

As a result, in this example, where the goal of the thesis is to demonstrate the impact of social media activities on customer based-brand loyalty of a fashion apparel brand, a quantitative research approach will be the most appropriate way.

### **2.3. Data collection and sampling**

Data collection entails acquiring information about the variables, analysing it with statistical techniques, determining the hypothesis, and calculating the result (Paradis et al., 2016). The empirical study was carried out with the use of primary data. The primary data was gathered using web-based self-completion questionnaires from cities across Pakistan with a large internet user population (Google, Kantar 2021).

The survey questions were adapted from multiple previous studies to ensure the best choice of word and sentence structure that ensured ease of understanding and left the least amount of room for ambiguity, which resulted in a lower response rate (Ho and Ho, 2008; Liu and Forsythe, 2011; Xu et al. 2011; Chen and Chou, 2012; Kim et al. 2019; Pappas et al., 2012).

The target population is the vast group of people who the researchers intend to apply their results to (Wu 2011). The accessible population, according to Wu (2011), is the percentage of the target population to which the researcher has access due to geographic, temporal, or cultural constraints.

English is the most extensively used language on the internet, with 53.6 percent of websites, applications, and online services in Pakistan using English as a content language (Rashid et al., 2018). Urdu, on the other hand, is used by less than 1% of all websites (W3Techs 2017). As a result, it is assumed that the target audience can understand and reply to questions offered in English, given that English is the country's second official language (Rashid et al., 2018) and that the majority of internet users in Pakistan consume internet content in English. As a result, the questionnaire was given to the participants in English.

There are two forms of sampling: probability and non-probability according to researchers (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005). For this study, convenience sampling was used as the non-probability sampling approach. This is a sampling approach in which respondents are chosen depending on their accessibility and proximity to the study (Jager et al., 2017). N should be at least 200, according to another researcher (Guilford, 1954), whereas Cattell (1978) suggested three to six respondents per item, with a minimum of 250. The following guidelines for establishing sample size adequacy were derived from a study: Poor = 100, fair = 200, good = 300, very good = 500, and excellent = 1,000 or higher (Comrey and Lee, 1992). More stringent sample size requirements call for at least ten individuals each item (Everitt, 1975) or a large sample, ideally several hundred (Cureton & D'Agostino, 1983).

The sample size is set as 300 for this research purpose. Initially, the link of the questionnaire was shared with the respondents using social media websites like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and WhatsApp. The respondents were requested to fill in the questionnaire and after filling the questionnaire they were requested to forward the link to their family and friends and to their personal social media accounts to gather more respondents. To identify the sample size, we followed the guidelines provided by Comrey and Lee (1992).

## **2.4. Design of questionnaire**

For this research, the questionnaire was divided into five sections, each with multiple-choice or grid questions with responses on a five-likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" (Vagias, 2006).

The first component comprised of generic and demographic questions about the respondents in order to determine their profile and lifestyle, which could have a bearing on vastly differing conclusions for various factors (Xu et al., 2011).

The second component comprise of social media marketing and usage and in total four questions were asked by the respondents having different constructs from the proposed hypothesis.

The suggested framework's five different components were represented by fifteen questions in the third segment (Zikmund, 2000). The questions were based on fashion apparel brands' social media marketing efforts and were divided into five categories: entertainment, trendiness, interactivity, personalization, and perceived risk. There were two to four questions in each category (Kim et al.

2019). There were several questions and responses for each component, and they were not ordered according to the hypotheses, which helped to prevent any potential response bias (Jovancic, 2019).

The fourth component of the questionnaire deals with the component of brand equity i.e. brand loyalty. Four questions were asked by the respondents as a measure of brand loyalty.

The fifth section consist of customer responses towards the brand followed by commitment. This section contains three questions. This section was designed to help the researcher support the structural model's managerial recommendations by understanding the customer's preferred method towards the brand (Khan et al., 2019).

## 2.5. Demographic profile

Table 1 illustrates the demographic characteristics of respondents in detail, revealing that female respondents (59.3%) outnumber male respondents (40.7%). In terms of age, 149 of the respondents (49.7%) were between the ages of 18 and 25, 98 were between the ages of 25 and 35 (32.7%), 39 were between the ages of 35 and 45 (20.3%), and 14 were 45 and over (4.7%).

In terms of occupation, 141 people were students (47%), 19 people were business owners (6.35%), 88 people were employed (29.35%), 11 people were unemployed (3.7%), 6 people were freelancers (2.0%), and 35 people were of various occupations (11.7%).

