

Online Interactive Activities for Brand Recognition: Evidence from Emerging Brands

S. Shyam Prasad PhD

***Professor in Corporate Strategy and Marketing
International School of Management Excellence,
Bengaluru***

s_shyam_prasad@yahoo.com

Dr. Shampa Nandi

***Professor in Marketing & Quantitative Techniques & Principal PGDM
International School of Management Excellence
Bangalore***

shampanandi12345@gmail.com

***Amrutha Krishna, Pranathi A N, Shatakshi Vats,
PGDM Students,***

***International School of Management Excellence
Bangalore***

amruthak.isme2224@gmail.com

pranathian.isme2224@gmail.com,

shatakshi.isme2224@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aimed to discover what interactive activities of emerging brands build brand recognition. This has become important for two reasons. The first is the proliferation of newer brands, and the second is the emergence of social media and the interactive marketing activities and their response to build brand recognition. This study used secondary data related to different interactive marketing strategies adopted by the three leading emerging brands (Nykaa, MamaEarth, Sugar Cosmetics) on various online platforms. The primary data collected from 695 respondents was used to investigate the patterns in interactive activities. SEM was used to

analyse the empirical data and examine the study's conceptual model. The paper examined online reputation, brand familiarity and visual influence on brand recognition and brand image. The paper provides an unexpected and crucial finding on interactive online activities. The finding provides new knowledge and insight to the practicing managers.

The limitation of the study is that it looked into the interactive activities of only three brands. Hence while generalising the findings, caution needs to be exercised. The findings of the paper is unique and significant. Given that firms are attempting to build brand recognition, this study's findings help them sharpen the focus of their efforts. This paper comes out with new findings counter to the usual understanding.

Keywords: *Interactive activities, Emerging brands, Brand Recognition. Visual Influence, Schema Theory, Online reputation*

1. Introduction

The Indian market is flooded with emerging brands, brands that have come into being recently - less than 10 to 12 years. Emerging brands are “The brands which, despite being small or new, are recognised as having strategic status because they have the potential to become future strong brands” (Dictionary, 2023). These brands are in the phase of building themselves. Building powerful brands, creating strong brand elements, brand loyalty, and brand image requires high levels of brand awareness (recall and recognition) (Bilgihan, Peng, & Kandampully, 2014; Xie & Chen, 2014). Brand recognition (BR) is crucial for building brand awareness (Aaker D., 1996) and increasing consumer trust and loyalty.

BR denotes the consumers' familiarity with a brand (Grewal, Iyer, & Levy, 2004; Bilgihan, 2016). BR is the degree to which a consumer can identify and recall a brand based on its visual or auditory cues, such as its name, logo, or slogan and it distinguishes a brand from its competitors in the marketplace. For example, when one sees the iconic letter T written inside an oval in a particular manner, one immediately recognises the TATA brand and knows what to expect. Marketers gradually increase this recognition with persistent branding efforts, such as employing the same logo and tagline across all their advertising and marketing channels. Strong brand recognition increases market share and sales because customers are more inclined to

choose a brand they are familiar with and trust (Chan, Lowe, & Petrovici, 2016). Moreover, brand recognition affects consumer buying decisions (Lin, 2013). Therefore, BR is critical to marketers, particularly those building their brands.

With the rapid onset of Web3, online interaction has become common and led to the proliferation of Online Social Networks (OSN). The OSNs can increase brand recognition (Barwise & Meehan, 2010). Further, OSNs' interactive and communicative features give enterprises various options for developing BR (Sigala, 2012; Yoon, Choi, & Sohn, 2008). OSNs, due to their widespread usage, can create and spread BR. On platforms such as Facebook, a post is viewed by an average of 35% of their connections (Bernstein, Bakshy, Burke, & Karrer, 2013). Marketers know that OSN is crucial for building branding fundamentals (Barwise & Meehan, 2010), and because of this, marketers use sophisticated techniques to attract customers through OSN (Neti, 2011). However, there is a lack of understanding as to how OSN marketing activities impact consumers' perception of brands (Hutter, Hautz, Dennhardt, & Füller, 2013; Nusair K., Bilgihan, Okumus, & Cobanoglu, Generation Y travellers' commitment to online social network websites, 2013) and which tools are most effective. The authors use the schema theory to analyse how OSN communication impacts brand recognition.

Brand building is a priority for emerging brands and brand recognition is a stepping-stone to the brand building (Aaker D., 1996). This study attempts to close two main research gaps, namely, what interactive activities are adopted by emerging brands to create brand recognition. The emerging brands would embrace many activities; our interest is to single out those that stand out. The present work begins with the cognitive psychology model of schema theory (Fiske, 1982; Mandler, 1982; Eysenck and Wilson, 1984), which serves as the foundation for numerous studies on information processing and the impact of advertising (MacInnis and Jaworski, 1989; Lane and Fastoso, 2016), as well as, more recently, the relationship between social media and brand equity (Bruhn, 2012)

Since many emerging brands in India are listed differently from varied perspectives, we chose the top three popular emerging brands for our research: Mamaearth, Nykaa and Sugar Cosmetics. Nykaa (Valuation \$8.3 bn, June 2022), Sugar Cosmetics (Valuation \$26.85 mn, FY2022), and Mamaearth (Valuation \$2bn, FY2022) are three leading brands in Beauty and Personal care

(BPC), an industry of \$15bn and booming at a CAGR of 10. The recent pandemic has acted as a booster for the growth of all three companies, and they witnessed growth due to omnichannel sales and captured the market through D2C and traditional offline stores. The rationale for choosing these brands is that they follow similar business models and have similarities in the target market, product mantras, and promotional strategies. This study compares the online interactive activities targeted to build online reputation, visual influence, and brand familiarity and delves into the process of how consumers receive and react to online communications from emerging brands and how they link communication stimuli to their prior knowledge and organise them as schemes (Puligadda et al., 2012; Lane and Fastoso, 2016). It sheds light on how consumers' prior knowledge and schema organizations influence their responses to online interactive activities and helps in forming brand recognition and brand image. It presents a theoretical contribution to the literature on Schema theory and brand image and a practical contribution to brand-building activities.

The research paper is arranged as follows. The following section discusses the extant literature on BR, OSN and Interactive activities. After that, we describe the methodology adopted and the results. A discussion of the main findings is then presented next. Finally, we conclude with the managerial implications and limitations.

