CHAPTER – 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
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This chapter reviews the recent literature on social media marketing, relationship marketing variables and purchase and loyalty intention. It provides the underlying theoretical foundations of characteristics of perception of Social media among the people. Studies pertaining to Social media, Relationship marketing and Customer intentions are examined to elucidate why members choose to maintain or enhance their relationships with a specific brand. Its impact on their purchase and loyalty intention are examined. Studies related to purchase intention and loyalty intentions are also examined. This chapter is organised into six sections

2.1 Social media
2.2 Relationship marketing
2.3 Customer intention
2.4 Identification of research gaps
2.5 The proposed model.
2.6 The research questions

2.1 SOCIAL MEDIA

2.1.1 Definitions of Social Media and Social Networking Sites

Social media is a relatively new topic and several authors in the recent years have defined in a number of ways.

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines social media as “forms of electronic communication (as Web sites for social networking and blogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos).” The same source defines networking as
“the exchange of information or services among individuals, groups, or institutions; specifically: the cultivation of productive relationships for employment or business.”

Rheingold (1993) postulates social media to be the “social aggregations that emerge from the net when enough people carry on those public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feelings, to form webs of personal relationships in Cyberspace.” Gross and Acquisti, (2005) said, most online networking sites share a core of features: through the site an individual offers a “profile” - a representation of their self and often of their own social networks - for others to peruse, with the intention of contacting or being contacted by others, to meet new friends or dates (Friendster, 3 Orkut 4), find new jobs (LinkedIn5), receive or provide recommendations (Tribe 6), and much more. Boyd and Ellison, (2007) define social network sites as web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. Carton, (2009) in his article opined that throughout much of human history, technologies have been developed that make it easier for us to communicate with each other. So the author defined Social media as technologies that facilitate interactions between humans using information or data: or Social media can simply be defined as just technologies that facilitate conversations. Kaplan and Haenlein, (2010) defined Social media as “a group of internet based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and it allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content.

2.1.2 Definition of Social Media Marketing

Mangold and Faulds (2009) argues that social media is a hybrid element of the promotion mix because in a traditional sense it enables companies to talk to their customers, while in a non-traditional sense it enables customers to talk directly to one another. Chi (2011) defines social media marketing as a “connection between brands and consumers, offering a personal channel and currency for user
centered networking and social interaction. Hanna, Rohm, and Crittenden, 2011 reiterate that interactive digital media has catapulted company and consumer contacts from a Web 1.0 passive model, to a Web 2.0 interactive model.

We define **Social media marketing as the set of applications that provide the platform for companies to provide information about the brand, engage their customers and network with them so as to form meaningful and mutually beneficial long-term relationship which will, in turn, increase the customer’s Purchase and loyalty intentions.**

### 2.1.3 Studies Relating to Social Media Marketing and its Outcomes

The evolution of the internet and in particular the emergence of social media with its enhanced ability to facilitate interaction between customers and Companies has captured the interest of managers seeking to better understand and serve their customers using these technologies and tools. But customer engagement is still evolving as a concept in academic literature. To engage according to the Oxford Dictionary (1996) has several meanings. Important meanings include: to **employ or hire, to hold fast, to bind by a contract, to come into battle, and to take part.** Its rise in the consciousness of managers has paralleled the emergence of new technologies and tools that enable greater interactivity among individuals and organizations.

Advertising Research Foundation (ARF) in March 2006, conjunction with the American Association of Advertising Agencies and the Association of National Advertisers undertook a “defining engagement initiative” according to which engagement is **“Turning on a prospect to a brand idea enhanced by the surrounding context”** (Advertising Research Foundation, 2008). This approach is that customer engagement can **conceivably encompass a wide variety of situations ranging from awareness, interest, and desire to purchase, retention, and loyalty.**
Empirical studies conducted by the Economist Intelligence Unit with managers in private and public sector enterprises worldwide (EIU, 2007a, b, c, d) leads them to define customer engagement as “an intimate long-term relationship with the customer” In terms of strategy, “engagement refers to the creation of experiences that allow companies to build deeper, more meaningful and sustainable interactions between the company and its customers or external stakeholders” and proposes that “It is not a fixed point that can be reached but a process that expands and evolves over time” (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2007b).

200 business decision makers in companies across the world, were surveyed by Forrester Consulting (2008) defines customer engagement as “creating deep connections with customers that drive purchase decisions, interaction, and participation over time.” Their survey indicates that companies are investing more in online programs and believe the internet is essential for building customer engagement. Forrester recommends identifying the ten most important things that engaged customers and prospects do and creating a dashboard to track the adoption, frequency, and intimacy metrics associated with these activities. For example, if purchases, recommendations, store visits, and online reviews are some of the customer engagement activities, the percentage of customers engaging in these activities, the average numbers of times they perform it in a certain period, and their preference, satisfaction or willingness to serve as customer references are used to measure customer engagement.

Gallup, a consulting firm used 11 questions to measure rational as well as emotional aspects of customer engagement in both consumer and business markets. Gallup Consulting (2009) distinguishes four levels of customer engagement: fully engaged, engaged, disengaged, and actively disengaged. According to Gallup, fully engaged customers represent an average 23 percent premium while actively disengaged customers represent a 13 percent discount relative to average customers on an index based on share of wallet, profitability, revenue, and relationship growth.
Sawhney et al. (2005) outlined the distinctive capabilities of the Internet as a platform for customer engagement, including interactivity, enhanced reach, persistence, speed, and flexibility, and suggest that firms can use these capabilities to engage customers in collaborative product innovation through a variety of Internet-based mechanisms. They discussed how these mechanisms can facilitate collaborative innovation at different stages of the New Product Development process (back end vs. front end stages) and for differing levels of customer involvement (high reach vs. high richness). Using two cases they reiterate that Internet allows firms to engage customers more broadly, more richly, and more speedily. It allows firms to create ongoing customer dialogue, absorb social customer knowledge, and scan knowledge of potential or competitors’ customers. By establishing a direct, persistent, and interactive dialogue, the firm can access knowledge at low cost from individual customers as well as from communities.

Higgins (2006), considers engagement as the second source of experience beyond the hedonic source of experience resulting from a motivational force to make or not make something happen. In this case, the motivational force is the Social media marketing.

