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A MODEL TO GET POSITIVE WORDS OF MOUTH FOR INDONESIA FOOTWEAR BRANDS: ROLE OF INFORMATION SEARCH, ONLINE ENGAGEMENT, MEMORIAL BRAND EXPERIENCE AND BRAND SOCIAL CONNECTION

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Abstract

The current study investigated the drivers of positive word of mouth in the footwear industry of Indonesia with the inclusion of social identity and signaling theory. The study analyzed the role of online engagement, memorial brand experiences and information search on word of mouth. Also the mediating role of brand social connection was examined in the relationship between word of mouth and its drivers. The primary data has been drawn from the sample size of 302. Confirmatory factors analysis and Structural equation modelling approach is incorporated in the study, several test was applied including: descriptive analysis, KMO and Bartlett's test, rotated component matrix, convergent and discriminant validity. The direct effects indicated that memorial brand experience and information search are the significant and positive drivers of word of mouth. While, online engagement was found insignificant variable for driving word of mouth. On the other hand, the indirect effects shows that Brand social connection acts as the significant mediator between online engagement and word of mouth. Also, brand social connection significantly mediated the relationship of memorial brand experience and word of mouth. Contrary, brand social connection does not acts as significant mediator between information search and word of mouth. The study embraces several theoretical, practical and policy making implications for the marketing management practitioners and strategy developers to boost word of mouth with customer satisfaction. Also, various limitations have been discussed for in-depth findings by the future researchers.

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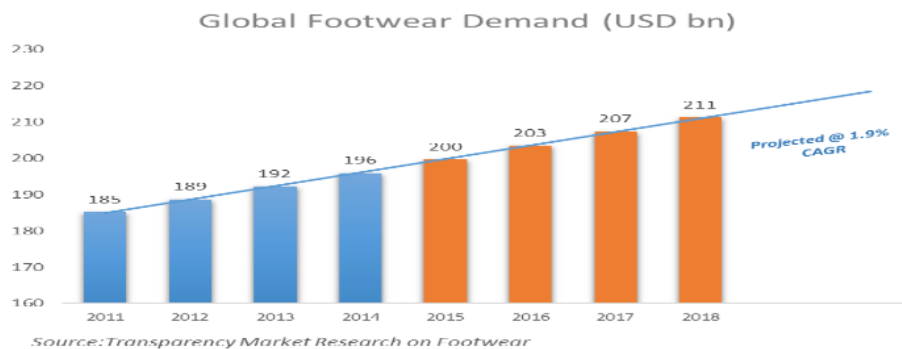
Keywords: Words of Mouth, Information Search, Online Engagement, Memorial Brand Experience, Brand Social Connection

1 Introduction

Word of mouth is emerged as a prominent concept with its multiple drivers. It becomes extremely significant for the organizations to establish and maintain relationships with their stakeholders specifically with customers in order to gain positive word of mouth benefits(Babić

Rosario, Sotgiu, De Valck, & Bijmolt, 2016). As the underlying purpose of every business and industry is the maximization of profits and the attainment of customer loyalty and satisfaction of customers. These expectations are met with the positive role of customers also as they become the co-creators and fosters word of mouth among others(You, Vadakkepatt, & Joshi, 2015). The advancement of new communication technologies altered the ways in which companies interact with its customers and also the expectations of customers from brands also changed. It enables the firms to foster profitable exchanges and boost satisfaction of customers that led towards positive word of mouth creation. The new interaction channels of communication are emerged comprising e-mails, Web 2.0 tools and mobile phones to maintain and enhance relationships with customers which ultimately led towards effective communication and positive brand experiences resulted in positive word of mouth (Hudson, Roth, Madden, & Hudson, 2015).