2. Literature review

2.1 Brand Recognition

“The first lesson of branding: memorability. It’s very difficult buying something you can’t remember.” – John Hegarty.

The primary goal of brand management is to make consumers recognise the brand (Aaker D. A., 1992), and OSN is a medium that can build and enhance BR (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014). The greater the number of customers who recognise the brand, the greater the reputation of the brand (Bilgihan, 2016). Generally, consumer purchase a product which he/she recognizes at the time of purchase (Chakravarti and Janiszewski, 2003) or consider the brand for future purchase (Chan et al., 2016). Thus, BR ensures consumer commitment, particularly for online fashion brands (Hajli, Shanmugam, Papagiannidis, Zahay, & Richard, 2017).

According to Keller (1993), BR and Brand recall are two key dimensions of brand awareness. Although BR and brand awareness have been used interchangeably, BR is an antecedent to brand awareness. This is because brand awareness results from brand recognition and brand recall (Harvey, 2023) and BR and brand recall can be used to measure brand awareness (Walsh, Kim, & Ross, 2008). As per AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) model, attention is the first step to attracting the customer and building a relationship. A fine distinction, no doubt, exists between BR and brand awareness (Rajavi, Kushwaha, & Steenkamp, 2019) and between BR and brand recall. BR stands for aided awareness, whereas brand recall means spontaneous awareness (Aaker D. A., 1992; Aaker D., 1996).

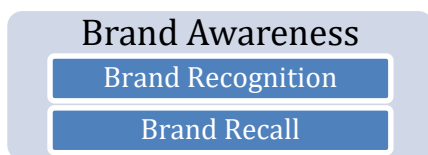


Figure I Relation between BA, BR and Brand Recall

Some think that first, people become aware of a brand and then build BR (Thimothy, 2020). We believe that both cognitive actions happen more or less simultaneously. Brand awareness continues much after BR. Nevertheless, our study focuses on BR.

2.2 Online Reputation

A brand's reputation is imperative for gaining and building consumer trust in online platforms (Pollak, Dorčák, Račeta, & Svetozarovova, 2016). Online brand reputation includes an organic presence in search results, marketing communications, particularly on social media, and other activities carried out on the Internet. Firms can achieve a higher level of brand reputation and brand loyalty through consistent communication through social media integrated with other communication channels (Chierici, R., 2018;). Marketing communication and social effects result in Brand image (Riezebos, 2003) and social media marketing activities acts as effective factors in brand image and brand loyalty (Bilgin Y. 2018). The points that are critical for online reputation are 1) the number of potential online customers and 2) the availability of information on the Internet (Dorčáka, Markoviča, & Pollákb, 2017). Therefore,

- H1: Interactive Marketing's Online Reputation component will have a positive effect on creating Brand Recognition.

2.3 Brand familiarity

Whether a person is familiar or otherwise with a brand depends on the person's memory and knowledge about the brand (Campbell & Keller, 2003). Familiarity with a brand happens when one has tried the brand, heard about it from one's family or friends, or has come across brand advertisements. One can be familiar with a brand even if he or she has read in the press something about the brand. When a person is not exposed to any of the above events, that person is unfamiliar. There is an association between Brand recognition and brand familiarity (Farjam and Hongyi, 2015). Therefore we propose

- H2: Interactive Marketing's Brand Familiarity component in an online/offline platform will have a positive effect on creating Brand Recognition.

2.4 Visual influence

"People simply choose with their eyes, and the old statement, 'what you see is what you get' should be rewritten as: 'what you see is what you choose'" (Clement, 2007). Every day, consumers are bombarded with plenty of ads, and visual effects take priority to stand out and make an impact. The first visual impression can make or break a brand (Kellermeier, 2016). According to dual processing theory, visual stimuli evokes imagery information processing (Kim and Lennon, 2008). Visual content in social media plays a major role in information exchange (Munar and Jacobsen, 2014) and visual storytelling has been accepted as an effective form of brand communication (Lim and Childs, 2020) and as a major branding tool. Studies have established that visual features impact customers' search strategy and response time (Clement, 2007). Hence, our next hypothesis is

- H3: Interactive Marketing's Visual Influence component will have a positive effect on creating Brand Recognition.

2.5 Interactive marketing and OSN

The convergence of direct marketing and the evolution of Web 2 has given rise to interactive marketing. The advent of artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality (VR) or augmented reality (AR) has further broadened the scope of interactive marketing, pushing it to give highly personalised content and exceptional experiences. OSN has built-in interactive capability where

users are encouraged to make recommendations and brand storytelling, thus building consumer-brand relationships (Lim & Childs, 2020).

OSN signifies a wide variety of online platforms used to communicate and educate each other about different aspects, such as products and issues (Kasavana, Nusair, & Teodosic, 2010; Di Pietro, Di Virgilio, & Pantano, 2012). OSN encompasses Facebook, Instagram, Myspace, Twitter, LinkedIn and Bebo (Nusair K., Bilgihan, Okumus, & Cobanoglu, 2013), wikis, blogs, message boards, podcasts, and Vlogs (Nusair, Bilgihan, & Okumus, 2013). Thus, social media includes varied online platforms disregarding the fact that each platform has been created and fashioned to meet different purposes and groups (Ngai, Tao, & Moon, 2015). Yet, they provide new opportunities for marketers to build brands (Law, Buhalis, & Cobanoglu, 2014). Marketers must adopt OSN for three reasons (Dutta, 2010). First, it provides a low-cost, highly accessible platform to build a brand. Second, it allows businesses to engage rapidly and simultaneously with various categories of people and third, OSNs provide instant feedback. However, most companies may lack focus on OSN and may do different things on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube (Weinberg & Pehlivan., 2011), not realising that it is more important to have content interesting to the target customers than being everywhere (Bright, Kleiser, & Grau, 2015). Companies need to keep the brand at the top of the customers' minds; this will happen when the brand stays continuously in the eyes and minds of the customers all the time. This can be realised by the consistent presence in OSN with robust visual and verbal strategies, in other words, by creating BR.

In line with the above, we propose the following hypothesis

- H4: Brand Recognition in an online platform will positively affect creating Brand Image.

