

**ON THE ANTECEDENCE OF BRAND COMMUNITY:  
AN EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE**

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AN EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

**Thesis Entitled: “On the antecedence of brand community: An empirical evidence”**

This study applies brand resonance theory and analyses the impact of Brand Community in context that is rarely studied. A survey of 430 Car users of locally manufactured brands in Pakistan with the presence of three “S” services. Brand Community plays a significant role in decision making thus it guides and effectively provides the evidence and eases the consumers buying decision. Further, it has been deeply discussed that how word of mouth (WOM) and brand experience play an important role and how they are significantly participate on developing brand trust. Furthermore, in this worry brand trust is of most extreme significance because of its job.

**Key Words:** Word of mouth (receive), brand experience, brand trust, brand community.

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# CHAPTER 1

## 1.1 Background of the study

Marketers' growing interest in using brands to build long-term relationships with their customers (Aaker et al., 2004; Fournier, 1998). Recent theoretical and empirical studies proved the effectiveness of brand communities to achieve this ultimate objective. Brand community study has evaluated social networks of brand users where consumers share their membership in the groups of same-minded admirers of that particular brand.

Since the emergence of brand age scholars have proclaimed that a brand is a social entity and that consumers are earnestly engaged in creation of the brand community (Muniz, Albert, & O Guinn 2001). (Muniz et al., 2011) define a brand community (BC) as "a specialized, non-geo-geographically bound community that is based on a structured set of social relationships among admirers of a brand".

These communities propose individuals the chance to develop purposeful emotional bonds with brands by providing a place for consumers to build relationships with them (Thompson & Shina, 2008). Meanwhile, the sports sponsorship industry continues to experience progress (Grohs, 2015), and social media presents a perfect stage to enhance the interaction between brands and consumers (Meenaghan, 2013). Rituals and traditions are figurative acts or signals that are developed throughout the history of the brand and target to perpetuate and communicate the symbolic meanings and culture of the brand community (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). For example, consumers use a particular jargon inside the community which is a cultural segment of the community that solidifies members' bonds. The third marker is obligations to society which is the sense of commitment members have toward the welfare of their fellow members and the community (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). This commitment is the central pivot in participating in brand use practices through which members help each other to maximize their brand use (Schau, Muniz, & Arnould, 2009).

Likewise, the other communities, a brand community has three major indicators that make a community recognizable. These indicators are shared consciousness, shared rituals and traditions, and obligations to society. Shared consciousness is a perceived feeling of connection among members within a brand community. These emotional connections lead members to feel that an invisible hand ties them to each other and

separates them from those who are not the members (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006b; Muniz & O' Guinn, 2001).

Further to these three markers, a brand community is compulsory constructed on a set of relationships that community members develop with the brand, the product, marketers, and other customers. In contrast to starting models of brand communities which supposed only relationships between consumers, the customer centric model of brand community considers the relationships among all involved elements in a brand community (Mc Alexander et al., 2002). So the foundation of a brand community depends upon four relationships: customer-product, customer-brand, customer-company, and customer-other customers. This provides a useful framework for analyzing brand communities as well as brand community building practices.

Marketers are very anxious to study about, organize, and facilitate brand communities (e.h., McAlexander, Schouten, & Koenig 2002; Schau, Muniz, & Arnould, 2009; Zhang, Su, & Zhou, 2001), which include a series of connections and relationships among people who admire a brand (Muniz & O;Guinn, 2001). The rationales behind such interest in brand communities involves the advantages of learning customer perceptions of new product incentives and competitive actions; enhancing opportunities to attract and coordinate closely with highly loyal consumers of the brand (Frank & Shah, 2003; McAlexander et al., 2002) influencing members' evaluations and actions (Muniz & Schau, 2005) rapidly spreading information (Brown, Kozinets, & Sherry, 2003: Jin, Cheung, Lee, & Chen, 2009): and most importantly gaining a "holy grail" of loyal customers (McAlexander et al., 2002).

In the recent available literature on branding, Keller (2001, 2003) concluded that the utmost level of brand connection can be achieved with its customers is characterized by a state of resonance, where customers interact with the brand are highly loyal and feel stronger ties, moreover, they experience strong relationships with the brand, which urges them to recommend it to other potential users of the same product, feel emotional association and perceive themselves part of it and create a brand community.

The topic of brand relationship that consumers form with their brands catch the minds of both managers (Birkner, 2011) and academic researchers (Aaker, 1997) who exchange their point of interest in realizing why and how consumers build ties with the brands (Grisaffle & Nguyen, 2011) and thus form a brand community.



The research reported here sheds light on "brand community", comparatively less focused construct of marketing that helps to explain and predict the variation in consumption behavior among consumers who are satisfied.

The prior studies discussed in detail about customers' satisfaction and their brand loyalty towards a particular product or service but in the following study efforts have been conducted to measure the impact of brand experience and word-of-mouth (receive) which can cause a stronger impact of brand choice through brand trust, and ultimately creates the brand community.

This research shows how word of mouth (WOM receive) refers to interpersonal communication among the customers sharing their personal brand experiences and evaluations of a service (Reichheld & Teal, 2001) and role of WOM (receive) to engage in post-experience communications that convey the product or service quality and value to the potential customers (Harrison-Walker, 2001).

And this study explains how brand trust plays a mediator role between brand experience and brand community. Strong bonding between brand attachment and brand community are important for brand engagement with the brand to occur (Keller 2001).

Hence this study is more focused on brand experience and WOM (receive) on brand community as compared to previous studies, due to significant importance of this research, it suggests a model frame work, in which brand experience & WOM (receive) are the trigger with mediating factor brand trust and with the output of brand community.

Particularly, this study conducts in depth coverage of three questions. DO WOM (receive) and brand experience impact on brand community? Do brand trust plays a mediator role among WOM (receiver), brand experience and brand community. Impact of WOM (receive) and brand experience on brand trust.

This study chases the rationales of brand resonance model, recommending that customer's resonance e.g., brand loyalty can be attained, triggered form brand salience (brand experience), and followed both routes i.e. emotional and rational such as brand love and brand trust (Keller, 2013).

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

Based on the above discussion, the research presents an under emphasized and less discussed construct of ‘brand community’ to assess how consumers may participate in a brand community to express their involvement with the branded product. Previous research exhibits the influence of brand involvement through loyalty to the community (Popp & Woratschek, 2016) and commitment to the brand (Alexandris & Tsotsou, 2012). High-involvement product categories typically are those with which the consumer wants to feel connected (Zaichkowsky, 1985) and how brand communities generally help consumers to share their experience with high-involvement product. I will deeply discuss the factors effecting on brand community, and how it helps customers when they intend to buy a High involvement product and become a part of community of a particular brand.

## **1.3 Theoretical Foundation**

Brand resonance model suggests to characterize brand relationship and refer to the nature of consumer-brand relationship and more precisely the level to which a person feels that he resonates or connect with the brand (Keller, 2001). In this concern, loyalty to the brand, in the end is possible through two channels, that is, rational and emotional (Keller, 2013). The rational path includes important factors, such as the performance elements (e.g., price, efficiency, durability and reliability), judgment (e.g., quality, credibility), while emotional path includes those who, like the images and feelings (pleasure, excitation) (Keller, 2013).

Keller (2001) explained brand resonance as the association between consumers and brands, or the level to which consumers sense the brands, and there are differences in the “potency” consumers’ emotional resonance with brands, which can be alienated into four levels, which are attachment, behavioral loyalty, sense of community, and active engagement.

There are several motives to select brand trust as a mediator due to its significant importance in research community, for examples there have been a wide variety of studies of antecedents and result of the trust as a mediating variable (Aaker, 1991, Keller, 1993). Keller (1993) specified that in order to resonate with a certain brand, consumers need not only to regular products use of the brand, but also want to energetically be

concerned about information relating to the brand, forming a strong psychological affection to the particular brand.

Chang (2011) further described brand resonance, believing that consumers loyalty caused by brand resonance in two methods, which are behavioral loyalty and emotional loyalty. It was believed that emotional loyalty required the existence of behavioral loyalty, but the vice versa may not be true. Huang (2006) recommended that brand resonance would establish psychological connection, in turn protecting behavioral loyalty, which affects purchase objective.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

- (1) What is the impact of WOM (receive) on brand community?
- (2) How brand experience can influence brand community?
- (3) What is the effect of brand trust on brand community?
- (4) How WOM (receive) can influence on brand trust?
- (5) What is the impact of brand experience on brand trust?
- (6) How brand trust as a mediator can effect on WOM (receive) and brand community?
- (7) How brand trust as a mediator can effect on brand experience and brand community?

## **1.5 Research Objectives**

The underlying thinking for focusing on brand community construct is that it could contribute to:

- (1) To identify the impact of WOM (receive) on brand community.
- (2) To observe the effect of brand experience on brand community.
- (3) To measure the effect of brand trust on brand community?
- (4) To analyze the impact of WOM (receive) on brand trust.
- (5) To examine the influence of brand experience on brand trust.
- (6) To observe the impact of brand trust as a mediator between WOM (receive) and brand community?

(7) To observe effect of brand trust as a mediator between brand experience and brand community.

## **1.6 Significance of Study**

The research will add theoretical benefits which are based on brand resonance model. Once this model will be empirically tested in this study this will lead to advocacy or refuting of this model which will be an important theoretical advancement (MacInnis, 2011).

For the decision makers in branding this literature will be helpful in brand building which were previously engaged in creating brand loyalty. And this knowledge will also be helpful in making future planning in relation to the brands.

For academic purpose this research will much more helpful since not much research work is available on this study. So this study will add some new dimensions in this area.

## **1.7 Structure & Flowchart of Thesis**

This unique study comprises of five detailed chapters, but in short,

**Chapter One** gives introduction, Background, objectivity, problematic statement and raising Research questions about this study.

**Chapter Two** reviews the literature including Word of Mouth (WOM) receive, Brand Experience, Brand Trust and Brand Community.

**Chapter Three** explains conceptual framework for brand community, exploring variables meanings, different techniques for data collection for this study, hypothesis verification, and research designing at the end.

**Chapter Four** emphasizes on data analysis and its graphical representation.

**Chapter Five** is all about conclusion, suggestions, theoretical and practical perspective and limitations/delimitations of the study.

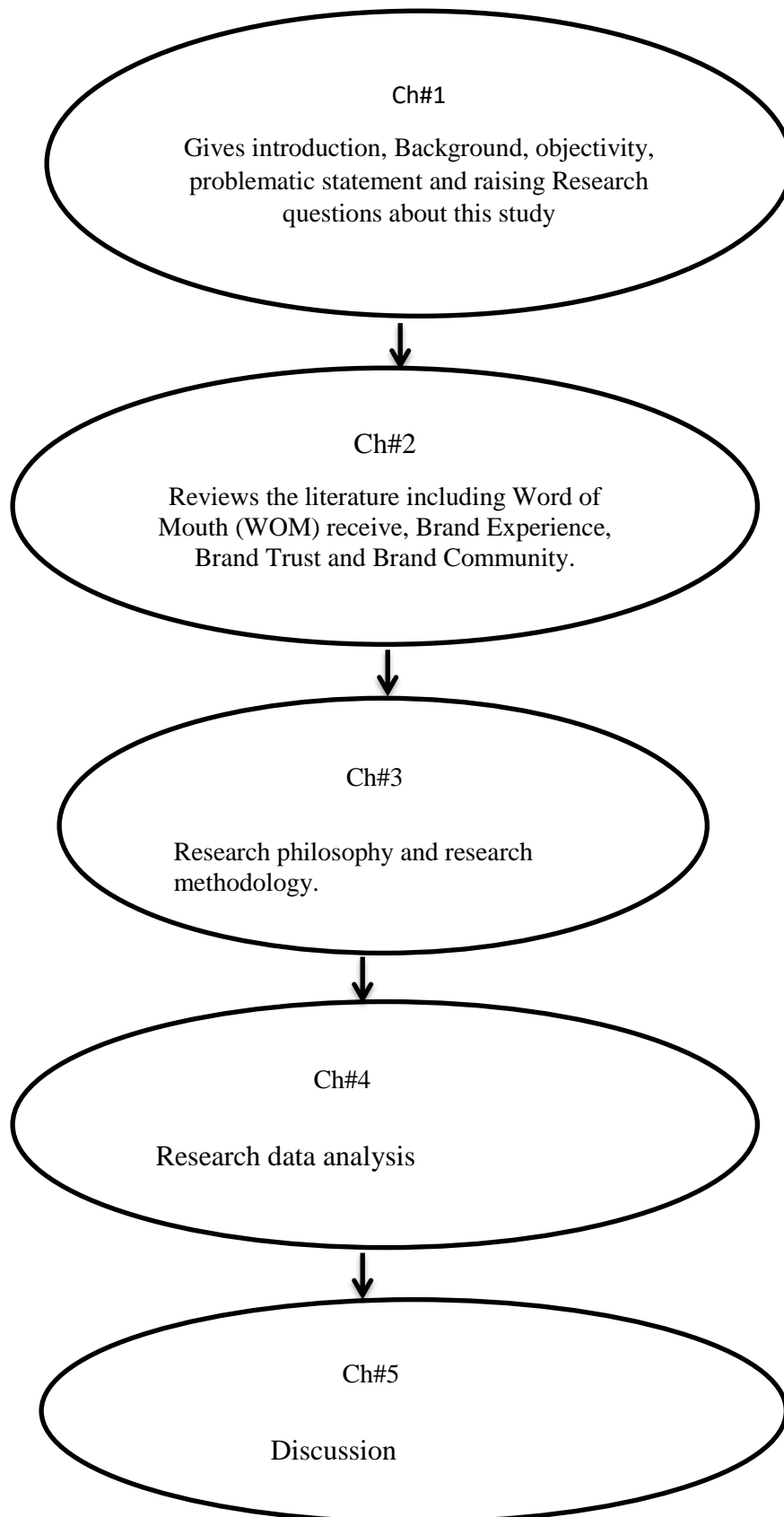


Figure 1.1 Flow chart of thesis

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Here we assumed to create the area of study, define the key terms, making sure the research is not an imitation and explaining the relations in the focused study area. Every study may have a different literature review. So, presented in this chapter is an estimation study of past studies found in literature related to the researchers' area of focus. In conjunction with, providing information regarding the past studies it also extracts the relationship among various variables in the past as well as proposed future studies by the researcher. Moreover, the literature helps emphasizing the faults and inaccuracies in previously conducted researches and also monitoring out the gaps. It also shows that the research is serving a better understanding of the study (Boote and Beile, 2005).

In this research we will study how a Brand Community can be a useful entity for the members where each and every member feels pleasure and excitement in sharing their experiences towards the product utility and emphasizes to attain the maximum utility of the product. Brand community can positively affect the product image in the masses and gives a sense of ownership within the community.

#### **2.1.1 Brand Community**

The word community activity “is the most significant revolution in business in 100 years” (Ahonen & Moore, 2005). Community study has been an important area in different capacities over the past. However, since the early-nineties communities have experienced a revival, and have since increased in quantity and significance; from in consumers point of view, the extensive and still increasing approachability of the internet enhances the participation in virtual communities worldwide; businesses, on the other hand, investments is increasingly in their installation and maintenance. Forward-thinking, communities will be important for consumers, as well as for marketers, as they symbolize a reaction to the lack of conventional forms of collectivization (Schouten & McAlexander, 1995): consumers meet, interact, and contribute based on the “norm of mutuality” (Chan & Li, 2010); without companies' apprehensions that consumers might avoid relational devices (Ashley, Noble, Donthu, & Lemon, 2011). The recent expansion and success of such consumer communities, particularly in virtual environments, show that “this form of online organization is creating a large impact in the business community” (Ganley & Lampe,

2009).

Consumers take keen interest and notice of a particular brand, build a community of those with the same interest, and interchange information inside their community, such a social foundation is called brand community (Kotler and Keller, 2012). Brand community is a current marketing conception which places importance on the motivation for establishing a community of consumers as a result of their common interest in a particular brand and connecting to one another to reinforce their favorite brand (Dholakia and Algesheimer, 2009; McAlexander, Schouten, and Koenig, 2002).

Since retaining one-on-one connections with customers is not always practical and efficient, brand communities were introduced as a way of serving customers (Laroche et al., 2012). Brand communities establish numerous actions within it including sharing information about the brand from several sources (Szmigin & Reppel, 2001), disseminating the history and services of the brand, and providing support to customers (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). It establishes connections with dedicated users, who are a rich basis of innovative ideas, rather than simply providing an surplus communication channel (Anderson, 2005). Brand communities also provide social configuration to customer-marketer relationships and considerably improve customer loyalty (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). Brand community generates advantages not only for companies but also for its customers. Customers link brand communities to identify themselves with principal brands so that their actual or motivated self-identity can be achieved (Laroche et al., 2012). Consumers find for symbols or logos in brand communities which could support them express who they want to be and how they want to be recognized by others (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998; Laroche et al., 2012). In brand communities customers are in a continuous search how to get optimal advantage from the brand. Members of brand community derive social and hedonic advantages from contributing in the brand community (Franke & Piller, 2004), while improving brand loyalty (McAlexander, Schouten, & Koenig, 2002).

### **2.1.1(a) Offline Vs Online Brand Communities**

Furthermore, brand communities can be generated in both offline and online situations (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). While the initial concepts of the offline brand community had geographical and physical limitations, online brand communities surpass it due to the expansion of internet technology. Online brand communities have potential

benefits for brands to find new methods to foster connections with their customers. (Kang, Lee, Lee & Choi, 2007). For example, online brand community generates new and extended form of cooperating consumer experiences. In online brand communities, consumers are actively involved in interactive methods through the online medium such as electronic discussion forums, bulletin boards, or chat rooms (Brodie, Ilic, Juric, & Hollebeek, 2013).

From last few decade has seen an increase of online brand communities as internet, social media, and mobile technologies have developed (Wirtz, Ambtman, Bloemer, Horvath, Ramaseshan, Klundert, Canli, & Kandampully, 2013). Many brand communities had materialized before the internet era, but have extended with online occurrence and functionality. Brand communities developed in today also start online first before a real-world aspect arises (Wirtz et al., 2013). As a result, by 2012, more than 50 percent of the top 100 global brands had established online brand communities which are activated on an international scale (Manchanda, Packard, & Pattabhiramaiah, 2012).

However, bearing in mind that online brand communities are becoming more important and predominant in today's worldwide connected business world (Laroche et al., 2012), it is essential for both marketers and scholars to have more insights about them. The theoretical concept of this study is based on previous brand community research. McAlexander et al. (2002) claimed that the expectation of developing relationships with same-minded consumers inspires initial product attainment for consumers who are looking for a sense of community. Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) found sign of community markers (i.e., consciousness of kind, rituals and traditions, and moral responsibility) within brand communities in their study. Schau, Muniz, and Arnould (2009) characterized four types of value creation practices (i.e., social networking, impression management, brand use, and community engagement).

Conventional brand communities have been concerned strongly toward the brand itself. There has been a comprehensive arrangement in the brand community literature that product categories which have easy-to-read and empirical abilities are more likely to build an effective brand community than others (McAlexander & Schouten, 1998). However, Wirtz et al. (2013) identified that the fundamental attention of online brand communities could be not only the brand itself but also the broader shared interests among its affiliates. Thus, brands with weak brand identity also could establish a successful online brand



community if they concentrate more on the social connections rather than the brand itself (Fournier & Lee, 2009).

Group members of the online brand community find proximity, association, social relationship and attachment with each other (Hoffman & Novak, 1996). In the online brand community, matters are created by members while community members participate in interactive communications and reciprocal activities to earn specific prizes for themselves (Nambisan & Baron, 2007). Consumers network with each other using virtual communication and use different methodologies and tools such as registry, guest book, bulletin boards, electronic discussion forums, chat rooms, newsgroups, and/or blogs (De Valck et al., 2009; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). These tools allow new and extended forms of collaborative consumer experiences and simplify a combination of collective expertise on individual topics. As online brand community gathers past contents economically, it creates a pool of knowledge and increases its value for all members (Brodie et al., 2013). Moreover, once it is generated, online brand community facilitates long-term, friendly contacts without the loss of the social contacts which frequently occurs in the offline environments (Ba, 2001).

Brand communities are a distinct form of consumer communities (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001), and have become a key current issue in the research work of brands, since they bind brand and community together. Social connections between community members profoundly impact customers' relationship with, and approach towards, the brand (McAlexander, Schouten, & Koenig, 2002). These social establishments offer many benefits (e.g., Brown, Kozinets, & Sherry, 2003), and serve as an instrument to build robust and lasting relationships with customers (e.g., Algesheimer, Dholakia, & Herrmann, 2005).

Further, to the increase and the high value of brand communities, "saying that networks are vital is stating the obvious" (Cross, Liedtka, & Weiss, 2005). The authentic numbers of selected online social networks are inspiring. Facebook, for example, touches more than 500 million lively users around the world in April 2011 (Facebook.com, 2011a), LinkedIn represents over 100 million members in over 200 countries and regions around the world (LinkedIn.com, 2011), and Twitter totals 106 million members in April 2010, growing by a rate of 300,000 members a day (Huffingtonpost, 04/30/2010). "Along with other forms of computer mediated communication, they [social networking sites]

have transformed consumers from quiet, lonely and invisible individuals, into a noisy, community, and even more uncontrollable than usual, collective” (Patterson, 2012). Subsequently, successful existing brand strategies also involve exploring and grabbing social network environments.

In such virtual atmospheres consumers often meet together in sub- groups with a particular brand in its middle (Woisetschläger, Hartleb, & Blut, 2008), a brand-related community; consumers sharing their attention for a brand, exchange information and knowledge, or they simply expose their liking for this specific brand. (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001), moreover, a brand community can exist everywhere, also virtually (Thompson & Sinha, 2008). This attribute shows that brand-related communities such as the Apple group with 110,015 members (Facebook.com, 2011b) or the Starbucks fan page with 21,238,192 members (Facebook.com, 2011c) potentially propose a multitude of advantages to marketers.

Studies during the last decade have examined the presence of, and primarily social procedures within, brand communities. From numerous researches, one can originate that social exchanges in brand communities occur throughout various product categories and branches, cultures, and different forms of communities. The latter contains offline and online brand communities (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001; Muniz & Schau, 2005), small-group brand communities (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006a), virtual large network brand communities (Adjei, Noble, & Noble, 2010), and brand events (Schouten, McAlexander, & Koenig, 2007).

Today in the modern marketing concepts consumers and firms join in distinct and extended ways. Brand enthusiasts perceive social individualities with small-group friendships groups, with virtual brand communities, with the brand, and with the company, all in a system of unified relationships (Bagozzi, Morandin, Bergami, & Marzocchi, 2012). Similarly, literature presents a range of studies in the fields of common virtual consumer communities (e.g., Algesheimer, Borle, Dholakia, & Singh, 2010; Dwyer, 2007), and online social networks (e.g., Cheung & Lee, 2010; Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008). However, to date, the existence, functionality and impact of brand communities and social networks have chiefly been examined separately. Actually, one of the few current studies in this area researches the influence of customer- based brand equity on brand community dynamics and represent social

networks as a well appropriate environment for making new brand community affiliates; applying a quantitative research methodology (Schäfer et al., 2011). A connected study examines the differences of consumer- versus marketer-generated brand communities (Sung, Kim, Kwon, & Moon, 2010), but does not emphasis on the different setting of a brand community within a public network. Thus, the blend of both venue and their coalesced meaning for marketing management and study still remain to be discovered. Moreover, building on current identity research (Bagozzi et al., 2012), surrounded brand communities permit their members to perceive several social identities: with the brand community, the brand, the firm, and with the social network. Together with an analytical study of the social and psychological procedures of their members, this research pursues to add to marketing research and to aid marketers understand how to best use such communities in social networks.

Brand community may help customers feel a kinship with other people associated with the brand. These connections may involve fellow brand users or customers or instead may be employees or representatives of the company. Perhaps the strongest affirmation of brand loyalty is when customers are willing to invest time, energy, money, or other resources into the brand beyond those expended in purchase or consumption (Keller, 2008).

The thoughts of brand community and virtual communities (e.g. Wiertz, 2005; Fuller

et al., 2005; Piller et al., 2005) interchange, but are not substitutes. Brand communities are often sustained by internet-based technology, but the concept is wider and basically encompasses everyone who senses linked to the brand, online or offline. Virtual communities in contrast by definition are only defined in the virtual world. A definition presented by Wiertz (2005) further highlights the diverse scope of online communities. She defines virtual communities as “company-endorsed online combinations of customers who together co-produce and consume content about a commercial activity that is essential to their attention by exchanging informational and social resources” (p. 6). And though, virtual communities may be focused round a brand, this is not necessarily the case. Moreover, we encompass the scope of brand community study beyond the typical examples of car (Jeep, Saab as in Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001; McAlexander et al. 2002; Algesheimer et al. 2005; Bagozzi and

Dholakia, 2006), motorcycle (Harley-Davidson as in McAlexander et al. 2002) and computer (Apple as in Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001; Muniz and Schau, 2005) brands with our choice of brand communities. Further, consumers may need joint consumption and therefore join a brand community. In line with Muniz and O'Guinn's (2001) argument that communities are more likely for publicly utilized goods, we observed that some products must be consumed jointly rather than independently (Hogg and Michell, 1997). More specifically, when the efficacy derived from consumption includes synergistic effects, the product is rather consumed jointly (Marmolo, 1999). Typical instances include joint games, plays, and sports competitions. Products that are consumed mutually are typically appropriate to build a community (Schau and Muniz, 2002), which assists as a meeting place and a point of discussion where members can consume the product together in form of a community.