Calder and Malthouse (2008) discuss the concept of media engagement, focusing on the consumer’s psychological experience while consuming media. They distinguish media engagement from mere liking, implying that engagement is a stronger state of connectedness between the customer and the media than liking alone. Facebook brand pages give ample opportunity to social media marketers to achieve this connectedness.

Chaffey (2008) suggested that Marketers on Social media should suitably engage the customers so as to increase the time or attention a customer or prospect gives to a brand on the web or across multiple channels. The glossary also gives an alternative definition from an interview with another blogger who defines customer engagement as “Repeated interactions between a customer and brand that strengthen the emotional, psychological or physical investment a
customer has in that brand” (Chaffey, 2007). Shevlin, 2007 argues that customer engagement encompasses a number of dimensions: product involvement, purchase frequency, service interactions frequency, and types of interactions, online behaviour, referral behaviour/intention, and velocity. Ertell, 2010 suggests that a central role in many marketing strategies is played by a customer engagement cycle said to consist of awareness, consideration, inquiry, purchase, and retention stages but these are stages in a purchase decision rather than a customer engagement cycle.

Higgins and Scholer, (2009) opined that Social media marketers act as a motivational force to achieve customer engagement. Engagement as a state of sustained attention, which can be characterized by full absorption and involvement as well as being fully occupied or engrossed in something. The authors also recognize that individuals can be engaged on different levels of intensity and suggest that the more a person is engaged, the more intense will be the experience of the motivational force The authors express considerations towards both positive (e.g. attraction) and negative (e.g. repulsion) expressions of engagement.

Mangold et al. (2009) argue that social media is a hybrid element of the promotion mix because in a traditional sense it enables companies to talk to their customers, while in a non-traditional sense it enables customers to talk directly to one another. Managers do not have direct control on the content, timing, and frequency of the social media-based conversations occurring between consumers are outside. Managers must, therefore, learn to shape consumer discussions in a manner that is consistent with the organization’s mission and performance goals. Methods by which this can be accomplished include providing consumers with networking platforms and using blogs, social media tools and promotional tools to engage customers.

Vandoorne et al. (2010), defined customer engagement behaviours (CEB as the customers’ behavioural manifestation toward a brand or firm, beyond purchase,
resulting from motivational drivers. CEBs include a vast array of behaviours including word-of-mouth (WOM) activity, recommendations, helping other customers, blogging, writing reviews, and even engaging in legal action. Social media marketing acts as a motivational driver as it enables WOM activity, blogging etc

Mollen and Wilson (2010) elaborate on the concept of engagement from the perspective of online consumer experience. The authors suggest that a consumer’s experiential response to a website or some other computer-mediated entity such as Social media in general and Facebook brand pages, in particular, comprises three experiential states including perceived interactivity, tele presence and engagement. In particular, engagement is defined as “a cognitive and affective commitment to an active relationship with the brand as personified by the website or other computer-mediated entities designed to communicate brand value” and is suggested to comprise the dimensions of active, sustained, cognitive processing, attainment of instrumental value (relevance and utility) and experiential value (emotional congruence).

Kumar et al. (2010) proposed four components of a customer’s engagement value (CEV) with a firm. The first component is customer lifetime value (the customer’s purchase behaviour), the second is customer referral value (as it relates to incentivized referral of new customers), the third is customer influencer value (which includes the customer’s behaviour to influence other customers, that is increasing acquisition, retention, and share of wallet through word-of-mouth of existing customers as well as prospects), and the fourth is customer knowledge value (the value added to the firm by feedback from the customer). CEV provides a comprehensive framework that can ultimately lead to more efficient marketing strategies that enable higher long-term contribution from the customer. They also proposed several behavioural, attitudinal, and network metrics in order to measure CEV’s four components.
Brodie et al. (2011a) suggested that Social media marketing has the capability to provide co-creative customer experiences which result in customer engagement. They developed a set of five fundamental propositions, “Customer engagement (CE) is (1) a psychological state that occurs by virtue of interactive, co-creative customer experiences with a focal agent/object (e.g. brand) in focal service relationships. It occurs (2) under a specific set of context-dependent conditions generating differing CE levels; and (3) exists as a dynamic, iterative process within service relationships that co-create value. CE plays (4) a central role in a nomological network governing service relationships in which other relational concepts (e.g. involvement, loyalty) are antecedents and/or consequences in iterative CE processes. It is (5) a multidimensional concept subject to a context- and/or stakeholder specific expression of relevant cognitive, emotional and/or behavioural dimensions.” Brodie et al. (2011a) also consider and justify a number of other potential antecedents and/or consequences of customer engagement, such as participation, rapport, customer satisfaction, trust, self-brand connection, and emotional attachment. The authors have found some relational constructs such as involvement and participation to be prerequisite to drive engagement, whereas the others could act as both potential antecedents and consequences within particular dynamic service relationships.

Malthouse and Calder (2011) point out that Social media through its various platforms provide ample opportunity to engage the customers. Engagement can arise not only from active behaviours such as e.g. blogging but simply receiving communication can also be viewed as interactive and co-creative, as long as these experiences are immersive.

Brodie et al. (2011b) adopt netnographic methodology to explore how social media marketing can create content in order to engage customers in an online brand community environment. The social media marketers should engage customers by subtly giving them an opportunity to learn, share, socialise, advocate and co-develop value co-creation reflecting consumers' interactive experience within online brand
communities, and among community participants. Engaged consumers exhibit enhanced consumer loyalty, satisfaction, empowerment, connection, emotional bonding, trust and commitment. The paper throws light on the importance of understanding how consumers engage in specific brand communities, and the consequences of this engagement. Specifically, online communities welcome marketers only if they are contributing to the community. Thus, businesses need to listen to and “engage in engaging” consumers in brand communications, which consumers perceive to be “non-commercially driven”.

Cheung et al. (2011) have initiated a study on how social media marketers can effectively engage their customers in online social platforms. They defined Customer engagement as “the level of a customer’s physical, cognitive, and emotional presence in connections with a particular online social platform”. The conceptual model developed suggests that customer engagement in an online social platform can be measured by the level of energy and mental resilience that the customer puts in (vigor), the level of concentration and engrossment he exhibits for a particular post (absorption) and the sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenge he feels (dedication) towards the online social platform, which are driven by involvement and social interaction. The consequences reflected in the model exhibit of the author’s belief that customer engagement will have a positive effect on online social platform participation and word-of-mouth communication about the platform. So managers should provide content that lead to interaction and involvement.