The length of time spent on social media and for how long they have been using social media were both different. The participants were asked to pick one of five fashion apparel brands that they like and follow on social media. Facebook is used by 49.0% of respondents, Instagram by 42.7%, YouTube by 8.0%, and Twitter by 0.3%.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERSTICS			
Variable	Construct	Frequency	Percentage (%)
GENDER	Female	178	59.3
	Male	122	40.7
AGE	Between 18-25	149	49.7
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERSTICS			
Variable	Construct	Frequency	Percentage



			(%)
AGE	Between 25-35	98	32.7
	Between 35-45	39	13.0
	Between 45 or above	14	4.7
OCCUPATION	Student	141	47.0
	Businessman	19	6.3
OCCUPATION	Employed	88	29.3
	Unemployed	11	3.7
	Freelancer	6	2.0
	Other	35	11.7
SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE	Less than a year	15	5
	1 – 5 years	102	34
	5 – 10 years	121	40.3
	More than 10 years	62	20.7
FREQUENCY OF USAGE	Daily	242	80.7
	Weekly	29	9.7
	Monthly	3	1
	At need	26	8.7
SELECTED FASHION APPAREL BRAND	Gul Ahmed	63	21.0
	Khaadi	78	26.0
	Sapphire	55	18.3
	Bonanza	28	9.3
	Junaid Jamsheed	76	25.3
SOCIAL MEDIA SITES	Facebook	147	49.0
	Instagram	128	42.7
	You Tube	24	8.0
	Twitter	1	0.3

Source: Author's own calculation based on data from Appendix 1

These demographic characteristics are consistent with expectations (Cheung et al., 2017), who found that female respondents and students have a higher likelihood of participating in voluntary surveys like this (Kantar, 2018), who found that older demographics (45 years old and above) are less likely to be regular users of social media sites, whereas people aged 18 to 25 and others were more involved in social media marketing (Cooke, 2018). Low response from the older group could be due to a lack of experience with online questionnaires, difficulties navigating the scale-based survey form, and various options and replies (Office for National Statistics 2020).

When respondents were asked to choose one of their preferred choice of brand from the following five leading national brands namely: Khaddi, Gul Ahmed, Sapphire, Bonanza and Junaid Jamsheed where they usually buy their products or follow them on social media platforms. These brands were selected on the basis of their popularity among the population of Pakistan and their social media activities engagement as well as because these brands deal with both men and women fashion apparel.

Table 1 shows that out of 300 respondent's 63 respondent's (21.0%) prefer Gul Ahmed, 78 respondent's (26.0%) prefer Khaadi, 55 respondent's (18.3%) prefer Sapphire, 28 respondent's (9.3%) prefer Bonanza and 76 respondent's (25.3%) prefer Junaid Jamsheed.

When the respondents were asked to select the social media sites out of four given social media platforms from which they follow their chosen fashion apparel brands Table 1 shows that out of 300 respondent's 147 respondent's (49.0%) follow their preferred brand through Facebook, 128 respondent's (42.7%) follow through Instagram, 24 respondent's (8.0%) follow through Youtube, and only 1 respondent (0.3%) followed their chosen brand through Twitter.

## **2.6. Data analysis methods**

As part of the research technique, data analysis is one of the processes for measuring, evaluating, and testing the research problems, allowing us to draw specific conclusions from the research problem. The obtained raw data must be extensively reviewed and analysed in order to disclose all of its meanings and consequences (Green et al. 1988). During the data analysis step, several interconnected activities are completed to summarise and rearrange the data (Zikmund 2000). Microsoft Excel and SPSS 23.0v statistical tools are utilized for data input and analysis in quantitative data analysis. For each class of respondent, the responses were copied to Excel sheets, and the data was then imported into SPSS to extract statistics. SPSS Statistics is used to evaluate the selected data, and Microsoft Excel and SPSS Statistics are also used to create the diagrams and charts.

The respondents' data was analysed in two stages: descriptive analysis and inferential statistics analysis. Data is summarised in descriptive analysis, whereas data is possessed for assessing preliminary data, reliability, and findings relevance and strength of relationships between variables in inferential statistics analysis.

In total, 300 people responded to the survey. To evaluate whether the scale is appropriate, data from fifteen respondents were pre-tested for internal consistency using Cronbach-Alpha to determine the reliability of the selected items.

The descriptive analysis includes descriptive statistics such as mean and mode. The standard deviation of the variables is also determined in this section. The Spearman correlation coefficient between values is measured in inferential statistics analysis. Multiple linear regressions are used to determine the relationship between the independent variables (social media marketing activities) and the dependent variable (brand loyalty and consumer commitment). The author was able to come up with certain results and findings after gathering all of the responses and conducting the analysis, which are discussed in the next chapter.

## **2.8. Pre-test**

With 15 initial respondents, a pre-test was carried out. The study focused on some of the participants' characteristics, such as gender, age, and occupation, in the first phase of the questionnaire (Appendix 1). The second phase in the questionnaire was to determine how people used social media sites and which fashion apparel brands they preferred (Appendix 1). In the third phase of the questionnaire the study compiled a list of potential candidate measure items, in order to uncover the elements that influence brand loyalty, as well as the function of customer response (Appendix 1). All of the items were given a five-point assessment (Vagias, 2006). The Likert scale is anchored at:

1 – Strongly disagree

2 – Disagree

3 - Neutral

4 – Agree

5 – Strongly agree

The benefit of using an interval scale is that it allows the researcher to utilize a range of statistical techniques, including mean, standard deviation, correlation, and other statistical techniques typically used in marketing research, on ordinal and nominal scale data.

### 3. FINDINGS AND RESULTS

This chapter will present and explain the study's main analyses and findings. First, the findings of the reliability analysis are presented, with Cronbach's alpha being utilised to verify data consistency. The descriptive analysis results, which comprise the variables' mean, median, mode, and standard deviation, are next provided. The findings of the Spearman correlation matrix and Multiple linear regressions are presented in the inferential statistics analysis. Finally, in this chapter, the suggestions for further study are discussed.