2.6 Schema Theory and brand recognition

To understand the impact of OSN on brand recognition, the authors based this study on schema theory (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016). “In psychology, a schema is a cognitive framework or concept that helps organise and interpret the information” (Cherry, 2023). According to schema theory, any information consumers receive is organised into prior knowledge's cognitive structures (Lane & Fastoso, 2016). The schematic knowledge that people develop helps them to

generate inferences about attributes and relate them to other concepts (Halkias & Kokkinaki, 2013). In particular, among many schemata the consumers develop through their experience, a brand schema is essential for evaluating marketing messages (Sjödén & Törn, 2006). The brand schemata have a critical role and incorporate the vital information necessary for consumers' purchase decision-making (Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer, 2013).

According to the schema theory, all online brand activities are stimuli that the consumers receive, and it is sorted and associated with consumers' earlier schemes (Halkias G. , 2015). Consumers' comprehension and absorption of new information happen subliminally (Eysenck, 2013). Nevertheless, the changes affect consumer decision-making (Halkias G., 2015). According to Keller (1993, 2001,2016), Schema theory helps to build Brand Image. The previously mentioned theory postulates that consumers link communication stimuli to their organised prior knowledge, or prior information that is organised into schemes (Puligadda et al., 2012; Lane and Fastoso, 2016). As a result, fresh information is not kept in random order; rather, it is organised into categories that correspond to ideas that customers have in mind (Halkias, 2015).

“In our study, the concept of Brand schemata is used to explain the impact of online interactive activities adopted by the three emerging brands on brand recognition. The authors argue that the intensity of the use of social media influences brand recognition/brand awareness leading to brand Image. We develop a conceptual model, shown in Figure 2, wherein factors such as online reputation, brand familiarity, and visual influence lead to brand recognition which leads to brand image.”

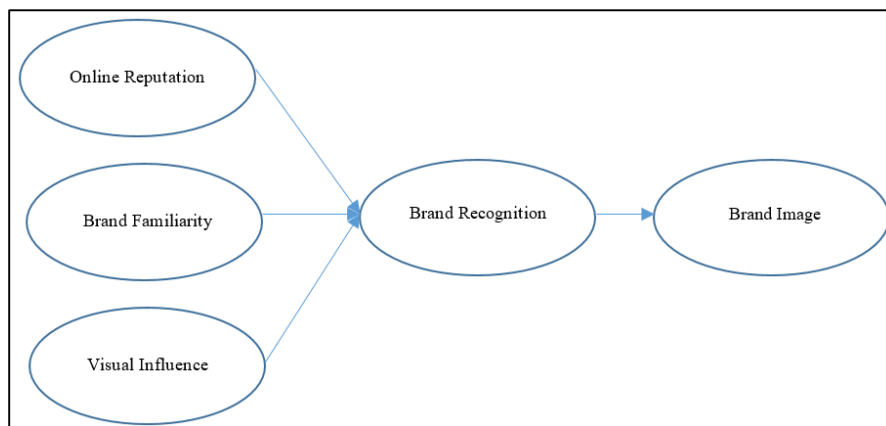


Figure II Proposed research model

3. Research Method

3.1 Research Type- The data for this study were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Researchers collected data for each of the brands separately.

3.2 Generating scale items- Since three brands are related to Beauty and Fashion products, our study has adapted a scale to measure BR from the study of DeMarchis et al.(2018) and (Keller et al., 2011). Three dimensions namely online brand familiarity (OBF), online visual simplicity (OVS), and online social reputation (OSR) are considered in our study and we have renamed the constructs as Brand Familiarity (BF), Visual Influence (VI) and Online Reputation (OR). After an initial discussion with experts, it was tested initially with about eight respondents for each brand. Redundant and ambiguous questions are discarded and researchers have identified BF

(four items) (Lee et al. (2018);, VI (four items) (Lee et al., 2018, Wu et al.,2016);and OR(six items) (Chen et al. 2015).

3.3 Data Collection- Further, we designed a common questionnaire where a particular brand name was inserted and collected only single brand questionnaire from a respondent. During the testing of the instrument and discussion with 14 male respondents, the researchers realised that men hardly use any of the brands chosen for the study. Hence, we decided to collect data mainly from females and collected responses between April 5, 2023, and April 16, 2023. Six hundred ninety-five women, selected through a judgmental sampling, (253-Sugar, 216-Nykaa, 226-Maaearth) from various age and income groups completed the survey questionnaires through direct interaction or in Google form.

3.4 Data Analysis tools & Techniques- The study adopted a mixed method comprising quantitative and qualitative research techniques.

4. Result

4.1 Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative research is based on the different interactive marketing strategies adopted by the three leading emerging brands on various online platforms. Though each interactive marketing strategy is aimed to achieve "Awareness, Interest, Desire and Action", they are intended initially to gain Online Reputation, Brand Familiarity through Visual Influence. Therefore, all the Interactive marketing activities adopted by these companies were segregated into three groups - Online Reputation= OR, Brand Familiarity = BF, and Visual Influence = VI. (See Table 1)

Table 1 Content Analysis of Interactive Marketing Strategies

Name of the Category	Name of the Activity	Description of the activity and discussions
OR (Mamaearth)	Influencer marketing	A marketing strategy targeting millennials. As a result, 400% growth was witnessed during COVID-19.
	Content marketing	The audience of Mamaearth is being educated media about the organic personal care products through posts on blogs, movies, and informative and entertaining content in social media
	Brand endorsement	Shilpa Shetty joined Mamaearth as an investor and brand ambassador and the company expanded quickly.
	Social media	The company launched the "Plant Goodness" programme, which involved planting a tree for each order placed. They also launched the "Plastic Positivity" project, which is about recycle plastics.

OR (Nykaa)	Influencer Marketing	Posting videos, posts, tutorials, and stories that add value to consumers rather than persuade them to buy with the help of influencers.
	Content Marketing	They provide consumable content for customers for free, which helps them educate themselves and learn more about the products.
	Brand endorsement	Katrina Kaif endorsed Nykaa and promoted the brand.
	Nykaa Femina Awards	An esteemed jury panel shortlisted the winning products and deemed them worthy of the final prize. Aside from the winning products, it was also a night to celebrate Bollywood's icons.