Moreover, customers who link a community for the possibility of joint utilization are more likely to highlight inter-customer relations. However, those who perceive the brand primarily as a symbol likely will be most interested in the relationships with the brand or the party. Finally, consumers whose key motivations center on their extraordinary involvement with the product should be mostly apprehensive with their relationship with the product.

When a community functions multiple intentions, we believe segments within the community for which the relative significance of these relationships differs. In turn, we suggest segmenting the community people on the foundation of the importance the members associate to the four relationships of the customer-centric brand community model (McAlexander *et al.*, 2002). We resist that such differences initiate in the different reasons consumers have to involve in the communities.

Marketers are progressively interested in using brands to create long-term relationships with their customers (Aaker et al., 2004; Fournier, 1998). Recent theory and research efforts have revealed the effectiveness of brand communities at accomplishing this objective. Brand community study has examined social networks of brand users in which folks acknowledge their membership in groups of like-minded brand followers. Understanding the functional environment of groups that gather around brands such as Jeep and car utility vehicles (McAlexander et al., 2002), Apple Macintosh computers (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001), Volkswagen automobiles (Alge-sheimer et al., 2005), and

MG automobiles (Leigh et al., 2006) has been both interesting and insightful. However, there is much to learn about brand communities beyond the social links of brand users that made up the respondent sets of recent study.

In the perspective of social brand communities, prior research has exposed that members of the community often reveal behaviors and objectives that are dependable with group norms such as having a liking for the brand, attending brand occasions, word-of-mouth promotion of the brand, and celebrating the brand history (McAlexander et al., 2002; Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). Commitment to a particular brand delivers the motivation to produce these consequences. It is more likely that an individual who has deep assurance to the brand would have a preference for the brand (i.e., choose the brand over a contestant even if it prices more), would join events intended to promote the brand, would endorse the brand to others, or would be attentive in the brand's history, than an individual who has slight commitment. As a result, we suggest that these results will be directly influenced by brand commitment.

Brand communities are an outstanding source of data for marketers to realize the customers' attitude towards the brand and its products. Marketers have accepted the need to keep a close watch on such brand communities and have started to incorporate the use of brand communities possessed by them on numerous social networking site SNSs (Constantinides et al., 2008).

The brand community, improves user efficiency in sharing knowledge and information and connecting with others, and offers a useful way to interact between brand community members (Akar & Mardikyan 2014).

And, if individuals sense a feeling of belonging for, and also recognize with the brand community and the other community fellows, they can be classified as brand community members. In online brand communities, for instance, the interaction of members is often computer-mediated, members meet rarely face-to-face but still share a social identity and consciousness of kind (Sicilia & Palazón, 2008).

Last but not the least brand community is a social group made on the foundation of consumers who exchange a great concern in and affection for the same brand and share information about that brand, both online and offline (Muniz and O'guinn, 2001; Dholakia and Algesheimer, 2009). Brand community consists of three components: brand

community affection, brand community trust, and brand community commitment, which mutually together represent a brand community (Hur, Ahn, and Kim, 2011).

### **2.1.2 WOM (Receive)**

Word of mouth stands for interactive communication by telling a story to another individual and so on, which is a vital attribute of making a brand popular through consumer involvement (Keller, 2013), and a marketing strategy developed by marketers to influence consumer communication (Kozinets, Valck, Wojnicki, and Wilner, 2010). This communication method offers benefits which include the capability to distribute news and important information about the specific brand in a fast and reliable way as it is the passing of a message to those who are near to the message recipient (Keller, 2013). It also costs less as compare to other types of communication and advertising methodologies (Lake, 2015).

Arndt (1967, p. 191) describes WOM communication as an oral, person-to-person communication between a perceived non-commercial correspondent and a receiver regarding a brand, a product, or a service presented for sale, and Westbrook (1987, p. 261) defines it as an informal communications focused at other consumers about the ownership, usage, and features of specific goods and services and/or their sellers. Early marketing literature incorporating WOM uses these perspectives as the formal WOM definitions of their studies (e.g., Bayus 1985; Higie et al. 1987; Lampert and Rosenberg 1975; Reingen and Kernan 1986).

The vibrant and face-to-face nature of WOM is credited as reasons for its strong influence for many arguments. WOM has been believed to be highly effective because of the integral flexibility the messenger has in adjusting the communication to accurately convey the information or to counter confrontations by the WOM receiver and face-to-face communication ensured nonverbal mechanisms of communication were spread as well (Rogers 1986). It is notable that the importance of this face-to-face element to support in interpersonal effect is one of the stable reasons why adaptive selling in individual selling situations is considered to be a mainly powerful form of marketing persuasion (Weitz et al. 1986). Researchers have used media richness theory (MRT; Daft and Lengel 1986) to explain that face-to-face communication should be superior to that of other form of communication or interaction with the audience. And the face-to-face nature of WOM means that the sender of the information can impose social control (intentionally or unintentionally) in the form of sanctions for noncompliance or rewards for compliance

(Beckman 1967). Researchers have also suggested that the face-to-face nature of WOM enables bright transmission of information as compared to many other forms of marketing communications (e.g., print media advertisements). Under some certain circumstances, research has shown the vividness of WOM to increase approachability and, in turn, its impact on attitude and behavior (Herr et al. 1991). Conventional WOM is also thought to have a greater impact than marketing communications because it is perceived as independent of the commercial intention motivating the messenger of marketing communications (Godes et al. 2005). Thus, WOM is very effective because the source is unlikely to be evaluated as having a commercial hidden motive. Further, in general, consumers tend to consider personal sources more trustworthy and credible than commercial sources, and thus WOM inclines to have greater influence because of the known tendency of trust/credibility to enable attitude/behavior change (Morgan and Hunt 1994).

### **2.1.2 (a) WOM (Receive) Consumer-to-Consumer**

Word of mouth is the consumer-to-consumer, customer-to-customer stream of product knowledge and experiences from purchasing and utilizing a product or service, which is non-rewarding (Kotler and Keller 2012, Solomon 2015). Word of mouth may be taken as the engine that motivates consumer expenditure, in that it accounts for two-thirds of consumer product sales (Solomon 2015). It has been revealed to be more persuasive than commercial advertising and promotions (Arndt 1967, Hennig-Thurau et al. 2015). And in this context Godes and Mayzlin (2004) examine the usage of online conversations in online communities to forecast viewership of new TV cable program. The writers note the difficulty and costs related with tapping into conventional (i.e., offline) WOM networks, which inspired their study using an alternative method to gauge WOM. The writers note that their discovery that online WOM (eWOM) is explanatory in clarifying offline consumer decisions supports the idea that at least some aspects of online WOM are substitutions for overall WOM, but they also note that —upcoming research to understand better the connections between WOM and sales through these worlds would be valuable and that there is a requirement to associate the extent to which online WOM and conventional WOM are similar and different. Likewise, Liu (2006) examines the pre- and post-release Internet buzz of movie announcements and the influence on box office sales. And view how WOM play its role in sales and revenue generation for the brand.

### **2.1.2 (b) WOM (Receive) Authenticated importance**

However, even though the often-assumed and in some contexts empirically authenticated importance of WOM in marketing, marketing research openly measuring WOM remains relatively limited given the methodological difficulties connected with measuring and quantifying it on a huge scale (Rust et al. 2004a). Thus, it is of slight surprise that experts and researchers alike have collected to investigating how consumer WOM happening in online channels effects marketing results. Access to consumer WOM using online platforms showed to be a problematic moment in the marketing investigation of WOM: Studying online WOM appears to overcome the methodological complications connected with studying conventional (i.e., offline) WOM. Online product appraisal systems, online message boards, and other web- assisted platforms generated permanent, freely accessible records about consumer emotion organized into an articulate fashion willingly adaptable to experiential analysis (Dellarocas 2003; Godes and Mayzlin 2004). Since the early 2000s, marketing literature has noted this possible success, and there does not seem to be any loss of interest among marketing researchers (e.g., Chevalier and Mayzlin 2006; Chintagunta et al. 2010; Duan et al. 2008; 2004; Mayzlin 2006; Riegner 2007; Shin et al. 2010; Zhu and Zhang 2010).

And Zhang et al. (2006) also inspect online WOM. However, unlike Liu (2006), who uses content investigation of unstructured online movie discussion, Zhang et al. use structured ratings (1–5 star ratings). Thus, Zhang et al. make the hypothesis that structured quantitative ratings function with equivalent, or similar, mechanisms to classic offline WOM. The scholars investigate the part of online user ratings in a transmission model on forecasting box office revenues, beyond typical forecasting models, which depend on on weekend opening revenues. The conclusions indicate that valence of the evaluations is the strongest forecaster, a different finding than Liu (2006) and Godes and Mayzlin (2004). This may be attributable to Dellarocas et al. (2006) using an clear rater- supplied metric of valence and the other studies using content analysis methods to infer valence.

However, WOM and eWOM as particular sorts of consumer-to-consumer communication in an extensive array of forms (e.g., blogs, forums, online views & reviews) and then describes the resemblances and differences between the two concepts. Next, a complete appraisal of the marketing literature offers a bigger perception on the fit of offline and online WOM within the marketing field. So there is a slight difference



between these jointly connected marketing concepts. Depending on the literature, consumers identify WOM to be highly trustworthy (i.e., believable) because they have faith in others endorse products based on unselfish motives (Solomon 2015).

Social Communication Theory proposes that there should be a difference between eWOM and WOM, according to the theory, eWOM is inferior to WOM because it communicates less statistics (Daft and Lengel 1986). For example, in eWOM, there is a reduced capability in passing on a message accompanying with multi-sensory information when matched to that of WOM communications by lessening the effect on each of the Social Communication Elements (credibility, engagement, commonality, and helpfulness). As a result, the decreased capability then lowers the impact on purchase-related decisions.

And the most important concept is Word of mouth WOM also called E-WOM (Electronic Word of Mouth) can be creating in influential communities: consumer reviews, blogs, forums, and social networks (Yi-Wen Fan & Yi-Feng Miao 2012). Collective norms or thoughts in the effective communities affect approval of eWOM, mainly between regular internet users (Kozinets, et. al. 2010).

The influence of indications in an offline WOM communication will significantly improve the effect of online communication (Kimmel et al. 2014). In an eWOM framework, nonverbal signals become limited, and senders develop their digital presentation by choosing signals that assist only to increase the concept and reputation. Therefore, appropriate signals are overestimated in online frameworks, leading to a hyper impact on the information processing of consumers (Tong et al. 2015). The Hyperpersonal Model of Communication proposes that essentials of WOM communication may be shifted to make eWOM more effective. These humanizing fundamentals (i.e., emotional and social signals) are more noticeable in eWOM messages, which leads the audience to overestimate the signals, which in turn will lead to a higher influence of Hyperpersonal electronic word of mouth (HeWOM) than the traditional eWOM on purchase-related decisions (Walther 1996).

Marketing has converted toward a digital marketplace (Lamberton and Stephen 2016). Previously, traditional marketing focused on selling a firm's merchandises to a mass spectators or targeted consumers, while carefully to secure the best terms with its vendors or distributor. Companies expected that they would retain their existing customers and consumed a good deal of effort to obtain new customers. At the turn of the time, Vargo and

Lusch (2004) claimed that marketing was developing toward a dynamic, evolutionary development, applying a service-centered opinion that is informed by resource-advantage theory, capabilities, knowledge, and affiliation marketing. According to Lamberton and Stephen (2016), marketing may have now moved from all service to all digital and networking. Lamberton and Stephen (2016) identified that digital marketing is just marketing, simply because almost all marketing activities that an organization might consider now can have some kind of digital feature. It may have taken over more than fifty years to move marketing from a traditional industrial focus to a service-oriented focus, but in the duration of just 15 years, we see a prominent digital focus (Lamberton and Stephen 2016). The acceptance of the domestic Internet, joined with Web technologies and mobile devices, has built a networked marketplace where the stream of product information is no longer tightly controlled and organized by the companies themselves. Web is categorized by services (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, Amazon) that —facilitate networks, conversations, presence, and feeling through the linking of people with same point of interests through the World Wide Web (Piecowye 2008). The digital conversion of marketing (Lamberton and Stephen 2016) offers a considerable and enduring amendment to marketing theory, marketing practice, and customer attitude (Kietzmann et al. 2011). At this time, a consumer message about one's own or another consumer's personal product experience can be transmitted to an individual or bulk audience within seconds of a click with the information that response from others could be unknown (i.e., not sent back), positive, negative, or mixed (Walther 2011). This larger form of message is called user generated content (UGC).

UGC is information or material that is produced by individuals who are the end consumers of a particular good or service (Trusov et al. 2009). Although UGC may be used for a diversity of audiences (e.g., firm, government, educational), the idea becomes perplexed when the UGC creator focuses a consumer audience, more precisely described as eWOM (Lamberton and Stephen 2016).

And due to the outburst of the Internet, WOM has now turn out to be a mainstream subfield within marketing on the academic side (Lamberton and Stephen 2016). Even though there is clear evidence that 75% of word-of-mouth communications still occur offline and face-to-face (Berger 2014; Kotler and Keller 2012; Vranica, 2010).

### **2.1.2 (c) eWOM (Receive)**

Though there is no scarcity of research on eWOM, but very slight research has

showing the comparison between WOM and eWOM to see whether the two concepts are related (Lamberton and Stephen 2016). This could be for many aspects. One, eWOM is much easier to study (Berger 2014). Text mining, data mining, data sourcing, data crawling are all methods to recover a large amount of online behavioral information to study. Also, researchers can experimentally generate a fake website or track consumers in a visit to websites and collect data to examine as well. However, the face-to-face communication would need more time, resources, and members not to mention having to base one's conclusions on questionably accurate self-report data (Lamberton and Stephen 2016). The procedure of identifying, assessing, and analyzing eWOM big data has provided great decision-making insight to consumer behavior; however, this requires moving further than the observational approaches that, while offering interesting understandings, make causal implications challenging (Lamberton et al. 2016). ). And if consumers feel good about a product or service, they will have higher objectives to purchase it and convey their friends and family members (Meuter et al. 2013). Lamberton and Stephen (2016) noticeably state that the literature does not regularly and decisively reveal that online WOM is, in fact, different from offline WOM in ways that matter for marketing however, the important question is not so much whether online and offline forms of WOM are different, but rather, whether these differences are important for marketers to know about and how effectively either WOM or eWOM in product promotion strategies.

Technically, there is no pre-defined method for authentically studying WOM and eWOM in a manner that preserves the essence of both (Baker et al. 2016). The difficulty in reviewing face-to-face communication (WOM) as compared to computer-mediated interaction (eWOM) pushes many researchers to study and publish exclusively eWOM articles.

And WOM is broadly considered as one of the most powerful factors affecting consumer behavior (Daugherty and Hoffman, 2014). This inspiration is especially significant with intangible products that are difficult to appraise prior to consumption, such as tourism or hospitality it may include travelling and the most importantly any electronic gadget etc. Therefore, WOM is considered the utmost vital information source in consumers' buying decisions (Litvin et al., 2008; Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012) and anticipated behavior. For example, tourist satisfaction is of utmost importance because of its influence on behavioral intentions, WOM and purchasing

decisions. In other words, overall satisfaction guides to the possibility of repeating the previously pleasant decision and recommending the destination (Sotiriadis and Van Zyl, 2013).

In many past researches it denotes that consumers remember WOM as a much more dependable medium than traditional media (e.g., television, radio, print advertisements, etc.) (Cheung and Thadani, 2012). It is thus considered one of the most powerful sources of information about products and services (Lee and Youn, 2009). Consumers generally believe other consumers more than sellers (Nieto et al., 2014). As a consequence, WOM can affect many receivers (Lau and Ng, 2001) and is observed as a consumer-dominated marketing channel in which the senders are independent of the market, which gives them trustworthiness (Brown et al., 2007). This independence makes WOM a more reliable and credible medium (Arndt, 1967; Lee and Youn, 2009).

And in this concern, in modern era new form of online WOM communication is known as electronic word-of-mouth or eWOM (Yang, 2017). This form of communication has taken on distinct importance with the appearance of online platforms and brand communities, which have made it one of the most significant information sources on the Web (Abubakar and Ilkan, 2016), for examples, in the tourism industry (Sotiriadis and Van Zyl, 2013). As a result of technological advances, these new resources of communication have guided to changes in consumer behavior (Cantalops and Salvi, 2014; Gómez-Suárez et al., 2017), because of the influence they allow consumers to apply on each other (Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012) by permitting them to attain or share information about companies, products, or brands (Gómez-Suárez et al., 2017).

Similarly, there is another concept closely related WOM is eWOM (electronic word of mouth) and it is one of the most comprehensive conceptions was projected by Litvin et al. (2008), who defined it as all informal communication via the Internet addressed to consumers and connected to the use or characteristics of goods or services or the sellers thereof. The major benefit of this instrument is that it is accessible to all consumers, who can use online platforms to share their thoughts and reviews with other users. Where once consumers trusted WOM from networks and family, today they look to online comments (eWOM) for information about a product or service (Nieto et al., 2014). And for both current and future type of consumers use this medium of information (eWOM). Consumers who share their thoughts about the product or services with other consumers via online are

active consumers; those who simply search for information in the comments or opinions sent by other customers are passive consumers (Wang and Fesenmaier, 2004).

However, Electronic word of mouth also delivers organizations with an advantage over traditional WOM, as it permits them both to attempt to comprehend what elements motivate consumers to share their thoughts online and to measure the influence of those comments on other people (Cantalops and Salvi, 2014). Though, consumers' use of technology to post opinions about products or services (eWOM) can be a concern for companies, as it can become a crucial segment they do not control (Yang, 2017). To counter this, businesses are looking for to gain greater control of customers' online appraisals by creating virtual spaces on their own websites, where consumers can leave comments and post their verdicts about the business's products and services (Vallejo et al., 2015).

In this scenario, companies view both types of references i.e., WOM and eWOM as a new opportunity to be aware of customers' requirements and regulate how they run promotional campaigns for their products or services to better address their requirements, thereby increasing their revenues. Likewise, a negative or positive approach toward the product or service will effect customers' future purchase intentions by allowing them to equate the product or service's actual performance with their expectations (Yang, 2017).

### **2.1.2 (d) WOM vs. eWOM**

There are many experts (e.g., Filieri and McLeay, 2014) and they think that eWOM evaluations to be electronic versions of conventional WOM reviews and in this concern there are many differences between WOM & eWOM such difference is credibility as an information source (Cheung and Thadani, 2012; Hussain et al., 2017), since it can effect consumers' behaviors towards a particular products or services (Veasna et al., 2013), for instance, with regard to the purchase of travel and tourism services, which are supposed to be on high-risk (Sotiriadis and Van Zyl, 2013). Luo et al. (2013) have proposed that the privacy of online messages could have a negative effect on their trustworthiness. In contrast, other studies (e.g., Hussain et al., 2017) have debated that consumers use eWOM more to decrease risk when decision-making. Similarly, eWOM inclines to be more reliable when the consumer using it has past experience (Sotiriadis and Van Zyl, 2013).

Furthermore, appraisals can be observed at various points in time (Cheung and Thadani, 2012). In some cases eWOM are considered more valuable due the reason that they are available in written form and can be viewed at any point of time where as traditional or conventional WOM can't be access by receivers at any available or given point of time, once they are delivered and received by the audience and after that they disappear.

There is one more noticeable difference between eWOM and WOM is the swiftness of diffusion of the message; eWOM statements spread much faster than WOM recommendations because of where they are published, i.e., on the Internet (Gupta and Harris, 2010). Online platforms for posting of content (social media, websites, blogs, etc.) are what set eWOM apart from traditional WOM (Cheung and Thadani, 2012). First, they make the reviews reachable to more consumers (Cheung and Thadani, 2012; Sotiriadis and Van Zyl, 2013). Second, because they are printed, they persist over time (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Cheung and Thadani, 2012).

At the end, the study of the different reviews revealed that these two concepts – WOM and eWOM look alike same to a greater extent, but also are at the same time very different. The Internet has transformed traditional WOM into eWOM. The communication of thoughts is no longer done interpersonally (i.e., person-to-person or face- to-face), but rather is controlled and evaluated the by companies. However, the many research conducted (e.g., Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1966; Brown et al., 2007; Daugherty and Hoffman, 2014; Yang, 2017) agree that they are the media most able to effect consumer attitude and buying habits and the most often used to attain information before, during, and after consuming a given product or service. For instance, in the area of tourism, eWOM is supposed the most influential pre- purchase source of travel information (Sotiriadis and Van Zyl, 2013).

In the field of consumer behavior, some previous studies (e.g., Park and Lee, 2009) have shown that consumers pay more attention to negative information than to positive information (Cheung and Thadani, 2012). For example, the customers most satisfied with a product or service tend to become loyal representatives thereof via positive eWOM (Royo-Vela and Casamassima, 2011), which can yield highly competitive advantages for establishments, businesses, or sellers, especially smaller ones, which tend to have fewer resources. Some studies have suggested that traditional WOM is

the sales and marketing tactic most often used by small businesses.

Additionally, eWOM offers businesses a way to identify customers' needs and perceptions and even a cost-effective way to communicate with them (Nieto et al., 2014). Today, eWOM has become an important medium for companies' social-media marketing (Hussain et al., 2017).

Moreover, it is more difficult to make a choice to purchase a laptop or even a juice machine. Many people take friend's advices and persist alert of all the alternatives given to them. Many experts say that the consumer can make the correct and stable decision (Ren et al, 2013). Most persons found that social set-ups have a significance impact on others than themselves, and that third person influence undesirably on individual's behavioral goal related to word of mouth communication (Cengiz & Yayla,2007). Online word of mouth happens just among few people, but a message is sent by people on various discussion platforms where many other users notice it rightly.

When consumers repeatedly talk to other consumers about their consumption experiences, a phenomenon called 'word-of-mouth communication' (Wetzer et al. 2007, p. 661). For most consumers, word-of-mouth (WOM) might be the only prospect to also study something about the negative features of a purchase (Singh 1990). The strategic significance of WOM for organizations could be demonstrated by a variety of researches (e.g. Goyette et al. 2010). Due to increasing competition and new procedures of online communication, the word-of-mouth WOM idea will continue to gain importance (Goyette et al. 2010; Trigg 2011).

Word of mouth stands for interactive communication by telling a story to another person and so on, which is a vital characteristic of branding through consumer involvement (Keller,2013), and a marketing strategy operated by marketers to influence consumer communication (Kozinets, Valck, Wojnicki, and Wilner, 2010). This communication approach offers benefits which include the ability to distribute news in a fast and dependable way as it is the passing of a message to those who are close to the message recipient (Keller, 2013). It also costs less as compared to other types of communication (Lake, 2015). According to Srinivasan et al. (2002), communities are very influential in promoting via word-of-mouth, exchanging information, comparing product experiences, seeking advice and particularly encouraging social associations between members. Interactions among members and between members and brands largely impact consumers'

relationships with and attitudes towards the brand (McAlexander et al., 2002) and make emotional connections with the network subject, helping to create customer loyalty (Casaló et al., 2010). The dynamism produced within the community will make value for the brand and the consumer (Schau et al., 2009) and hence, perceived benefits coming from the community lead to customer loyalty (Park and Kim, 2014). Social bonds established within brand communities generate a special environment to develop communication strategies to conquer consumers' trust and foster customers' loyalty (Algesheimer et al., 2005; Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2002; Habibi et al., 2014a; Labrecque, 2014; Laroche et al., 2013). A positive word-of-mouth (WOM) is chiefly relevant for brands and companies, as associated consumers are seen to be more trustworthy sources of information (R.V. Kozinets, 2002). Brand communities foster vulnerable facts about the brand through word-of-mouth communications and by sharing personal experiences. Consumers involve in these activities for philanthropic nature or to achieve higher status (Dichter, 1966; Gatignon & Robertson, 1986), but Kozinets, de Valck, Wojinicki, and Wilner (2010) found that these intentions are more complex. Whatever their motivation, members of a community are engaged in dealing impressions activities. We believe that these activities are not only noticeable in social media communities, but are heightened by the capabilities of social media. Attitudinal brand loyalty states to repeat purchase intention, the readiness to pay a premium price or the loyal consumer's willingness to spend a larger amount of financial resources to obtain the brand, and intention of Word-of-Mouth WOM (Algesheimer *et al.*, 2005) which is the inclination or preference to speak positively about the brand. Thus attitudinally loyal consumers who are eager to approve their preferred brand are well-known from repeat purchasers who may continue repurchase but lack the feeling to circulate favorable Word-of-Mouth WOM about the brands. The present study defines brand loyalty according to Morrison and Crane (2007), who expressed it as a deeply held commitment to invalidate a preferred product/service constantly in the future.