#### 3.1. Reliability of data

Reliability verifies that measuring scales' internal consistency is free of random errors. Cronbach's alpha values are used to assess the overall scales' and each of the variables' dimensions' reliability. Cronbach's alpha is a widely used metric for assessing reliability. A Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value greater than 0.70 indicates a reliable construct (Kaplan, 2009 and Kline, 2005). The dependability coefficients around 0.90 are outstanding, and values close to 0.80 are satisfactory, according to the rule of thumb. Failure to recognize the need for reliability may result in the removal of problematic components.

Table 2. Reliability analysis results

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
Entertainment	0.81	3
Interaction	0.81	4
Trendiness	0.83	4
Customization	0.76	3
Preceived risk	0.71	2
Brand loyalty	0.88	4
Commitment	0.81	3

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
Overall	0.92	

Source: Author's own calculation based on data from Appendix 1

A Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.7 is regarded appropriate in order to establish internal consistency of the obtained data, according to a researcher (DeVellis, 2003). All five social media marketing activities have a Cronbach's alpha value higher than 0.8. Furthermore, the coefficients for brand loyalty and commitment are both greater than 0.8. The overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.92, indicating that the data is internally consistent, reliable, and acceptable for further investigation.

### **3.2. Descriptive analysis**

This section summarizes the quantitative data obtained, with a focus on the survey respondents, as well as descriptive statistics and frequencies. The frequency distribution for each social media marketing activity is shown, as well as other key calculations for each variable, such as mean, mode, and standard deviation. The descriptive statistics for the five social media marketing initiatives, as well as consumer commitment and brand loyalty, are shown in Table 2. When asked about their pre-knowledge, 300 people out of 300 said that they follow one of the five mentioned fashion apparel brands on a social media networking site in Pakistan. Thus, N = 300 for all variables, based on descriptive data. According to descriptive statistics analysis, all variables' mean values are more than 3.5, and their mode values are consistently 4. Table 3 demonstrates that the mean values of the social media marketing activities measurements vary from 3.5 to 4.0, with 4 as the median value.

The statement regarding the usage of social media sites by preferred brand is trendy has the highest mean value of 4.08 among the variables of social media marketing activities, while both the median and mode for this item are 4 respectively. The availability of product information has the second highest mean score of 4, with a median value of 4 and a mean of 4.02. The third highest mean value of the social media marketing activities item is 3.97, which is on the statement concerning up to date content, with a mode of 4 and a median of 4 as well. The mean values of commitment and brand loyalty measures, on the other hand, range between 3.8 and 3.9 for these items. The minimum mean value of a commitment statement is 3.85 with a median of 4 which is regarding

the obsession of oneself with the brand, whereas the minimum mean value of a loyalty statement is 3.83, which is about considering yourself as a loyal customer.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics

Variables	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.
The advertisement content shared on social media by yours choice of brand is pleasing.	3.73	4	4	0.88
The content shared on social media platform of your favourite fashion Apparel Brand(s) is enjoyable.	3.85	4	4	0.78
My favorite fashion Apparel Brand(s) share interesting information about product on their social media platforms.	3.95	4	4	0.86
Your favourite brand gives you opportunity to share information about their products using social media platforms.	3.93	4	4	0.90
Your brand always gives you an opportunity to share your valuable comments and exchange of your thoughts to the others users using social media.	3.85	4	4	0.90
My choice of brand gives me the authority to communicate directly with their administrator using social media.	3.64	4	4	1.08
My favourite brand gives me the chance to share and convey my opinions about their brand easily on social media.	3.79	4	4	0.95
My choice of brand always share information or content up to date on social media.	3.97	4	4	0.93
The use of social media of your selected brand is trendy, fashionable and stylish.	4.08	4	4	0.81
My choice of brand always develops noticeable trend activities on social media platforms.	3.97	4	4	0.89
My favourite fashion apparel brand reacts promptly with the latest trend affinities.	3.86	4	4	0.84
The information I want about the product regarding the brand is easily available on the social media.	3.95	4	4	0.88
My choice of brand provides me the information I needed.	4.02	4	4	0.83
My favourite fashion apparel brand provides me with the customized service the way I want.	3.73	4	4	1.08
The social media content of my selected brand increases the concerns regarding their services.	3.77	4	4	0.91

Variables	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.
The social media content of my concerned brand value(s) my concerns regarding the usage of their product and services provided to me.	3.83	4	4	0.87
I always prefer to keep purchasing the products and services offered by my choice of brand.	3.87	4	4	0.92
I am loyal with my chosen brand.	3.87	4	4	0.98
I always consider my choice of brand as my first priority whenever I go for shopping.	3.87	4	4	0.98
I always consider myself as a loyal customer of my choice of brand.	3.83	4	4	1.03
I am proud to be the customer of my selected fashion apparel brand.	3.87	4	4	0.89
I am confident that my choice of brand will do best in the upcoming years.	3.98	4	4	0.85
I am fond and obsessed with my selected brand.	3.86	4	4	0.96

Source: Author's own calculation based on data from Appendix 1

In the above table N=300 and the calculations done are according to the number of respondents participated in the survey.