OR (Sugar Cosmetics)	Influencer marketing	Sugar cosmetics didn't rope in the influencers but they turned the customers into influencers. If you are happy with the product, you won't mind flaunting it! During the pre-launch phase of a product, SUGAR hands over sample products to 50 women influencers and 50 other women in the company for in-depth feedback. This allowed SUGAR's team to tweak the product and the promotional strategies.
	Bifurcating influencers	Sugar cosmetics used their customers to market their products. Hence, they divided customers into two types, the ones with fewer followers created content for the brand, while influencers with higher reach needed to act as 'media' for the brand.
BF and OR (Nykaa)	Nykaa Network	Interactive beauty website where users may speak with other beauty enthusiasts and get beauty advice from experts. The brand also provides gifts with special orders to make customers feel delighted with their purchases.
	#AllThatYouLove with Nykaa! (by Janhvi Kapoor)	Nykaa Beauty launched "All That You Love," one of its largest beauty events, featuring Janhvi Kapoor.

BF (Mamaearth)	Referral marketing	Mamaearth has launched an affiliate program with a 25% commission.
	YouTube marketing	Mamaearth launched YouTube campaigns to promote its brand.
	Digital campaigns	Mamaearth has a significant online presence and uses a variety of digital marketing strategies, including social media advertising, influencer marketing, and email marketing.
	SEO and meme marketing	The website of Mamaearth receives 2 million hits from organic search and 219.2K visitors from paid search, giving it an authority score of 51.
BF (Nykaa)	Posting Deals	Nykaa bombards its customers with deals on every occasion and uses email marketing to build relationships and inform about upcoming market trends and styles.
	Pink Friday Sale	The Pink Box will allow one to curate one's shopping list before the sale and automatically move one's Pink Box items to the Shopping Bag with slashed prices when the sale goes live.

	Nykaa beauty book	Publishes blogs on beauty, makeup, and personal care.
	Mynykaa	Real Girl Beauty strategy - content created by real girls for real girls and internationally acclaimed beauticians and stream live on Facebook and IGTV
	Nykaa Affiliate Program	Enables more content creators to publish content across digital platforms on behalf of Nykaa and earn affiliate commissions.
BF (Sugar Cosmetics)	Virtual try on	Sugar Cosmetics offers a virtual try-on feature on their website that allows customers to experiment with different makeup looks and find products that suit them best.
	Campaigns	One of the biggest campaigns that were a huge success is #This #ShukarHaiSUGARHai campaign narrates a moment personally relatable to the brand's core audience. In an intimate setting with the families of the two protagonists, the campaign continues the story of Ranveer Singh (playing Vihaan) and Tamannah Bhatia (playing Arya). The frame opens with Tamannah getting ready for her special day, applying SUGAR Cosmetics' makeup, and Vineeta Singh, Co-Founder and CEO of SUGAR Cosmetics (playing Vihaan's sister), by her side.
	Social media contests	Sugar Cosmetics frequently hosts social media contests and encourage customer engagement and create a buzz around the brand.
	Limited edition collections	Sugar Cosmetics frequently launches limited edition collections that create a sense of urgency and encourage customers to purchase their products before they run out.
VI (Mamaearth)	TV Commercials	Mamaearth is good at placing advertisements and exhibiting product features and brand-associated stories in visual oriented social media.
VI (Sugar Cosmetics)	Packaging and APP	Sugar cosmetics is very successful in creating visual identity in the digital medium and grabbing the attention of consumers while scrolling their mobile phones through its innovative eye-catching designs and packaging.
VI (Nykaa)	Nykaa TV	The brand creates video content like makeup tutorials, DIYs, and much more. Videos in multiple languages ensure to connect with customers and through AR and other disruptive technologies it has added virtually trying make up looks or clothes to influence customers.

4.2 Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative analysis assesses the research hypotheses and establishes relationships between various dimensions that lead to testing the proposed model.

4.2.1 Demographic Data Analysis

Table 2 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Group	Respondents' Characteristics	Number of Respondents
Age Cohorts	Below 18	22(3.2%)
	18 to less than 22	146(21%)
	22 to less than 30	300(43.2%)
	30 to less than 40	117(16.8%)
	More than 40	110(15.8%)
Educational Qualification	High School or less	25(3.6%)
	Undergraduate	348(50.0%)
	Post Graduate	206(29.6%)
	More than PG	116(16.7%)
Monthly Family Income (Rs)	Less than 1 lakh	151(21.7%)
	1 lakhs to less than 2.5 lakhs	136(19.5%)
	2.5 lakhs to less than 5 lakhs	166(23.8%)
	5 lakhs to less than 10 lakhs	202(29.0%)
	More than 10 lakhs	40(5.7%)

4.2.2 Measurement Model

The authors performed a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to assess the measurement model with the three constructs related to Online Reputation (OR), Brand Familiarity (BF), and Visual Influence (VI) to assess emerging brands' online social activities. Some items in each construct having low loading were removed after the initial CFA. The measurement model of the CFA achieved moderate fit; $\chi^2 = 452.6$, $df = 74$, $\chi^2/df = 6.117$, $p < .05$, CFI = 0.933, NFI = 0.922; TLI = 0.918; GFI = 0.909; RMSEA = 0.08).

Table 3 Measurement Model (Loadings, Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, Average Variance Explained)

Constructs	Item	Mean	SD	SL	SMC	CA (Cronbach's Alpha)	CR (Composite Reliability)	AVE (Av. Variance explained)
	SR17	3.73	0.892	0.801***	0.641			
	SR18	3.69	0.920	0.806***	0.649			
	SR19	3.61	0.898	0.749***	0.561			
	SR20	3.52	0.868	0.701***	0.491			
	SR25	3.67	0.936	0.722***	0.521			
	SR26	3.56	0.976	0.678***	0.459			
OR (Interactive Marketing_Online Reputation)		3.63	0.915			0.880	0.881	0.554
	BF1	3.87	1.083	0.758***	0.571			
	BF3	3.64	1.106	0.786***	0.638			
	BF5	3.72	1.054	0.799***	0.617			
	BF6	3.48	1.101	0.756***	0.574			
BF (Interactive Marketing Brand Familiarity)		3.67	1.086			0.856	0.857	0.601
	VS8	3.26	1.185	0.777***	0.603			
	VS9	3.45	1.125	0.805***	0.648			
	VS10	3.55	0.965	0.787***	0.619			
	VS11	3.37	0.991	0.731***	0.534			
VI (Interactive Marketing_Visual Influence)		3.41	1.066			0.856	0.857	0.601

4.2.3 Reliability

“The reliability and validity of all scales were assessed through CFA. The authors confirmed convergent validity by analysing the conditions suggested by (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). All CFA factor loadings were statistically significant at $p < .05$ (see Table 3). The average variance extracted (AVE) for all the constructs was above the value of 0.50. All the indicators of each construct have critical values of more than 1.96. Thus, the convergent validity of each construct is established (Byrne, 2016).