Weman (2011) in their study show that Consumers were found to join the brand communities on Facebook through brand pages primarily because they are affectively committed to the brand. This makes sense since brand communities are constructed for admirers of a brand. Economic benefits and entertainment were perceived as motivating factors, whereas social benefits and social enhancement were of little importance as a motivator. Based on the results it seems that consumers do not use the brand community for social activities, such as getting to
know other community members, staying in touch with community members or helping community members. This might partially reflect what the community offers, as economic benefits (e.g. raffles and competitions) are often used in Facebook communities. Furthermore, the social nature of Facebook may mean that members prefer to turn to their own peer network for social support, rather than seek for social benefits on Facebook communities.

Wilimzig (2011) suggest that companies can build online communities in Facebook by using Facebook brand pages and forming a group. It was identified that online brand community members on Facebook have high feelings of association with the online brand communities they patronage. Members perceive the information within online brand communities as objective, trustworthy, and derived from opinion leaders. Members of online brand communities do not seem to feel obligated or committed to the associated brand, but have high purchase rates and are likely to recommend the brand to friends or associates.

Vivek et al. (2012) explore the nature and scope of customer engagement (CE), which is a vital component of relationship marketing. They define CE as the intensity of an individual’s participation in and connection with an organization’s offerings and/or organizational activities, which either the customer or the organization initiate. They argue that it is composed of cognitive, emotional, behavioural, and social elements. They developed a conceptual model of CE. CE, in which the participation and involvement of current or potential customers serve as antecedents of CE, while value, trust, affective commitment, word-of-mouth, loyalty, and brand community involvement are consequences of CE.

Huber et al. (2012) observed that due to the popularity and intensive usage of Online Social Networks, more and more companies try to get in touch with existing as well as potential customers and to market their brands and products within these networks. Especially Facebook provides an extensive user base and the opportunity to implement fan pages, which allow companies to leverage a broad range of technical features and media types to interact with users. However, the
success of company fan pages varies and is by far not guaranteed. Therefore, it is necessary to measure whether a company's efforts to stimulate user activity on fan pages are successful or not. Hence, they deduced and hypothesized factors influencing the number of active users on fan pages and take different technical features and media types companies can use into account. To test their hypotheses empirically, they drew on publicly and non-publicly available data of a global insurance company's fan page within Facebook. The results suggest that based on the number of current fans companies can particularly stimulate user activity and engagement by using company wall posts with its different media types as well as by commenting on already existing wall posts.

Reitz et al. (2012) in their study examined whether and how perceived Facebook company page features (i.e., perceived information quality, perceived enjoyment, and perceived interactivity) predicted online consumer engagement, and further investigated whether and how online consumer engagement with companies on Facebook related to loyalty and ultimately (re)purchase intent. First, focus groups were conducted to get a better understanding of the “liking” behaviour on Facebook and to refine the survey questionnaire. Next, 233 online surveys were collected from U.S. adult Facebook users who “like” companies on Facebook to test the online consumer engagement framework. Hypotheses were tested through structural equation modelling. Findings suggest that perceived Facebook characteristics (i.e., perceived information quality, perceived enjoyment, and perceived interactivity) influence online consumer engagement, which influences loyalty and ultimately (re)purchase intent.

Kim and Ko (2012) examined the luxury brand’s marketing activity to engage its customers using social media platforms Facebook and twitter. They found that the firms in their facebook page entertains customers by offering a variety of free contents as well as social network activity, and enables customized information searching. Activities on the brand’s social media platforms create interaction among users that can lead to word-of-mouth effects and include fashion
and trend attributes. In contrast to existing marketing activities that appeal directly to the value of actual products or services, a luxury fashion brand's SMM activities focus more on hedonic and empirical values that can be reached by indirect brand experience. Accordingly, five constructs of perceived SMM activities of luxury fashion brands were found to be entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word-of-mouth. In order to find the customer’s perception of these five constructs the brand’s SMM activities a visual stimulus of Louis Vuitton’s activity on the two most commonly used social media, Facebook and Twitter, was developed. Participants were asked to review the proposed visual stimulus and answer 25 measurement items, which were developed from previous literature related to luxury fashion brand’s social media marketing activities. Both exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis was conducted. Effects of social media marketing activities of the brand to engage its customers on value equity, relationship equity, and brand equity are significantly positive. For the relationship between customer equity drivers and customer equity, brand equity has significant negative effect on customer equity while value equity and relationship equity show no significant effect. As for purchase intention, value equity and relationship equity had significant positive effects, while relationship equity had no significant influence. Finally, the relationship between purchase intention and customer equity has significance.

Sashi et al. (2012) attempt to enhance understanding of customer engagement by examining practitioner views of customer engagement, linking it to the marketing concept, market orientation and relationship marketing, modelling the customer engagement cycle and developing a customer engagement matrix. They developed a model of the customer engagement cycle with connection, interaction, satisfaction, retention, loyalty, advocacy and engagement as stages in the cycle. It arrays customers in a customer engagement matrix according to the degree of relational exchange and emotional bonds that characterize their relationship with sellers. Four types of relationships emerge: transactional customers, delighted customers, loyal customers and fans.
Customer engagement turns customers into fans. But for customers to become fans they have to progress through the stages of the customer engagement cycle. In addition to current fans, sellers need a mix of transactional, delighted, and loyal customers who can be turned into fans in the future. They opined that a mix of digital and non digital technologies can be employed to facilitate customers ‘transition through the stages in the customer engagement cycle.

Gummerus et al. (2012) studied how social media marketers can use Online games to engage their customers. An online survey of members of a gaming Facebook brand community, resulting in 276 usable responses from gaming customers was conducted. Customer engagement was divided into “Community Engagement Behaviours” (CEB) and “Transactional Engagement Behaviours” (TEB). In addition, three relationship benefits were identified: social benefits, entertainment benefits and economic benefits. The engagement behaviours largely influenced the benefits received. Furthermore, the mediation analysis results show that the influence of CEB on satisfaction is partially mediated by social benefits and entertainment benefits, while the effect of TEB on satisfaction is fully mediated through the same benefits. The effect of CEB on loyalty is mediated through entertainment benefits. Their findings gave ideas about how firms can utilize Facebook communities to enhance satisfaction and loyalty by offering the right kinds of relationship benefits. Managers are encouraged to study customer engagement behaviours on, and perceptions of, all channels and to utilize this information for the development of their social media strategies.