Table 3 indicates that the trendiness of the fashion apparel brands is the most dominant activity of the social media marketing strategy among the other activities with a highest mean of 3.97 which indicates that the content provided by the fashion apparel brands should be trendy and enjoyable. Followed by customization (mean: 3.90), entertainment (mean: 3.84), interaction (mean: 3.80) and perceived risk (mean: 3.78). As for the brand loyalty and customer commitment towards the brand table 3 indicates the customers are moderately loyal towards the brand as well as their commitment towards their preferable apparel brand with a mean of 3.86 and 3.90 respectively.

The statement "My choice of brand gives me the authority to communicate directly with their administrator using social media" has the largest standard deviation of the items at 1.087. The statement "The content shared on social media platforms of your favourite fashion Apparel Brand(s) is enjoyable" has the lowest standard deviation of 0.785. Table 3 shows that the majority of respondents strongly agree or agree with the comments made. However, an inferential statistics analysis is used to determine the strength of the relationship between the independent variables (i.e. social media marketing activity) and the dependent variable (i.e. customer commitment and brand loyalty).

### **3.3. Inferential statistics analysis**

The correlation coefficients of Spearman were used to determine how strong a relationship exists between the aspects of social media marketing and consumer commitment and brand loyalty in the inferential statistics analysis section. When data is obtained using the Likert scale, Spearman's rho coefficient is commonly employed. Table 3's correlation matrix also shows that social media marketing dimensions are positively and significantly associated with one another. At a 1% significance level, the results of the Spearman correlation matrix reveal a substantial positive link between the independent variables (social media marketing activities) and the dependent variable (brand loyalty and consumer commitment). Table 3 reveals that all relationships have values ranging from 0.585 to 0.815. It denotes a positive relationship between factors and data.

The correlation coefficient, which varies from -1 to +1, is determined using correlation analysis. This coefficient reflects the strength of the association between the two variables and whether it is positive or negative. In other words, it illustrates the magnitude of the relationship between variables as well as the direction of the relationship. If the coefficient is positive, it means that greater levels of one variable correspond to higher levels of other variables, and vice versa. If the coefficient is negative, it means that higher levels of one variable correspond to lower levels of the other. The amount or intensity of the association is represented by the coefficient's actual value. Table 4 shows that the correlation between social media marketing factors ranged from 0.585 to 0.753, indicating a substantial positive association between the components of social media marketing. The results of the Spearman correlation matrix indicate that a significant correlation is between Customization and Perceived risk, with a correlation coefficient of 0.753, followed by Customization and Interaction, with a correlation coefficient of 0.744. Customization has a correlation coefficient of 0.661 to 0.753 with other characteristics, whilst Entertainment and Perceived risk have the lowest correlation coefficient of 0.585.



Table 4. Spearman correlation matrix between social media marketing activities, brand loyalty and commitment

		Entertainment	Interaction	Trendiness	Customization	Perceived Risk	Brand Loyalty	Commitment
Entertainment	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.654**	.661**	.661**	.585**	.589**	.619**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300	300	300
Interaction	Correlation Coefficient	.654**	1.000	.676**	.744**	.697**	.650**	.670**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300	300	300
Trendiness	Correlation Coefficient	.661**	.676**	1.000	.698**	.690**	.704**	.710**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300	300	300
Customization	Correlation Coefficient	.661**	.744**	.698**	1.000	.753**	.690**	.691**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300	300	300
Perceived Risk	Correlation Coefficient	.585**	.697**	.690**	.753**	1.000	.677**	.660**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300	300	300
Brand Loyalty	Correlation Coefficient	.589**	.650**	.704**	.690**	.677**	1.000	.815**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300	300	300
Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.619**	.670**	.710**	.691**	.660**	.815**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.
	N	300	300	300	300	300	300	300

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Author's own calculation based on data from Appendix 1

The correlation matrix analyzed the relationship between social media marketing activity, loyalty, and commitment. Table 4 shows that the five social media marketing elements, all have a positive correlation with the dependent variable (consumers commitment and brand loyalty). With a value of 0.704, the correlation between Trendiness and Brand loyalty is highly positive, whilst the least positive correlation between Entertainment and Brand loyalty is shown with a value of 0.589. Moreover, the correlation between Trendiness and consumer commitment is highly positive with a value of 0.710, whilst the least positive correlation between Entertainment and consumer commitment is shown with a value of 0.619.

Multiple linear regression analysis based on collected data is used to determine the impact of independent factors (Entertainment, Interaction, Trendiness, Customization, Perceived risk) on the dependent variable (Brand loyalty and Consumer commitment).

Table 5. Multiple linear regressions for Brand loyalty with social media marketing activities

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.754
R Square	0.569
Adjusted R Square	0.562
Standard Error	2.239
Observation	300

Source: Author's own calculation based on data from Appendix 1

In the above Table 5, the multiple correlation coefficient between the independent variables i.e. SMMA (Entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization and perceived risk) and the dependent variable i.e. brand loyalty variable, where  $r = 0.754$  which shows there is positive correlation between the variables. The  $R^2 = 0.569$  shows that 56.9% of the change in the dependent variable i.e. SMMA, can be explained by the independent variables i.e. brand loyalty and the rest 43.1% remains unexplained. The adjusted  $R^2 = 0.562$  gives the idea of how well the model generalizes. The difference between the  $R^2$  and adjusted  $R^2$  is  $0.569 - 0.562 = 0.007$ ; it means the model would account for approximately 0.7% less variance.