Word-of-Mouth (WOM) attitude (i.e. gaining new customers), again studies that simultaneously analyze more than one target of identification could provide a better picture of the specific relevance of both satisfaction and identification as drivers of relationships. These insights would help companies to create effective marketing strategies which are appropriate for a particular company, brand organization and their respective relationship marketing goals. Social connectedness and the consumer's wants for belongingness are significant for a consumer's psychological sense of community. Social media-based brand



communities, in particular, rely on the active involvement and interaction of consumers. For example, marketers found that verbal and face-to-face word of mouth (WOM) can be added with e-WOM via online Brand Communities OBCs (Gupta & Harris 2010). The importance of customer experience on online Brand Communities (OBCs) calls for a wider understanding of social relations (Algesheimer, Dholakia & Herrmann 2005; Carlson, Suter & Brown 2008; Ellison et al. 2007). However, the succeeding inclusion of social gravity and other cultural factors in the technology use studies has produced limited insights (Venkatesh et al. 2012). Subjective or social standards refer to consumers' awareness that most people who are important to them consider they should or should not execute the behavior in question (Ajzen 1991). It denotes to the perceived social pressure sensed by individuals to perform or not to perform the behavior. Social norms appears to be an important determinant of intention in the On line Brand Communities (OBC) situation (Algesheimer et al. 2005; Carlson et al. 2008). Customers may select to continue using an On line Brand Communities (OBC) if they believe that important social referents think they should do the behavior, and they are adequately motivated to comply with their social referents' behavior (Venkatesh et al. 2012). The usage of OBCs often indicates conforming to social norms (Laroche et al. 2012). Brand love contains of many types of emotions, such as passion, positive attitude and evaluation, liking, attachment, commitment, etc. (Albert *et al.*, 2008; Batra *et al.*, 2012; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Shimp and Madden, 1988; Sternberg, 1986). It hence has a sensitive component. If consumers love the brand, they might sense greater brand loyalty, wish to use, willingness to finance more resources to purchase the brand, i.e., behavioral loyalty, to be more engaged, and to spread positive word-of-mouth (WOM), and attitudinal loyalty (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Batra *et al.*, 2012). Related studies also determine the significant effects of these emotional elements, e.g., attachment, on brand loyalty (Aurier and de Lanauze, 2012; Davis-Sramek *et al.*, 2009; Fuchs *et al.*, 2015; Johnson *et al.*, 2006).

WOM content contains data about price levels, service prospects, stay experiences, and recommendations (de Matos & Rossi, 2008; Reichheld & Teal, 2001). Potential customers increasingly rely on information and opinions passed through face to face WOM communities and other WOM channels such as online feedback systems (Minazzi, 2014). In addition to expressing satisfaction, positive WOM is also a essential means for reducing cognitive dissonance brought in an expensive purchase condition such

as in case of a luxury hotel stay (Lindberg-Repo, 2001). Positive WOM activities signal that customers are forging bonds with one hotel over its competitors, thus potentially reducing the level of cognitive dissonance (Kim, 2011). As such, WOM generates an exciting way of watching at the customers' motivation to be involved in informal relationship marketing either by expressing satisfaction or reducing purchase dissonance where WOM is positive.

Customers' buying decisions and purposes to make positive endorsements to others through WOM intentions do not depend only on apparent judgments about service quality but also on external signals like the brand image (Syed Alwi & Kitchen, 2014; Zehir & Narcıkara, 2016). Şahin, Kitapçı, and Zehir (2013) describe WOM intentions as being the consequence of high service quality by any service provider through superior brand image and service value perceptions. It is therefore inferred that that service quality itself can grow a satisfactory brand image resulting in positive WOM intentions. Similarly, it is stated in many studies that perceived service value acts as a bond between service quality and WOM intentions (Floh, Zauner, Koller, & Rusch, 2014; Ladhari, 2007; Syed Alwi & Kitchen, 2014).

The significance of word of mouth (WOM) in business has been widely debated and researched, especially the worldwide acceptance of Internet technology, which has transformed the distribution and effect of word of mouth (Jalilvand, Ebrahimi, & Samiei, 2013). And more over, e-WOM is an informal communication instrument was directed at consumers through internet-based technologies which are connecting to the usage or the specific characteristics of goods and services. So with the development of internet technology, it increases the number of tourists who use the internet to search for information purposes and to conduct online dealings (Litvin, Goldsmith, & Pan, 2008). The easy way for tourist who is searching for information about travel destinations is the use of e-WOM (Ladhari & Michaud, 2015). There are so many tourists are looking for sites using e-WOM for more modern, fun, and easier trustworthy than information provided by travel companies. The concept of e-WOM is a change of word of mouth which is on a limited basis as debates about products and services. With the growth of the times, the word of mouth revolved into e-WOM internet-based so it can cover wider viewers (Sen & Lerman, 2007). e-WOM communicates with so many ways the example, website, twitter, facebook, Instagram, and platform with web-based (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, &

Gremler, 2004).

Given the vital role already played by branding and star-rating in mitigating class uncertainty, the question rises as to whether, and to what degree eWOM can add further to dropping the level of quality uncertainty. This is by no means an insignificant question: while eWOM may accurately represent the preferences of consumers, it is possibly exposed to manipulation by sellers interested to maximize profits at the cost of indulging in unethical behavior (Li & Hitt, 2008). In addition, as online reviewers are not a randomly drawn sample of the user population, eWOM is subject to 'noise' formed by unsatisfied and revengeful customers. Whether eWOM has informational content that can decrease information irregularity in online markets for the hospitality and hotel industry is therefore an important empirical question, the relevance of which carries over to other business areas. The more positive relations the brand will generate for consumers, the further brand loyalty consumers will prove and the more positive word-of-mouth will communicate the brand experience, thus increasing the brand equity.

### **2.1.3 Brand Experience**

The concept of consumer experience appeared at the start of the 1980s (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982) to overwhelmed the limitations of traditional consumer behavior theories. This opinion highlights the importance of neglected variables such as considering consumers as emotional beings as well as thinkers (Addis & Holbrook, 2001). It examines consumer responses to the symbolic, aesthetic, creative and imaginary meanings of the product, raising the role of multi-sensory experience features (Addis & Holbrook, 2001; Hansen, 2005; Hirschman, 1989; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Tsai, 2005). Accordingly, this view expands and supplements the information processing viewpoint, enriching it with the experiential view. Brand experience may happen regardless of the consumers vigorous search behavior after some want recognition. According to Duncan and Moriarty (2006), marketing managers incline to adopt a slight view of touch points as they are observing only those generated by planned marketing communication activities. In support of this view, Berry et al. (2002, p. 89) point out that: *“Anything that can be perceived or sensed – or recognized by its absence – is an experience clue”*. Or, as contended by Klaus and Maklan (2007, p.119): *“companies do not have the luxury to decide whether or not to engage with customer experience. Every customer contact, consumption experience and communication creates an experience in*

*the mind of the customer*". When taking into consideration only those contact points that are monitored by the firm, important elements of brand experience may be overlooked. Many of the definitions of brand experience represent a narrow view, considering experience as rather constructed, staged and generated by the service company (see for example Gupta and Vajic 2000; Pine and Gilmore 1998).

Consumer and marketing exploration has shown that experiences happen when consumers search for products, when they buy for them and receive service, and when they utilize them (Arnould, Price, and Zinkhan 2002; Brakus, Schmitt, and Zhang 2008; Holbrook 2000). And like wise, Product experiences arise when consumers interact with products—for example, when consumers pursuit for products and examine and appraise them (Hoch 2002). The product experience can be straight when there is physical interaction with the product (Hoch and Ha 1986) or indirect when a product is offered virtually or in a commercial (Hoch and Ha 1986; Kempf and Smith 1998). Respondents are typically asked to imitate on a combination of direct and indirect product experiences to examine how the combination influences product judgments, attitudes, preferences, purchase intent, and recall (Hoch and Deighton 1989; Hoch and Ha 1986; Huffman and Houston 1993), and in such a way Shopping and service experiences happen when a consumer interacts with a shop's physical environment, its workers, and its rules and practices (Hui and Bateson 1991; Kerin, Jain, and Howard 2002). Thus, research in this area explores how atmospheric variables and salespeople affect the experience (Arnold et al. 2005; Boulding et al. 1993; Jones 1999; Ofir and Simonson 2007). Numerous articles have investigated customers' interaction with sales team and how that experience affects customers' emotional state, brand attitudes, and satisfaction (Grace and O'Cass 2004).

Brand experiences also occur when consumers utilize and use products. Consumption experiences are of numerous types and include hedonic dimensions, such as feelings, imaginations, and exciting (Holbrook and Hirschman 1982). Much of the explanatory research on consumption experiences has examined hedonic objectives that occur during and after the consumption of, for example, museums, river rafting, baseball, and skydiving (Arnould and Price 1993; Celsi, Rose, and Leigh 1993; Holt 1995; Joy and Sherry 2003).

In short, experiences arise in a diversity of settings. Most experiences occur directly when consumers shop, buy, and consume products. Experiences can also happen

indirectly—for example, when consumers are showing to advertising and marketing communications, including Web sites. Most of the research on experiences currently has dedicated on utilitarian product qualities and category experiences, not on experiences provided by brands. When consumers examine for, buy for, and use brands, they are exposed to utilitarian product attributes. However, they are also exposed to several specific brand-related incentives, such as brand-identifying colors (Bellizzi and Hite 1992; Gorn et al. 1997; Meyers-Levy and Peracchio 1995), profiles (Veryzer and Hutchinson 1998), typefaces, background design essentials (Mandel and Johnson 2002), slogans, mascots, and brand attributes (Keller 1987). These brand-related stimuli look as part of a brand's design and identity (e.g., name, logo, signage), packing, and marketing communications (e.g., advertisements, brochures, Web sites) and in surroundings in which the brand is marketed or traded (e.g., stores, events). These brand-related stimuli establish the major source of subjective, internal consumer reactions, which we refer to as “brand experience.” So, we hypothesize brand experience as subjective, internal consumer reactions (sensations, emotional state, and cognitions) and behavioral responses aroused by brand-related stimuli that are chunk of a brand's design and individuality, pack-aging, communications, and environments. Moreover, Brand experiences differ in strong point and intensity; that is, some brand experiences are stronger or more penetrating than others. As with product experiences, brand experiences also differ in valence; that is, some are extra positive than others, and some experiences may even be negative. Moreover, some brand experiences occur naturally without much likeness and are short-lived; others happen more intentionally and last longer. Over time, these long-term brand experiences, stored in consumer memory, should affect consumer satisfaction and loyalty (Oliver 1997; Reicheld 1996).

Brand experience also differs from motivational and affective thoughts, such as association (Zaichkowsky 1985), brand attachment (Thomson, MacInnis, and Park 2005), and customer pleasure (Oliver, Rust, and Varki 1997). Involvement is based on needs, ethics, and interests that motivate a consumer toward an item (e.g., a brand). Antecedents of involvement contain the perceived prominence and personal relevance of a brand (Zaichkowsky 1985). Brand experience does not assume a motivational state. Experiences can occur when consumers do not show attention in or have a personal linking with the brand. Moreover, brands that consumers are highly involved with are not essentially brands that evoke the strongest experiences. If the brand engagement can be characterized by

minor affect, brand attachment refers to a robust emotional bond (i.e., “hot affect”) between a consumer and a brand, as evidenced by its three extents—affection, passion, and connection (Park and MacInnis 2006; Thomson, MacInnis, and Park 2005). In contrast to brand attachment, brand experience is not an emotional relationship idea. As we defined previously, experiences are feelings, emotions, cognitions, and behavioral responses aroused by brand-related stimuli. Over time, brand experiences may outcome in emotional bonds, but emotions are only one inner outcome of the motivation that evokes experiences. As with brand connection, customer pleasure is characterized by arousal and positive feedback; it can be considered the affective element of satisfaction (Oliver, Rust, and Varki 1997). Customer delight results from disconfirming, astonishing consumption (Oliver, Rust, and Varki 1997). In contrast to customer delight, brand experiences do not happen only after consumption; they occur whenever there is a direct or indirect contact with the brand. Moreover, a brand experience does not need to be astonishing; it can be both expected and unexpected.

Further, brand experience is distinct from brand relations and brand image (Keller 1993). One of the most researched constructs of brand associations is brand personality (Aaker 1997). Consumers tend to award brands with human characteristics that result in a brand personality, which contains of five dimensions—sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness (Aaker 1997). Brand personality is based on inferential processes (Johar, Sengupta, and Aaker 2005). That is, consumers are not loyal or excited about the brand; they only project these characters onto brands. And opposite to this, brand experiences are actual emotional, feelings, cognitions, and behavioral feedbacks. Thus, because brand experience varies from brand evaluations, involvement, attachment, and customer enjoyment, brand experience is also conceptually and empirically differ from brand personality.

Further, Esch *et al.* (2012) finalized that customers perceive declarative information and experience emotions differently when evaluating brands as “strong” brands versus unaware brands. The importance of the five senses in the creation of multisensory experience of brands is thus connected to how consumers value and experience brands and their descriptions (Hultén 2011). This has results for building brands and their individuality, loyalty base, and image (Hultén 2011).

As suggested by Yoo *et al.* (2000), perceived quality, brand loyalty and brand

awareness are the main scopes of brand equity. Brand experiences affect brand loyalty (Brakus *et al.* 2009; Iglesias *et al.* 2011; Sahin *et al.* 2011). However, experiences supposed as superior by consumers regulate their true loyalty if an emotional commitment to brands amongst their customers is also established (Iglesias *et al.* 2011).

Brand experiences also deliver a hierarchical composition of customers 'cognitive, affective, and behavioral scopes according to the CBBE constructs. Findings of research by Choudhury and Kakati (2014), suggest that in testing of brand resonance model, brand loyalty and brand performance positively donate towards brand resonance; also relationship happens between brand imagery and brand resonance. And in this concern brand experience is being further researched in term of luxury brand experience too. And in the most recent approaches to conceptualising luxury brands, scholars have initiated to emphasise the signigifance importance of consumer experiences in luxury branding (e.g. Atwal and Williams, 2009). Tynan *et al.* (2010) note that luxury brand experiences propose an important way of increasing the value resulting from luxury brands. Gistri *et al.* (2009) claim that the hedonic nature of luxury brands delivers consumers with an experience of sensory satisfaction that is unattainable from non-luxury brands. Fionda and Moore (2009, p. 351) also note that consumer experiences are vital to a luxury brand's marketing communication procedure, because "the consumption experience provides an insight into a brand lifestyle by making it reality". However, with few exemptions (e.g. Tynan *et al.*, 2010), these luxury experiences have not been visibly defined and their part in forming consumer opinions of luxury brands has not been addressed.

#### **2.1.4 Brand Trust**

Trust stands for hope from others on a particular task, and hopes fluctuate between high and low. Variation of hope is called a risk. For comprehensive understanding of brand trust, a brand must be tested, evaluated and checked as to how much it is linked with brand loyalty (Lau and Lee, 1999). The academic community has not ignored the importance of understanding brands, and specially brand trust. Many minor problems have been the focus of academic research. For instance, there have been wide-ranging assortments of studies of the antecedents and consequences of trust or the influence of trust as a mediating variable in an exchange system (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993). Trust has to be considered as the foundation and as one of the most needed qualities in the relationship both between a

company and its clients and in the association between a brand and its consumers. The emphasis on brand trust is based on conclusions that there is a strong positive relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001).

*The brand trust defined as the „confident expectations of the brands reliability and intentions“ (Delgado et al., 2003).*

Though the significance importance of brand trust has been theoretically highlighted in the branding literature (Ambler, 1997), there has been little empirical research into it (Delgado et al., 2005). It can be supposed that the difficulty in hypothesizing and measuring the construct of brand trust is one of the causes for the lack of empirical research. Combining different definitions of trust across numerous research disciplines, it can be decided that confident prospects or willingness to trust on as well as improbability and risk are serious elements of most trust definitions. In the branding literature, the idea of brand trust is based on the idea of a brand-consumer relationship, which is realized as a substitute for human interaction between the company and its customers (Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995). Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001), describe brand trust as the readiness of the average consumer to trust on the capability of the brand to achieve its specified function. Across disciplines, there is also settlement that trust only occurs in an uncertain and risky environment. Trust is only pertinent in a risky situation, when the consequences of a confident decision are uncertain and important for the individual (Matzler et al., 2006).

Brand trust can be defined as ‘a feeling of safety held by the consumer that the brand will fulfill his consumption pattern’ (Delgado Ballester and Luis Munuera Alem´an 2001, 1242). This sensation is based on consumers’ awareness that the brand is dependable in that it has the compulsory capacity to respond to consumer’s wants and on the confidence that the brand does not yield opportunistic advantage of consumers’ vulnerability (Delgado Ballester and Luis Munuera Alem´an 2001).

Brand trust grows over time and it progresses from past experience and prior connections (Rempel, Holmes, and Zanna 1985). As many marketing researchers have pointed out, brand trust shows a key role in commercial exchange associations, because it can generate competitive advantage and stimulate marketing success (e.g., Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Alem´an 2005; Barney and Hansen 1994). Importantly in the circumstances where no further data about the quality of a product or service is



obtainable, brand trust plays a significant part, because it works as an information substitute, which may help as a pointer for the general dependability of the brand or contractor (Adler 1998). So it always help different types of customers to rely on the consider opinion of that customer who has already utilized that particular brand and showed his trust on that and form a considered opinion.

Further, Trust can be defined as the degree to which a consumer believes that a certain brand he or she has assurance in satisfies his or her wish. In this situation, the consumer is willing to depend on on the brand he or she has sureness in the advantages (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). According to Pavlou *et al.* (2007), brand trust is the readiness of the average consumer to rely on the ability of the brand to perform its specified function. The existing marketing literature discloses that trust is more prominent in situations of doubt, information irregularity and fear of opportunism (Chiu *et al.*, 2010). Thus, the part of trust is to drop uncertainty and information asymmetry and make customers feel relaxed with their brand (Gefen *et al.*, 2003; Pavlou *et al.*, 2007). For example, if people understand the utilitarian and hedonic values of their brand their trust would upsurge (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). In this study, brand trust mentions to the willingness of the average consumer to rely on the ability of the brand to perform its stated function (Wang and Emurian, 2005).

Brand trust has been observed as a central construct of durable and long-term brand relationships (Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Alemán, 2001). Cultivating consumers' trust in a brand can enhance their readiness to support, co-create, and surge brand loyalty (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; See-To & Ho, 2014). Hence, improving knowledge of how brand trust is built has been deemed critical to the success of marketing via Social media brand communities (SMBCs). Previous studies on brand trust has established that a consumer's trust in a brand can be transferred from that in other, connected, objects, such as the brand community (e.g., Jung, Kim, & Kim, 2014). Thus, Trust transfer theory proposes that an individual's trust can be shifted from a trusted source to an unidentified target if there is a particular association between them (Doney & Cannon, 1997; Stewart, 2003). Trust transfer can work through two procedures: the communication process and the cognitive process (Stewart, 2003). The communication procedure of trust transmission happens when the trustor is directly affected by the trusted source during their communication, while the cognitive procedure of trust transfer happens

when the trustor foundations his or her trust in the target on knowledge of the association between the target and a trusted source. However, most existing research has absorbed on the cognitive procedure, while the communication process has established less empirical attention. This may have controlled to the effect of additional variables (such as mediators) being ignored during the process through which brand trust is transmitted.

Trust can also support to decrease information irregularity, which may be connected to perceived uncertainty and threat in the online environment (McKnight et al., 2002). For instance, in an e-commerce framework trust is the key component in decreasing the risk of purchasing from a seller (Hsu et al., 2014); in a virtual team, working with trusted other associates will reduce the risk of the teamwork failing (Robert et al., 2009). This is also true in the situation of Social media brand communities SMBCs: trust creates consumers' perceived security increase and perceived risk drop in relation to engaging in actions in the community. Further Consumer commitment is watchfully related to consumers' tendency to capitalize the resources of themselves in activities in Social media brand communities SMBCs such as value co-creation, social communication, information sharing/storing, and word of mouth WOM (Brodie et al., 2011; Harmeling et al., 2017; Oh, Roumani, Nwankpa, & Hu, 2017; Pansari & Kumar, 2016; van Doorn et al., 2010). Highly involved consumers are more likely to acquire enhancements in self-esteem and a sense of authorization from these interaction procedures, which in turn creates them feel as though they are favored about and watched as part of the brand (Vivek, Beatty, & Morgan, 2012). Thus, highly involved consumers will form positive approaches and trust beliefs toward the brand more quickly compared to less-engaged consumers (Habibi et al., 2014). Moreover, since consumers establish connections with brands using the norm of interpersonal affiliations (Aggarwal, 2004), those people who share their information, ideas, pictures, and friends to the brand via its Social media brand communities SMBC demonstrate strong trust beliefs in that brand. Again, this means that involved consumers are more willing to trust the brand compared to those who are less engaged with that particular brand. As mentioned before, trust can be moved from a trusted party to an unidentified target based on the trustor's knowledge that the trusted party and the target are connected (Stewart, 2003). Trusted consumers in a Social media brand communities SMBC can be associated with the brand in different ways. For example, they may be lovers of the brand (Laroche et al., 2012; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001), or users of the brand's products. When consumers notice potential relations between those whom they trust and a

brand, their trust in these others will be more likely to move to the brand (Stewart, 2003). Additionally, in a Social media brand communities SMBC, when joint trust among consumers is established, consumers will view this brand community as a praiseworthy place for them to visit (Chen et al., 2009). It has been witnessed that trust may be resulting from perceived shared values among community members (Hsu et al., 2014; Wu et al., 2010). Therefore, customers in a Social media brand communities SMBC might be obligated development of the trust atmosphere in the community to the brand, because it is the brand that associates folks with shared values and a shared interest (Lu et al., 2010). This leads to an increase of consumers' feeling of being favored for and respected by the brand. The concern that they will be cheated and used by the brand in the forthcoming will then decrease, resulting in their trust-related behaviors toward the brand (McKnight et al., 2002).

Marketers relate with consumers on account of the brand in a Social media brand communities SMBC (Goh et al., 2013). The values and trust revealed in marketers' behaviors shown to consumers in Social media brand communities SMBCs will be reliable with those of the brand (Doney & Cannon, 1997). One of the most significant mechanisms of trust relocation is that it happens from the trusted person to the trustee when there are observed similarities between them (Stewart, 2003). Similarity observed by the trustor means that there are shared features between the trusted person and the trustee, which may comprise shared interests, values, or demographic characters. (Lu et al., 2010). Accordingly, we expect that the stable values and beliefs of marketers and the brand will initiate the cognitive procedure of trust relocation, such that if consumers trust marketers, their objective to trust the connected brand will be improved.

## 2.2 Relationship among Variables

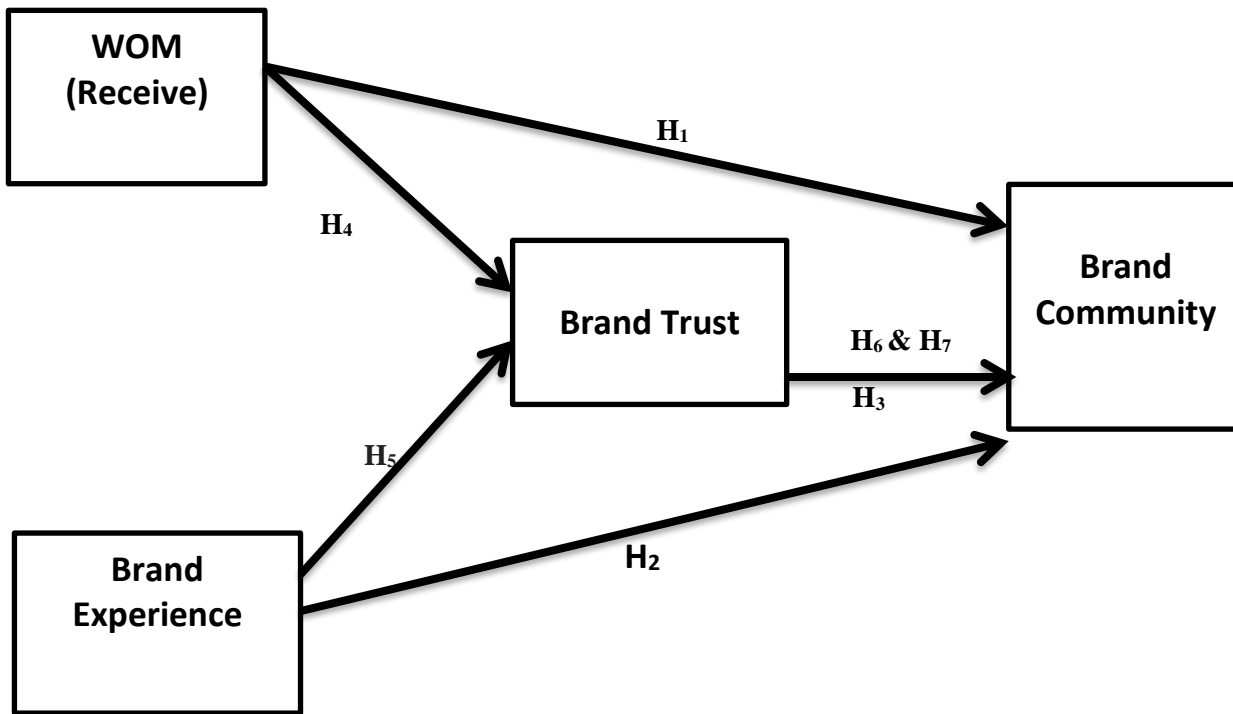


Fig 2.1 Relationship between variables

### 2.2.1 Relationship between Word of Mouth (WOM) and Brand Community

#### 2.2.1 (a) WOM (receive) and Brand community:-

Positive WOM forms a supportive behavior for the benefit of brand & brand community, which highly identified individuals reveal in order to strengthen the group, further saying positive things about the brand or brand community is a source to express and improve the own self-identity (Arnett et al; 2003). According to Hur et al. (2011), brand community commitment has a positive effect on word of mouth in the contexts of online brand community of cell phones in China and also Mini Cooper online community. Yeh and Choi (2011) also found that brand community commitment is of positive influence on word of mouth via electronic media and brand loyalty. The consistent results from these studies demonstrate that brand community has a positive relationship with word of mouth communication.