Kam Fung So et al. (2013) suggests that Social media marketers can engage their customers by providing content that holds the customer’s attention and interest and makes them enthusiastic participants in a dialogue with both the company as well as other customers. He developed and validates a 25-item CE scale that comprises five factors: identification, enthusiasm, attention, absorption, and interaction. They also suggested that Customer engagement lead to more loyalty.
Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) analyzed how marketers can engage their customers on facebook brand pages. They felt content played a very important role in creating effective engagement. In terms of characteristics of the content communicated by the company, such as media type, content type, posting day and time, over the level of online customer engagement measured by number of likes, comments and shares and interaction duration for the domain of a Facebook brand page. They divided the content type as Entertainment posts, information posts and remuneration posts. Entertainment posts are those posts which are unrelated to the brand but contain humour and word play. Information posts contained information about the brand and remuneration posts promised some reward for engaging with the brand. The entertainment posts caused maximum engagement as measured by number of likes, shares and comments whereas the information content produced maximum interaction.

Wirtz et al. (2013) explore Online Brand Communities both from a consumer and company perspective. They provided a conceptual framework that extends understanding of OBCs and consumer engagement. Identification of Four key OBC dimensions (brand orientation, internet-use, funding and governance) and three antecedents (brand-related, social and functional) are proposed of consumer-OBC engagement. They also examine the moderators (product, customer and situational moderators) of this relationship between the OBC antecedents and outcomes. After presenting the framework, the study advances the potential outcomes of greater levels of customer-OBC engagement, including structural outcomes (e.g., in idea generation and in the firm’s organization of OBC-related activities) and the possible brand equity outcomes of greater consumer OBC engagement (e.g., in improved sales, brand image and customer relationships).

Olczak and Sobczyk (2013) developed a post engagement rate for both likes and shares. They also observed that the strategy of posting, in order to achieve the best results in getting feedback (engagement) is a combination of the several elements – these are – the time of posting, its length, frequency and the type of
the content. The type of content that offers most engagement can be information about products/service, such as information about the new offer. They can be also related to the brand, containing photos from new store launch or contests with a chance of winning brand’s souvenirs. The third type of posts are those unrelated to the brand, which are usually connected with seasonal events, like holidays, sports games, entertainment, etc.

Smith (2013) conceptualised that People who claim to have positive experiences with a brand’s content on Facebook pages have a greater likelihood of claiming to be more likely to do a social media action than people who do not claim to have such experiences and more likely to do a purchase funnel action and advocacy action Therefore brand owners need to decide what emotions they want to evoke in their customers and decide the content.

Mohammad et al. (2014) in their study aimed to evaluate the effect of social media marketing on online shopping of customers based on mediating role of value capital, relational capital and brand capital by path analysis method. 169 students of Tehran University were included in this study. They filled out the questionnaires of social media marketing, value capital, and relational capital, brand capital and e-shopping of customers. Social media marketing measures were included from Kim and Ko (2012) the results of path analysis showed that social media marketing had positive and significant impact on value capital, relational capital and brand capital leading to e-shopping.

Schivinski and Dabrowski (2014) studied the effects of firm-created and user-generated social media communication on brand equity, brand attitude, and purchase intention. They investigated 504 Facebook users using a standardized online survey across Poland. To test the proposed model, they analyzed 60 brands across three different industries: non-alcoholic beverages, clothing, and mobile operators. In the data analysis, they applied the structural equation modelling technique. The results of their empirical studies showed that user-generated social media communication had a positive influence on brand equity and brand
attitude. In addition, the analysis indicated that firm-created social media communication affected only brand attitude. **Both brand equity and brand attitude showed a positive influence on purchase intention.** Moreover, measurement invariance was assessed using a multi-group structural modelling equation. The findings revealed that the proposed model was invariant across the researched industries.

**Hajli (2014)** observes that empowered by social media, individuals are active content creators in social networking sites. This has brought new changes in business environment, of which social commerce is one of them. Social commerce, a new stream in e-commerce, highlights the role of technological advancements to develop a new social commerce era. In social commerce era, individuals share their knowledge, experiences, and information about the products and services with peers, providing a supportive environment in an online context. **They act as advocates if they are highly satisfied and Companies can use them as brand advocates who do free electronic word-of-mouth marketing for them. So companies should cleverly create content to actively engage their customers.**

**Behan (2014)** in his research studied the effect that a Facebook page has on friends of the brand. The analysis of the data additionally shows this effect on brand perception is based on the drivers of a) connectivity, b) change of perception, c) internal value, d) goodwill and e) the decision process. Interactions between the SME and individuals through Facebook appears to have a positive effect on the perception of the brand due to its unique connectivity features, which in turn influences the goodwill offered by the users. The combination of these factors also appears to have the net effect of Facebook being a catalyst in ultimate purchase decisions. Additionally, by providing a sense of community and having the ability to co-create the content, the users of the brand’s Facebook page recognize the uniqueness of Facebook as a marketing communication tool.

**Vivek et al. (2014)** propose that Social media marketing leading to Customer engagement can be measured by the level of the customer’s (or potential customer’s)
interactions and connections with the brand or firm’s offerings or activities. Engaged individuals include current as well as prospective customers. Following the expanded relationship metaphor and service-dominant logic, the researchers conceptualize a three-dimensional view of CE, including conscious attention, enthused participation, and social connection.

Ferencová et al. (2015) observed that social media significantly affect the development of the information and knowledge-based society in terms of business and sustainable development. They are important sources of information; they create stakeholder networks, databases, play an important role in communication with target groups, and influence purchasing behaviour. They found that there is a significant positive relationship between the intention of buying a product and its purchase via social media.

Barreda et al. (2015) conducted a survey among 230 OSN (Online social networks) users was deployed to test the theoretical model. The data was analyzed using SEM. Study results indicate that building brand awareness in OSNs increases WOM traffic. In order to foster brand awareness in OSN, it is important to create a virtually interactive environment, enabling users to exchange reliable, rich and updated information in a timely manner. Receiving financial and/or psychological rewards and accessing exclusive privileges in OSNs are important factors for users. Both system quality and information quality were found to be important precursors of brand awareness in OSNs. Study results support the importance of social media in online branding strategies. Virtual interactivity, system quality, information content quality, and rewarding activities influence and generate brand awareness, which in return, triggers WOM.