Table 6. ANOVA Table

	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	5	1945.529	389.106	77.583	.000
Residual	294	1474.508	5.015		
Total	299	3420.037			

Source: Author's own calculation based on data from Appendix 1

The significance value obtained from Table 6 is 0.000, indicating that the regression model can be employed because the significance value is less than 0.05. The ANOVA's F-value shows the model's statistical significance at  $p < 0.05$  because the calculated F value is 77.583. The F-value is considered statistically significant, when compared to table F, its value is 2.214, indicating that the calculated F is greater than the table F.

Table 7. Regression coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
Intercept	.355	.798		.445	.657	-1.215	1.924		
Entertainment	.067	.091	.043	.733	.464	-.112	.246	.434	2.305
Interaction	.141	.069	.129	2.046	.042	.005	.277	.369	2.708
Trendiness	.368	.075	.310	4.899	.000	.220	.516	.366	2.730
Customization	.277	.096	.191	2.897	.004	.089	.466	.339	2.953
Perceived risk	.406	.131	.190	3.108	.002	.149	.664	.394	2.536

Source: Author’s own calculation based on data from Appendix 1

Table 7 indicates that, when the predictor variable under evaluation increases by one and all other independent variables remain constant, the regression coefficient indicates how much the dependent variable brand loyalty is predicted to increase. Coefficients have a substantial influence when  $p \leq 0.05$  is used for all independent variables. The VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) result of 1 VIF 5 indicates that the variables are moderately linked with one another. The tiny VIF values corresponding to the variables indicate that collinearity is not an issue. This indicates that each independent variable (Entertainment, Interaction, Trendiness, Customization, and Perceived Risk) is capable of predicting brand loyalty.

Table 8 presents the results of various linear regression studies for social media marketing activities and consumers commitment. The value of R is 0.783, indicating a strong relationship between commitment and the social media marketing activities variable. The square root of R is 0.612. (61.2 percent ).

Table 8. Multiple linear regressions for Commitment with social media marketing activities

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.783
R Square	0.612
Adjusted R Square	0.606
Standard Error	1.463
Observation	300

Source: Author’s own calculation based on data from Appendix 1

In the above Table 8, the multiple correlation coefficient between the independent variables i.e. SMMA (Entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization and perceived risk) and the dependent variable i.e. consumer commitment variable, where  $r = 0.783$  which shows there is positive correlation between the variables. The  $R^2 = 0.612$  shows that 61.2% of the change in the dependent variable i.e. SMMA, can be explained by the independent variables i.e. commitment and the rest 38.8% remains unexplained. The adjusted  $R^2 = 0.606$  gives the idea of how well the model generalizes. The difference between the  $R^2$  and adjusted  $R^2$  is  $0.612 - 0.606 = 0.006$ ; it means the model would account for approximately 0.6% less variance.

Table 9. ANOVA Table

	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	5	995.164	199.033	92.906	0.000
Residual	294	629.836	2.142		
Total	299	1625.000			

Source: Author's own calculation based on data from Appendix 1

The significance value obtained from Table 9 is 0.000, indicating that the regression model can be employed because the significance value is less than 0.05. The ANOVA's F-value shows the model's statistical significance at  $p < 0.05$  because the calculated F value is 77.583. The F-value is considered statistically significant, when compared to table F, its value is 2.214, indicating that the calculated F is greater than the table F.

Table 10. Regression coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
Intercept	.738	.521		1.415	.158	-.288	1.764		
Entertainment	.139	.059	.129	2.339	.020	.022	.256	.434	2.305
Interaction	.096	.045	.127	2.122	.035	.007	.185	.369	2.708
Trendiness	.268	.049	.328	5.463	.000	.172	.365	.366	2.730
Customization	.200	.063	.199	3.197	.002	.077	.323	.339	2.953
Perceived risk	.172	.085	.116	2.011	.045	.004	.340	.394	2.536

Source: Author's own calculation based on data from Appendix 1

Table 10 indicates that, when the predictor variable under evaluation increases by one and all other independent variables remain constant, the regression coefficient indicates how much the dependent variable commitment is predicted to increase. Coefficients have a substantial influence when  $p \leq 0.05$  is used for all independent variables. The VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) result of 1 VIF 5 indicates that the variables are moderately linked with one another. The tiny VIF values corresponding to the variables indicate that collinearity is not an issue. This indicates that each independent variable (Entertainment, Interaction, Trendiness, Customization, and Perceived Risk) is capable of predicting brand loyalty.

### **3.4. Findings**

This study was conducted to determine the effective component of social media marketing activities of five national fashion apparel brands' in Pakistan, and two question was posed to lead the investigation. The questions were, “Which is the most effective dimension of social media marketing activities done by fashion apparel brands in Pakistan” and “Does these social media marketing activities contribute in buildig brand loyalty and customers commitment towards fashion apparel brands of Pakistan”

The data was analyzed using the software Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to answer the study question .

According to the study's findings, the most popular social media platforms among participants were Facebook and Instagram followed by 49% and 42% respectively. This finding is consistent with the findings of the We Are Social 2020 report. Khaddi and Junaid Jamsheed fashion apparel brands with 26% and 25.3% were the most popular on social media, according to the participants.