Almost every industry is facing the challenge of high completion and customer retention due to dynamic business environment which requires the implementation of strategies to expand the customer base and generate positive brand perceptions among customers in order to survive in the business industry. And word of mouth is the significant predictor of customer retention and attraction(Syahrivar & Ichlas, 2018). The most significant driver for the global footwear market is the rising importance of emerging markets not only as production businesses but also as customer demand driven markets. As the global demand for footwear is increasing with a high growth rate as shown in figure 1(Cindy & Balqiah, 2018).



Throughout the world, the total production of Indonesia's footwear industry was 1.41 billion pairs of shoes that contributed towards 4.6% to total world's production. It makes Indonesia the 4th largest producer of footwear in the world China, India and Vietnam. Also, the revenue in the Footwear market amounts to US\$4,006m in 2019. The market is expected to grow with a compound annual growth of 5.4% from 2019-2023. Also, the statistics shows that 30% of the total revenue in the footwear market will be generated through online sales by 2023 (Rachbini, Haryani Hatta, & Evi, 2019) as the current sales was also indicated from figure 2.

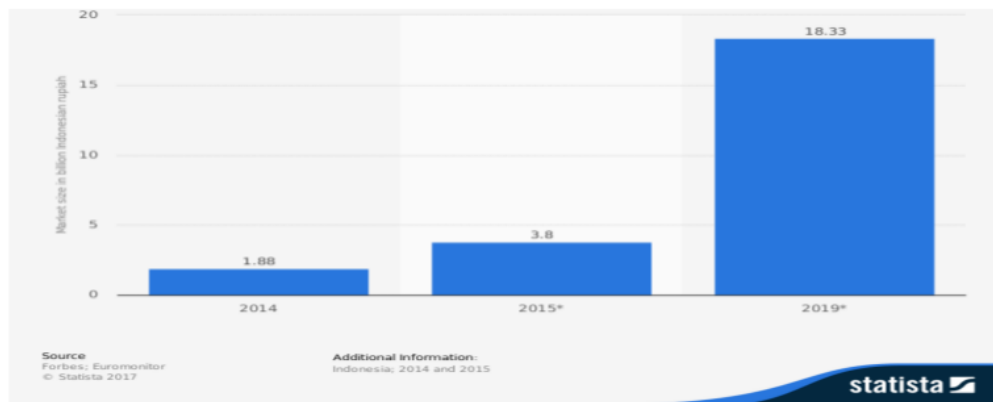


Figure 2: Footwear E-commerce sales in Indonesia from 2014-2019 (in billions of Indonesian rupiah)

Thus, it is imperative for successful businesses to realize the importance of the role played by marketing tactics in the overall performance of a business and the creation of word of mouth. Hence, to overcome this challenge, several studies have been conducted around the globe to explore the antecedents of positive word of mouth but the mixed results was observed. According to some scholars, brand experience leads towards word of mouth whereas, other studies claimed that availability of easily accessible information leads towards recommendation and referrals (Sutia, Adha, & Fahlevi, 2019). Therefore, in view of the discussed findings, it is observed that the researches have been focused on the impact of various word of mouth drivers (Mattsson & Söderlund, 2017; Setiawan, 2018; Wang & Yu, 2017), but no such study have been conducted to analyze the role of Online Engagement, Memorial brand experience, and Information Search on Positive word of mouth in the Footwear sector of Indonesia as it is the prominent growing sector. Also, the mediating role of brand social connection in the relationship between Online Engagement, Memorial brand experience, and Information Search on Positive word of mouth was not examined earlier.

Therefore, in view of the importance of word of mouth for the footwear industry and above-mentioned research gaps it becomes essential to analyze the impact of various Word of, mouth drivers for the boosting the customer demand in this industry. Thus, by following the suggestions of previous studies of (An, Do, Ngo, & Quan, 2019; Boateng, 2019; Yu, Liu, Lee, & Soutar, 2018)the present study proposed the following research objectives:

1. To determine the impact of information on positive word of mouth of Footwear brands in Indonesia.
2. To analyze the impact of online engagement on positive word of mouth of Footwear brands in Indonesia.
3. To investigate the impact of memorial brand experience on positive word of mouth of Footwear brands in Indonesia.
4. To investigate the mediating role of Brand social connection in the relationship between Online Engagement, information search, memorial brand experience and word of mouth of footwear brands of Indonesia.