Word of mouth (WOM) content comprises data about price, service prospects,

stay experiences, and endorsements (de Matos & Rossi, 2008; Reichheld & Teal, 2001). Prospective customers gradually trust on information and views passed through face to face WOM communities and other WOM channels such as online feedback systems (Minazzi, 2014). In addition to communicating satisfaction, positive WOM is also an essential means for reducing cognitive dissonance induced in an expensive buying situation (Lindberg-Repo, 2001). Positive WOM movements signal that customers are forging ties with one brand over its competitors, thus potentially reducing the level of cognitive dissonance (Kim, 2011). As such, WOM generates an exciting way of looking at the customers' motivation to be involved in informal connection marketing either by expressing satisfaction or reducing purchase dissonance where WOM is positive.

Further, in contrast to brand community, there is another marketing conception of building a connection with a brand, established by Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) who recommended that brand love means a mood and liking of consumers for a specific brand. Further, brand community and brand love are likely to bring about word of mouth communication, which is a main attribute of the branding procedure through consumer contribution for examples interactions of experience with and love for a particular brand (Whang, Allen, Sahoury, and Zhang, 2004; Batra, Ahuvia, and, Bagozzi, 2012 ;Langer, Schmidt, and Fischer ,2015).

And there is a research conducted by Unal and Aydin (2013) discovered that brand love is positively connected to word of mouth in the circumstances of sports shoe brands. Likewise, Nazari, Leylan, and Panahandeh (2014) found that brand community is a positive consequence on word of mouth communication in the contexts of textiles and automobiles. In addition, Wallace, Buli, and Chernatony (2014) pointed out that brand community is positively linked to word of mouth communication in the contexts of products using Facebook as distribution channel.

And in this concern, social media-based brand communities; specially, depend upon the dynamic contribution and interaction of consumers. Such as for instance, marketers observed that verbal and face-to-face word of mouth (WOM) can be supplemented with e-WOM via online brand communities OBCs (Gupta & Harris 2010). The significance of customer experience on online brand communities OBCs calls for a wider understanding of social associations (Algesheimer, Dholakia & Herrmann 2005;

Carlson, Suter & Brown 2008; Ellison et al. 2007). However, the following inclusion of social gravity and other cultural features in technology use studies has produced restricted insights (Venkatesh et al. 2012). And in this concern individual or social norms mention to consumers' opinion that most customers who are important to them think they should or should not execute the behavior in demand (Ajzen 1991). It denotes to the perceived social gravity sensed by consumers to accomplish or not to perform the behavior. Social norms appears to be an important determinant of intention in the online brand communities OBC context (Algesheimer et al. 2005; Carlson et al. 2008).

And, Positive word of mouth (WOM) apart from a consumer's devotion towards a brand or community, current literature particularly attaches great importance to positive WOM as an actual means of achieving new customers for that specific brand (von Wangenheim and Bayón, 2007).

Further, apart from the effects of customer pleasure on loyalty, researchers highlight the value of high customer satisfaction altitudes as a way to surge positive WOM. Experimental studies verify these thoughts both in the context of brand communities (Stokburger-Sauer, 2010; Zhu et al., 2016) and in general (de Matos and Rossi, 2008).

**H1:** WOM (receive) has a relationship with brand community.

## **2.2.2 Relationship between Brand experience and Brand Community**

### **2.2.2 (a) Brand experience and brand community**

In this relationship we will evaluate the link between brand experience and brand community, social media is not the only place where brand communities exists but there are recent empirical studies showing the existence of brand communities (Ziglia, 2013) quality and unique aspects of brand communities embedded in social media platforms (Richard,2014). This is the utilitarian and hedonic values (Algesheimer et al., 2005; McAlexander et al., 2002; Ouwersloot & Odekerken-Schröder, 2008; Zaglia, 2013) of the brand which urges consumers to join the brand community.

Likewise, McAlexander et al. (2010) delivered a more customer-centric perspective of the brand community; in this they are giving more weightage to customer's opinion. They recommend that brand communities are there and are in benefits of customers because of their whole experience they deliver rather than because of the brand experience itself. And because marketers are involved in taking benefit of the experiences

of social media-based brand communities to progress long-term associations with their respective customers, the key component of this research is to observe what companies can do to encourage their customers to repeatedly engage with them and also customers can make long-term relationship with them. There is rising interest among companies to understand the factors that motivate online brand community OBC loyalty because of brand experience, that is, elements that lead customers to stay or discontinue using online brand communities OBCs (Bhattacharjee 2001a). Continuation delivers the vital mass of customers desired by the firm to take advantage of the benefits of online brand communities OBCs.

As mentioned above Brakus *et al.* (2009) defined brand experience as consumers' "sensations, feelings, cognitions, and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications, and environment". And in this situation, Brand experiences aroused when customers intermingle with the brand during the customer decision voyage to buy that particular brand or not. Any touch point is having capability to shape an impression in the minds of the customer that can ease customers to make any decision(s) related to the brand, and customer take those imprints with them in shape of unforgettable brand experiences. Brand experience is a multi-dimensional phenomenon that incorporates sensory, behavior, affective and intellectual experiences.

In this concern, further research revealed that by experiencing the greater brand experiences a company can establish strong customer-brand relationship (Chang and Chieng, 2006). Exceptional and memorable brand experiences can expand customer satisfaction with the brand (Ha and Perks, 2005), and improves brand loyalty (Brakus *et al.*, 2009; Khan and Rahman, 2015). Research have explored significant result of brand experience on brand loyalty through emotional commitment (e.g., Iglesias *et al.* 2011). In another important study, Nysveen *et al.* (2013) inspected brand experience scale of Brakus *et al.* (2009) in context of telecommunication services, and recommended an additional dimension (i.e., relational experience).

Whereas, conducting research on brand experience in retail business, Ishida and Taylor (2012) proved sensory, affective and behavioral experience dimensions and recommended the identification of other experiential characteristics, and they also observed an important inspiration of brand experience on brand personality, brand

satisfaction and brand loyalty. However, Khan and Rahman (2015) in a qualitative research advocates the important part of brand experiences in improving brand loyalty in the environment of retail brands.

In addition to this discussion, Keller (2001) made brand commitment a key element of his Customer-Based Brand Equity model. Developing an educated research on his fundamental idea of brand salience, Keller suggested that leaders and managers can take particular measures to generate brand equity by involving with customers and making their brands pertinent to their customers' life. Keller emphasized that, dynamic relationship between brand and customer leads to brand engagement with the brand expressed as customer's eagerness to talk about it, learn about it, and exhibit its use (Goldsmith, 2011). The brand management literature is stuffed with recommendations and exhortations advising brand managers to encourage their consumers to become engaged with specific brands (Sullivan, 2009).

For brand communities which are originated by the consumers, the consumers deliberately tie around the brand, so that an inspiration on their brand-related intentions and attributes can be expected. Official brand communities started by the brand owner also follow this

theory and have the objective to attain from the positive word of mouth (WOM) influence between the community and the brand. Members who are reliable towards the brand community and can cause cognitive dissonance if they shift to another brand (Algesheimer et al., 2006). Moreover, converting the brand would regularly lead to elimination from the brand community which outcomes in a loss of social connections (McAlexander et al., 2002).

The further benefits of an individual's interactions with and within the brand community subsequently reinforce his loyalty towards the brand. Empirical studies also found support of a positive result of brand community on brand loyalty (Algesheimer et al., 2005; Algesheimer et al., 2006; Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2006).

The brand's role is to be unique and distinguish the service or the utilizing of the product it sells from the other prevailing competitors in the market. What is the distinguish features and attributes in the service or the product is that brand is more connected to the organization and the service contribution than with products. In this concern we take an



example of a car cab company. The company is a brand, the travelling service and the service provider and the travelling experience in the cabs are all at the same time. From a marketing viewpoint, some authors see the idea of brand experience as something you enhance to your main service to add value a value-added service (Collins, 1986). The services obtainable are only there to encourage the main or key element in the service. The value-added services provide benefits for both the customer and the firm. Customers have the chance to attain something beyond their basic wants. There is an example of shopping experience at IKEA. Some will debate that the brand experience is all about the additional services like free daycare center, lunch halfway through the store and free parking facility before you leave their store. This argument was presented at the “Service Experience Camp” in Berlin, 14-25 September 2013 (Making Waves blog, 2013).

**H2:** Brand experience has a direct relationship with brand community

The study will show a direct relationship between brand experience and brand community.

### **2.2.3 Relationship between Brand Trust and Brand Community**

#### **2.2.3 (a) Brand Trust and Brand Community**

Brand trust is “the willingness of the average consumer to rely on the ability of the brand to perform its stated function” (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001, p. 82). Trust generally is more of a concern when there is data irregularity and chances of opportunism. Declining information unevenness results in increased trust. Thus, one way brands can make their customers trust them is to give them the compulsory material about the product and the brand (Chiu, Huang, & Yen, 2010; Gefen, Karahanna, & Straub, 2003). Here we will discuss and show the relationship between brand trust and the brand community.

A brand community is a specialized, non-geographically bound community, based on a structured set of social relations among admirers of a brand. Grounded in both classic and contemporary sociology and consumer behavior. (Albert M. Muniz, Jr & Thomas C. O’ Guinn; 2001). When it comes to the trust, some claim that “perhaps there is no other single variable which so thoroughly influence the interpersonal and intergroup behaviour” (Golembiewsky & McConki, 1975). Trust is critical for attitude and behavior toward a brand or seller (Dwyer, Schurr, & Oh, 1987) and is important during shopping

(Power et al., 2012), so the relationship between consumer and brand increase the brand trust.

Further, Brand trust and brand satisfaction established brand trustworthiness, as trust and satisfaction liable for affiliation and to enhance the value of relationship (Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001; Moisescu and Allen, 2010). Literature on branding recommends that the theory of brand trust is grounded on the consumer-brand connection (Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995), and brand satisfaction also impact the brand relationship in a similar way of brand trust loyalty (Moisescu and Allen, 2010). And likewise the connection between brand satisfaction and process of rebuying prevails to be well researched, and there is general settlement that overall satisfaction-like assessments are positively linked to customer retention (Szymanski and Henard, 2001). The emphasis on brand trust is based on conclusions that there is a durable positive connection between brand trust and brand relationship (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). In all the protocols, there is also settlement that trust only happens in an ambiguous and risky situation. Trust is only pertinent in a risky environment, when the consequences of a certain choice are undefined and significant for the customers (Matzler et al., 2006). The difference in brand resonance is described by its experiences to some extent, but there may be additional features which may be explaining brand resonance in the situation of different goods and services (Gautam and Kumar, 2012). Its need to test, brand resonance model with current market scenario, and further, we need to enhance more variables that are related with brand relationship, such as brand satisfaction and brand trust (Raut and Brito, 2014).

As per the literature from diverse field such as relationship marketing, branding, retail and the other fields, there is an important connection between satisfaction and trust (Johnson and Auh, 1998; Caceres and Paparoidamis, 2007; Martinez and Del, 2013). The research conclusions of Garbarino and Johnson (1999), recommend that the satisfaction leads trust in the diverse way in different products and services. If the users are delighted with the product or services, they will be expected to trust on that specific product or services (Ganesan 1994; Helfert and Gemuenden 1998; Geyskens et al., 1999).

Further, brand trust is essential as it enhances buying habits and boiled down the potential destruction from negative consumer assessments (Godfrey, P.C; Acad. Manag, 2005). A company's CSR engagement is viewed as an effective marketing plan to create a trustful relationship between a company and its consumers (Torres, A.; Bijmolt, T.H.A.;

Tribo, J.A.; Verhoef, P,2012).

Here we will also discuss how initialization of a brand community established on social media can impact brand trust. Actually in this concern one main marketing goal is to achieve consumers' trust in the brand. Trust is an integral part during the buying process (Powers, Advincula, Austin, Graiko, & Snyder, 2012) and it is significantly important antecedent of benefaction (Pentina, Zhang, & Basmanova, 2013; See-To & Ho, 2014). Therefore, acknowledging how social media created brand communities (SMBBCs) impact brand trust is indispensable for marketers. Further, this might be supportive to managers and marketers in social media activities because gauging social media ROI is a challenge for them and one way of calculating ROI is to examine what kind of "marketing goals" the social media events would fulfill (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010, p. 42).

Zhou, Zhang, Su, and Zhou (2012) researched on the role of brand community identification on improving brand community commitment and brand identification. Likewise, Algesheimer et al. (2005), through a nomological framework they establish positive impacts of brand community identification on brand community binder, which is an idea very much related to brand loyalty. Casaló, Flavián, and Guinalú (2007) observe the effects of contribution in brand community on brand trust and loyalty. They observed, in the framework of online brand communities, that participation in brand community improves brand trust and brand loyalty. Tsai, Huang, and Chiu (2012) surveyed the antecedents of contribution in brand community. They conducted a study in a non-western context and concluded that in accumulation to consumers' personal elements, the observed level of trust in the associations improves participation in brand communities.

**H3:** Brand Trust has a relationship with brand Community

A trusted brand is only capable to form a brand related community. Where customers share their experiences in relation to a particular product or service. Brand community is beyond the boundaries and can form a special group irrespective of demographic or geographic methodologies.

#### **2.2.4 Relationship between WOM (receive) and Brand Trust**

#### **2.2.4 (a) WOM (receive) and Brand Trust**

In this relationship we will evaluate the link between WOM (receive) and brand trust. All types of WOM issued by consumers, which may provide a reliable communication to people who receive them (G.S. Day, Attitude change media and word of mouth, J. Advertising 1971), when a consumer is satisfied with the brand (R.L. Oliver, Satisfaction A Behavioral Perspective on the Consumer, Irwin/ McGraw-Hill, New York, 1997.), or is committed to, or trust it (C. Ranaweera, J. Prabhu, On the relative importance of customer satisfaction and trust as determinants of customer retention and positive word of mouth, J.Targeting Meas.

The significance of word of mouth (WOM) in business has been broadly discussed and researched, particularly the worldwide implementation of Internet technology, which has transformed the distribution and impact of word of mouth (Jalilvand, Ebrahimi, & Samiei, 2013).

(Anal. Marketing 2003), he is more likely to spread the positive WOM about the brand.

In today's scenario, business firms have many methods of communication to generate the firm's different and unique ways. Therefore, all along with visual identity, website and promotion, business managers practice uncontrolled ways of communication with their current and prospective consumers. The significant aspect of uncontrolled communication have been acknowledged as either word-of-mouth (WOM) or tertiary communications, which is a message that is transferred about the brand by third parties (consumers of that particular product). Word-of-mouth WOM can influence consumers' perceptions and anticipations during their search for information and the succeeding buying procedure; also, it impacts their approach during the re-purchase estimation of alternative brands. And Word-of-mouth WOM can influence their verdicts either positively or negatively. Communicating with public and media relations are important attributes for the establishing of ties with the firm's brand and the consumers, and are trusted on for success, legitimacy and growth (Broom, 2011). Dealing with the customers and all these types of activities are targeted on the firm's awareness and recognition rather than on separate promotions communicating a company's corporate/brand identity. However, media and public affairs and all the related activities are progressively being acknowledged by the managers as a key component. And Word-of-mouth (WOM) way of

interaction has been revealed as the most significant and major resource of information in developing a destination image (Hanlan, J.; Kelly, S. J. *Vacat. Mark.* 2004). Further, the importance of Word-of-mouth WOM has been studied for numerous decades in the marketing area, and it showed its significant effectiveness in the modern business age. And in this concern, there are powerful developments in electronic communication that have directed to the increase of electronic WOM (eWOM) which permits customers to share their thoughts and experiences with other customers via electronic communication channels, such as e-mails, blogs, networks, chat rooms, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, online reviews, and websites with user-generated information—all of which have become powerful tools of promotion and communication decisions (Blal, I.; Sturman, M. 2014).

(Jeong, E.; Jang, S. *Int. J. Hosp. Manag.* 2011) state, as a comparison to traditional Word-of-mouth WOM, eWOM travels more widely and quickly due to being directed at multiple individuals, being anonymous and accessible at any time; thus, the potential influence of eWOM on customers' decision-making procedures can be more influential than the effect of traditional Word-of-mouth WOM. Hence, Word-of-mouth WOM becomes a vital feature of the decision-making process (Murray, K.B. *J. Mark.* 1991) due to the reason that Word-of-mouth WOM decreases insecurity and perceived apprehensions. Further, Word-of-mouth WOM is mainly essential for hospitality providers as well, (where complete information is seldom available and it also helps when information for any product isn't readily available) whose offerings are largely imperceptible, and experience or credibility based (Ng, S.; David, M.; Dagger, T. *MSQ* 2011).

And always positive Word-of-mouth WOM eventually increases the brand trust of the customers and in these contexts consumers who are highly engaged with a brand are activists for that brand (Hollebeek, 2011). Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen's (2010) research proposed that consumers who had a sense of community and durable brand identification experience more brand love and live association with that specific brand. Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2010, p. 510) integrate word of mouth (WOM) in their measure of active and live attachment. Engaged consumers on social networks are considered as potential brand campaigners. The social network supports promotion, because of the inspiration of online members (Lawer and Knox, 2006). In addition to linking with others, these brand users may have emotional attachment with a brand and contribute with the brand through high involvement and positive WOM (Wragg, 2004). Word of mouth WOM is the movement of

communication among consumers about products or services (Westbrook, 1987). Further, to offering brand endorsements to others, it is proclaimed that brand advocates are also likely to receive new brand extensions and to forgive a brand for wrongdoing (Du et al., 2007). Although advocacy, incorporating WOM and brand acceptance, can originate from multiple sources, including friends or existing brand users (Senecal and Nantel, 2004), this all cause to make strong ties in between Word of mouth WOM and consumers' trust in the brand.

**H4:** WOM (receive) has a relationship with brand trust

Showing the relationship between WOM (receive) and brand trust

## **2.2.5 Relationship between Brand Experience and Brand Trust**

### **2.2.5 (a) Brand Experience and Brand Trust**

Originating a great brand experience must be one of the foremost important objective of the company (Verhoef et al., 2009). The firm must enter into a race to provide a new experience to its users, so they must be more than satisfied while utilizing that particular brand. And brand user's experience initiating from the connection between the consumer with products or services provided by the company which will be a reason of certain reaction (Gentile, Spiller, & Noci, 2007; Shaw & Ivens, 2002). The experience delivers worth on senses, emotional, intellectual, attitude and associations where these values substitute the value of the functional (Schmitt, 1999). The satisfaction achieved by the consumer in the previous phase will have an influence at the time will do the purchase procedure (Berry, Carbon, & Haeckel, 2002) and will enhancing the brand loyalty (Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009; Sahin, Zehir, & Kitapci, 2011; Shim, 2012). The direct experience can improve customer loyalty, but there is a research describes that the brand experience does not have a significant impact on customer loyalty (Iglesias, Singh, & Bastita-Foguet, 2011).

Conventional marketing strategies merely emphasizes Though customer's brand experience can improve the brand trust through positive word of mouth WOM interaction and enhance customer's dependence on a particular type of product or the services. And Consumers will sense emotionally ties with specific brands which will be able to enhance consumer loyalty (Dunn & Hoegg, 2014; Vlachos, 2012). A strong emotional connection will be able to eradicate consumer change and tolerance on the negative information

(Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006) and able to make consumer to re-buy (Yim, Tse, & Chan, 2008). Patwardhan and Balasubramanian (2011) define that brand attachment are explained in the construct brand love and trust, where brand loyalty will be able to upsurge significantly. There are key features to be considered in the business that is generating brand trust. The trust is the component of being able to establish consumer loyalty (Lau & Lee, 1999).

On physical product specifications or services, such as quantity, excellence, functionality, obtainability, approachability, price, delivery and customer guidance (Mascarenhas, Kesavan, & Bernacchi, 2006), and also feature and advantage (Schmitt, 1999a, 1999b). And now there is a change in its expansion which leads to the economy experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 1998) which generate experiences to consumers are also elements that are perceived vital (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Pullman & Gross, 2003, 2004; Schmitt, 1999a, 1999b). The divider in the operational framework has shifted into customer experience (Mascarenhas et al., 2006). The change happened because consumers are not delighted when only receive the product or service advantage of operational attributes, but emotional side is achieved from the experience when shopping or consuming and this experience eventually increase the brand trust as well.

Further, giving brand experiences to the consumer are one of the tactics that was performed by the company in order to outclass in competitive environment (Shaw & Ivens, 2002). And the experience is a individual reaction from customers due to the existence of a contact to the company (Meyer & Schwager, 2007). Consumer experience attained from the collaboration between the company/ products/brand with the consumer (Lasalle & Britton, 2002). Ismail, Melewar, Lim, and Woodside (2011) describe the experience as it associated with supposed sensations, feeling, knowledge attained and skills gained by dynamic commitment in the moment, during and after doing consumption of the specific product brand or service .The active engagement can be credited to the co-creation in formation experience (Caru & Cova, 2003; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). It can be determined that the consumer experience is a subjective feedback from customers due to the collaboration between companies with customer, where in these collaborations there are some active involvement between the customer and the firm and customers in the interaction there is an active involvement between customers and the firm both previously, forever and after consumer doing utilization of

the product and eventually causes a high level of brand trust (by experiencing any product or service).

The Confidence is understood from different angles. There are few approaches contain the connection between seller and buyer (Dwyer, Schurr, & Oh, 1987; Eastlick, Lotz, & Warrington, 2006; Morgan & Hunt, 1994), the organization and the stakeholders (Greenwood & Van Buren III, 2010), or consumers and brands (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Aleman, 2001; Delgado-Ballester, Munuera-Aleman, & Yague- Guillen, 2003). The belief is also used in the numerous research, among others used in the research as the atmosphere online and e-commerce (Ha, 2004; Ha & Perks, 2005; Kracher, Corritore, & Wiedenbeck, 2005; Lee, Ahn, Kim, & Lee, 2014; Li & Yeh, 2010; Ruparelia, White, & Hughes, 2010; Salo & Karja- luoto, 2007; Tanrikulu & Celilbatur, 2013), or offline environment (Dwyer et al., 1987; Eastlick et al., 2006; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). And in this concern there are different definitions of brand trust (developed by brand experience) .Chaudhuri and Hal Holbrook (2001) define brand trust as a willingness in relying on the capability of a product to accomplish its function. Consumers believe the ability of brands due to the past experience (Ardyan & Aryanto, 2015; Tanrikulu & Celilbatur, 2013). Trust in the brand is also defined as an expectation of assurance in the dependability of brands and goodwill in circumstances including risk (Delgado-Ballester et al., 2003). Further Gefen (2000) defines trust is a willingness to make himself conscious in to the action taken by a trust- worthy person established on a sense of trust and obligation. Brand trust is an important concern of doing business. In the literature of the brand, the idea of trust in the brand is based on the idea of relationship between the brand and the consumer (Zehir, Sahin, Kitapci, & Ozsahin, 2011).

The trust on the brand will be able to enhance the assurance (Bowden, 2009; Dwivedi & Johnson, 2013; Ezgi & Hancer, 2015; Sahin, Kitapci, & Zehir, 2013) and interest of the customer in the behaves (Alan & Kabadayi, 2014; Kabadayi & Alan, 2012). Some other study describes the significant part of brand trust, for example, the impact of trust on the brand loyalty (Sahin et al., 2011; Zehir et al., 2011) UKM's progress (Eggers, O'Dwyer, Kraus, Vallaster, & Gulden- berg, 2013). Flaw in establishing brand trust will cause disbelief on consumer that will cause the business hurt in the future (Miranda & Klement, 2009).



The trust is one of the most pertinent in undefined condition (Moorman, Zaltman, & Deshpande, 1992). Lacking of trust in others, then the people will work on complication (Gefen, 2000) and uncertainty. Hawes, Kenneth, and Swan (1989) see trust as a substance to produce many dealings between customer and the seller and it can deliver a high expectation to the customer to achieve a satisfactory interchange. The accomplishment of the exchange happens because the trust on a brand and service is able to remove doubts remain. In the exchange essentials to be stressed the existence of safe, trustworthiness and dependability. And sureness about reliability, safety and honesty is an significant feature of the trust (Zehir et al., 2011).

Further the brand experience in the past will make a customer more assured in doing anything (buying decision) in the future. The trust in cognitive deficiencies will increase when the brand experience in accordance with consumer hopes (Komiak & Benbasat, 2006). Tanrikulu and Celilbatur (2013) trust is one of the features to improve the confidence from past experience by utilizing that specific brand product or service. The research of Weisberg, Te'eni, and Arman (2011) shows that that the experience of previous buying will increase consumer confidence.