Finally, the reliability of each construct, i.e., the CA values, is above the value of 0.70, fulfilling the general reliability condition for the research instruments (Table 2). In confirming the discriminant validity, the author evaluated the correlations of the constructs with the square root of the AVE values for each of the constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Again, the fitness of the structural model was measured by the squared multiple correlations (SMCs). SMC values of all items were nearly or over 0.5, i.e., over the threshold criterion of 0.5.”

4.2.4 Structural equation model (SEM)

The structural model was tested with maximum likelihood estimation using AMOS (Table 4) to assess the model fitness and inter-relationship among Online Activities and Brand Recognition constructs. Next, the relationship between Brand Recognition to Brand Image was tested. The overall model fitness indices $\chi^2 = 1105.953$, $df = 223$, $\chi^2/df = 4.958$, CFI = 0.920, TLI = 0.909, NFI = 0.902, GFI = 0.866, and RMSEA = 0.07, reflects moderately good model fit. The path model is given in Figure 2.

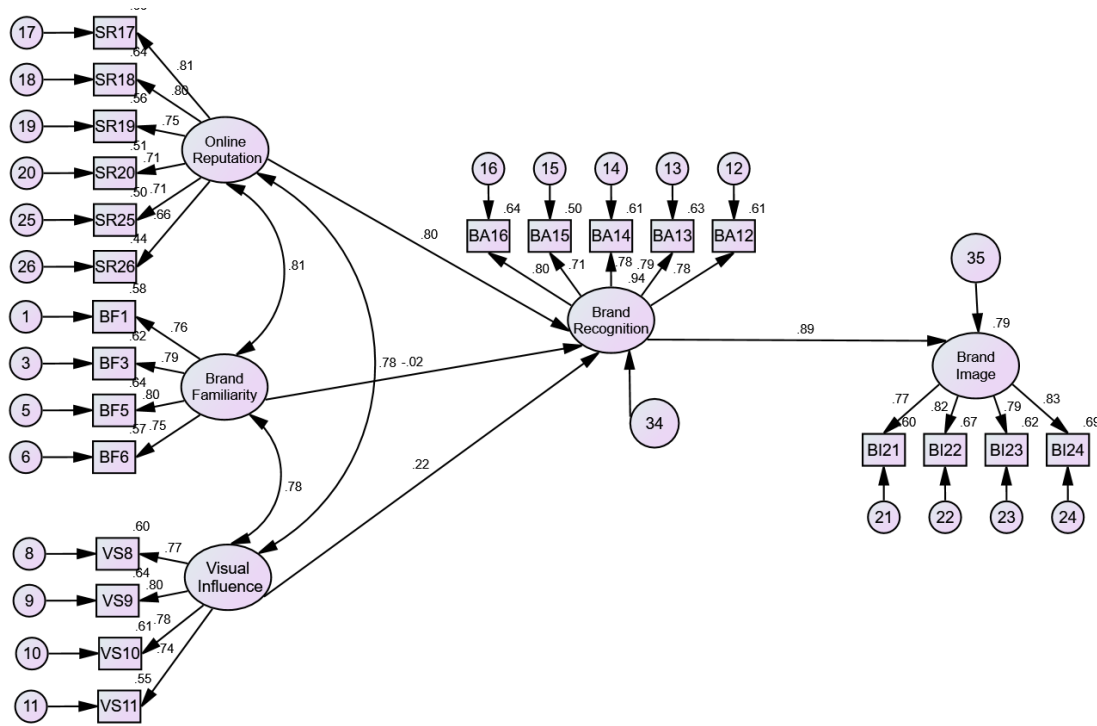


Figure 1 The path model

4.2.5 Test of Hypotheses

The first hypothesis, H1, investigated the contribution of the Online Reputation (OR) component of Interactive Marketing strategies towards Brand Recognition (BR). H1 produced a standardised regression weight ($\beta = 0.80$, $p < 0.01$). Hence, H1 is supported. Similarly, the second hypothesis, H2, examined the impact of the Brand Familiarity (BF) component of Interactive Marketing strategies on BR. H2 produced standardized regression weight ($\beta = -0.02$, $p = 0.651$); therefore, H2 is not supported. The third hypothesis, H3, checked the relationship between Visual Influence and BR. H3 produced a standardised regression weight ($\beta = 0.23$, $p < 0.01$). Thus, H3 is supported. Since all three components are taken together, they have a total effect of 94%, as the SMC value is 0.94. Brand Recognition produced an overall impact of 79% on Brand Image (BI) as the standardised regression weight ($\beta = 0.89$, $R^2 = 0.79$, $p < 0.01$). Hence, H4 is supported. See Table 4.

Table 4 Hypotheses Results

Hypothesis	Relationship	<i>B</i>	CR	p-value	Result
H1	Online Reputation → Brand Recognition	0.80	12.65	0.000	Supported
H2	Brand Familiarity → Brand Recognition	-0.02	-0.502	0.615	Not Supported
H3	Visual Influence → Brand Recognition	0.23	4.972	0.000	Supported
H4	Brand Recognition → Brand Image	0.88	21.366	0.000	Supported

5. Discussion

The Internet has evolved into a powerful source of communication and entertainment. Covid-19 has propelled it as an essential commercial channel for most successful enterprises, and increasingly, businesses use it for marketing and building brands (Vukasovič, 2013). The advent of newer technology has enabled firms to launch many interactive activities to reach a wider audience, create compelling value propositions and build brands. We used Schemas theory to establish how three online interactive activities namely i) Online Reputation, ii) Brand Familiarity and iii) Visual Influence are used to convey the message about brand name, knowledge about the brand and the underlying product attributes and create brand schemata (John & Sujana, 1990). These brand schemata allow customers to process new information about the brand and build new knowledge with already existing knowledge of the brand and build brand recognition and brand image (Fiske & Taylor, 1991).