Moreover, unlike previous studies, the current study incorporated advanced methodological techniques such as Structural equation modelling, and confirmatory factor analysis. The explanation of the proposed mechanism is significant for the marketing management practitioners to develop marketing strategies for encouraging positive word of mouth and brand social connection. Thus, the rest of the paper covered the relevant literature on antecedents of marketing performance and formulation of hypotheses, in section 3 the methodology of the study is discussed, whereas in section 4 data analysis and results are discussed while section 5 includes conclusion and future policy implications.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Background

In this study, we employed the theory of social identity theory (Hogg, 2016), and signaling theory (H. Li, Fang, Wang, Lim, & Liang, 2015) in order to develop the framework for understanding the role of Information Search, Online Engagement, Memorial Brand Experience and Brand Social Connection in generating positive word of mouth. “Signaling Theory” and “social identity theory” are incorporated for the explanation of the phenomenon pertains to antecedents of word of mouth and the role of brand social connection in its determination. Signaling theory comprises of three major elements i.e. signaler: the provider of service or product, receiver: customer and the signal itself (Carragher, 2015). The firm influences the opinions of its customers by providing various signals through information, memorial brand experiences and online engagement to foster positive word of mouth among customers. The firms desire to gain the trust of customers and fosters word of mouth through providing information easily accessible through variety of medium (J. Li, Tang, Jiang, Yen, & Liu, 2019). In the current era, organizations relied on IT enabled features for sending signals to their customers and stakeholders with the intention of creating positive perceptions and behavioral intentions led to word of mouth. Thus the present study considers online engagement and memorial brand experience and information searching as signals or the sources to boost positive word of mouth among customers (Su, Peng, Tan, & Cheung, 2016).

Whereas, social identity theory explains how brand social connection leads towards positive word of mouth. According to the theory, individuals are motivated and inclined towards developing and maintaining their social identities and belong to the groups and brands which reflects their personality (Garcia-Prieto & Scherer, 2016). When they feel connected with a brand, and perceive it as a reflector of their social connection so they acts as the brand ambassadors and recommended others the usage of same brand in order to build stronger connection (Meyer, Durrheim, & Foster, 2016). Several studies have incorporated the theories for an in-depth understanding of word of mouth mechanism. Thus, the present study proposed the following conceptual model based on social identity and Signaling Theory, presented in figure 3 by taking into consideration the online engagement and memorial brand experience, information search (independent variables) as the determining factor of word of mouth (dependent variable). The study also assumed that brand social connection acts as a significant mediator in the relationship between online engagement, memorial brand experience, information search and word of mouth.

2.2 Information Search and Word of Mouth

The information searching behaviors was reached extensively by various scholars. The underlying motivations for searching the brand related information is the reduction of future risks associated with purchases (Chung & Koo, 2015). A critical evaluation of brand related information was done prior to the purchase decision. The researches indicates that when the customer found a negative information about the brand so, the research process further deepens and ultimately it results in the positive impact due to searching of complete information about the brand (Park, O'Hare, Schifanella, Jaimes, & Chung, 2015). It is evidenced that the higher the time spent on searching about a particular product or service, higher will be the intentions of purchase and also the high chances of recommendation to others.

Also, it has been noted by (Chang & Huang, 2019) that the availability of information is the most prominent source in positive behavioral intentions and attachment of customers towards the brand. Moreover, it leads towards consistency in high customer value through high recommendation levels by customers to others (Lee, Cheng, & Shih, 2017). In addition, the information search helped customers to explore the current of the products and they are able to make an informed decision. In order to archive high levels of word of mouth and customer trust, the firms incorporate the activities comprising of easy to use websites incorporated with all necessary information related to the brand (Zarrad & Debabi, 2015). The firms desire to gain the trust of customers and fosters word of mouth through information converted into multiple signals through variety of mediums (Herrero, San Martín, & Hernández, 2015). Therefore, in view of the reviewed literature and the recognizing the important role of information search in the determination of positive word of mouth, the current study hypothesized that:

H1: Information search has a significant impact on word of mouth.