Customer's concept in relation with the particular brand reliability and that brand is responsible for customer's welfares it is therefore has a cognitive element (Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Aleman 2003).

Consumers improve trust in brands based on positive opinions (Ashley & Leonard, 2009). The significance of the trust is to build durable affiliation between customer and brand (Fournier, 1998) it associated positively with brand loyalty (Lau & Lee, 1999). Trust mirrors the collective effects from time to time on customer loyalty in high participation, products of high market services (Ciou & Droge, 2006). Some of scholars explain that belief is the result of customer loyalty (Sahin et al., 2011).

Viewing the prior literature brand trust is defined as “feeling of security held by the consumer in his/her interaction with the brand that is based on the perceptions that the brand is reliable and responsible for the interests and welfare for the consumer” (Delgado-Ballerter et al., 2003).

**H5:** Brand Experience has a relationship with brand Trust

The main objective of the study is to study two intermediate mechanism between brand experience and brand trust. Thus the brand trust is a consumer's expectations in relation with the brand reliability in a risky situation (Delgado-Ballerster, Munuera-Aleman, & Yague-Guillen, 2001) and how customer's tendency on a brand trust after the particular brand experience.

### **2.2.6 Mediating relationship:-**

#### **2.2.6 (a) Brand trust mediates the relationship between WOM (receive) and brand community**

The relationship between the dependent and the independent variable no longer exists and their variations are controlled by some other variable, then that variable is termed as the mediator variable, here we will demonstrate how mediating relationship exists between brand trust (as a mediator) and brand community (dependent variable). Thus this theory forms two more hypothesis and brand loyalty can be achieved via rationally and emotionally (keller, 2013). Important elements of the rational routes are product performance such as (price, efficiency, reliability, durability), while emotional route includes such as (feelings, excitement), (Keller, 2013). In this study I am looking at two studies one is emotional and the other is rational both of these are playing a mediating role between brand salience and brand community. This cause generation of two more hypothesizes;

Brand trust works as a catalyst (mediator) and form a new relationship in this framework and causes to establish a new connection between word-of-mouth WOM and brand community. Also despite of brand community, there is another marketing thought of establishing a connection with a brand or brand love, established by Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) who recommended that brand love means a mood and trust of consumers for a specific brand. Moreover, brand community and brand love are intend to bring about word of mouth communication, which is a main feature of the branding procedure through consumer involvement e.g. exchanges of experience with and likeliness for a specific brand (Whang, Allen, Sahoury, and Zhang,2004; Batra, Ahuvia, and, Bagozzi, 2012 ;Langer, Schmidt, and Fischer ,2015).

And WOM is motivated by personal consumption experiences (Luo and Homburg 2007; Wangenheim and Bayon 2007) and WOM is also encouraged by marketing

rewards (e.g., coupon programs) (Kumar et al. 2010; Ryu and Feick 2007; Schmitt et al. 2011). Further the link between WOM and customer attainment when WOM is not linked to an actual consumption. Although all three forms of WOM can lead to new customer attainment, we distinguish each as a unique WOM channel because different acquisition processes have substantial consequences on retention probability (Thomas 2001) and value design (Lewis 2006). Which leads to brand trust and brand trust incorporate a vital role as a mediator between WOM and brand community.

And highly satisfied customers convey positive WOM and thus attract surplus customers to a firm basically for free (Anderson and Mittal 2000; Rust et al. 1995). Positive WOM sent because of personal good experience with a brand is tend to encourage many positive brand relations in the WOM receiver because the WOM message likely delivers functional, experiential, and figurative advantages of the brand. A great deal of research has emphasized that personal consumption experiences are a important elements of WOM activity (Anderson 1998; Anderson and Mittal 2000; Swan and Oliver 1989; Westbrook 1987). Though, it has been discussed satisfaction and WOM should not be supposed to be a simple positive relationship. Although satisfaction also positively affects loyalty and reduces defection likelihood, Biyalogorsky (2001).

And WOM and brand performance is twofold: through WOM's influence on brand attentiveness and brand associations. Closely connected is Godes and Mayzlin's (2009) conclusion that a WOM campaign can affect awareness and/or preference related to the brand.

WOM correspondent not only directs the specific content of the message but also fundamentally transmits non-product-related attributes such as (1) the type of consumers who utilize and do not utilize the brand, (2) figurative advantages of the brand (e.g., social approval of reputation for use or nonuse of the brand), and (3) information about the personality of the brand through conversion of a prototypical consumer's personality (Aaker 1997; McCracken 1989) because of the WOM receiver's perceptions of the WOM transmitter him or herself. Such indications have been recognized as less tangible but predominantly powerful sources of brand knowledge for consumers, because they are exclusive points of differentiation challenging for competitors to replicate (compared with tangible attributes) and can lead to brand resonance (Keller 2001). Combined with WOM's relatively higher level of reliability and trustworthiness compared with

marketing communications (Nielsen Consumer Research 2009), WOM can modify brand associations and the resulting consumer behavior.

Likewise, a positive brand emotions may be retransmitted for many reasons, such as it being helpful to others (humanity), demonstrating expertise (Higie et al. 1987), or working as social lubrication (idle chatter; (Berger and Milkman 2010). Retransmitting negative brand information may be encouraged for reasons such as helping others (serves as a warning) (Gilly et al. 1998).

And all this indication is consistent with the fundamental interpersonal relations orientation (Schutz 1958) model of why people share information with one another. More important, the retransmission of positive brand WOM concurrently serves initial human drives such as building social capital, humanity, and maintaining pleasant social relations (Peters and Kashima 2007).

In this content the power of the social connection between the WOM participants should also influence and inclined to influence message communication. One of the recognized characteristics of communications between strong social connection is that the discussions tend to be more tailored and pertinent to the participants (Granovetter 1983), and thus more valuable. Because retransmission of WOM information received related to a brand is in part depending on the perceived value of the WOM, transmission of information between strong social ties should in turn tend to consequence in greater retransmission possibility than messages between relatively weak social relationships.

Further, brand love denotes to consumers' emotional connection with a brand. Which is lately converted into brand trust and thus brand trust helps consumers to form a word of mouth WOM. It is a long-established sensitive relationship which influences consumer behavior and strongly effects word-of-mouth communication. In other words, brand love is consumers' emotional feedback and their expression of love for a specific brand (CarollandAhuvia, 2006; Batra et al., 2012; Langer et al., 2015).

**H6:** Brand trust mediates the relationship between WOM (receive) and brand community

### **2.2.7 Brand trust mediates the relationship between Brand experience and brand community**

Customer commitment and trust are shown to be important predictors for WOM as commitment and trust in a specific fan page is a prerequisite for spreading positive WOM about brand (Ruiz Mafe et al., 2012). This is supported by the view that the customers who are committed to and trust a brand are more likely to engage in reciprocal activities that may eventuate the positive WOM about the brand (T.H. Jung, E.M. Ineson, E. Green, Online social networking relationship marketing in UK hotels, *J. Marketing Manage.* 2013).

There is a strong relationship between brand experience and brand community and brand trust is playing a vital role of mediator in this context.

Generating the superior experience at the consumers end should be the main goal of the company (Verhoef et al., 2009). The company must contest to provide a new experience to the consumer of that product or the services. To produce an interesting and exciting experience for the value customer is one of the methods to increase customers association and connection with the product. Consumer experience starting from the connection between the consumer with products or services rendered by the company which will provide a certain reaction (Gentile, Spiller, & Noci, 2007; Shaw & Ivens, 2002). The experience provides worth on senses, emotional, cognitive, attitude and relationships where these values substitute the worth of the functional (Schmitt, 1999). And in this concern the level of satisfaction achieved by the consumer in the past will have an influence at the time will do the buying process (Berry, Carbon, & Haeckel, 2002) and will enhance the brand loyalty (Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009; Sahin, Zehir, & Kitapci, 2011; Shim, 2012).

Instead of direct experience of a product or a service of a specific brand can increase customer loyalty, but there is a research explain that the brand experience does not have a substantial effect on customer loyalty (Iglesias, Singh, & Bastita-Foguet, 2011).

And further to this consumers will sense emotionally attached with certain brands which will be able to enhance consumer loyalty (Dunn & Hoegg, 2014; Vlachos, 2012). A strong emotional connection will be able to remove consumer defection and acceptance

on the negative information (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006) and tend to make consumer to re-buy (Yim, Tse, & Chan, 2008). Patwardhan and Balasubramanian (2011) define that brand attachment are defined in the construct brand romance, where brand loyalty will be able to increase considerably. There are important elements to be considered in the business that is building trust. The trust is part of being able to build consumer loyalty (Lau & Lee, 1999). And remained always important to create a brand community through this trust building process. So brand trust always forma an important role in originating a brand community and plays as a mediator role.

Conventional marketing only emphases on physical product specifications or services, such as quantity, quality, functionality, availability, accessibility, price, delivery and customer support (Mascarenhas, Kesavan, & Bernacchi, 2006), and also characteristics and product benefits (Schmitt, 1999a, 1999b). There has been a change in its development which leads to the economy experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 1998) which generates experiences to consumers are also elements that are considered vital (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Pullman & Gross, 2003, 2004; Schmitt, 1999a, 1999b). The differentiator in the competition has changed into customer experience (Mascarenhas et al., 2006). The change arose because of consumers are not satisfied when only receive the benefit of functional, but emotional side is gained from the experience when shopping or consuming.

Providing experiences to the consumer are one of the methods that was done by the company in order to outclass in competition (Shaw & Ivens, 2002). Fundamentally, the experience is a subjective response from customers due to the occurrence of a connection to the company (Meyer & Schwager, 2007). Consumer experience gained from the communication between the company/ products/brand with the consumer (Lasalle & Britton, 2002). Ismail, Melewar, Lim, and Woodside (2011) define the experience as it connected to the perceived sensations, emotion, knowledge attained and skills gained through active engagement in the instant, during and after doing consumption. The active and live participation can be attributed to the co-creation in making experience (Caru & Cova, 2003; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). It can be determined that the consumer experience is a subjective feedback from customers due to the collaboration between companies with customer, where in these interactions there are some active engagement between the customer and the company and customers in the

interaction there is energetic engagement between customers and the company both previously, continually and after consumer doing consumption of that specific product or services.

Further brand experience is one of the conceptions in the literature brand proposed by Brakus et al. (2009), define that brand experience as an interaction between consumer with the stimulus connected with the brand and brand identity (name, symbol and color combinations), marketing communications (ads, brochures and website) and the marketing communications (billboards, Event and Website). In the explanation, the brand experience happens when customer make interaction with the brand (Alloza, 2008) and feel the stimulus provided by the brand, for example: the aesthetics of product design (Veryzer & Hutchinson, 1998), color (Gorn, Chattopadhyay, Yi, & Dahl, 1997), interface (Mandel & Johnson, 2002), as well as inspiration of the advertisements that will always be recalled (Friestad & Thorson, 1993; Keller, 1987, 1991; Pham & Van- huele, 1997). In this research, the dimension of brand experience adopted from Brakus et al. (2009), that are sensing, feeling and thinking experiences which always helps to enhance the brand trust and form a brand community.

The brand trust plays the role of mediator in this framework and there are some approaches include the relationship between seller and buyer (Dwyer, Schurr, & Oh, 1987; Eastlick, Lotz, & Warrington, 2006; Morgan & Hunt, 1994), the organization and the stakeholders (Greenwood & Van Buren III, 2010), or consumers and brands (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Aleman, 2001; Delgado-Ballester, Munuera-Aleman, & Yague- Guillen, 2003). The belief is also used in the many research, among others used in the research as the environment online and e-commerce (Ha, 2004; Ha & Perks, 2005; Kracher, Corritore, & Wiedenbeck, 2005; Lee, Ahn, Kim, & Lee, 2014; Li & Yeh, 2010; Ruparelia, White, & Hughes, 2010; Salo & Karja- luoto, 2007; Tanrikulu & Celilbatur, 2013), or offline environment (Dwyer et al., 1987; Eastlick et al., 2006; Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

And there are various definitions of brand trust. Chaudhuri and Hal Holbrook (2001) define brand trust as willingness in relying on the capability of a product to perform its purpose. Consumers trust the ability of brands due to the past experience (Ardyan & Aryanto, 2015; Tanrikulu & Celilbatur, 2013). Sureness in the brand is also defined as an hope of confidence in the dependability of brands and goodwill in situations

involving risk (Delgado-Ballester et al., 2003). Gefen (2000) defines trust is a willingness to make himself conscious in to the action taken by a trust- worthy person based on a sense of trust and obligation. In this study, the dimensions of brand trust adopted from Delgado-Ballester et al. (2003) and Morgan and Hunt (1994) that are: Brand reliability, Brand Predictability, Brand Competence, and Reputation trust.

Brand trust is a significant issue of doing business and it performs decisive roles in the business success. In the literature of the brand, the concept of trust in the brand is based on the idea of affiliation between the brand and the consumer (Zehir, Sahin, Kitapci, & Ozsahin, 2011). Consumers are the judges in evaluating and accessing a product or brand that is being offered by the company to consumers. And this assessment will define whether the consumers believe it or not on a brand or product. That has been offered. The trust will be able to increase the guarantee (Bowden, 2009; Dwivedi & Johnson, 2013; Ezgi & Hancer, 2015; Sahin, Kitapci, & Zehir, 2013) and attention of the person in the behaves (Alan & Kabadayi, 2014; Kabadayi & Alan, 2012). Some other research clarifies the role of brand trust, for example, the effect of trust on the brand loyalty (Sahin et al., 2011; Zehir et al., 2011) UKM's progress (Eggers, O'Dwyer, Kraus, Vallaster, & Gulden- berg, 2013). Error in building brand trust will cause distrust on consumer, that will cause the business loss in the future (Miranda & Klement, 2009).

The confidence is one of the most relevant in ambiguous situation (Moorman, Zaltman, & Deshpande, 1992). Without trust in others, then the people will work on difficulty (Gefen, 2000) and uncertainty. Hawes, Kenneth, and Swan (1989) see trust as a an important substance to produce many dealings between buyer and seller, it can provide very high hopes to the buyer to attain and gained a satisfactory exchange which will proof value for money latter. The success of the exchange happens because the belief is able to remove doubts remain. In the exchange requirements to be stressed the presence of secure, honesty and reliability. Confidence about dependability, security and honesty is an important aspect of the trust (Zehir et al., 2011).

Experience of a product or service in the past will make a consumer highly confident in doing anything related to that in the future. The belief in cognitive deficiencies will increase when the experience in accordance with consumer hopes (Komiak & Benbasat, 2006). Tanrikulu and Celil- batur (2013) trust is one of the elements to develop the confidence from past experience. The study outcome of



Weisberg, Te'eni, and Arman (2011) explain that the experience of past purchases will increase consumer confidence. Consumers grow trust in brands based on optimistic beliefs (Ashley & Leonard, 2009). The significance of the belief is to construct strong relationship between customer and brand (Fournier, 1998) it connected positively with brand loyalty (Lau & Lee, 1999). Trust replicates the cumulative effects from time to time on customer loyalty in high level of engagement, products of high market services (Ciou & Droge, 2006). Some of the researchers describe that belief is antecedents from customer loyalty (Sahin et al., 2011).

And some of the experts and researches define the experience in different ways. The experience defined as the entirety of customer observation that was created during the procedure of learning process when needed, usage and sometimes organize goods or services (Carbon & Haeckel, 1994). The experience is defined as the actions occurred because of responses of a personal nature from some motivations (Pullman & Gross, 2003; Schmitt, 1999a, 1999b). Usually the experience is more tending to touch the emotional side, either emotionally or emotional VIP basis (Pullman & Gross, 2004), feeling, fantastic and inclination (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). The experience that is able to touch the consumer emotional side will cause the existence of consumer connection on the brand or specific product Dunn and Hoegg (2014).

Further the emotional connection is the emotional ties between people with certain objects (Fournier, 1998; Park et al., 2010; Thomson et al., 2005). Morgan and Hunt (1994) share partial support by emphasizing that the correlation is not only promise, but it also includes trust. Jahn, Gaus, and Kiessling (2012) are making suggestions where the impact of a construct is more emotional and relational (i.n., self-concept connection, partner quality) also can effect brand trust. Furthermore, Jahn et al. (2012) define the various aspect of emotional attachment contains of self- concept and quality of the partner association. Quality partners include features of certainty, dependability and faith that effect the development of trust (Wieselquist, Rusbult, Foster, & Agnew, 1999). And the brand trust reacts as strong mediator to form firm ties between independent variable brand experience and the dependent variable brand community because brand community can only be form by healthy brand experience which works as a catalyst on the brand trust of a specific product or service.

However, providing experience for customers is not simple. The first stage a

company to manage the customer experience is to give a direction or an influence on the customer (Berry et al., 2002; Carbon & Haeckel, 1994), both rational and emotional. There are two kinds of directions: performance and context clue (Carbon & Haeckel, 1994). Experience can happen when consumers directly connected to the product or through marketing communications (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Schmitt, 1999a, 1999b) or when consumers are visiting the store (Kerin, Jain, & Howard, 1992), and there can be many other ways.

And build the relationship between brands and consumers become an important component in the accomplishment of a business plan (Jones, Comfort, Clarke-Hill, & Hillier, 2009). When the brand has been established with a strong connection based on its consumers, it will generate a major source of diversity will ultimately create brand loyalty and this leads to brand trust. The experience is able to forecast the possible reaction of consumers in the future (Zarantonello, 2008). Brand experience can enhance the profitability of the brand and also create brand loyalty and brand reference to other parties (Morrison & Crane, 2007). A customer with excellent experience on the brand will influence brand loyalty (Biedenbach & Marrel, 2010; Brakus et al., 2009; Frow & Payne, 2007; Ismail et al., 2011).

**H7:** Brand trust mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand community.

### **2.2.8 Chapter Summary**

In above mentioned hypotheses I tried to provide the evidences of all the hypotheses, and proved my statement that all the variables are having relationships with one another and thus form the bases of strong well connected brand community and how much it is important to have a brand community for brand. We observed several studies and tried to prove the relevancy and authenticity of the research in a systematic way.

We also proved that brand community is such a valid and effective source of advertising for the company which can bring significant result for the enterprise.

And in this concern we proved the hypothetical relationships among the variables and witnessed the ties among the variables.

**H1:** WOM (receive) has a relationship with brand community

**H3:** Brand Trust has a relationship with brand Community

**H4:** WOM (receive) has a relationship with brand trust

**H5:** Brand Experience has a relationship with brand Trust

**H6:** Brand trust mediates the relationship between WOM (receive) and brand community

**H7:** Brand trust mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand community.

In the following chapter 3, we will be more focused on research data collection and will be more focused on data accuracy and provide more evidence about the purposiveness of this research, where we go for a rigor data analysis and follow the precision.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH MODEL AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Base Line of the Study**

The necessary phase for the data analysis implementation is to design suitable, appropriate and related research techniques. Problem statement is investigated through different Research methods this is the understanding of studying to attain a particular research. Usually, define, explain the research method, and is known as forecasting methods by which their work is researched. Further, the research methodology is the foundation for the exceptional knowledge (Rajasekar, Philominathanet, & Chinnathambi, 2013).

#### **3.2 Research Philosophy and Research Methodology**

The research methodology delivers the explained opinion about the procedure and analysis. Research methods should be suitable otherwise it can produce useless and uncreative consequences and as a result out assumption cannot be confirmed and it will only be wastage of time. The essential grounds of this chapter are data collection, its successful analysis, to fit a suitable method, defining variables and hypothesis discussion to answer all research questions mentioned in chapter one. At the end showing verified conceptual framework.

The term research philosophy refers to a system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge. Although this sounds rather profound, it is precisely what you are doing when embarking on research: developing knowledge in a particular field. The knowledge developing you are embarking upon may not be as dramatic as a new theory of human motivation, but even addressing a specific problem in a particular organization you are nonetheless, developing your knowledge.

Whether you are consciously aware of them or not at every stage in your research you will make a number of types of assumptions (Burrell and Morgan 2016). These include (but not a limited to) assumptions about the realities you encounter in your research (Ontological assumptions), about human knowledge (Epistemological assumptions), and about the extent and ways your own values influence your research process (Axiological assumptions). These

assumptions inevitably shape how you understand your research questions, the methods you use and how you interpret your findings (Crotty 1998).

Objectivism incorporates assumptions of natural sciences arguing that the social reality we search is external to use and others (referred as social actors). This means that, ontological, objectivism embraces realism which in the most extreme form, consider social entities to be like physical entities of the natural world (Burrell and Morgan 2016).

Subjectivism incorporates assumptions of the arts and humanities asserting the social reality is made from perception and consequent of social actors.

### 3.1- Tabular form of Research Design

Comparing Qualitative and Quantitative Research	
Research Design	
Qualitative Research	Quantitative Research
<b>Induction</b>	<b>Deduction</b>
Purposes	Purposes
Generate theory from observation Oriented to discovery, exploration	Test theory through observation Oriented to cause and effect
Procedures Emergent design	Procedures Predetermined design
Merges data collection and analysis	Separates data collection and analysis
<b>Subjectivity</b>	<b>Objectivity</b>
Purposes	Purposes
Emphasize meaning, interpretations Tries to understand others perspectives	Emphasize things that can be measured Results do not depends upon beliefs
Procedures Researcher is involved, close to the data Researcher is the researcher instrument	Procedures Researcher is detached, distant from data Relies on standard protocols
<b>Context</b>	<b>Generality</b>
Purposes	Purposes
Emphasize specific depth and details Analyze holistic system	Emphasize generalization and replication Analyze variables
Procedures Use a naturalistic approach Relies on few purposively chosen cases	Procedures Use experimental and statistical control Work across a large number of case

Source: Fetterman, D. M. (2009).

### 3.3 Conceptual Framework of Research

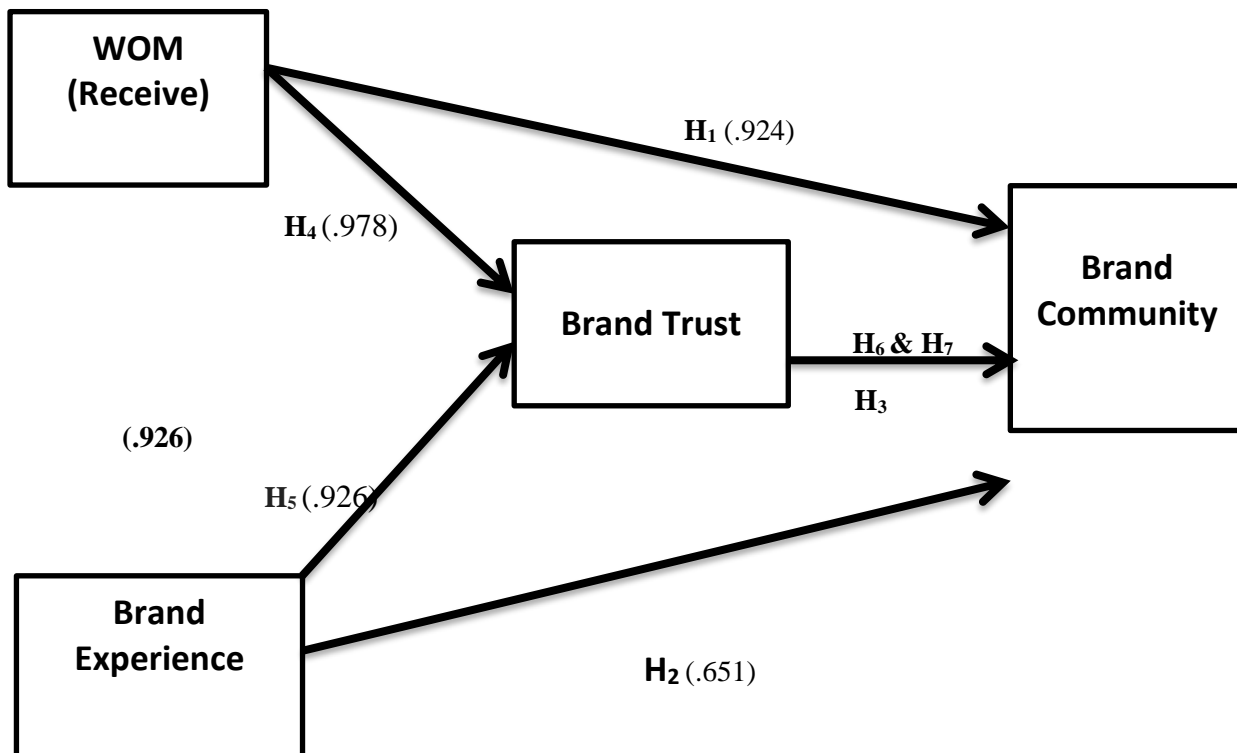
The conceptual framework is also known as “Theoretical Framework” or “Idea Context” of the proposed study. It is a systematic way to characterize connection among

variables (Robson, 2011). Miles & Huberman (1994) only a point that can be noted is that theoretical framework displays the relationship in descriptive form while the other “Research Model” shows the relation among study variables in graphical form. But their justification remains the same. It is a broader term used for beliefs and views. It is recognized as idea context because it is contain of actual ideas of the research. It is important for research as it answer the following questions.