Sabate et al. (2015) analysed the factors that are conditioning consumer interaction with branded content and aimed to shed light on those factors that are expected to impact on Facebook branded post popularity. A conceptual model is developed to reflect the influence of the content’s richness and time frame on the number of comments and likes. An empirical analysis using multiple linear
regressions is conducted based on 164 Facebook posts gathered from the fan pages of 5 Spanish travel agencies. Results suggest that the richness of the content (inclusions of images and videos) raises the impact of the post in terms of likes. On the other hand, using images and a proper publication time are significantly influencing the number of comments, whereas the use of links may decrease this metric. This study empirically contributes to the existing literature on the management of marketing strategies for consumer engagement in social networking sites.

Mariani et al. (2016) explore how Italian regional Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) strategically employ Facebook to promote and market their destinations, and improves on the current metrics for capturing user engagement. Based on big data analysis from the regional DMOs’ Facebook pages, supplemented with semi-structured interviews conducted with DMO managers, the study sheds light on the factors contributing to superior level of social activity. The findings indicate that the way Facebook is tactically and strategically employed varies significantly across Italian regional DMOs. Visual content (namely photos) and moderately long posts have a statistically-significant positive impact on DMOs' Facebook engagement, whereas high post frequency and early daily timing (in the morning) of posts have a negative impact on engagement. Last but not least, the study shows that most of the regional DMOs (except for Trentino, Tuscany, and Sicily) deploy Facebook with a top-down approach, allowing for little spontaneous user generated content (UGC).

To summarise, Section 2.1.3 reveals that

1. Social media marketing in Facebook is possible by building online brand communities by creating company Facebook pages. Many authors have studied the customer motivations for individuals to choose to join a Facebook brand community.
2. One of the most important objective of social media marketing on facebook pages is to engage the customers. Different authors have shed light on the type of content that effectively engages the customer. Many of them have tried to develop a scale for Customer engagement in Social media.

3. This Customer engagement leads to relationship development which in turn creates behaviour outcomes such as purchase intentions, Loyalty intentions and advocacy intentions (Word-of-mouth). Many studies also shed light on this topic.

2.2 RELATIONSHIP MARKETING

It is widely accepted that building and maintaining lasting customer relationships through relationship marketing tactics is not only one of the most definitive ways to build a sustainable competitive advantage in most industries (Barlow, 2000) but also represents a fundamental paradigm shift in the marketing literature (Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995; Webster, 1992). The main premise of relationship marketing is that the parties involved in the relationship both exert effort to make the relationship mutually beneficial for both the firm and the consumer (Berry, 1983; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Parvatiyar and Sheth, 2000).

In order for maintenance and enhancement of relationships, a two-way communications approach is necessary where both entities are in regular contact with one another and the quality of these communications is high (Gronroos, 2000; Berry, 1995).

Social media gives consumers powerful and active voices in their relationships with Organizations. At its core, social media stands to transform the way that businesses communicate with consumers, fulfilling the goal of relationship marketing in which both parties make investments in, and benefit from, the relationship. Social media gives consumers a voice that marketers cannot ignore. In fact, 85% of marketers cited one of the benefits of social media marketing was the ability to engage in dialogue with consumers (Mershon, 2012). However, in
order for social media to fulfill its function as a tool to co-create value, Companies must make efforts or investments in consumers in order to provide them with incentives to share information and engage in relational behaviours with the organization. Consumers must also provide inputs to the relationship in terms of not only passive permission for companies to track customer information, but also in terms of providing content and conversation for many social media strategies. It is important to understand how Consumers view social media marketing efforts by an organization, and equally important is to understand, how social media interactions influence the relationship, the consumers have with organizations.

2.2.1 Definition

Morgan and Hunt (1994) defined relationship marketing for the first time as “all marketing activities directed toward establishing, developing, and maintaining successful relationships” Relationships can exist between the organization and its customers, and also between the organization and other organizations and stakeholders. Relationships between customers and business firms have been consistently encouraged as successful business practices worldwide.

2.2.2 Evolution of Relationship marketing

Over the past three decades, relationship marketing has been a popular area of research. In the preindustrial era, trade was relationship-based with agricultural producers and craftsmen selling their goods at local markets. The development of customer loyalty was often based on community, family, or tribal affiliations (Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995). Over time relationship marketing evolved as shopkeepers knew customers wants and identified which sales people were good at building relationships with customers (Jain, 2005). The industrial revolution introduced mass production of goods produced and sold at much lower prices. Institutional marketing emerged as intermediaries stored inventory and dispersed goods to diverse markets. This capability led to the introduction of transaction marketing. It led to the 4P’s (i.e. product, price, promotion, place) of marketing theory published by McCarthy.
This transaction-based theory was unique to the robust post-war economy of the United States that characterized sellers as active and buyers as passive with no support of personalized relationships (Murphy et al., 2007) and did not acknowledge the relationship marketing paradigm more common in European and Asian cultures. 1970’s saw most US businesses losing its market share to Asian countries especially Japan. This forced them to review their management principles and paved a way for relationship marketing in place of transaction marketing. The earliest efforts to relationship marketing has been in the form of national contracts and master purchasing agreements to avoid hidden transaction costs of searching and negotiating, which increased the overall cost and led to inefficiencies. This movement led to national accounts management, ongoing buyer–seller relationships, and strategic partnerships (Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995). Relationship marketing origins in the United States were primarily in B2B buyer–seller dyads, and in the service industry (Murphy et al., 2007). While transaction marketing is viewed as a specialized discipline, relationship marketing is seen from a social science perspective and viewed holistically across the business (Harker and Egan, 2006). Webster (1992) called for the study of marketing to expand beyond the microeconomic theories of management to the study of psychology, organizational behaviour, and sociology. In turn, the analysis shifts from product and firms to people, organizations, and social processes. Using the theory of social exchange, Jancic and Zabkar (2002) presented a conceptual framework that showed marketing relationships as intrinsic social exchange as compared to marketing management that is an extrinsic economic exchange. Intrinsic exchanges create perceptions of personal obligation, gratitude and trust.