The data shows that Online Reputation and Visual Influence significantly influence Brand Recognition. The result is aligned with earlier research by Tsimonis and Dimitriadis (2014) which shows that online reputation has a positive impact on brand recognition. Corporates often partner with social media influencers to bolster brand image after crises (Thakur et al., 2016). Social media is used elaborately by firms to strengthen brands and to create brand awareness, brand reputation and brand loyalty (Alberghini, Cricelli, & Grimaldi, 2014). Integrating social

media with other media firms can obtain information on recent trends, serves customers better and build brand awareness and loyalty (Chierici, R et al, 2018). Our study discussed how three emerging brands used variety of digital marketing strategies like social media advertising, posting videos, tutorials, and stories, influencer marketing and email marketing to create brand awareness and brand reputation and encouraged customers to engage through coupons, gift and interaction opportunities with famous celebrities. Online posting on various CSR activities adopted by the firms helped them to build good reputation. The quantitative part of our study proved the strong and significant influence of online reputation (with a β coefficient of 0.80) on brand recognition.

Previous studies claimed that attractive packaging increase visual stimuli and influence in store buying decision process in several stages (Clement, 2007). Several researches stated that lively, interactive audiovisual content increase users' interest and acceptance of brands present in online media (Fortin and Dholakia, 2005). All the three brands are good in placing advertisement and visual brand stories in digital media and successful in grabbing attention of customers through innovating eye-catching designs while scrolling the mobile phones. Videos in multiple languages and virtual try on through VR technology ensured high level of customer engagement. The result of our research showed significant positive impact of Visual simplicity on brand recognition and brand image. These results are at par with the earlier findings that vividness, interactivity, information and entertainment capacity of social networking ads act as antecedent of customer engagement and online participations (Kujur & Singh, 2017).

Brand familiarity acts as an important variable that influence consumer decision making. Brand knowledge structure and brand association are captured by brand familiarity. These three emerging brands are new to the market place as many consumers are not yet exposed to these brands and therefore they are unfamiliar (Stewaert, 1992). They are in the process of establishing the brand names in consumers' memories. Our study interestingly showed that brand familiarity's impact on brand recognition was not significant. As an emerging brands they have more scope to bring novelty in advertisements in both traditional and social media. Ads from unfamiliar brands are more interesting and are processed more extensively with repetitions than those from familiar brands (Campbell and Keller, 2003). Our study demonstrated that although

being unfamiliar, these brands are able to engage customer using various online interactive activities and sell the products. They become popular amongst consumers and have emerged as strong brands.

“Brands around the world have also realized the significance of investments in the digital space, which mostly consists of a variety of social media platforms (Hride et al., 2022, Husain et al., 2022, Sajid et al., 2022). Social media marketing activities have been recognized as effective factors to build brand awareness and brand image(Bilgin Y. 2018). Our present work used the cognitive psychology model of schema theory and conformed a strong positive relationship between brand recognition and brand image. The findings are aligned with earlier studies that states that the digital form of communication allows the brand owners to accomplish communication goals (Brown and Hayes, 2008) and social media communications strongly influence brand image (Bruhn, 2012). Online interactive activities through social media allows the three brands to develop the consumer engagement, promote brand recognition, reach more and more audiences and build brand image.

6. Theoretical Implications

The current research has used schema theory (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016) to understand the impact of OSN on brand recognition and is among the initial studies that discussed how the online interactive activities are categorised to build brand familiarity, online reputation and visual influence and showed their influence to build brand recognition and brand image. In spite of numerous usage of schema theory like, the cognitive psychology model of schema theory (Fiske, 1982; Mandler, 1982; Eysenck and Wilson, 1984), the advertising model-information processing and its impact (Maclnnis and Jaworski, 1989; Lane and Fastoso, 2016), the relationship between social media and brand equity (Bruhn, 2018), this is a first attempt to analyse impact of online interactive activates on brand recognition using Schema theory and it draws new insights into brand promotion and social media marketing .

7. Managerial Implications

Mamaearth, Nykaa and Sugar Cosmetics grabbed solid online presence through “thumb-stopping strategies” and established as leading players in the Beauty and Personal Care industry. In post pandemic era, they witnessed heavy growth due to omnichannel and D2C sales, digital promotions, content marketing, vloggers, influencers, email marketing and through adoption of AR and VR in virtual try on options. Based on the feedback of users of those brands we have shown that BR is influenced by the online reputation and visual influence. The unexpected discovery of our study is that Brand familiarity is not significant in building BR. This can be explained by the fact that the established brands are well-known and familiar to the customers whereas in the case of emerging brands, they are not very familiar. However, these brands are able to sell the products and become popular amongst consumers because customers recognise them. What the above means is that though BF has a positive influence on the brand, brand recognition precedes BF. Even before the shoppers become familiar with the brand, if brands can build brand recognition, it leads to success, as in the case of the three chosen brands. The above is a major finding of this study which is both new and significant. It helps the firms to sharpen the focus of their efforts.

8. Limitations

The major limitation of this study is that we have considered only three brands. Hence generalisation of the findings is fraught with danger. The second limitation is that only online interactive activities were considered in this study. There is further scope for research to study offline activities. The third limitation is that the brands chosen from BPC industry and there lies scope to include other verticals in future studies.

References

- Aaker, D. (1996). *Measuring brand equity across products and markets*. California Management.
- Aaker, D. A. (1992). The Value of Brand Equity. *Journal of Business Strategy*, 13(4), 27–32. doi:10.1108/eb039503
- Barwise, P., & Meehan, S. (2010). The one thing you must get right when building a brand. *Harvard Business Review*, 88(12), 80–84.
- Bernstein, M. S., Bakshy, E., Burke, M., & Karrer, B. (2013, April). Quantifying the invisible audience in social networks. In *Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on human factors in computing systems*. ACM.). Quantifying the invisible audience in social networks. *Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on human factors in computing systems* (pp. 21-30). Paris, France: ACM. Retrieved 03 05, 2023, from <https://hci.stanford.edu/publications/2013/invisibleaudience/invisibleaudience.pdf>
- Bilgihan, A. (2016). Gen Y customer loyalty in online shopping: an integrated model of trust, user experience and branding. *Computers in Human Behavior*, pp. 61, 103–113. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2016.03.014
- Bilgin Y. (2018), The Effect Of Social Media Marketing Activities On Brand Awareness, Brand Image And Brand Loyalty, *BMIJ*, (2018), 6(1): 128-148 doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15295/bmij.v6i1.229>
- Bilgihan, A., Peng, C., & Kandampully, J. (2014). Generation Y's dining information seeking and sharing behavior on social networking sites: An exploratory study. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 26(3), 349–366. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-11-2012-0220

Bright, L. F., Kleiser, S. B., & Grau, S. L. (2015). Too Much Facebook? An Exploratory Examination of Social Media Fatigue. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 44, 148-155. . doi:10.1016/j.chb.2014.11.048

Bruhn, M., Schoenmueller, V. and Schäfer, D.B. (2012), "Are social media replacing traditional media in terms of brand equity creation?", *Management Research Review*, Vol. 35 No. 9, pp. 770-790. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01409171211255948>

Byrne, B. M. (2016). *Structural equation modelling with AMOS: Basic concepts, applications, and programming*. New York: Routledge.