2.3 Memorial Brand Experience and Word of Mouth

The huge differences lies among customers with regards to their perception of brand experiences. It is shown from the previous researches that identification of a person with a brand depends upon his or her prior positive memorable brand experiences (Klein, Falk, Esch, & Gloukhovtsev, 2016). It is evidenced that these positive memorable experiences are the reasons for customer loyalty and repurchases. Also it leads towards positive word of mouth and strong connection about the particular brand. Also, these experiences can predict the customer positive behavior and perceptions of customers towards the product or service and contributed towards the positive word of mouth. Khan and Rahman (2015) Investigated the factors that are responsible for positive word of mouth and found that prior experiences of customers with the companies extensively determined the positive behavior among customers. Also, it was revealed from the empirical results that the implementation of strategies focused on providing positive and memorable experiences to customers build positive emotions among them and proved to be the viral predictor of word of mouth (Riivits-Arkonsuo & Leppiman, 2015). Therefore, based on the reviewed literature and the recognizing the important role of prior brand experiences in the determination of positive word of mouth, the current study hypothesized that:

H2: Memorable brand experience has a significant impact on word of mouth.

2.4 Online engagement and word of mouth

The engagement of customers is defined as “the intensity of an individual’s participation and connection with the organization’s offerings and activities initiated by either the customer or the

firm” (p. 1)(Zhang, Hu, Guo, & Liu, 2017). It is considered as medium to gauge the preferences and needs of customers through their loyalty and attachment with brand, it also determines the predictive purchase intentions of the customers and their referrals(Chu, Lien, & Cao, 2019). The online engagement of customers emerged through social media and results in the creation of potential opportunities for providing improved services to the customer. As the behavior was reflected through liking and commenting process on the shared content on the social media managed by the firm (Islam & Rahman, 2016). Similarly, it was evidenced from the findings (Rialti, Zollo, Caliandro, & Ciappei, 2017)that for the generation of word of mouth, the relationship marketing aspects are among one of the crucial success factors for the company which enhances customer engagement. Also, it was postulated that developing relationships with customers through social media presence and online engagement fosters trust, sharing of information, and positive behaviors that led towards customer as co-creators of value and led towards creation of positive word of mouth (Baker, Donthu, & Kumar, 2016)

In addition, Online engagement plays a prominent role in fostering positive word of mouth for a product service and aims to meet the needs of customers as customers contributed with their contribution as brand ambassadors (Mathwick & Mosteller, 2017) . Many studies have emphasized the importance of online engagement for the creation of word of mouth. While studying the major determinants of word of mouth the findings of (Zhao, Liu, Lai, Zhang, & Zhang, 2016)highlighted that the importance of implementation of online engagement resulted in positive customer experiences and their referrals. Therefore, based on the reviewed literature and the recognition of importance of online engagement in the determination of positive word of mouth, the current study hypothesized that:

H3: Online engagement has a significant impact on word of mouth.

2.5 Mediating role of Brand Social connection

Brand social connection is the “extent to which the customers feels associated and connected with the users of particular brand” (Ahmad & Thyagaraj, 2015). It is indicated from the previous studies that emotional connections are developed for the users of the brand which a person is using and it creates a sense of social connection as indicated by social identity theory (Kucukemiroglu & Kara, 2015) Brand social connection leads towards positive word of mouth. According to the mentioned theory, individuals are motivated and inclined towards developing and maintaining their social identities and belong to the groups and brands which reflects their personality. When they feel connected with a brand, and perceive it as a reflector of their social connection so they acts as the brand ambassadors and recommended others the usage of same brand in order to build stronger connection (Wu, Fan, & Zhao, 2018). It is argued by the authors that brand social connection is created with social groups and results in emotional connections. The searching of information of a particular brand, interacts customer with various social media platforms, bloggers and other reviewer websites which builds the brand social connection with like-minded people. Also, the online engagement activities of firms in the form of social media pages and reviews connects various proponents of the same brand provides ways for the customer centered marketing strategy according to their emotional connection and lead towards high levels of word of mouth (Zhang et al., 2017). Moreover, it was highlighted by Anam and Faiz (2016) that past memorable experiences plays a significant role in the process of social connection building and positive word of mouth creation, Thus in view of the interrelated