Europeans had been studying Relationship marketing for over 20 years, dating back to the 1950s and 1960s work of the Copenhagen School (Murphy et al., 2007). Gummesson (1994, 1997) attempted to operationalize relationship marketing by describing it as 30 Rs (relationships) that exist in organizations. Relationships via full-time and part-time marketers, classic dyads, electronic relationships, personal and social networks, mega-alliances, and relationships to external providers of
marketing services were few of the examples of 30 Rs. He posited that relationship marketing is marketing-oriented management that embeds marketing in the whole organization, rather than the one-dimensional marketing management in conventional theory. He viewed transaction marketing as manipulative and used to exploit customers, whereas relationship marketing fostered a win–win environment. Gummesson (1996) proposed that relationship marketing goes beyond the traditional marketing approach that sees competition as the driving force to a theory of mixed economies where competition coexists with collaboration and regulations, which leads to market equilibrium. In the classic market equilibrium, supply and demand are balanced by price and competition. He further advocated for the “de-programming” of marketing theory away from management science and quantitative measurement more towards the qualitative methods of sociology that are more complex and unclear (Gummesson, 2002).

The relational approach to Customer relations has developed in recent years into a major theoretical perspective (Ledingham, 2008). Relationship management drew initially upon interpersonal communication to identify and the nature and key attributes of relationships between organizations and their customers (Thomlison, 2000). Once the relationship approach was explicated and positioned as a viable theory of Customer relations (Broom, Casey, and Ritchey, 1997, 2000; Ledingham, 2003, 2006), most scholarly research focused on identifying and measuring the core attributes of organization-Customer relationships such as trust, control mutuality, satisfaction, commitment, investment, involvement, openness, responsibility, bonding and others (Broom, et al., 1997; Bruning, 2002; Bruning and Ledingham, 1998, 1999, 2000; Grunig, 2002; Grunig and Huang, 2000; Hon and Grunig, 1999; Huang, 2001; Jo, 2006; Kim, 2001; Ledingham and Bruning, 1998, 2000). Based on this research, Customer relations scholars and practitioners have a shared and agreed upon understanding of organization-customer relationships as multi-dimensional, measurable concepts. The existing body of research has also documented the desirability and positive outcomes of mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and customers (Bruning, 2002;
Bruning and Ledingham, 1998, 2000; Grunig and Huang, 2000; Ledingham and Bruning, 1999) and has identified relationship maintenance (Grunig and Huang, 2000; Hon and Grunig, 1999), or cultivation (Grunig, 2006; Ki and Hon, 2009), strategies such as access, positivity, openness, sharing of tasks, networking, and assurances. In a related line of work, Kent and Taylor (1998, 2002) have proposed dialogue as a theoretical framework to guide the creation and maintenance of relationships between organizations and customers. Research suggests that the purpose of Customer relations is relationship cultivation, and scholars and practitioners alike seem to agree that long-term, mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their customers are highly desirable.

2.2.3 Study on Key variables of Relationship Marketing

The pioneering work of Morgan and Hunt (1994) explored the nature of RM and suggested how it should be conceptualized. They theorized that commitment and trust are key variables that mediate successful relationships. They defined commitment as “an exchange partner believing that an ongoing relationship with another is so important as to warrant maximum efforts at maintaining it”. They conceptualized trust as “existing when one party has confidence in an exchange partner’s reliability and integrity”. Their causal model of RM identified the five precursors to commitment and trust as relationship termination costs, relationship benefits, shared values, communication, and opportunistic behaviour. The underlying model identified five additional qualitative outcomes that follow commitment and trust: acquiescence, propensity to leave, functional conflict, uncertainty, and cooperation. They tested their model against a rival model surveying a sample of 1,394 members of the National Tire Dealers and Retraders Association. The rival model did not allow relationship commitment and trust as mediators, but rather treated them as nomologically similar to the antecedents. A total of 204 questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 14.6%. Correlation analysis supported all 13 hypotheses identified by their model, and the more powerful structural equation modelling supported 12 of the 13 hypotheses. They
concluded that relationship commitment and trust precipitate cooperation and contribute to overall competitive performance.

Ndubisi (2004) identified the constructs of RM as trust, commitment, equity and empathy. He defined trust as the partner’s willingness to rely on the other partner with confidence and commitment as the desire of the partners to maintain the relationship due to a desire for mutually satisfying benefits. Equity is the perceived fairness in the buyer–seller relationship. Empathy is the caring and individualized attention given to the customer and the compassion and benevolence that imparts goodwill on the customer. Wilson (1995) proposed that different variables are active during different stages of the relationship. He identified relationship variables as commitment, trust, cooperation, mutual goals, interdependence/power imbalance, performance satisfaction, structural bonds and comparison level of alternative, adaptation, non-retrievable investments, shared technology and social bonds.

Gundlach and Murphy (1993) posited that trust, equity, responsibility and commitment are key variables of exchange. They defined trust as the faith or confidence that the other party will fulfill its obligations of the exchange. They viewed equity in the context of distributive justice and responsibility as an obligation of ethical duties. They defined the characteristics of commitment as stability, sacrifice and loyalty. Commitment lacks credibility if trust, equity and responsibility are not present.

Ndubisi and Wah (2005) identified the key variables of RM taken from numerous previous publications as trust, commitment, competence, equity, benevolence, empathy, conflict handling, and communication. They studied five constructs using a survey of 400 bank customers of 15 of the 20 banks in the city of Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia. Of the convenience sample of 400, 220 usable questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 55%. The results indicated that customers’ perception of their bank depends on the bank’s competence,
commitment, communication, conflict handling and trust, which they identify as the underpinnings of RM.

**Fullerton (2005)** investigated the different effects that components of commitment have on switching intentions (intent to switch suppliers) and advocacy intentions (word-of-mouth recommendations), specifically affective commitment and continuance commitment. The question examined was whether customer commitment in service relationships always leads to customer loyalty. Most research in RM looks at the affective component of commitment, which is a positive form of commitment that relates to feelings of trust, goodwill and shared values. In contrast, continuance commitment is a negative form of commitment related to limited or no alternatives or switching costs that lead to feelings of entrapment, also referred to as the dark side of RM. Fullerton tested 10 hypotheses related to affective and continuance commitment using a closed-ended survey taken at three different service settings: banking, telecommunications, and retail grocery. The three different settings were chosen because they differ substantially in their service attributes, allowing for possible generalization across service industries. Data in the banking survey were collected by personal interview of random consumers leaving the bank with a refusal rate of 60% for 220 completed questionnaires. Data in the telecommunications survey were collected by shopping mall intercept with a refusal rate of 40% for 206 completed questionnaires. Data in the retail grocery survey were collected by store exit interviews with a 40% refusal rate resulting in 208 completed questionnaires. The results suggest that continuance commitment has a weak effect on customer retention but a significant effect on negative word-of-mouth communication. Affective commitment was found to be significantly and negatively related to switching intentions and significantly and positively related to advocacy intentions.