- What are the possible associations that research wants to inspect?
- Why it is necessary to study all these associations/phenomenon?
- What are the goals, researcher wants to achieve?
- How to clarify these goals to make study realistic?
- What are the appropriate techniques?

The conceptual Framework is given on the next page.

**Conceptual Framework:**



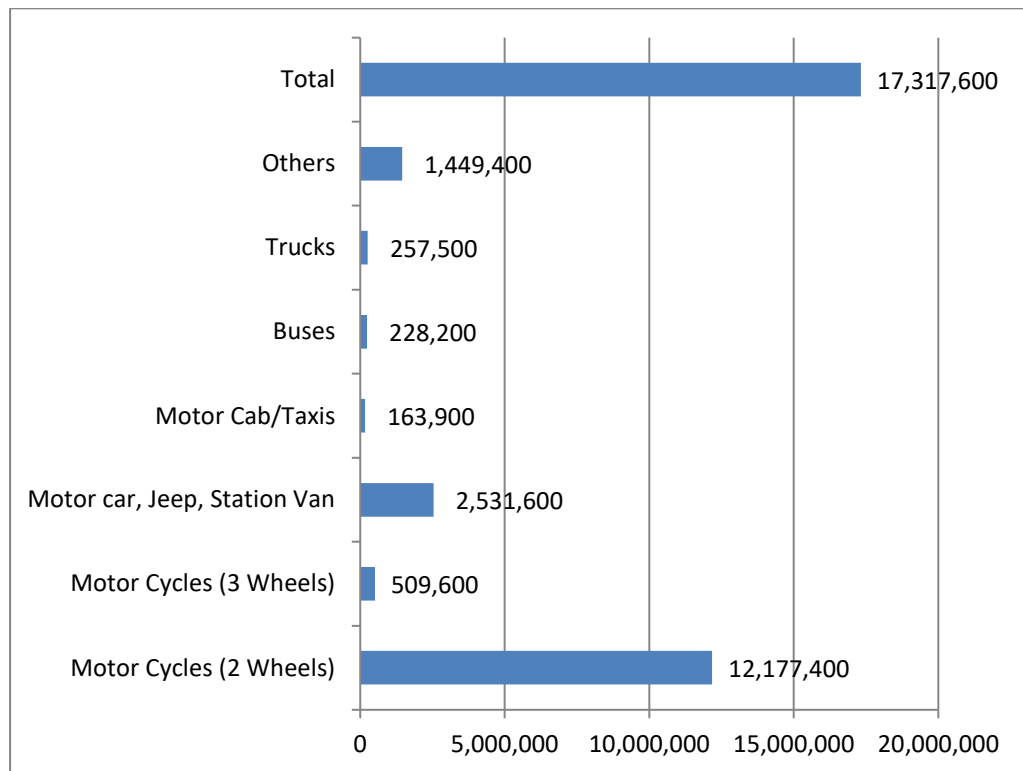
**Fig: 3.1 Conceptual Framework with beta values**

Brands for Motor Cars such as Suzuki, Toyota, Honda are chosen as corporate brands for conducting my research. These are the popular brands nowadays in our market

and selection of these three brands was based on two critical factors, first these are dominant brands collectively holding 86% of the market share Suzuki 33%, Toyota 28% and Honda 25% (Hembel, 2017) and second these three brands have license to manufacture and assemble automobiles in Pakistan, product of all other are either imported or as a reconditioned vehicles (EDB, 2016).

### 3.4 Population

In 2015 the number of registered motor cycle (2 wheels) was 12,177,400, motor cycle (3 wheels) 509,600, motor cars, jeeps and station wagon 2,531,600, motor cabs/taxis 163,900, buses 228,200, trucks 257,500, others 1,449,400 and total number was 17,317,600 (Pakistan Economic Survey 2015-2016).



**Figure 3.2** Source: Transport Data of Pakistan (Economic Survey 2015-2016)

From above mentioned transport in use we took deliberately segment of the cars, because it is high involvement product due to its price and utility and in some case people took this as status symbol too that's why consumers are highly involved and show a greater deal of commitment as compared to other utilities.



. Cars are considered to make an especially strong statement about their buyers. For example, according to a Forbes study (Forbes, 2008), Porsche drivers are thought to be self-rewarding achievers with a household income for around \$390,000. And if you drive a Porsche 911, you are most likely a man (87% of 911 buyers are). The idea is that consumers are drawn to certain types of products, i.e. country-of-origin (Roth and Romeo, 1992; Saeed, 1994; Hsieh et. al., 2004; Lin and Chen, 2006; Wang and Yang, 2008).

What is much harder and costly is to identify the characteristics of buyers that tend to buy a certain brand or product, and a substantial share of marketing research expenditures fall into this category. The most common approach is to use surveys, and it has been adopted both by consulting firms as well as academic research.

Respondents: Members of Car Communities on Face Book using passenger cars of Suzuki, Toyota and Honda.

This study utilizes cross sectional data for evidence on relationship as conceptualized in framework. Target population for this study is the members of car communities on Face Book, three main players of the corporate brand has been chosen with respect to their sales share in the market i.e, Pak Suzuki Motor Company Limited, Indus Motor Co Ltd (Toyota Pakistan) and Honda Atlas Cars (Pakistan) Limited.

#### *3.4 (a) Pak Suzuki Motor Company Limited*

In 1992, Suzuki acquired the majority of Pak Suzuki's shares. Then, it extended a new assembly plant having integrated production lines (capable of handling presswork, welding, coating, and assembly). The plant added press line slater. Further, bumpers and instrument panels are produced in plastic molding machines and painting lines within their own plant. Besides, eight factories of part manufactures are located in the surrounding area.

#### *3.4 (b) Indus Motor Company Limited*

In 1993, Toyota Motor Corporation established a joint venture, Indus Motor Company Limited, with Toyota Tsusho Corporation and Habib Group, with equity contribution of 40% by Habib Group, 12.5% by Toyota Motor2, and 12.5% by Toyota Tsusho. Indus Motor also constructed a plant in Bin Qasim and has commenced production of Corolla mainly, as well as Hi-Lux and Daihatsu Cuore.

### *3.4 (c) Honda Atlas Cars Pakistan Limited*

In 1992, Honda Atlas Cars Pakistan Limited was established as a joint venture of Honda Motor Company Limited and local Atlas Group, and commercial operation started in 1994. It manufactures the City and Civic models at a newly built plant in the suburbs of Lahore.

Convenient sampling technique has been used to collect the data, members of the above car Face Book communities will be sent self-administrative questionnaire through a software survey monkey and will be filled by as per convenience of the members.

Respondent were selected based upon sales volume of the car brands, in Pakistan annual sales of Suzuki is 33%, Toyota's share is 28%, Honda is at 25% while other brands are at 14%, so the sample will be selected as per the given sales percentage appropriately.

This specific age group of respondents and group of brands mentioned above are chosen for this study because of their cultural diversity in nature, the values of this brand and lifestyle of respondent group (Nusair et al., 2011); and this group has long been the target of companies to develop the relations of the mark and is particularly favored by marketing scholars (Bush et al., 2004).

### **3.5 Sampling Technique**

The convenient sampling technique has been used to collect the data from the respondents. This technique of sampling can be considered a form of propionate stratified sampling, in which predetermined proportion of people are sampled from different groups, but on a convenience bases.

### **3.6 Sample Size**

Data was collected from the sample of 364 Face Book car community members mentioned above. Studies employing multiple regression analysis, there have been different views found in literature regarding the number of respondents, but as a rule of thumb 10 respondents per scale items are used, but if multivariate normality assumption is violated, this number can increase up to 15 respondents (Heidt and Scott, 2007), in this study, number of subjects per predictor used will be 10, leading to a sample size of 420.

During data collection it was carefully considered to take all samples which were representative of all defined criterion in our questionnaire. It was considered to take the data as per percentage of the users of a particular brand of specific vehicle, for instance; Pak Suzuki is having 33% market share and as per our samples size 139 people of different age groups has been selected as per their age, occupation and education, likewise 28% of the people who prefer Toyota and there number is 118, and there are 105 users of Honda with their market share of 25%, and representing different age, occupational and educational backgrounds. Since being on Face Book community we took data nationwide and tried our level best to follow the defined criteria in our questionnaire.

We divided the respondents based upon their age groups, education and occupation.

### 3.7 Data Collection Method

The data have been collected in form of self-administrative questionnaire adapted from the respondents.

### 3.8 Operationalization

Data have been collected from the respondents based upon 5- points Likert scale and must be unidimensional.

**Table 3.2 Summary of the study instruments with dimensions and items**

Sr#	Variable Name	Status	Author Name	No. of Items
1	Brand Community	Dependent	Kevin Lane Keller (2001)	4
2	WOM (Rcv)	Independent	Algesheimer et. al (2005)	3
3	Brand Experience	Independent	Brakus et. al (2009)	12
4	Brand Trust	Mediator	Delogado-Ballester et. al (2003)	8

In above mentioned table 3.2 there is a summary of study with instruments and no of items against each construct.

**Table 3.3 Details of the study instruments with dimensions and items**

Constructs/	Item No	Measurement Items	Source Dimensions
Brand Community	BC1	I really identify with people who use this brand	Kevin Lane Keller (2001)
	BC2	I feel like I almost belong to a club with other users of this brand	
	BC3	This is the brand used by people like me	
	BC4	I feel a deep connection with others who use this Brand	
Word of Mouth (received)	WOM (rcv1)	I hardly miss any opportunity to tell others positive things about the community	Algesheimer et al. (2005)
	WOM (rcv2)	if friends or relatives were to search for a brand community I would definitely recommend this one	
	WOM (rcv3)	I will comments positive on the Community	
Brand Experience Sensory Experience	BES1	This brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses	Brakus et al (2009)
	BES2	I find this brand interesting In sensory way	
	BES3	This brand doesn't appeal To my senses	

**(Continued)**

Constructs/ Item No Dimensions	Measurement Items	Source	
	BES4	This brand induces feelings and sentiments	
	BES5	I don't have strong emotions for this brand	
	BES6	This brand is an emotional brand	
Behavioral	BEB1	I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I use this brand	
	BEB2	This brand results in bodily experiences	
	BEB3	This brand is not action oriented	
Intellectual	BEI	I engage in lot of thinking when I encounter with this brand	
Brand Trust Brand Fiability	BTF1	This is the brand name that meets my expectations	Delgado-Ballester et al (2003)
	BTF2	I feel confident in this brand's name	
	BTF3	This is the brand never disappoints me	
	BTF4	This brand guaranteed satisfaction	
Brand Intentionally	BTI1	This brand would be honest and sincere in addressing my concerns	

Constructs/ Dimension	Item No	Measurement Items	Source
	BTI2	This brand would make any effort to satisfy me	
	BTI3	I could rely on this brand to solve the problem	
	BTI4	This brand would compensate me in some way to of the problem with mobile phone	

Table 3.3 with detailed description of the item and the source used in this research

### 3.8.1-WOM (receive):-

Researchers (Sweeny et al 2008) has studied from the receiver's end, the factors which influenced the positive word of mouth. The objective of the study were to found that the outcomes of WOM, the factors that influences the receiver to act on WOMs and it also aimed at developing a model which relates to consume experience when the receive WOM.

### 3.8.2-Brand Experience

Gilmore and Pine (1999) and Schmitt (1999) are the pioneer of the concept of the brand experience, defined by Brakus et al., (2009), that brand experience are “ Subjective, internal consumer responses (sensation, feelings and cognitions and behavioral responses) evoked by brand related stimuli that are part of brand's design and identity, package, communications and environment”.

To measure brand experience construct, twelve items scale will be used, which is adopted from study of Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantonello (2009) (can have scale form the given writers). It is a multidimensional scale having three dimensions (i) Sensory Experience (ii) Intellectual Experience and (iii) Behavioral Experience. It will be measured with 5-point Likert scale. Some of the scale items along with their dimensions are given below:

#### (1) Sensory Experience

This brand makes a strong impression on my visual senses or other senses.

#### (2) Intellectual Experience

I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this brand.

#### (3) Behavioral Experience

This brand results in bodily experiences.

### **3.8.3-Brand Trust**

Brand trust is defined as “feeling of security held by customer in his/her interaction with the brand, that it is based on the perceptions that the brand is reliable and responsible for the interests and welfare if the consumer” (Delgado-Ballester et al., 2003).

To measure the brand trust as a mediator, eight items scale will be used, which is adopted from study of (Delgado-Ballester et al., 2003). It is a multidimensional scale having two dimensions with four items each. It will be measured with 5-point Likert scale. Some of the scale items along with their dimensions are given below:

#### **3.8.3 (a) Fiability**

To measure fiability, we can have items such as; this brand name that meets my expectations and this brand guarantees the satisfaction.

#### **3.8.3 (b) Intentionality**

To measure intentionality we need to have items like; this brand would be honest and sincere in addressing my concerns and this brand would compensate me in some way for the problem with mobile phone.

### **3.8.4-Brand Community**

Brand community is a —specialized, non-geographically bound community, and based on a structured set of relationships among admirers or a brandll (Muniz and Guinn, 2001).

In order to measure the brand community as a mediator which will study by unidimensional scale (Keller, 2001), some of the scale items are as, I feel a deep connection with others who use this brand.

### **3.9 Choice of Data Analysis Software and Statistical Techniques**

Multiple regression was selected as an analysis technique for my research due to many reasons, the most important and practically significant are prediction and explanation. Prediction involves the extent to which the regression variates (one or more independent variables) can predict the dependent variable. Explanation examines the regression coefficients (their magnitude, signs and statistical significant) for each independent variable and attempts to develop a substantive or theoretical reason for the effects of the independent variables. These research problems are not mutually exclusive so multiple regression is the best analytical technique to address my research problems.

Multiple regression also provides a means of objectively assessing the degree and character of relationship between dependent and independent variables. Suitability of multiple regression is due to three main reasons; 1) matching the appropriateness of the research problem, 2) specification of statistical relationships, 3) selection of dependent and independent variables.

SPSS Statistics is used for multiple regression analysis; SPSS generates quite a few tables of output for a multiple regression analysis. A complete explanation of the output you have to interpret when checking data for the eight assumptions required to carry out multiple regression. This includes relevant scatterplots and partial regression plots, histogram (with superimposed normal curve), Normal P-P Plot and Normal Q-Q Plot, correlation coefficients and Tolerance/VIF values.

### **3.10 Structural Equation Modeling**

According to Lei and Wu, (2007) SEM contains variety of statistical model and confirmatory factor analysis. It is also useful in determining the causal relationship between latent variable which is the important feature of SEM. Statistical model in



SEM is used for analyzing and testing the theory by multiple regression technique. SEM is also use to develop the structure of model (Holmes-Smith et al., 2004; Lei and Wu, 2007)

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DATA ANALYSES AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter is divided into three chunks; first part based on demographics of sample and data screening techniques where normality, multi co-linearity, mistakes for entering the data and missing values are discussed. Second part of this chapter describes the Analysis of measurement model for each construct and getting the best model fit and last part is about hypothesis testing.

#### **4.1 Stepwise detail of data analysis**

After data have been collected from a representative sample of the population, the next step is to analyze them to test the research hypotheses. However, before we can start analyzing the data to test the hypotheses, some preliminary steps need to be completed. These help to ensure that data are accurate, complete and suitable for future analysis.

In case of this research data is collected through questionnaires and following steps are considered before setting this data for analysis.

##### **4.1.1 Coding and data entry**

First step in data preparation is data coding, it involves assigning numbers to participants' responses so they can be entered into a database.

##### **4.1.2 Data entry**

After responses have been coded, they can be entered into a database. Raw data can be entered through any software, for instance SPSS.

##### **4.1.3 Editing data**

After the data are keyed in, they need to be edited. For instance, the blank responses, if any, have to be handled in some way, and inconsistent data have to be checked and followed up. Data editing deals with detecting and correcting illogical, inconsistent, or illegal data and omission in the information returned by participants of the study.

An example of an illogical response is an outlier response. An outlier is an observation that is substantially differs from the others.

#### **4.1.4 Data transformation**

Data transformation is the variation of data coding, is process of changing the original numerical representation of a quantitative value to another value. Data is typically changed to avoid the problems in the next stage of data analysis process.

#### **4.1.5 Demographics of Sample and Data Screening**

For fair view of sample, in this section profile of respondents have been discussed which include gender, age, designation, education. Apart from this, descriptive statistics, missing data and outliers are also explored.

#### **4.2 Respondent's Details**

Descriptions of responses had given in appendix according to gender, age, designation and education, where 363 respondents were taken as sample. Table shows the responses according to their usage of the automobile brand 33% participants are Suzuki cars, 28% Toyota, 25% are using Honda passenger cards while 14% car users are utilizing other brands of the cars.

This table also describe that there were total 363 participants for the questionnaire filling out of them 351 were males which is 97% whereas there were 12 females 3% females. Participants of the research had been divided into three group 25-35 years (31.5%), 36-46 (37%) and 47-56 (30%), education wise there were three groups Bachelors 212 (58%), 103 Masters (28%) where as others education 47 (13%). And there were three types of professional people participated in this survey was Businessmen 175 (48%), Private Jobs 122 (33.5%), Govt Employees 66 (18%).

**Table 4.1 Targeted Population summary**

Variable	Name Category	Distribution	
		Frequency	Percentage
Age Group	25-35	115	31.5
	36-46	136	37
	47-56	113	30
Gender	Male	353	97
	Female	10	3
Profession	Business	151	35.1
	Private Job	140	32.6
	Govt Employee	71	17
Education	Bachelors	212	58
	Masters	103	28
	Others	47	13
Brands	Suzuki	140	33
	Toyota	118	27.8
	Honda	106	24.5
	Others	56	14.7

### 4.3 Descriptive Statistics

The table 4.2 summarized the respondent rating for the four variables. On the antecedence of brand community represented that most of the respondent's responses were between agree or neutral. Finding revealed that usually car users agree that brand community was influenced by various variables. The mean value of WOM (4.17) indicates that respondents at some extent agree Word of mouth having an effective role on brand community. Table 4.1 also shows the mean value of BC (3.37) which represents brand community plays an important role. Similarly the BE and BT having mean value of 3.67 and 4.07 respectively, which explains that brand experience and brand trust are vital in formation of a brand community. In this case brand trust may increase the tendency of the users to be a part of a brand community.

**Tables 4.2: Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
WOM	364	1.00	5.00	4.1786	1.00512	1.146	.128	.679	.255
BC	364	2.00	4.00	3.3732	.38203	1.883	.128	1.103	.255
BE	364	1.00	5.00	3.6746	.70641	1.883	.128	.103	.255
BT	364	1.00	5.00	4.0783	.90437	1.402	.128	1.381	.255
Valid N	364								

#### 4.4 Data Screening

Data screening is basically broadcasting of data it is important to conduct any analysis. Data screening is useful tool for examining any sort of inconsistencies. Here we examined that all assumptions related to Structural Equation Model (SEM) are encountered or not. Data screening is basically examining the mistakes during the entering of data. It is also use to find out the missing data and extreme values.

##### 4.4.1 Examination of Data Entry and Missing Data

In case of mistake in entering the data we have two options first is we have to examine validity of each entry. Second option is whenever we are conducting descriptive statistics the results already shows any kind of missing and invalid data.

About 430 questionnaires were sent to selected car users out of which 400 questionnaires were returned which are proceeds for further analysis. It was found that 36 questionnaires were removed because they are not fully completed and unable to measure the construct. Respondents are not answered the question probably due to having lack of information or due to privacy concern. Therefore, 364 questionnaires are usable for including as data entry where response rate is about 90% because of self-administration.

## **4.5 Data Assumptions**

### **4.5.1 Assessment of Normality**

For structural equation model, assumptions for normality are important (Kline, 2005).

Normality can be measure through bell shaped, symmetrical distribution where values lie at Centre (Gravetter and Wallnau, 2000, p. fifty two). Histogram and normality plots are best displays to examine the shape of distribution (Tabachnick and Fidell 2001, p. 73).

However, Kurtosis and Skewness are important measures to check the normality. Hall and Wang (2005) argued that high nature of kurtosis and skewness leads towards non-normality of data.

An inspection of the shape of histogram along with visualization of normal curve shows that the scores of each variable are normally distributed. In the normal Q\_Q plots the observed values and expected values are following the straight line to show the normality. A little variation in few cases is quite common in social sciences.

### **4.5.2 Assessment of Multicollinearity**

Assumption of multicollinearity is another important issue which has to solve before structural equation model application. Multicollinearity is a state where auto correlations exist between two or more independent variable. According to Hawking (1983), under multicollinearity linear relationship among independent variables should be exact and perfect. Multicollinearity can be detected through correlations matrix and VIF. Where value of VIF less than 10 and correlation coefficients between any two predictor variables are near to unity indicates that there is no issue of multicollinearity (Kline, 2005).

The statistics of VIF shows in table 4.2 is less than 10 which indicate there is no issue of multicollinearity. Table 4.3 shows the correlation matrix where coefficients between any two independent variables are not near to unity (Stine, 1985). It means there is no issue of multicollinearity. Many researchers (Freund et al., 2003; Stine, 1985) use variance inflation factor (VIF) for detecting multicollinearity.

**Table 4.3: Correlations**

	BC	WOM	BE	BT
BC	1			
WOM	.624**	1		
BE	.456**	.524**	1	
BT	.526**	.578**	.326**	1

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

#### **4.5.3 Homoscedasticity:**

At each level of the predictor variable(s), the variance of the residual terms should be constant. This just means that the residuals at each level of the predictor(s) should have the same variance (homoscedasticity); when the variances are very unequal there is said to be heteroscedasticity.

#### **4.5.4 Linearity:**

The mean values of the outcome variable for each increment of the predictor(s) lie along a straight line. In plain English this means that it is assumed that the relationship we are modelling is a linear one. If we model a non-linear relationship using a linear model then this obviously limits the generalizability of the findings.

#### **4.6 Factor Analyses**

Factor analysis is the relationship between set of observed or latent variables. It is basically a data reduction technique where we check inter correlation between variables. This approach is used for data analyses it has two basic types exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

#### **4.7 Exploratory Factor Analysis**

Exploratory Factor Analysis is very descriptive by nature as Byrne, (2005) explained it shows the relationship between unknown latent and observed variables. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is useful in cultivating the items in model. Here we have to reduce items from each constructs and explore that which items measure the intended factors because researchers has no prior knowledge. According to Byrne, (2005) we consider those items for measuring that are highly loaded on single factor. Current study made exploratory factor analyses (EFA) for those variables that have more than one

factor like WSS, CSR Activities, Knowledge Sharing Process (KSP) and Organizational Trust.

Factor analysis contains different techniques Principle Components Analysis (PCA) is one of them that is used in current research. Which is define by Tabachnick & Fidell, (2001) as all the variance in the variables used whenever we are going to transformed smaller set of linear combinations into original variable. Oblique technique of Direct Oblimin is used here which show the high loading on each factor and minimize the number of variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001).For EFA three main tables are used (Rotated Matrix, Structure Matrix and Component Correlation Matrix) for each variable that is attached in appendix. The **Component Correlation Matrix** which shows the strength of the relationship between factors. The next table is **Rotational Matrix** that shows the factor loading of each variable on two factors. The **Structure Matrix** table provide information about the correlation between variables and factors.

## EFA

### 4.8 KMO and Bartlett’s test of Sphericity:-

KMO & Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity is a measure of sampling adequacy that is recommended to check the case to variable ratio to conduct the analysis. In most academic and business studies, KMO & Bartlett’s test plays an important role for accepting the sample adequacy. While the KMO ranges from 0 to 1, the world-over accepted index is over 0.6. In addition, the Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity relates to the significance of the study and thereby shows the validity and suitability of the responses collected to the problem being addressed through the study. For Factor Analysis to be recommended suitable, the Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity must be greater than 0.7 but 0.6 is acceptable (Perri, 2012). The research findings for KMO and Bartlett’s Test for proposed construct are reported in table below.

**Table 4.4: KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.791
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2885.245
	Df	364
	Sig.	.000



**Table 4.5: Rotated Component Matrix (a)**

	Component				
	BC	WOM	BT	BE	Extraction
Brand_Community1	0.859				0.585
Brand_Community3	0.857				0.684
Brand_Community4	0.856				0.779
Brand_Community2	0.818				0.642
WOM_RCV1		0.866			0.57
WOM_RCV2		0.816			0.886
WOM_RCV3		0.761			0.486
BT_Intentionally3			0.866		0.67
BT_Fiability1			0.866		0.47
BT_Intentionally1			0.866		0.47
BT_Intentionally2			0.861		0.686
BT_Intentionally4			0.86		0.686
BT_Fiability3			0.549		0.437
BT_Fiability4			0.565		0.455
BT_Fiability2			0.548		0.778
BE_Sensory1				0.866	0.57
BE_Intellectual2				0.866	0.57
BE_Sensory2				0.861	0.486
BE_Intellectual3				0.861	0.686
BE_Sensory5				0.736	0.538
BE_Intellectual1				0.736	0.738
BE_Sensory4				0.603	0.456
BE_Sensory6				0.579	0.664
BE_Behavioral2				0.569	0.798
BE_Behavioral3				0.556	0.737
BE_Sensory3				0.542	0.467
BE_Behavioral1				0.524	0.723

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

**Table 4.6: Exploratory Factor Analysis**

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Initial Items</b>	<b>Final Items</b>
BES	BES1,BES2,BES3,BES4,BES5,BES5,BES6	BES1,BES2,BES3,BES4,BES5,BES5,BES6
BEB	BEB1,BEB2,BEB3	BEB1,BEB2,BEB3
BEI	BEI1,BEI2,BEI3	BEI1,BEI2,BEI3
BTF	BFT1,BFT2,BFT3,BFT4	BFT1,BFT2,BFT3,BFT4
BTI	BTI1,BTI2,BTI3	BTI1,BTI2,BTI3
WOMR	WOMR1,WOMR2,WOMR3	WOMR1,WOMR2,WOMR3
BC	BC1,BC2,BC3	BC1,BC2,BC3

As exploratory factor analysis technique has been done now data is ready to move towards Regression Analysis.