indirect relationship between online engagement, information search, memorial brand experience, brand social connection and word of mouth, the present study hypothesized that:

H4: Brand social connection has a significant mediating role in the relationship between information search and word of mouth.

H5: Brand social connection has a significant mediating role in the relationship between memorial brand experience and word of mouth.

H6: Brand social connection has a significant mediating role in the relationship between online engagement and word of mouth.

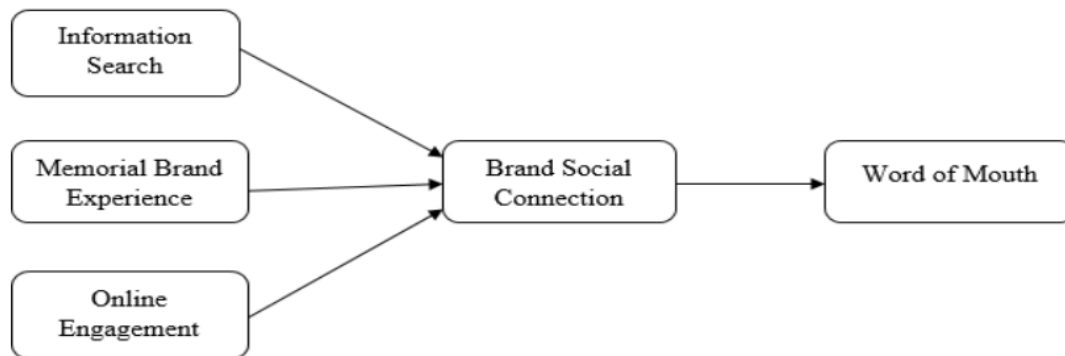


Figure 3: Conceptual Model

3 Research Methodology

3.1 Population and Sampling

In this proposed study, researcher desired to examine the role of information search, online engagement, memorial brand experiences in creating the positive words of mouth, in mediating effect of brand social connection. Researcher target the Indonesia footwear brands for observing the impact of proposed study as Indonesia foot wear industry also contribute in global market share or in economy of Indonesia because Indonesia export the high-quality shoes and it became 52% of the export of the Indonesia. Indonesia also positioned at the 4th rank in world footwear production but to create the market demand in the other countries or to increase the export revenue, some measures have to be taken into account for creating positive word of mouth. In this study, it has been proposed by providing superior values to customer in the form of relationship building and online services, company can create the positive word of mouth. Researcher collect the data about the study from employees and managers of marketing department of Esmee official, Winston Smith, and Andre Valentino. Researcher used purposive sampling technique for sample selection as the brands have many departments but, in this study, our main focus is marketing department that's why researcher selects only those employees, which have been employed in marketing department. Sample size is 360 that's why researcher distributes survey questionnaires among 360 respondents but after whole process only 302 valid responses have been collected, as rest of the responses have been discarded due to invalidity and incompleteness.

3.2 Data Collection Procedure

The most appropriate survey instrument for data collection under survey strategy is questionnaire, which has been structured in the two categories of closed ended questionnaire such as variable scale items category and demographic questions category. Reason behind closed ended questions is that researcher desired to collect objective responses not subjective detail about variables. Language of questionnaire must be in accordance to native Indonesia language for data collection process, after data collection researcher can translate back it into English language for easy data analysis. Researcher performed pilot study on only 25 respondents to find out that whether items were understandable by respondents or not. Afterward, researcher administered the questionnaire through self-administering technique, in which research himself visit the respondents and tried to solve the queries of respondents.