Literature review on Key relationship marketing variables reveal that authors have found that the key relationship marketing variables as trust, commitment, responsibility, bonding, empathy, equity, Conflict handling, competence,
benevolence and communication. Among them, the most cited variables are trust commitment, bonding and responsibility. Hence these variables have been included in our study.

2.2.3.1 Trust

Rotter’s (1967, p. 651) in his study in 1967 defined trust as “a generalized expectancy held by an individual that the word of another ... can be relied on” Deutsch (1973) defines trust as the confidence that one will find what is desired from another, rather than what is feared. Barney and Hansen (1994) suggest that trust is the mutual confidence that no party to an exchange will exploit another’s vulnerability. Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995) affirm that trust is the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of the party.

Therefore it is extremely important for the business to communicate in such a way so as to earn the consumer’s trust. In their study, Moorman, Deshpande and Zaltman (1993, p. 82) reinforce the classical study by defining Trust as a “willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence”. In a pioneering study, Morgan and Hunt (1994) defined trust as existing when one party has confidence in an exchange partner's reliability and integrity. The review of social psychology literature reveals that trust consists of two essential elements, trust in the partner’s honesty and trust in the partner’s benevolence. Honesty is the belief that the Company or the brand stands by its word. Benevolence is the belief that the Company or the retail store is interested in the customer’s welfare and will not take unexpected actions which will negatively impact the Customer’s welfare (Geyskens and Steenkamp, 1995). Wetzls et al., 1998 postulated that if partners in a relationship trust each other they are more emotionally involved and less consciously weighing the benefits against the costs of that relationship. So any company that instills trust in its brand in the customer’s mind will be able to charge a premium for its products and the consumers will gladly pay for it. Kramer (1999) posited that trust has both thinking and feeling aspects to it and that trust is socially oriented and motivated. He defined trust as the rational choice based on recognizing
the motivations of others. So it means that trust in an individual is dependent on what his peers or people in his social circle think and act. Mishra et.al 2008 found that communication is critical for demonstrating all aspects of trust (i.e., reliability, openness, competence, and concern). So communication in an effective medium is of paramount importance is the key to build trust in customer’s mind.

**Delegado Ballister (2001)** defines brand trust as Feeling of security held by the consumer 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 of the consumer. **Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001, p. 82)** define brand trust as “the willingness of the average consumer to rely on the ability of the brand to perform its stated function”. **Ha and Perks, (2005) Pitta, Franzak, and Fowler, (2006)** define brand trust as consumers secure belief that a brand will perform as expected upon consumption.

### 2.2.3.2 Commitment

**Definition: Morgan and Hunt (1994)** define commitment as “an exchange partner believing that an ongoing relationship with another is so important as to warrant maximum efforts at maintaining it” (p.23). In traditional exchange relationships, commitment is generally defined as “an enduring desire to maintain a valuable relationship” (Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpande, 1992, p. 316).

Commitment is considered as one of the most critical issues in the customer relationship and customer behaviour literature (Garbarino and Johnson, 1999). Good customer relationships cannot be built effectively without a solid foundation of commitment (Fullerton, 2005; Hocutt, 1998). Such a commitment is built upon the mutual benefits that the trading partners receive by maintaining their business relationship. In the service relationship literature, customers’ commitment to companies is viewed as a precursor of brand loyalty and is built through providing superior benefits and promoting companies’ values (Garbarino and Johnson, 1999).
2.2.3.3 Bonding

Callaghan et al. (1995) defined Bonding as the dimension of business relationship that results in two parties (buyer and seller) acting in a unified manner toward a desired goal Sin et al. (2002) said that the dimension of bonding as it applies to relationship marketing consists of developing and enhancing customer loyalty, which results directly in feelings of affection, a sense of belonging to the relationship, and indirectly in a sense of belonging to the organization. Wilson (1995), classified bonding into two categories: social bond and structural bond. Social bond has a number of dimensions including social interaction, closeness, and friendship and performance satisfaction. Wilson and Mummalaneni (1986) find that stronger personal bonds among buyers and sellers lead to a greater commitment to maintain the relationship.

Studies focusing on the presentation of self in social networking sites have invariably stressed the “network aspect” of the profile, where the display of connections is as crucial as the users’ self-descriptions (Boyd, 2006; Donath, 2008; Livingstone, 2008; Papacharissi, 2009). For instance, in a study of teenagers’ use of social networking sites, Livingstone (2008) found that in some cases “position in the peer network was more significant than the personal information provided, rendering the profile a place marker more than a self-portrait” (p. 399, emphasis added). Extending these insights to organizational communication, Kavada (2012) considers “self-display” to be the information generated by official representatives of the organization. The “public display of connections” consists of representations of the organization’s supporters and of their relationship with the organization and with their fellow supporters. If, as Boyd (2006) argues, individuals are “who they know” on social networking sites, organizations are “who supports them”, but this image is also affected by the content added by their supporters on the organizational profile. Investigating these platforms as a site of interaction turns our attention to the ways in which they frame group communication. Who communicates with whom and where this communication is located in the continuum between personal and
impersonal, private and public, reciprocal and one-way are important for bonding and the development of a shared identity. “Who communicates with whom” draws the boundaries, real or imaginary, of the group.

Reciprocity and interactivity are important both for bonding and for the development of a collective identity. The latter requires a process of “interactive broadcasting” (Etzioni and Etzioni, 1999) enabling participants to send messages that reach many people simultaneously and allowing those who are addressed by the broadcast to provide feedback not only to the “broadcaster” but also to other recipients. Etzioni and Etzioni (1999) call the latter “communal feedback”, noting that it is central for “mutual persuasion”, the process through which people with different opinions come to develop a shared position. In other words, constructing a shared identity requires modes of communication that include many-to-many, one-to-many, and many-to-one.