Campbell, M. C., & Keller, K. L. (2003, September). *Journal of Consumer Research*. 30(2), 292–304. doi:10.1086/376800

Chakravarti, A. and Janiszewski, C. (2003), “The influence of macro-level motives on consideration set composition in novel purchase situations”, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 30 No. 2, pp. 244-258.

Chan, F., Lowe, B., & Petrovici, D. (2016). Processing of product placements and brand persuasiveness. *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*, 34(3), 355-375. doi:10.1108/MIP-03-2015-0051

Cherry, K. (2023, 03 12). What Is a Schema in Psychology? Retrieved from Verywell Mind - Dotdash media website: <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-a-schema-2795873>

Chen, M.H., Chang, Y.Y. and Lo, Y.H. (2015), “Creativity cognitive style, conflict, and career success for creative entrepreneurs”, *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 68 No. 4, pp. 906-910.

Clement, J. (2007). Visual influence on in-store buying decisions: an eye-track experiment on the visual influence of packaging design. *Journal Of Marketing Management*, 23(9-10), pp. 917–928. doi:10.1362/026725707X250395

De Marchis, G.P., Reales-Avilés, J.M. and Rivero, M.D.P. (2018), "Comparative values of variables related to brand logos", *Measuring Business Excellence*, Vol. 22 No. 1, pp. 75-87.

Di Pietro, L., Di Virgilio, F., & Pantano, E. (2012). Social network for the choice of tourist destination: Attitude and behavioural intention. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, 3(1), 60-76. doi:10.1108/17579881211206543

Dorčáka, P., Markoviča, P., & Pollákb, F. (2017). Multifactor analysis of online reputation of selected car brands. *Procedia Engineering 192 - TRANSCOM 2017: International scientific conference on sustainable, modern and safe transport* (pp. 719-724). Elsevier Ltd. doi:10.1016/j.proeng.2017.06.124

Dutta, S. (2010, November). *Managing Yourself: What's Your Personal Social Media Strategy?* Harvard Business Review. Retrieved March 16, 2023, from <https://hbr.org/2010/11/managing-yourself-whats-your-personal-social-media-strategy>

Eisend, M., & Stokburger-Sauer, N. E. (2013). Brand Personality: A Meta-Analytic Review Of Antecedents and Consequences. *Marketing Letters*, 24(3), 205-216. doi:10.1007/s11002-013-9232-7

Emerald Publishing Limited. (2021). New frontiers and future directions in interactive marketing: Inaugural Editorial. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 15(1), 1–9. doi:10.1108/JRIM-03-2021-270

Eysenck, M. (2013). *Anxiety: The Cognitive Perspective*. Hove: Psychology Press.

Farjam, S. and Hongyi, X. (2015). Reviewing the Concept of Brand Equity and Evaluating ConsumerBased Brand Equity (CBBE) Models. *International Journal of Management Science and Business Administration*, 1(8), 14-29.

Fedric Kujur, Saumya Singh (2017), Engaging customers through online participation in social networking sites, *Asia Pacific Management Review* 22 (2017) 16e24, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.apmr.2016.10.006>

Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 39-50. doi:10.2307/3151312

Fortin, David R. and Ruby Roy Dholakia (2005), "Interactivity and Vividness Effects on Social Presence and Involvement with a Web-based Advertisement," *Journal of Business Research*, 58, 3, 387–96.

Grewal, D., Iyer, G., & Levy, M. (2004). Internet retailing: enablers, limiters and market consequences. *Journal of Business Research*, 57(7), 703–713. doi:10.1016/S0148-2963(02)00348-X

Gursoy, D., Chen, J. S., & Chi, C. G. (2014). Theoretical examination of destination loyalty formation. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 26(5), 809-827. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-12-2013-0539

Hajli, N., Shanmugam, M., Papagiannidis, S., Zahay, D., & Richard, M. (2017). Branding co-creation with members of online brand communities. *Journal of Business Research*, 70, 136-144. doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.08.026

Halkias, G. (2015). Mental Representation of Brands: A Schema-based Approach to Consumers' Organization of Market Knowledge. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 24(5), 438–448. doi:10.1108/JPBM-02-2015-0818

Halkias, G. (2015). Mental representation of brands: a schema-based approach to consumers' organisation of market knowledge. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 24(5), 438–448. doi:10.1108/JPBM-02-2015-0818

Halkias, G., & Kokkinaki, F. (2013). Increasing advertising effectiveness through incongruity-based tactics: The moderating role of consumer involvement. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 19(3), 182-197. doi:10.1080/13527266.2011.592346

Harvey, S. (2023). Brand recognition or brand awareness: What's the difference? Retrieved 03 06, 2023, from Fabrik website: <https://fabrikbrands.com/brand-recognition-or-brand-awareness/>

Heejin Lim and Michelle Childs (2020), 'Visual storytelling on Instagram: branded photo narrative and the role of telepresence', *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing* Vol. 14 No. 1, 2020, pp. 33-50, DOI 10.1108/JRIM-09-2018-0115

Hutter, K., Hautz, J., Dennhardt, S., & Füller, J. (2013). The impact of user interactions in social media on brand awareness and purchase intention: The case of MINI on Facebook. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 22(5/6), 342-351. doi:10.1108/JPBM-05-2013-0299

Jakeli, K., & Tchumburidze, T. (2012). Brand awareness matrix in political marketing area. *Journal of Business*, 1(1), 25-28. doi:10.31578/.v1i1.31

John, D. R., and Sujana, M. (1990). Age differences in product categorization. *Journal of Consumer Research*. 16. 452-460.

Kasavana, M. L., Nusair, K., & Teodosic, K. (2010). Online social networking: Redefining the human web. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, 1(1), 68–82. doi:10.1108/17579881011023025

Keller, K. (1993). Conceptualising, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Marketing*, 57(1), 1–22. doi: 10.1177/002224299305700101

Kellermeyer, S. (2016). Why visual branding matters. Retrieved August 7, 2018

Kim, M. and Lennon, S. (2008), "The effects of visual and verbal information on attitudes and purchase intentions in internet shopping", *Psychology and Marketing*, Vol. 25 No. 2, pp. 146-178.