3.3 Measures

Different authors have been conducted the research study on the proposed variables but in different perspective, researcher adapts the measurement items from their research work for this proposed research study. Different number of items have been adapted such as for information search, 3 measurement items have been adapted from (Crotts, 1999), (Mason & Scammon, 2011) & (Verplanken, 1993), for memorial brand experience, researcher has been adapted the 3 survey items from , for online exchange, 4 measurement items have been adapted from earlier research work of (Coburn, Wang, & Okumus, 2009) & (Guo, 2014). Coming towards brand social connection, it has been measured through 5 survey items, which have been adapted from (Lobschat, Zinnbauer, Pallas, & Joachimsthaler, 2013) & (Fischer, Völckner, & Sattler, 2010) and for word of mouth, 3 survey items have been taken through work of (Alexandrov, Lilly, & Babakus, 2013). Researcher measured the responses of respondents through 5-point Likert scale, in which 1 stands for strongly disagree and 5 stands for strongly agree.

3.4 Data Analysis

In data analysis procedure, researcher performed the descriptive statistics test, reliability test, correlation test, regression test, with help of SPSS software. Reliability of data has been assessed through two criteria such as (1) Cronbach's alpha and (2) composite reliability, both must have the values in specific threshold range greater than 0.70, for confirming the items reliability and internal consistency of data. Further, AMOS has also been used for data analysis such as for running diagnosis of confirmatory factor analysis, which have been used for assessing convergent validity, discriminant validity and model fitness. Moreover, AMOS has also been accompanied for running structure equation modeling, which runs for hypothesis testing or structural model analysis.

4 Data analysis and interpretation

In this study, 302 questionnaires were distributed among the participants. The demographic details of respondents were that, there were 124 males and 178 were females, according to which the number of females were high, education wise 23 of the respondent had done their graduation, 147 of the respondents had done their postgraduation, 122 of the respondents had done their masters and 10 had some other degrees. Age wise, 55 of the respondents were between 21 to 30 years old, 118 of the respondents were from 31 to 40 years old, 107 of the respondents were from 41 to 50 years old and 22 were 50+ in age.

Descriptive statistics

1

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | SD | Skewness | |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------|
| | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | SD |
| BraSocCon | 302 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.4894 | 1.07293 | -.696 | .140 |
| WordofMou | 302 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.4272 | 1.11916 | -.510 | .140 |
| InfoSearch | 302 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.5839 | 1.11607 | -.829 | .140 |
| MemBasExp | 302 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.5486 | 1.10422 | -.805 | .140 |
| OnlineEng | 302 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.5166 | 1.09824 | -.726 | .140 |
| Valid (listwise) | N 302 | | | | | | |

The above table one is showing the descriptive statistics of the study, the descriptive statistics detailed explanation about the variables if the study and they showing that the descriptive coefficients that give a complete summary of data. This set of data represent the entire sample of the population. The data is showing that there is no outlier in given data because maximum values are in the threshold range of 5-point Likert scale and the value of skewness is between -1 to 1, which is the threshold range of normality so, the given data is normal and valid. The data is valid to go for further testing.

2

Table 2: Rotated Component Matrix

| | Component | | | | |
|-----|-----------|------|------|------|------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| IS1 | | | | .765 | |
| IS2 | | | | .859 | |
| IS3 | | | | .813 | |
| ME1 | | | | | .793 |
| ME2 | | | | | .809 |
| ME3 | | | | | .836 |
| OE1 | | .772 | | | |
| OE2 | | .822 | | | |
| OE3 | | .844 | | | |
| OE4 | | .810 | | | |
| BS1 | .741 | | | | |
| BS2 | .789 | | | | |
| BS3 | .802 | | | | |
| BS4 | .789 | | | | |
| BS5 | .781 | | | | |
| WM1 | | | .826 | | |
| WM2 | | | .856 | | |
| WM3 | | | .867 | | |

The above table two of rotated components matrix is showing that, almost all of the indicators are having factor loading more than 0.7, it means that all indicators are eligible to be exposed to further hypothesis testing techniques, because all the factors are in suitable threshold level and all the factors in suitable and valid sequence and range. So, this data is good to go for further testing techniques. There is no cross loading in the data shown in RCM so, the data is reliable.