#### **4.9 Multiple Regressions:-**

There are basic steps involved in multiple regression such as conduct the correlation analysis with all potential variables to find variables to enter into the analysis that are correlated with the DV, but not overly correlated with IV (e.g., multicollinearity), instead of, or in addition to, the correlation analysis, some people will enter all potential variable produces unique effect upon the DV, and then conduct another multiple regression analysis to see which variable produces unique effect upon the DV, and then conduct another multiple regression analysis with only those variables that produce a unique effect upon DV.

If you have a hypothesis, conduct a multiple regression to test that hypothesis, called “confirmatory” analysis because you are determining whether or not your hypothesis is confirmed.

After testing hypothesis, you can also do “exploratory” analysis to look at different permutations of the variables. It’s called “exploratory” analysis because you are exploring the data beyond your initial hypothesis.

#### **4.9.1 Model Summary**

Gives you R Square, which is the variance explained by the IV, R Square. The adjusted R Square corrects for the number of variables in the analysis. Each predictor explain some variance some variance to chance, so the more variables in the analysis the higher the R Square due to the chance. When you have many variables in the analysis you may want to look at Adjusted R Square instead of R Square.

Explains you whether the overall model is significant,  $p=.000$ . Also, if the overall model is significant, then at least 1 or more of the individual variables will most likely have a significant relationship to the DV, it tells the UNIQUE effect size of each variables. In this case all the variables uniquely predict the DV.

#### **4.10 H1: WOM positively correlated with BC**

Correlation matrix (Table 4.7 b) represents a positive relationship between individual WOM and BC (.924\*,  $p<0.05$ , H1 is supported).

Table 4.7 ( c ) results of regression analysis shows that overall this model for hypothesis H1 was positive with an overall F value of 2115.255 ( $p<.000$ ), however, this explained that 52.3% variation in the dependent variable as indicated by Adjusted R Square values. According to the result of regression analysis H1 is accepted. Table 4.6 (c) results also explicated that WOM of a customer has a positive impact on BC as indicated by standardized Beta value (.924). Further the result shows that customers WOM are associated reasonably with BC ( $t=45.992$ ,  $p<.000$ ). This findings show that WOM of a consumer is positive on BC.

**Table 4.7: Model Summaryb**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.724 <sup>a</sup>	.524	.523	.14624

a. Predictors: (Constant), WOM

b. Dependent Variable: BC

**Table 4.7 (a): ANOVAa**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	45.236	1	45.236	2115.255	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	7.742	362	.021		
	Total	52.978	363			

a. Dependent Variable: BC

b. Predictors: (Constant), WOM

**Table 4.7 (b): Coefficientsa**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.906	.033		58.067	.000		
	WOM	.351	.008	.924	45.992	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: BC

**Table 4.7 (c): Regression Analysis**

Regression Analysis	Beta	t-value	sig
WOM	0.924	45.992	0.000

**Table 4.7 (d): Regression Analysis**

**n=364 ; R Square = .524; Adjusted R Square =.523;**

**F=2115.255; Significance F= 0.00;**

**Dependent Variable=BC**

## 4.11 H2: BE positively correlated with BC

Correlation matrix (Table 4.8 b) represents a positive relationship between individual BE and BC (.651\*,  $p < 0.05$ , H2 is supported).

Table 4.8 ( c ) results of regression analysis shows that overall this model for hypothesis H2 was positive with an overall F value of 130.774 ( $p < .000$ ), however, this explained that 57.9% variation in the dependent variable as indicated by Adjusted R Square values. According to the result of regression analysis H2 is accepted. Table 4.7 (c) results also explicated that BE of a customer has a positive impact on BC as indicated by standardized Beta value (.651). Further the result shows that customers BE are associated reasonably with BC ( $t = 57.016$ ,  $p < .000$ ). This findings show that BE of a consumer is positive on BC.

**Table 4.8: Model Summaryb**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.761a	.580	.579	.72163

a. Predictors: (Constant), BE

b. Dependent Variable: BC

**Table 4.8 (a): ANOVAa**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	52.978	1	52.978	130.774	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	142.215	362	.393		
	Total	195.193	363			

a. Dependent Variable: BC

b. Predictors: (Constant), BE

**Table 4.8 (b): Coefficientsa**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.2545	.043		12.474	.000		
BE	0.563	.036	0.651	57.016	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: BC

**Table 4.8 (c): Regression Analysis**

Regression Analysis	Beta	t-value	Sig
<b>BE</b>	<b>0.651</b>	<b>57.016</b>	<b>0.000</b>

**Table 4.8 (d): Regression Analysis**

<p><b>n=364 ; R Square = .580; Adjusted R Square =.579;</b></p> <p><b>F=130.774; Significance F= 0.00;</b></p> <p><b>Dependent Variable=BC</b></p>
--

### 4.12 H3: BT positively correlated with BC

Correlation matrix (Table 4.9 b) represents a positive relationship between individual BT and BC (.651\*,  $p < 0.05$ , H3 is supported).

Table 4.9 ( c ) results of regression analysis shows that overall this model for hypothesis H3 was positive with an overall F value of 2167.439 ( $p < .000$ ), however, this explained that 73.3% variation in the dependent variable as indicated by Adjusted R Square values. According to the result of regression analysis H3 is accepted. Table 4.8 (c) results also explicated that BT of a customer has a positive impact on BC as indicated by standardized Beta value (.926). Further the result shows that customers BT are associated reasonably with BC ( $t=46.556$ ,  $p < .000$ ). This findings show that BT of a consumer is positive on BC.

**Table 4.9: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.857 <sup>a</sup>	0.734	.733	.14472

a. Predictors: (Constant), BT

b. Dependent Variable: BC

**Table 4.9 (a): ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	45.396	1	45.396	2167.439	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	7.582	362	.021		
	Total	52.978	363			

a. Dependent Variable: BC

b. Predictors: (Constant), BT

**Table 4.9 (b): Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.778	.035		50.691	.000		
	BT	.391	.008	.926	46.556	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: BC

**Table 4.9 (c): Regression Analysis**

Regression Analysis	Beta	t-value	Sig
BT	<b>0.926</b>	<b>46.556</b>	<b>0.000</b>

**Table 4.9 (d): Regression Analysis**

**n=364 ; R Square = .734; Adjusted R Square =.733;**

**F=2167.439; Significance F= 0.00;**

**Dependent Variable=BC**

### 4.13 H4: WOM positively correlated with BT

Correlation matrix (Table 4.10 b) represents a positive relationship between individual WOM and BT (.978\*,  $p < 0.05$ , H4 is supported).

Table 4.10 ( c ) results of regression analysis shows that overall this model for hypothesis H4 was positive with an overall F value of 8045.400 ( $p < .000$ ), however, this explained that 57.2% variation in the dependent variable as indicated by Adjusted R Square values. According to the result of regression analysis H4 is accepted. Table 4.9 (c) results also explicated that WOM of a customer has a positive impact on BT as indicated by standardized Beta value (.978). Further the result shows that customers WOM are associated reasonably with BT ( $t = 89.696$ ,  $p < .000$ ). This findings show that WOM of a consumer is positive on BT.

**Table 4.10: Model Summaryb**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.757 <sup>a</sup>	.573	.572	.18792

a. Predictors: (Constant), WOM

b. Dependent Variable: BT

**Table 4.10 (a): ANOVAa**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	284.110	1	284.110	8045.400	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	12.783	362	.035		
	Total	296.894	363			

a. Dependent Variable: BT

b. Predictors: (Constant), WOM

**Table 4.10 (b): Coefficientsa**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.400	.042		9.495	.000		
	WOM	.880	.010	.978	89.696	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: BT



**Table 4.10 (c): Regression Analysis**

<b>Regression Analysis</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>Sig</b>
<b>WOM</b>	<b>0.978</b>	<b>89.696</b>	<b>0.000</b>

**Table 4.10 (d): Regression Analysis**

<b>n=364 ; R Square = .573; Adjusted R Square =.572;</b>
<b>F=8045.400; Significance F= 0.00;</b>
<b>Dependent Variable=BT</b>

#### **4.14 H5: BE positively correlated with BT**

Correlation matrix (Table 4.11 b) represents a positive relationship between individual BE and BT (.926\*,  $p < 0.05$ , H5 is supported).

Table 4.11 ( c ) results of regression analysis shows that overall this model for hypothesis H5 was positive with an overall F value of 2167.439 ( $p < .000$ ), however, this explained that 73.3% variation in the dependent variable as indicated by Adjusted R Square values. According to the result of regression analysis H5 is accepted. Table 4.10 (c) results also explicated that BE of a customer has a positive impact on BT as indicated by standardized Beta value (.926). Further the result shows that customers BE are associated reasonably with BT ( $t=46.556$ ,  $p < .000$ ). This findings show that BE of a consumer is positive on BT.

**Table 4.11: Model Summaryb**

<b>Mode</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>.857<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>.734</b>	<b>.733</b>	<b>.34260</b>

a. Predictors: (Constant), BE

b. Dependent Variable: BT

**Table 4.11 (a): ANOVAa**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	254.404	1	254.404	2167.439	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	42.490	362	.117		
	Total	296.894	363			

a. Dependent Variable: BT

b. Predictors: (Constant), BE

**Table 4.11 (b): Coefficientsa**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3.314	.160		20.737	.000		
	BE	10.957	.235	.926	46.556	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: BT

**Table 4.11 (c): Regression Analysis**

Regression Analysis	Beta	t-value	Sig
BE	<b>0.926</b>	<b>46.556</b>	<b>0.000</b>

**Table 4.11 (d): Regression Analysis**

**n=364 ; R Square = .734; Adjusted R Square =.733;**

**F=2167.439; Significance F= 0.00;**

**Dependent Variable=BT**

## Mediation through PROCESS MACRO

### 4.15 H6: Brand trust mediates the relationship between WOM (receive) and brand community

Brand Trust plays a mediating role between WOM (receive) and brand community.

Below Table 4.12 results of regression analysis shows that overall this model for hypothesis H6 was positive with an overall ( $p < .000$ ), however, this explained that 72.9% variation in the dependent variable as indicated by Adjusted R Square values. According to the result of regression analysis H6 is accepted. Table 4.12 results also explicated that BT plays a positive mediating impact on BC and WOM. Where total effect of X on Y is .3512 with ( $t = 45.9919$ ).

**Indirect and total effects:**

This indirect effect is tested using bootstrap standard errors and confidence intervals.

The null hypothesis is that the population indirect effect is zero, whereas the alternative is that the population indirect effect is non-zero. So if zero falls between the lower and upper bound of the confidence interval (again, the default is 95%), then you maintain the null. If zero falls outside of the interval, then you reject the null.

Here, we reject the null.

This is the total effect of brand trust on brand community, computed as  $DE + IE = .1635 + .1877 = .3512$ . Because zero (the null) does not fall between the lower and upper bound of the 95% confidence interval, we infer that total effect of mastery goals on achievement is significantly different from zero.

**Table 4.12: Before and After Mediation**

	<b>Coeff</b>	<b>se</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
constant	1.8202	.0353	51.5333	.0000	1.7507	1.8896
WOM	.1635	.0354	4.6123	.0000	.0938	.2332
BT	.2133	.0394	5.4154	.0000	.1358	.2908
R	.865					
R-sq	.748					

**After Mediation**

	<b>Coeff</b>	<b>se</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
constant	1.9056	.0328	58.0670	.0000	1.8411	1.9701
WOM	.3512	.0076	45.9919	.0000	.3362	.3662
<b>R</b>	.854					
<b>R-sq</b>	.729					

**Total effect of Brand Trust on Brand Community**

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.3512	.0076	45.9919	.0000	.3362	.3662

**Direct effect of Brand Trust on Brand Community**

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.1635	.0354	4.6123	.0000	.0938	.2332

**Indirect effect(s) of Brand Trust on Brand Community**

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
BT	.1877	.0364	.1172	.2591

**4.16 H7: Brand trust mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand community.****Before Mediation**

Brand Trust plays a mediating role between BE and brand community.

Below Table 4.13 results of regression analysis shows that overall this model for hypothesis H7 was positive with an overall ( $p < .000$ ), however, this explained that 69.18% variation in the dependent variable as indicated by Adjusted R Square values. According to the result of regression analysis H7 is accepted. Table 4.13 results also explicated that BT plays a positive mediating impact on BC and BE. Where total effect of X on Y is .3512 with ( $t = 27.4239$ ).

**Indirect and total effects:**

This indirect effect is tested using bootstrap standard errors and confidence intervals.

The null hypothesis is that the population indirect effect is zero, whereas the alternative is that the population indirect effect is non-zero. So if zero falls between the lower and upper bound of the confidence interval (again, the default is 95%), then you maintain the null. If zero falls outside of the interval, then you reject the null.

Here, we reject the null.

This is the total effect of brand trust on brand community, computed as  $DE + IE = .4194 + .3345 = .7539$ . Because zero (the null) does not fall between the lower and upper bound of the 95% confidence interval, we infer that total effect of mastery goals on achievement is significantly different from zero.

**Table 4.13: Before and After Mediation**

	<b>Coeff</b>	<b>se</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
constant	.4237	.1302	3.2547	.0013	.1676	.6798
BE	.4194	.0437	9.6048	.0000	.3335	.5053
BT	.4954	.0535	9.2631	.0000	.3902	.6006
R	.8688					
R-sq	.7548					

**After Mediation**

	<b>Coeff</b>	<b>se</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
constant	1.0082	.1275	7.9096	.0000	.7574	1.2589
BE	.7539	.0275	27.4239	.0000	.6999	.8080
<b>R</b>	.8318					
<b>R-sq</b>	.6918					

**Total effect of Brand Trust on Brand Community**

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.7539	.0275	27.4239	.0000	.6999	.8080

**Direct effect of Brand Trust on Brand Community**

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.4194	.0437	9.6048	.0000	.3335	.5053

**Indirect effect(s) Brand Trust on Brand Community**

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
BT	.3345	.0337	.2704	.4029

**4.17 Direct effect and mediating effect with significant and path**

In the table below, WOM (receive) has a significant impact on brand community at ( $\beta=0.924$ ,  $t=45.992$ ). Similarly, brand experience has a significant effect on brand

community ( $\beta=0.651$ ,  $t=57.016$ ), brand trust has a significant impact on brand community at ( $\beta=0.926$ ,  $t=46.556$ ), WOM (receive) has a significant effect in brand trust at ( $\beta=0.978$ ,  $t=89.696$ ) and brand experience has significant impact on brand trust at ( $\beta=0.926$ ,  $t=46.556$ ), further brand trust played a mediator role between WOM (receive) and brand community at ( $\beta=0.3512$ ,  $t=45.99$ ) and brand trust also played a mediator role in between brand experience and brand community at ( $\beta=0.75.6$ ,  $t=27.42$ ).

Hypothesis Path	$\beta$ Value	S.E.	$t$ -Value	Results
<i>H1</i> WOM (receive) → Brand community	0.924	.008	45.992	Supported
<i>H2</i> Brand experience → Brand community	0.651	.036	57.016	Supported
<i>H3</i> Brand trust → Brand community	0.926	.008	46.556	Supported
<i>H4</i> WOM (receive) → Brand trust	0.978	.010	89.696	Supported
<i>H5</i> Brand experience → Brand trust	.0926	.235	46.556	Supported
<i>H6</i> Brand trust → WOM (receive) → Brand Community	0.3512	.0076	45.99	Supported
<i>H7</i> Brand trust → Brand experience → Brand Community	0.7539	.0275	27.42	Supported

#### 4.18 Discussion

Hence, by using multiple regression as an appropriate analytical technique to proof validity of our hypotheses and discussed the various effects of independent variables on dependent variable. Also observed the mediation effects of the mediator through process macro of SPSS. Finally come to the conclusion that all the hypotheses are acceptable.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION, RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

#### **5. Overview**

This chapter targets to accomplish the overall research presented in this thesis. Furthermore, to present the key contributions made by this research, to propose main limitation of this research, to highlight implications of this research and to propose further research.

This chapter not only comprises of the conclusion of the study but also includes the contribution of the study having both academic and managerial implications along with certain limitations of the study. In addition, it also contains the directions for future research, which would help in building a base line for other researchers interested in studying the same or somewhat different phenomena.

#### **5.1 Discussion**

This research investigates that there is a significant effect of word of mouth receives and brand experience which is significantly helpful for formation of brand community. Once the brand community is established (usually created and organized) by the company, it lasts a powerful influential impact on the consumers, where they share their experiences and updated their product knowledge and researched how to maximize product utilization of the brand. How important brand community is, it can be visualized that, more than 1.5 million firms have created brand communities (i.e., fan pages) on Facebook in 2010 (Website-Monitoring 2010). And this is community which plays a vital role in consumers decision making process and helps them in making and finalizing a purchase decisions and there are many studies that show that consumers' brand community engagement may affect their community behavior (Bagozzi and Dholakia 2006). In this concern brand community ease the process of final decision making by eliminating the doubts and ambiguities related to a specific product or services however, in a general product class, consumers may have inclinations for multiple brands (Cunningham 1956; Jacoby 1971; Massy et al. 1968) and



further have multi-brand purchase behavior (Ehrenberg and Goodhardt 1970; Howard and Sheth 1969).

Engagement with a brand community becomes very important when consumers plan to buy an expensive item in this research, brand community of Pakistan auto mobile industry is taken. Where consumer think many times before going to make a final purchase decision. This research shows that how user of automobiles can share their different experiences related to their vehicles. This research also defines that how consumers uncertainty related to brand performance can be reduced, more community involvement will allow consumers to have more information of the brand, and brand uncertainty will be better reduced (Chen et al. 2004; Lin and Goh 2011).

Chapter No 1 of this research depicts the questions which are being addressed in this study and successfully able to lead the reader in an appropriate way to address the certain problem consumers may come across while making a brand decision. A brief details has been discussed related to all the dependent variables such as word of mouth (receive), brand experience with the mediator brand trust and the dependent variable i.e, brand community. In this study, brand trust plays the role of mediator between both of the independent variables, word of mouth (receive) and the brand experience.

This research also shows that views and reviews shared in a brand community plays vital role and in this the slight difference between the WOM & eWOM has been elaborated and proved that how much close they are and impacting on the buyer's behavior and companies must have an agile look into this and seeking for excellent feedback for their product of services. Similarly, brand experience, plays a vital role in consumers future plan so it must be taken care, in this automobile industry now companies are frequently advertise their vehicle is ready for a test drive with such slogans i.e, "Drive me", "let us drive" etc. In this research a careful and self-administrative questionnaire adapted to get a fair feedback from the respondents.

The relationship between in Hypothesis H1 & H2 are directly related to dependent variable, while H4 & H5 are showing their connection with the mediator, and H3 showing the relationship between mediator and the dependent variable, whereas H6 & H7 depicting their connection with independent variables and the dependent variable, hence showing the mediating effects.

## **5.2 Research Implications:-**

It has been monitored that consumers try to seek data of the brand which they intend to buy specially for those product which are expensive and have an impact on daily life and thus require high level of trust and reliability. In this situation brand community is of utmost important because they are vital and due to their non-commercial nature, consumers rely more on the information provided by online brand communities rather than information provided by marketers or firms (Algesheimer et al., 2005).

### **5.2.1 Academic Implications**

Dynamics of brand community is viewed with different perspective in current study. Here the outcomes show the significant and non-significant relationship. Theoretical model is developed on the bases of literature. The outcome shows that WOM (receive) and brand experience are playing a vital role in creation of predictors. By analysis results and statistic terms it is evident that brand trust can mediate the relationship between independent and dependent variables.

So, current study contributes a lot in literature with new and unique relationship. It also provides new way to analyze brand trust with different antecedence which were not used simultaneously in any researcher.

### **5.2.2 Managerial Implications**

In current age consumer is much aware as compare to past and the firms have to struggle a lot for their survival in the fierce completion. Several closely related substitutes are readily available in the market.in this scenario firms have to cover an extra mile for the survival. And in this concern I have observed that brand trust significantly decreases uncertainty and ambiguity when a consumer is faced with a choice of brands, and that buying objective is determined by consumers' brand trust when they did not have sufficient information about or knowledge of new products (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001; Lau and Lee, 1999). So this of utmost important for the managers to keep a vigilant eye when marketing and launching a brand, because this is something very important which helps consumers to rely on brand community and which facilitates the consumers to make purchase decision.

CEO and COO need to closely work together in order to making a business plan

related to a particular product or service, and need to make their brand such a reliable so consumer can firmly believe on WOM (receive) and brand experience which are two independent variables in this research. Now based upon rapid means of communication firms are always attentive on their social media management and pay keen interest on the content available on their tutorials.

So brand trust is playing a pivotal role in this research but also crucial for marketing strategy formation.

### **5.3 Limitations**

The part of limitation is necessary in every type of research where we have to carefully see the issues.

- The effect of variables can be examined specially in case of multiple mediations.
- Current study is based on cross sectional study while if we conduct the study through longitudinal data it will give different result.
- In order to conduct this research there is limited time and money.
- Consideration of sample selection is narrow that is only users of passenger cars; results can be change if it may use other car segments as well.
- Sampling technique, called purposive sampling is used to collect the data may also questionable for generalization.

### **5.4 Future Research**

Directions for future research are that

- Model can be improved by adding and deleting few variables.
- Model can be used for comparative analysis and for validation in local imported cars.
- This research concept can be used with different sampling technique.
- This research model can be used by enhancing the geographical coverage (not only concern of online car users community as use in this research).

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## Appendix 1: Questionnaire

This survey is being conducted to investigate “On the antecedence of brand community: An empirical evidence” : An Empirical Study from the members of Face Book brand community of Cars corporate brands i.e, Pak Suzuki Motor Company Limited, Indus Motor Co Ltd (Toyota Pakistan) and Honda Atlas Cars (Pakistan) Limited. **Please give your opinion on a Scale of 1-5 (where 1=strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree and 5=strongly Agree**

**Indicate your answer by putting a tick ( ✓ ) in the box:**

<b>1. Gender:</b>	<b>2. Car Comm</b>	<b>3. Age Group:</b>	<b>4. Profession</b>	<b>5. Education:</b>
a) Male 1	<b>Brand:</b> a) Suzuki 1 b) Toyota 2 c) Honda 3	a) 25-35 years 1 b) 36- 46 years 2 c) 47- 56 years 3	a) Business 1 b) Private Job 2 c) Govt Employee 3	a) Bachelors 1 b) Masters 2 c) Others 3
b) Female 2				

**Indicate your answer by putting a tick ( ✓ ):**

Sr	Items	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
<b>Brand Experience</b>						
	<b>A) Sensory</b>					
1.	This brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses				✓	
2.	I find this brand interesting in sensory way.					
3.	This brand doesn't appeal to my senses.				✓	
4.	This brand induces feelings and sentiments.				✓	
5.	I don't have strong emotions for this brand.		✓			

6.	This brand is an emotional brand.				✓	
<b>B) Behavioural</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Neutral</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5	
7.	I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I use this brand.				✓	
8.	This brand results in bodily experiences.				✓	
9.	This brand is not action oriented.		✓			
	<b>C) Intellectual</b>					
10.	I engage in lot of thinking when I encounter this brand.				✓	
11.	This brand doesn't make me think.			✓		
12.	This brand stimulates my curiosity and problem solving.				✓	
	<b>Brand Trust</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Neutral</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>A) Brand Fiability</b>						
13.	This is the brand name that meets my expectations.				✓	
14.	I feel confident in this brand's name.					✓
15.	This is the brand never disappoints me.				✓	

16.	This brand guarantees satisfaction.				✓	
B	<b>B) Intentionally</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Neutral</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
17.	This brand would be honest and sincere in addressing my concerns.					✓
18.	This brand would make any effort to satisfy me.				✓	
19.	I could rely on this brand to solve the problem.				✓	
20.	This brand would compensate me in some way of the problem with mobile phone.				✓	
<b>WOM (received)</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Neutral</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5	
21.	I hardly miss any opportunity to tell others positive things about the community.				✓	
22.	If friends or relative were to search for a brand community, I				✓	



	would definitely recommend this one					
23.	I will comment positive on the community.				✓	
<b>Brand Community</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Neutral</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5	
24.	I really identify with people who use this brand.				✓	
25.	I feel like I almost belong to a club with other users of this brand.				✓	
26.	This is the brand used by people like me.				✓	
27.	I feel a deep connection with others who use this brand.					✓

## Appendix 2: Assessment of normality

### 3.1- Tabular form of Research Design

Comparing Qualitative and Quantitative Research	
Research Design	
<b>Qualitative Research</b>	<b>Quantitative Research</b>
<b>Induction</b>	<b>Deduction</b>
Purposes	Purposes
Generate theory from observation Oriented to discovery, exploration	Test theory through observation Oriented to cause and effect
Procedures Emergent design	Procedures Predetermined design
Merges data collection and analysis	Separates data collection and analysis
 <b>Subjectivity</b>	 <b>Objectivity</b>
Purposes	Purposes
Emphasize meaning, interpretations Tries to understand others perspectives	Emphasize things that can be measured Results do not depends upon beliefs
Procedures Researcher is involved, close to the data Researcher is the researcher instrument	Procedures Researcher is detached, distant from data Relies on standard protocols
 <b>Context</b>	 <b>Generality</b>
Purposes	Purposes
Emphasize specific depth and details Analyze holistic system	Emphasize generalization and replication Analyze variables
Procedures Use a naturalistic approach Relies on few purposively chosen cases	Procedures Use experimental and statistical control Work across a large number of case

Source: Fetterman, D. M. (2009).