To begin, the questionnaire's reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. For all five social media marketing parameters, Cronbach's alpha is higher than 0.7, and for commitment and brand loyalty, it is greater than 0.8. This shows that the data collected is of acceptable to good reliability and can be evaluated. The descriptive statistics for the concept, such as mean, mode, median, and standard deviation, were then determined. The results of the descriptive study suggest that Pakistani fashion apparel brands engage in extensive social media marketing, with scores ranging from 3.5 to 4.0. This indicates that the social media marketing efforts of Pakistani fashion apparel brands are generally successful.

According to the findings, SMMA is directly and positively related to brand loyalty, which is consistent with earlier research. A correlation analysis was conducted to further investigate the relationship between the aspects of social media marketing of Pakistani fashion apparel brands, brand loyalty and consumer commitment. This study examined into the direct links between social media marketing activities, brand loyalty and customer's commitment. Trendiness is the most dominant social media marketing dimension among Pakistani fashion apparel brands, according to the survey responses, which has the highest mean score among the others. At the same time, trendiness shows has the highest correlation with brand loyalty, whereas Trendiness also have a substantially higher correlation with customer's commitment towards the brand.

A correlation matrix analysis was used to demonstrate the relationships between social media marketing parameters to brand loyalty and customer commitment. The inferential statistics research revealed that the correlation between brand loyalty and trendiness is significantly positive, with a value of 0.704, implying that the social media marketing factor trendiness increases brand loyalty in comparison to other social media marketing activities done by fashion apparel brands. The findings of an inferential statistics analysis of social media marketing activities and customers commitment also shows a very strong positive correlation between the two, with a value of 0.710, indicating that social media marketing activities enhances customers commitment towards the brand.

According to the present master's thesis, the second dimension that Pakistani customers value the most is customization. Customization is concerned primarily with the website's technical functionality as well as customised services, and the Spearman correlation matrix shows that it has a major impact on customers' brand loyalty. The link between brand loyalty and customization has a larger value than the correlation between the other social media marketing activities values, according to inferential statistics analysis. Customization is very desirable with Pakistani customers, with a correlation value of 0.690, as well as the coorelation between customization and customers commitment is also high with a value of 0.691 .

Perceived risk and Interaction rank third ad fourth, respectively, among social media marketing activities. Perceived risk and interaction both play a substantial role in the social media marketing activity dimension, with correlation values of 0.677 and 0.650 for brand loyalty, 0.70 and 0.660 for customers commitment, respectively.. The least significant dimension seen by Pakistani customers of fashion apparel brands is entertainment. Entertainment has a 0.589 and 0.619 connection with the dependent variable of brand loyalty and customers commitment.

Multiple linear regression analysis was used to determine the impact of independent factors (Entertainment, Interaction, Trendiness, Customization, and Perceived risk) on the dependent variables (Brand loyalty) and Brand loyalty and Commitment. The study indicates high regression statistics for Commitment and Brand loyalty, according to the results of multiple linear regression analysis. According to the regression research, social media marketing activities can account for 56.9 percent of brand loyalty variance and 61.2 percent of changes in the commitment variable. The primary concern for building brand loyalty and committed customers in the fashion clothing business is social media marketing activities; the principal findings are also evidence of the effects of social media marketing activities on brand loyalty and consumer commitment. As a result, the findings reveal that the five aspects of social media marketing activities have a considerable impact on Pakistani fashion apparel brands. At the same time, the calculations reveals that several social media activities have a significant impact on boosting brand loyalty among Pakistani customers, as well as, has a high level of impact on increasing customers commitment.

According to the results of the analysis. the current study show that Pakistani customers positively perceive social media marketing activities based on descriptive and inferential statistics analysis, it is important to increase the level of entertaining posts in the fashion apparel market in Pakistan, among other factors of social media marketing activities.

#### **3.4.1. Theoretical implication**

Findings of this study add to the increasing body of literature in social media marketing by addressing the function of social media marketing activities in enhancing critical branding goals such as brand loyalty and customers commitment. To begin with, measuring and conceptualizing SMM remains difficult (Godey et al., 2016). Several investigations in the preceding literature validated the five aspects of social media and supported the employed assessment scale of SMM activities produced by a researcher (Kim and Ko, 2012). The activities that motivate users to use social media are defined by the overall influence of these factors.

Users engage in online platforms to get personalized services and obtain the most up-to-date information, while also sharing their experiences and making additional recommendations. Second, SMM improves brand loyalty; the five SMM traits identified are among other online drivers of loyalty (Srinivasan et al., 2002). Updated, trendy, and information-based media generate loyal customers with good views who have revisiting intents for an online platform. This study mainly focuses on the five national fashion apparel brands namely: Gul Ahmed, Sapphire, Khaddi,

Junaid Jamsheed and Bonanza in Pakistan and their SMMA were observed and a dimensions of brand equity i.e. brand loyalty was measured. SMMA positively impact brand loyalty which shows that, if the brands want the consumers to be loyal with the brand they should work more on the SMMA to increase the brand loyalty and consumers commitment towards the brand.