Lane, V., & Fastoso, F. (2016). The impact of repeated ad exposure on spillover from low fit extensions to a global brand. *International Marketing Review*, 33(2), 298-318. doi:10.1108/IMR-12-2011-0270

- Law, R., Buhalis, D., & Cobanoglu, C. (2014). Progress on information and communication technologies in hospitality and tourism. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 26(5), 727-750. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-08-2013-0367
- Lee, J.E., Hur, S. and Watkins, B. (2018), “Visual communication of luxury fashion brands on social media: effects of visual complexity and brand familiarity”, *Journal of Brand Management*, Vol. 25 No. 5, pp. 449-462.
- Lim, H., & Childs, M. (2020). Visual storytelling on Instagram: branded photo narrative and the role of telepresence. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 14(1), 33–50. doi:10.1108/JRIM-09-2018-0115
- Lin, Y. C. (2013). Evaluation of co-branded hotels in the Taiwanese market: The role of brand familiarity and brand fit. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 25(3), 346–364. doi:10.1108/09596111311311017
- Neti, S. (2011). Social Media and Its Role in Marketing. *International Journal of Enterprise and Business Systems*, 1, 2230–8849.
- Ngai, E. W., Tao, S. S., & Moon, K. K. (2015). Social media research: Theories, constructs, and conceptual frameworks. *International Journal of Information Management*, 35(1), 33-44. doi:10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2014.09.004
- Nusair, K. K., Bilgihan, A., & Okumus, F. (2013, September). The role of online social network travel websites in creating social interaction for Gen Y travellers. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 15(5), 458-472. doi:10.1002/jtr.1889
- Nusair, K., Bilgihan, A., Okumus, F., & Cobanoglu, C. (2013). Generation Y travellers' commitment to online social network websites. *Tourism Management*, 35, 13–22. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2012.05.005

Nusair, K., Bilgihan, A., Okumus, F., & Cobanoglu, C. (2013, April). Generation Y travellers' commitment to online social network websites. *Tourism Management*, 35, 13–22. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2012.05.005

Pollak, F., Dorčák, P., Račeta, N., & Svetozarovova, N. (2016). Sustainable E-marketing of Selected Tourism Subjects from the Mediterranean Through Active Online Reputation Management. In *Smart City 360°*. SmartCity 360 2016, SmartCity 360 2015. Lecture Notes of the Institute for Computer Sciences, Social Informatics and Telecommunications Engineering (pp. 692-703). Midtown Manhattan, New York City, Smart City 360°. SmartCity 360 2016, SmartCity 360 2015. Lecture Notes of the Institute for Computer Sciences, Social Informatics and Telecommunications Engineering: Springer, Cham. doi:10.1007/978-3-319-33681-7_60.

Rajavi, K., Kushwaha, T., & Steenkamp, J. (2019). In brands We trust? A multi-category, multi-country investigation of sensitivity of consumers trust in brands to marketing-mix activities. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 46(4), 651-670. doi:10.1093/jcr/ucz026

Roberto Chierici , Barbara Del Bosco, Alice Mazzucchelli & Claudio Chiacchierini (2018), “Enhancing Brand Awareness, Reputation and Loyalty: The Role of Social Media”, *International Journal of Business and Management*; Vol. 14, No. 1; 2019 ISSN 1833-3850 E-ISSN 1833-8119, doi:10.5539/ijbm.v14n1p216

Schivinski, B., & Dabrowski, D. (2016). The effect of social media communication on consumer perceptions of brands. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 22(2), 189-214. doi:10.1080/13527266.2013.871323

Sigala, M. (2012). Social networks and customer involvement in new service development (NSD): The case of www.mystarbucksidea.com. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 24(7), 966–990. doi:10.1108/09596111211258874

Sjödin, H., & Törn, F. (2006). When Communication Challenges Brand Associations: A Framework for Understanding Consumer Responses to Brand Image Incongruity. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 5(1), 32-42. doi:10.1002/cb.44

- Thimothy, S. (2020, December 28). What Is The Difference Between Brand Awareness And Brand Recognition? Retrieved April 14, 2023, from Forbes:
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/theyec/2021/12/28/what-is-the-difference-between-brand-awareness-and-brand-recognition/?sh=773ad4e62e3d>
- Tsimonis, G., & Dimitriadis, S. (2014). Brand strategies in social media. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 32(3), 328-344. doi:10.1108/MIP-04-2013-0056
- Vukasovič, T. (2013, July). Building successful brand by using social networking media. *Journal of Media and Communication Studies*, 5(6), 56-63. doi:10.5897/JMCS2013. 0352
- Walsh, P., Kim, Y., & Ross, S. (2008). Brand recall and recognition: a comparison of television and sport video games as presentation modes. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 17(4), 201–208.
- Weinberg, B. D., & Pehlivan., E. (2011). Social Spending: Managing the Social Media Mix. *Business Horizons*, 54, 275-282. doi:10.1016/j.bushor.2011.01.008
- Wu, K., Vassileva, J., Zhao, Y., Noorian, Z., Waldner, W. and Adaji, I. (2016), “Complexity or simplicity? Designing product pictures for advertising in online marketplaces”, *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 28, pp. 17-27.
- Xie, L., & Chen, C. C. (2014). Hotel loyalty programs: How valuable is valuable enough? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 26(1), 107-129. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-08-2012-0145
- Yoon, D., Choi, S. M., & Sohn, D. (2008). Building customer relationships in an electronic age: The role of interactivity of E-commerce Web sites. *Psychology and Marketing*, 25(7), 602–618. doi:10.1002/MAR.20227
- Books
- Fiske, S. T., and Taylor, S. E. (1991). *Social cognition*. NY: McGraw Hill, Inc.

Keller, K.L., Parameswaran, M.G. and Jacob, I. (2011), Strategic Brand Management: Building, Measuring, and Managing Brand Equity, Pearson Education India

Munar, A.M. and Jacobsen, J.K.S. (2014), "Motivations for sharing tourism experiences through social media", *TourismManagement*, Vol. 43, pp. 46-54.

Riezebos, R. K. (2003). *Brand Management- A theoretical and Practical Approach*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.