**Table 3.2 Summary of the study instruments with dimensions and items**

Sr#	Variable Name	Status	Author Name	No. of Items
1	Brand Community	Dependent	Kevin Lane Keller (2001)	4
2	WOM (Rcv)	Independent	Algesheimer et. al (2005)	3
3	Brand Experience	Independent	Brakus et. al (2009)	12
4	Brand Trust	Mediator	Delogado-Ballester et. al (2003)	8

In above mentioned table 3.1 there is a summary of study with instruments and no of items against each construct.

**Table 3.3 Details of the study instruments with dimensions and items**

Constructs/	Item No	Measurement Items	Source Dimensions
Brand Community	BC1	I really identify with people who use this brand	Kevin Lane Keller (2001)
	BC2	I feel like I almost belong to a club with other users of this brand	
	BC3	This is the brand used by people like me	
	BC4	I feel a deep connection With others who use this Brand	
Word of Mouth (received)	WOM (rcv1)	I hardly miss any opportunity to tell others positive things about the community	Algesheimer et al. (2005)
	WOM (rcv2)	if friends or relatives were to search for a brand community I would definitely recommend this one	
	WOM (rcv3)	I will comments positive on the Community	

Brand Experience

Sensory Experience	BES1	This brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses	Brakus et al (2009)
	BES2	I find this brand interesting In sensory way	
	BES3	This brand doesn't appeal To my senses	

***(Continued)***

Constructs/ Item No Dimensions		Measurement Items	Source
	BES4	This brand induces feelings and sentiments	
	BES5	I don't have strong emotions for this brand	
	BES6	This brand is an emotional brand	
Behavioral	BEB1	I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I use this brand	
	BEB2	This brand results in bodily experiences	
	BEB3	This brand is not action oriented	
Intellectual	BEI	I engage in lot of thinking when I encounter with this brand	
Brand Trust Brand Fiability	BTF1	This is the brand name that meets my expectations	Delgado-Ballester et al (2003)
	BTF2	I feel confident in this brand's name	
	BTF3	This is the brand never disappoints me	

	BTF4	This brand guaranteed satisfaction
Brand Intentionally	BTI1	This brand would be honest and sincere in addressing my concerns

Constructs/ Dimension	Item No	Measurement Items	Source
	BTI2	This brand would make any effort to satisfy me	
	BTI3	I could rely on this brand to solve the problem	
	BTI4	This brand would compensate me in some way to of the problem with mobile phone	

**Table 4.1 Targeted Population summary**

Variable	Name Category	Distribution	
		Frequency	Percentage
Age Group	25-35	115	31.5
	36-46	136	37
	47-56	113	30
Gender	Male	353	97
	Female	10	3
Profession	Business	151	35.1
	Private Job	140	32.6
	Govt Employee	71	17
Education	Bachelors	212	58
	Masters	103	28
	Others	47	13
Brands	Suzuki	140	33
	Toyota	118	27.8
	Honda	106	24.5
	Others	56	14.7

**Tables 4.2: Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
WOM	364	1.00	5.00	4.1786	1.00512	1.146	.128	.679	.255
BC	364	2.00	4.00	3.3732	.38203	1.883	.128	1.103	.255
BE	364	1.00	5.00	3.6746	.70641	1.883	.128	.103	.255
BT	364	1.00	5.00	4.0783	.90437	1.402	.128	1.381	.255
Valid N	364								

**Table 4.3: Correlations**

	BC	WOM	BE	BT
BC	1			
WOM	.624**	1		
BE	.456**	.524**	1	
BT	.526**	.578**	.326**	1

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

**Table 4.4: KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.791
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2885.245
	Df	364
	Sig.	.000

**Table 4.5: Rotated Component Matrix (a)**

	Component				
	BC	WOM	BT	BE	Extraction
Brand_Community1	0.859				0.585
Brand_Community3	0.857				0.684
Brand_Community4	0.856				0.779
Brand_Community2	0.818				0.642
WOM_RCV1		0.866			0.57
WOM_RCV2		0.816			0.886
WOM_RCV3		0.761			0.486
BT_Intentionally3			0.866		0.67
BT_Fiability1			0.866		0.47
BT_Intentionally1			0.866		0.47
BT_Intentionally2			0.861		0.686
BT_Intentionally4			0.86		0.686
BT_Fiability3			0.549		0.437
BT_Fiability4			0.565		0.455
BT_Fiability2			0.548		0.778
BE_Sensory1				0.866	0.57
BE_Intellectual2				0.866	0.57
BE_Sensory2				0.861	0.486
BE_Intellectual3				0.861	0.686
BE_Sensory5				0.736	0.538
BE_Intellectual1				0.736	0.738
BE_Sensory4				0.603	0.456
BE_Sensory6				0.579	0.664
BE_Behavioral2				0.569	0.798
BE_Behavioral3				0.556	0.737
BE_Sensory3				0.542	0.467
BE_Behavioral1				0.524	0.723

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.



**Table 4.6: Exploratory Factor Analysis**

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Initial Items</b>	<b>Final Items</b>
BES	BES1,BES2,BES3,BES4,BES5,BES5,BES6	BES1,BES2,BES3,BES4,BES5,BES5,BES6
BEB	BEB1,BEB2,BEB3	BEB1,BEB2,BEB3
BEI	BEI1,BEI2,BEI3	BEI1,BEI2,BEI3
BTF	BFT1,BFT2,BFT3,BFT4	BFT1,BFT2,BFT3,BFT4
BTI	BTI1,BTI2,BTI3	BTI1,BTI2,BTI3
WOMR	WOMR1,WOMR2,WOMR3	WOMR1,WOMR2,WOMR3
BC	BC1,BC2,BC3	BC1,BC2,BC3

**Table 4.7: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.724 <sup>a</sup>	.524	.523	.14624

a. Predictors: (Constant), WOM

b. Dependent Variable: BC

**Table 4.6 (a): ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	45.236	1	45.236	2115.255	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	7.742	362	.021		
	Total	52.978	363			

a. Dependent Variable: BC

b. Predictors: (Constant), WOM

**Table 4.6 (b): Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.906	.033		58.067	.000		
	WOM	.351	.008	.924	45.992	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: BC

**Table 4.6 (c): Regression Analysis**

Regression Analysis	Beta	t-value	sig
WOM	0.924	45.992	0.000

**Table 4.6 (d): Regression Analysis**

**n=364 ; R Square = .524; Adjusted R Square =.523;**

**F=2115.255; Significance F= 0.00;**

**Dependent Variable=BC**

**Table 4.8: Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.761 <sup>a</sup>	.580	.579	.72163

a. Predictors: (Constant), BE

b. Dependent Variable: BC

**Table 4.8 (a): ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	52.978	1	52.978	130.774	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	142.215	362	.393		
	Total	195.193	363			

a. Dependent Variable: BC

b. Predictors: (Constant), BE

**Table 4.8 (b): Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.2545	.043		12.474	.000		
BE	0.563	.036	0.651	57.016	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: BC

**Table 4.8 (c): Regression Analysis**

Regression Analysis	Beta	t-value	Sig
BE	<b>0.651</b>	<b>57.016</b>	<b>0.000</b>

**Table 4.8 (d): Regression Analysis**

**n=364 ; R Square = .580; Adjusted R Square =.579;**

**F=130.774; Significance F= 0.00;**

**Dependent Variable=BC**

**H3: BT positively correlated with BC**

**Table 4.9: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.857 <sup>a</sup>	0.734	.733	.14472

a. Predictors: (Constant), BT

b. Dependent Variable: BC

**Table 4.9 (a): ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	45.396	1	45.396	2167.439	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	7.582	362	.021		
	Total	52.978	363			

a. Dependent Variable: BC

b. Predictors: (Constant), BT

**Table 4.9 (b): Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.778	.035		50.691	.000		
	BT	.391	.008	.926	46.556	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: BC

**Table 4.9 (c): Regression Analysis**

Regression Analysis	Beta	t-value	Sig
BT	<b>0.926</b>	<b>46.556</b>	<b>0.000</b>

**Table 4.9 (d): Regression Analysis**

**n=364 ; R Square = .734; Adjusted R Square =.733;**

**F=2167.439; Significance F= 0.00;**

**Dependent Variable=BC**

#### **H4: WOM positively correlated with BT**

**Table 4.10: Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.757 <sup>a</sup>	.573	.572	.18792

a. Predictors: (Constant), WOM

b. Dependent Variable: BT

**Table 4.9 (a): ANOVAa**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	284.110	1	284.110	8045.400	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	12.783	362	.035		
	Total	296.894	363			

a. Dependent Variable: BT

b. Predictors: (Constant), WOM

**Table 4.9 (b): Coefficientsa**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.400	.042		9.495	.000		
	WOM	.880	.010	.978	89.696	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: BT

**Table 4.9 (c): Regression Analysis**

Regression Analysis	Beta	t-value	Sig
WOM	<b>0.978</b>	<b>89.696</b>	<b>0.000</b>

**Table 4.9 (d): Regression Analysis**

**n=364 ; R Square = .573; Adjusted R Square =.572;**

**F=8045.400; Significance F= 0.00;**

**Dependent Variable=BT**

### **H5: BE positively correlated with BT**

**Table 4.11: Model Summaryb**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.857 <sup>a</sup>	.734	.733	.34260

a. Predictors: (Constant), BE

b. Dependent Variable: BT

**Table 4.11 (a): ANOVAa**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	254.404	1	254.404	2167.439	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	42.490	362	.117		
	Total	296.894	363			

a. Dependent Variable: BT

b. Predictors: (Constant), BE

**Table 4.11 (b): Coefficientsa**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3.314	.160		20.737	.000		
	BE	10.957	.235	.926	46.556	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: BT

**Table 4.11 (c): Regression Analysis**

Regression Analysis	Beta	t-value	Sig
BE	<b>0.926</b>	<b>46.556</b>	<b>0.000</b>

**Table 4.11 (d): Regression Analysis**

n=364 ; R Square = .734; Adjusted R Square =.733;

F=2167.439; Significance F= 0.00;

Dependent Variable=BT

### Mediation through PROCESS MACRO

**H6: Brand trust mediates the relationship between WOM (receive) and brand community**

**Table 4.12: Before and After Mediation**

	<b>Coeff</b>	<b>se</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
constant	1.8202	.0353	51.5333	.0000	1.7507	1.8896
WOM	.1635	.0354	4.6123	.0000	.0938	.2332
BT	.2133	.0394	5.4154	.0000	.1358	.2908
R	.865					
R-sq	.748					

**After Mediation**

	<b>Coeff</b>	<b>se</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
constant	1.9056	.0328	58.0670	.0000	1.8411	1.9701
WOM	.3512	.0076	45.9919	.0000	.3362	.3662
<b>R</b>	.854					
<b>R-sq</b>	.729					

**Total effect of X on Y**

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.3512	.0076	45.9919	.0000	.3362	.3662

**Direct effect of X on Y**

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.1635	.0354	4.6123	.0000	.0938	.2332

**Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:**

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
BT	.1877	.0364	.1172	.2591

**H7: Brand trust mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand community.**



**Table 4.13: Before and After Mediation**

	<b>Coeff</b>	<b>se</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
constant	.4237	.1302	3.2547	.0013	.1676	.6798
BE	.4194	.0437	9.6048	.0000	.3335	.5053
BT	.4954	.0535	9.2631	.0000	.3902	.6006
R	.8688					
R-sq	.7548					
<b>After Mediation</b>						
	<b>Coeff</b>	<b>se</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
constant	1.0082	.1275	7.9096	.0000	.7574	1.2589
BE	.7539	.0275	27.4239	.0000	.6999	.8080
<b>R</b>	.8318					
<b>R-sq</b>	.6918					
<b>Total effect of X on Y</b>						
Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	
.7539	.0275	27.4239	.0000	.6999	.8080	
<b>Direct effect of X on Y</b>						
Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	
.4194	.0437	9.6048	.0000	.3335	.5053	
<b>Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:</b>						
	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI		
BT	.3345	.0337	.2704	.4029		

### Appendix 3: Figure

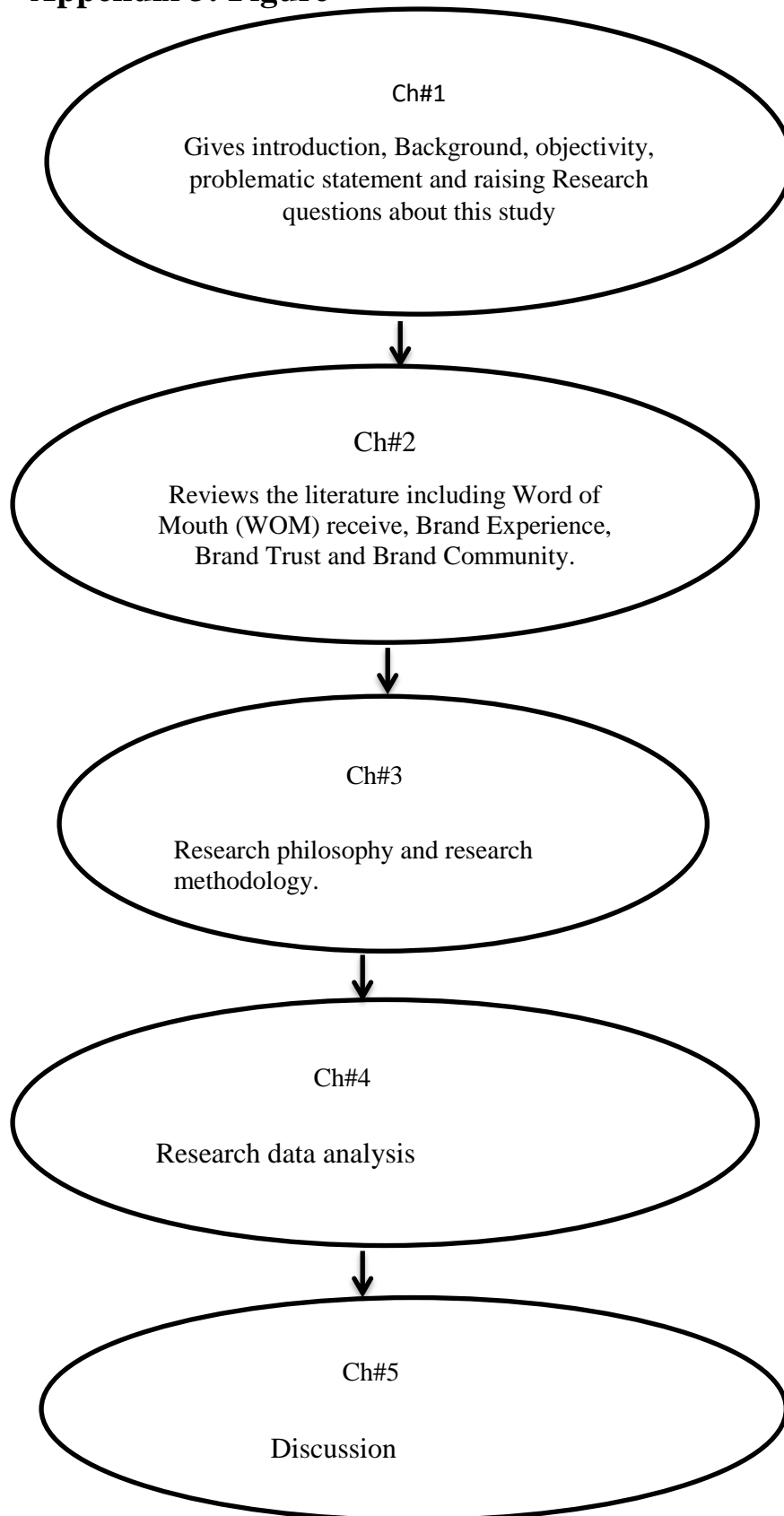
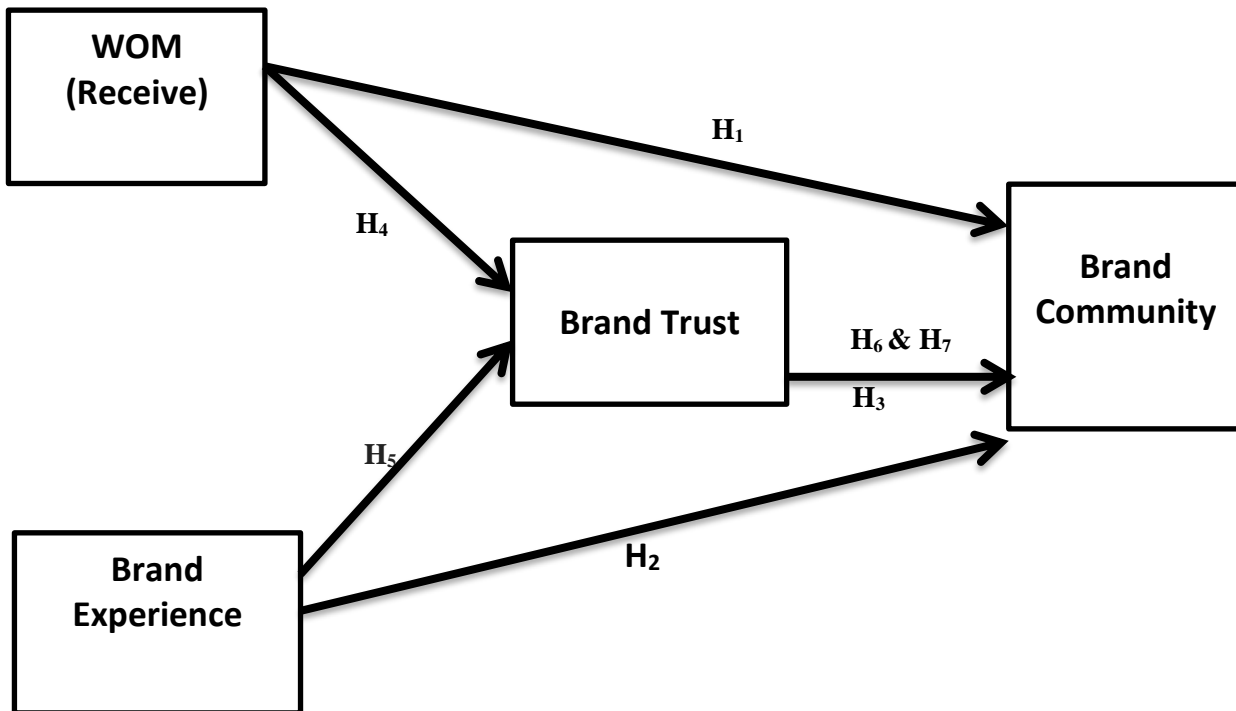
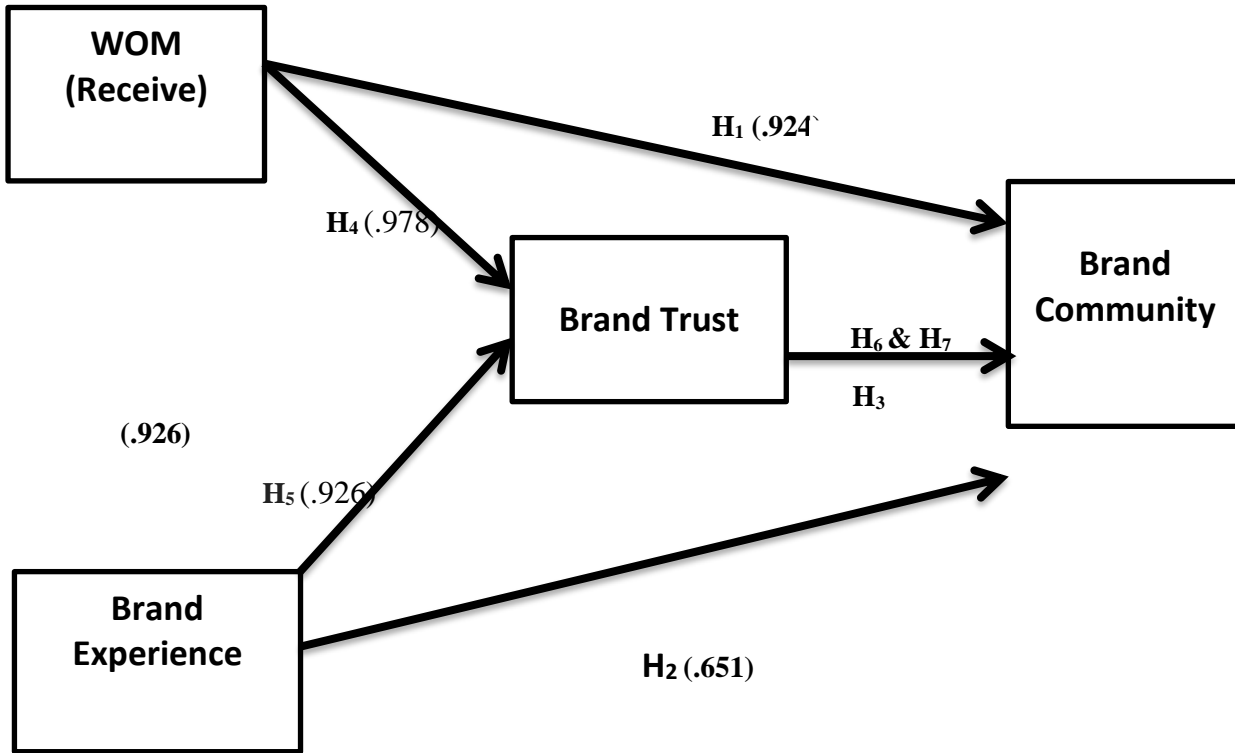


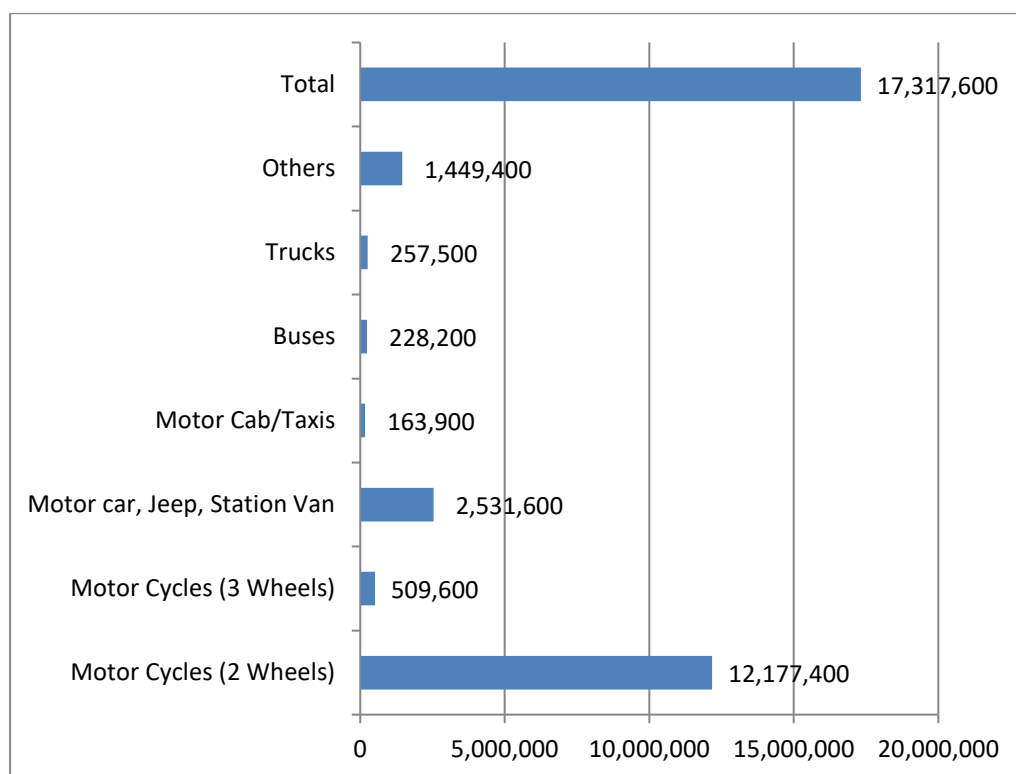
Figure 1.1 Flow chart of thesis



**Fig 2.1** Relationship between variables



**Fig: 3.1 Conceptual Framework with beta values**



**Figure 3.2** Source: Transport Data of Pakistan (Economic Survey 2015-2016)