The type of the relationship that apparel brands have with their customers determines how committed customers are to buying and using their services. A weak relationship with customers will therefore result in negative commitment, or in other words, no commitment from the customer; whereas, a good relationship with customers will have a high chance of creating commitment behaviour. This finding is in line with what other researchers have discovered (Lawson-Body & Limayem, 2004; Amin, 2011; Wang et al. 2004; Hardwick & Ford, 1986; Traylor, 1981).

#### **3.4.2. Practical implication**

Social media marketing is an essential component of online marketing techniques for improving brand performance. It is linked to customer relationship marketing and the favourable effects it has on customer loyalty, resulting in increased sales and profit. The main purpose for this study was that there are very limited studies on national fashion apparel brands in Pakistan. The social media marketing in engaging customers and driving emotional and behavioural responses is highlighted in this study. The study's findings reveal the mechanisms that marketers rely on to engage their customers. As a result, the SMM properties that have been found provide insight into these systems. Companies' main aim is to tailor the same service activities delivered to customers according to their preferences. As a result, consumers might be recognized within their brand communities and enticed to participate in further activities. Social media is a important source of information that has a significant impact on consumer purchase decisions. Companies should use social media and other online applications to present customers with the most up-to-date, relevant, and current information possible. As a result, this information inspires and motivates buyers to choose their preferred brand (Yadav & Rahman, 2018). SMMA in fashion apparel brands are a major determining factor of brand loyalty, according to this study. Because SMMA are a vehicle for generating positive effects on brand loyalty, which contribute to apparel brand value, apparel brands should develop more intriguing and aggressive SMMA to encourage customers to utilize social media more actively.



Consumer commitment has been demonstrated to have a major impact on brand, implying that if customers are committed towards the brand, they will continue to advertise. As a result, apparel brands should encourage customers to commit willingly and use social media effectively to manage customers' behavioural and emotional responses to a brand.

### **3.5. Limitations and future research prospect**

There are certain limitations to this research. The study is based on a nonprobability sampling technique and a single geographic area: Pakistan. Although the sample size is small, it is demographically representative, which may lend confidence in the data' generalizability. Furthermore, the study looked at the impact of social media marketing operations without taking into account the distinct characteristics of each media platform. These restrictions will be taken into account in future study.

Another restriction is that it is limited to only five Pakistani fashion apparel brands. The findings gave the sector a new direction. This study will offer a solution to all apparel companies who do not employ social media marketing as a tool. The insights can be used to improve the brands social media marketing strategies. This will assist them in developing and enhancing the brand's image, as well as expediting the brand equity role. Other researchers may add more variables in the future, such as moderating and intervening variables, to produce more significant results.

Moreover, only one dimension of brand equity has been studied i.e. brand loyalty. Other researchers may add more variables in the future, to produce more noteworthy results.

The researcher used four social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube) in this study and examined the aggregate effect rather than the individual effect of each one. This research can be expanded by examining the impact of the proposed SMMA on certain social media platforms. As a result, an apparel brand will be able to focus on which social media platforms will help them attract more customers.

Although this study found that SMMA had a favourable influence on customer response, the implications of these effects on company competency or managerial performance were not examined. Future research that takes into account these restrictions will be beneficial not only to fashion clothing companies, but also to marketers in other industries looking for solutions to social media marketing strategies and decision-making.

## CONCLUSION

Pakistan is a developing country, and while the concept of social media marketing is gaining traction in other developing countries, it has yet to catch on in Pakistan. Pakistan's textile and garment industries are booming and have a big economic influence. Pakistan's social media marketing activities are slowly gaining traction. The purpose of this study was to determine the effective dimension of SMMA that enhances brand loyalty and customer's commitment towards the five national apparel brands of Pakistan. To analyse the effect, this study comes up with the research questions, which states that "Which is the most effective dimension of social media marketing activities done by fashion apparel brands in Pakistan" and "Does these social media marketing activities contribute in building brand loyalty and customer's commitment towards fashion apparel brands of Pakistan".

In context to Pakistan, mostly studies are done to analyse the effect of SMMA on brand equity and its components on luxury fashion apparel brands. The current study adds to a previous study (Rukhsar M Iqbal and Sadaf Khan, 2021) that looked at the influence of SMMA's on national fashion apparel brands on brand equity, this is the first to look at the relationship between SMMA's on brand loyalty and customer's commitment specifically for national fashion apparel brands in Pakistan are associated with luxury fashion apparel brands . This study examines the impacts of SMMA's on five national fashion apparel brands (Khaddi, Sapphire, Junaid Jamsheed, Gul Ahmed and Bonanza) using four social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter) on brand loyalty, with respect to customer response i.e. commitment were not studied in the prior researched.

To answer the research question, a quantitative research method was applied. Data was collected from all around Pakistan using web-based self-completion questionnaires. The survey of 300 participants was conducted to examine the effectiveness of SMMA. The majority of respondents were approached through social media and e-mail distribution. In order to review their experiences with SMMA of Pakistani fashion apparel brands, respondents were asked to rank 16 social media marketing strategies statements on a scale of "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). In

order to investigate the association between SMMA's factors, the participants were also given three commitment statements and four brand loyalty statements to determine the relationship between the dependant and independent variables respectively

The acquired information was put to the test and examined. Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine the data's reliability, which was greater than 0.7 for all five SMMA components and greater than 0.8 for customer's commitment and brand loyalty. The descriptive statistics for the constructs, such as mean, mode, median, and standard deviation, were then calculated. The data suggest that Pakistani fashion apparel brands have a high degree of SMMA, with scores ranging from 3.5 to 4.0. This suggests that SMMA of fashion apparel brands has a high perceived value among Pakistani customers..