Table 3: Convergent and Discriminant Validity

| | CR | AVE | MSV | MaxR(H) | BS | IS | ME | OE | WM |
|----|-------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| BS | 0.893 | 0.627 | 0.319 | 0.895 | 0.792 | | | | |
| IS | 0.882 | 0.714 | 0.335 | 0.942 | 0.562 | 0.845 | | | |
| ME | 0.898 | 0.746 | 0.335 | 0.964 | 0.565 | 0.579 | 0.864 | | |
| OE | 0.896 | 0.682 | 0.309 | 0.973 | 0.502 | 0.556 | 0.519 | 0.826 | |
| WM | 0.884 | 0.717 | 0.277 | 0.978 | 0.476 | 0.346 | 0.526 | 0.447 | 0.847 |

The validity master sheet was used in order to confirm the convergent and discriminant validity for the research model variable. The discriminant validity provided the discrimination between variables while the convergent validity was measured with the help of composite reliability and average variance extracted. The results of the validities are shown in the table three. The results and convergence of each variable is more than 70%. The average variances extracted are more than 50%, while the discriminate validity showed that, loading of each variable discriminates form each other. Every variable has maximum loading with itself as compared with others. So, these validities prove the authenticity of the collected data.

Confirmatory factor analysis

Table 4: Confirmatory Factors Analysis

| Indicators | Threshold range | Current values |
|------------|----------------------|----------------|
| CMIN/DF | Less or equal 3 | 2.134 |
| GFI | Equal or greater .80 | .913 |
| CFI | Equal or greater .90 | .961 |
| IFI | Equal or greater .90 | .961 |
| RMSEA | Less or equal .08 | .061 |

Table four is of CFA, which is the confirmatory factor analysis used to confirm the fitness of hypothetical model before structural equation modeling, current results are showing that CMIN is less than 3, GFI is more than 0.80, CFI is more than 0.90, IFI is more than 0.90, and RMSEA is less than 0.08. All of the results showed that the data is in valid range and is good to go for further testing. Following is the screen shot of CFA in figure one.

Figure 1: CFA

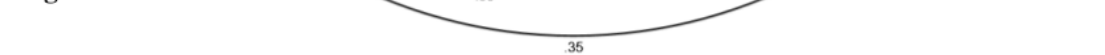
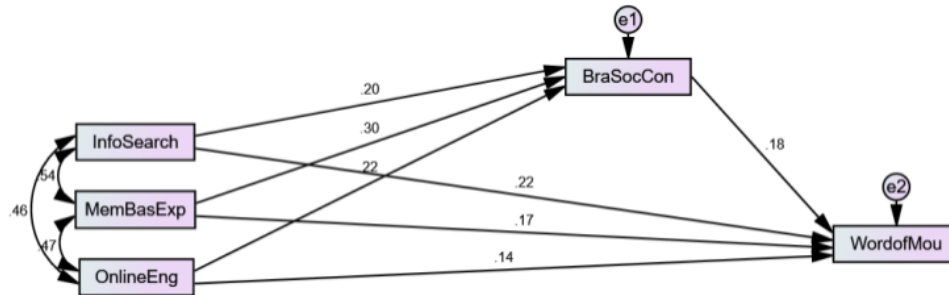


Table 5: Structural Equation Modeling

| Total Effect | OnlineEng | MemBasExp | InfoSearch | BraSocCon |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| BraSocCon | .217** | .297*** | .195* | .000 |
| WordofMou | .181** | .226** | .255** | .177* |
| Direct Effect | OnlineEng | MemBasExp | InfoSearch | BraSocCon |



| | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| BraSocCon | .217** | .297** | .195* | .000 |
| WordofMou | .142 | .174* | .220** | .177* |
| Indirect Effect | OnlineEng | MemBasExp | InfoSearch | BraSocCon |
| BraSocCon | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| WordofMou | .038* | .053** | .035 | .000 |

The above table of SEM is showing the relationships of different variables with each other and what impact they do cast on each other. The impact of OE on WOM is insignificant, the impact of MBE on WOM is 17% and is significant, the impact of IS on WOM is 22% and is significant, the impact of BSC on WOM is significant and 17%. The overall model is significant.

Figure 2: SEM

5 Discussion and conclusion

5.1 Discussion

Study aimed at analyzing the foot wear brands of Indonesia, for knowing the impacts of information search (IS), memorial brand experience (MBE) and on lining engagement (OE) on word of mouth (WOM). The study took brand social connection (BSC) as a mediator. The first hypothesis proposed by the study was that “OE has a significant impact on WOM”. This hypothesis is rejected according to the analysis and past literature (Hasegawa & Matsuoka, 2015). Second hypothesis was that “MBE has a significant impact on WOM” this hypothesis is accepted, as brand experiences enhances the WOM of the brand by the consumers to the potential customers (Kirono et al., 2016). Third hypothesis proposed by the study was that “IS has a significant impact on WOM”. This hypothesis is accepted as well because information search and its ease provide a base to the consumers for creating positive WOM about the brands and also attracts the potential customers through the already existing consumers (Kis-Katos & Sparrow, 2015). Fourth hypothesis proposed was that “BSC has a significantly mediating role between SI and WOM”. This hypothesis is accepted. BSC promotes permanent connection between the brands and its consumers which help in creating a positive WOM about the brands and this mediator is also seen to be also significantly enhancing the IS (Mukhlis, Utomo, &

Soesetio, 2015). Fifth hypothesis proposed by this study was “BSC has a significant mediating role between MBE and WOM”. This hypothesis is accepted as well. According to the results of the analysis MBE has an enhanced impact through BSC on WOM. The sixth hypothesis proposed by the study was that “OE and WOM are significantly mediated by the BSC”. This hypothesis is accepted as it is seen that impact of OE enhance with the presence of BSC (Sidharta & Affandi, 2016).

5.2 Conclusion

Study aimed at analyzing the foot wear brands of Indonesia, for knowing the impact of information search (IS), memorial brand experience (MBE) and on line engagement (OE) on word of mouth (WOM). The study took brand social connection (BSC) as a mediator. The data was collected by distributing questionnaires among 302 participants from the foot wear brand of Indonesia. The results showed that OE does not significantly impact WOM whereas IS and MBE have a significant and positive impact on WOM. Moreover, BSC significantly mediates between all variables.

5.3 Implications of the study

The study has focused on the foot wear brands of Indonesia and the results are applicable on any foot wear brand worldwide. Because the matter of WOM is important for any kind of brand worldwide not only for Indonesia and not only for foot wear brands. WOM can be enhanced by going through the study for any brand by the implementation of IS, MBE and OE. BSC will also be promoted by going through the results of this research which has significantly contributed in enhancing the sense of BSC and why it is important for WOM. Moreover, brands can go for an extra mile to implement IS, MBE, and OE for the enhancement of their positive WOM. The brands can also make stronger BSC for ensuring that WOM by their consumers is positive for their potential customers.

5.4 Limitations and future research indications

The focus of the researcher was only the foot wear brands of the Indonesia whereas, it is the requirement of each sector and every brand that its WOM can become positive for attracting the potential customers. The study could have been conducted two times in order to compare the results before and after the education of implementation of IS, MBE and OE. Moreover, the study could have focused on foot wear brands outside the Indonesia as well for the generalization and validity of the results globally.

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