Trendiness and customization emerge as the most important social media marketing activities when the components that make up social media marketing activities are studied. Consumers place the least emphasis on entertainment and interaction when it comes to social media marketing. Entertainment is a crucial component of social media marketing operations, according to study conducted by (Kim and Ko, 2012) and (Seo and Park, 2018). However, according to (Seo and Park, 2018), trendiness is the most important factor for consumers when it comes to social media marketing. The results of this study differed from those of (Kim and Ko, 2012).

The data was further analysed using the Spearman correlation matrix and multiple linear regressions tests. The Spearman correlation matrix demonstrated a substantial positive association between brand loyalty and trendiness as well as between customer's commitment and trendiness, showing that brand loyalty as well as customer's commitment and this SMMA are intimately intertwined. Customization is the second key SMMA with strong correlation values that has a considerable impact on brand loyalty and commitment with brand. With strong correlation values, perceived risk is the third key SMMA that has a considerable impact on brand loyalty and consume's commitment. The data was further analyzed through regression statistics to conform the results.

According to the results of inferential statistics, reveals high regression values based on the findings of multiple linear regression analysis for independent variable i.e. SMMA and in between independent variable i.e. brand loyalty and customer's commitment. According to the results of the regression study, selected SMMA's can explain 56.9% of the variance in brand loyalty and 61.2% of the variance in SMMA's and customer's commitment. The findings of the master's thesis

show that the brand loyalty for national fashion apparel brands in Pakistan is influenced by the level of selected SMMA dimensions. At the same time, the master thesis shows that SMMA's also plays a great role in making customer's to be committed towards the brand. This indicates that such a consumer fervently believes in the brand and will tell others numerous reasons why the brand is good and why they should purchase the brand's products. Furthermore, the findings revealed that a brand-loyal customer will devote time and resources to promoting about the brand in order to generate new market.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1. Questionnaire

**Consent:** *This is the research project and it aims to identify the effect of social media marketing strategies on brand loyalty of fashion apparel brands in Pakistan. You have being requested to participate in this survey because your participation and your comments adds an important value to this survey. It will hardly take 10 minutes of your precious time. Your participation will not affect you in any manner because your information is highly confidential and we value that. Your participation will help the researchers and the companies for further evaluation on how social media is effecting brand loyalty. The below sections questions are based on five point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree - Strongly Disagree*

### Personal Information

Gender: Female  Male

Age: Between 18 – 25  Between 25 – 35  Between 35 – 45  45 Above

Occupation: Student  Businessman  Employed   
Unemployed  Freelancer  Others

### Social Media Marketing:

- For how many years you have been using social media platforms?

Less than a year  1 – 5 years  5 – 10 years  more than 10 years

- How frequently you use social media platforms?

Daily  Weekly  Monthly  At need

- Which of the Fashion Apparel Brands in Pakistan you prefer to shop in mostly?

Gul Ahmed  Khaadi  Sapphire  Bonanza  Junaid Jamsheed

- How do you interact or follow the selected brand of yours using social media platform?

Facebook  Instagram  YouTube  Twitter

### Social Media Marketing Activities:

#### Entertainment

- The advertisement content shared on social media by yours choice of brand is pleasing.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

- The content shared on social media platform of your favorite fashion Apparel Brand(s) is enjoyable.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

- My favorite fashion Apparel Brand(s) share interesting information about product on their social media platforms.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

### *Interaction*

- Your favorite brand gives you opportunity to share information about their products using social media platforms.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

- Your brand always gives you an opportunity to share your valuable comments and exchange of your thoughts to the others users using social media.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

- My choice of brand gives me the authority to communicate directly with their administrator using social media.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

- My favorite brand gives me the chance to share and convey my opinions about their brand easily on social media.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

### *Trendiness*

- My choice of brand always share information or content up to date on social media.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

- The use of social media of your selected brand is trendy, fashionable and stylish.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

- My choice of brand always develops noticeable trend activities on social media platforms.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

- My favorite fashion apparel brand reacts promptly with the latest trend affinities.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

*Customization*

- The information I want about the product regarding the brand is easily available on the social media.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

- My choice of brand provides me the information I needed.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

- My favourite fashion apparel brand provides me with the customized service the way I want.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

*Perceived risk*

- The social media content of my selected brand increases the concerns regarding their services.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

- The social media content of my concerned brand value(s) my concerns regarding the usage of their product and services provided to me.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

**Brand Loyalty:**

- I always prefer to keep purchasing the products and services offered by my choice of brand.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

- I am loyal with my chosen brand.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

- I always consider my choice of brand as my first priority whenever I go for shopping.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

- I always consider myself as a loyal customer of my choice of brand.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

**Customer Response:**

*Commitment*

- I am proud to be the customer of my selected fashion apparel brand.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

- I am confident that my choice of brand will do best in the upcoming years.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

- I am fond and obsessed with my selected brand.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Strongly Disagree  Disagree

***“Thanking you for your valuable time and precious feedback”***

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