Bonding, on the other hand, necessitates one-to-one communication that can provide a high level of encompassing knowledge of others (Kavada (2010b). Being able to authenticate the information that one receives and to hold others accountable are vital for the development of ties. In their analysis of collective action as a communicative phenomenon, Flanagin et al. (2006) note that for strong ties to be created, activists need personal interaction. This “involves repeated, organized interaction with known others over time and the development of interpersonal relations” (Kavada (2010a). Impersonal interaction, on the other hand, “emphasizes the expression or pursuit of interests and concerns” (Kavada (2010b), p. 33), but does not involve any personal and direct interaction with others. This is more suited to “affiliative” ties that develop when individuals feel a sense of connection as a result of their shared affiliation to the organization.

Sin et al. (2002) identified three themes in social bonding namely, a sense of belonging to the relationship, a sense of belonging to the organisation and a feeling of affection which results in a desire to maintain a long-term relationship with the
company. **Ju and Chung (2002)** developed a scale of bonding using the three themes.

### 2.2.3.4 Responsibility

**Gundlach and Murphy, (1993)** defined Responsibility as the ethical obligations that are linked to the morality of managerial duties. The essence of management is taking responsibility for its actions. Three types of responsibility are identified in the literature. Role causal and capacity *(Toffler 1986)*. Role responsibility refers to the actions and obligations specified by one’s role. Causal responsibility refers to the fact that if the business has caused harm, it has a moral responsibility to rectify its mistake. Capacity responsibility refers to the fact that the business has the responsibility to deal with the situation if one has the capability to do so. In other words, it is the indicator of the capability of the business. Though perceived responsibility by customers is very important in the relationship building exercise, not many authors have explored the outcomes of this variable. **Begalle SM (2008)** developed a scale for responsibility by considering three sub topics namely Meaning of responsibility, Indicators of responsibility and demonstrations of responsibility.

### 2.2.3.5 Studies on Social Media Marketing and Key Relationship Marketing Variables

**Leimeister et al. (2005)** point out that in online communities, the concept of trust is based on both community characteristics and interpersonal relationships. **Hsu et al. (2007)** share a similar view, suggesting that trust in online communities may be built upon the benefits derived from information and knowledge in the community, and also upon the identification with other members in the community. **Hsiao et al. (2010)** also report that users’ purchasing intention in an online community is influenced by two aspects of trust: trust in the website (which is based on website characteristics), and trust in other members’ recommendations (which is based on the trustworthiness of other members).
Jang et al. (2007) have confirmed that Online Brand Community participation contributes positively to community commitment.

Kim et al. (2008a) suggested that Consumers with strong OBC commitment tend to have stronger brand commitment an analysis of a large data set from studies involving OBCs further confirms the positive influence of OBC participation on Commitment.

Westerlund et al. (2009) indicate, trust in social networking communities can be understood in the context of interpersonal relationships, that is, trust between members in the community. Based on above, we thus conceptualize that trust in the brand page can be categorized into two constructs: information-based trust and identification-based trust. Information-based trust represents customer’s trust in the information that posted on the brand page, including information from companies and from other customers. Identification-based trust represents customer’s trust in other members on the brand page, which is based on the trustworthiness of other customers.

Cvijikj and Michahelles (2011a) suggested that the major characteristic of brand pages is the dissemination of brand information to customers. The information allows customers to better assess the quality of the brand page (e.g., honesty and integrity). Therefore, brand page trust may be largely based on the brand page’s information quality, such as accuracy, reliability, and objectivity.

Lankton and McKnight (2011) suggested that customers’ interpersonal trust on the brand page may be based on their identification with others. The trustworthiness (e.g., honesty, integrity, benevolence) of brand page members can also be transferred to the brand page, and therefore can help customers build stronger confidence on the brand page.

Men, L.R. and Tsai, W.H.S (2012) examined how companies use popular social network sites (SNSs) to facilitate dialogues with publics in two culturally
distinct countries: China and the United States thereby cultivating relationships with their customers. Overall, companies in both countries have recognized the importance of SNSs in relationship development and employed the appropriate online strategies disclosure, information dissemination, and interactivity and involvement, but the specific tactics vary across the two markets.

Wirtz et al. (2013) observed that one of the outcomes of Customer engagement on Facebook is commitment. They felt that the long-term survival of an Online brand Community depends greatly on its members’ commitment and continued participation in the community relationships. Such commitment and participation are particularly important in the online context, as members can switch to an alternative Online Brand Community with just a few easy clicks.

Turri et al. (2013) indicate that emotional relationships are cultivated by the intimacy and self-connection a consumer has, towards the brand or artist. This intimacy and connection can lead to an emotionally based attachment and bond, or affective commitment. Strong affective commitment from the consumer can be extremely valuable to the brand and his/her music because it leads to loyalty in the form of purchase behaviour, and repeat purchase behaviour and advocacy for the brand. Affective commitment that is the desire to maintain a long-term relationship with the brand can be brought about by emotionally engaging the consumers on Facebook by providing emotionally rich content.

Logan, K., (2014) compares the antecedents to young adults’ intentions to follow brands on Twitter and Facebook. A 90 item questionnaire was filled in by 502 respondents and three conclusions that emerge. First, perceived ease of use directly affects users’ intentions to follow brands on Facebook and Twitter. Second, peer pressure is an important factor in the decision to follow brands on Facebook and Twitter. Third, consumers’ attitudes toward following brands on Facebook and Twitter do not directly affect their intentions to follow brands.
Mohamed Tawfik, A. (2015) et al explored perceptions about consumer electronics retailers’ use of Social media. Information gathering about products is not the main SM usage but is fairly common. Users think product pictures with brief captions are best and like Facebook and Instagram most for this. They like frequent updates but dislike irrelevant posts simply to generate a stream of notifications. Content and organization of the corporate SM site are important in fostering repeat visits.

Habibi and Richard, (2014) developed a model depicting how consumers’ relationship with the elements of a brand community based on social media (i.e. brand, product, company and other consumers) influence brand trust. Questionnaires were sent to brand community members via twitter, facebook and myspace. They found that the elements of the social media namely brand, product and company have a positive influence on brand trust whereas customer–other customer relationships negatively influence brand trust. Also, community engagement efforts play a moderating role between elements of the brand community and it positively influences brand trust. The same authors also with the help of a survey-based empirical study with 441 respondents established that social media have positive effects on customer / product, customer / brand, customer / company and customer / other customer’s relationships, which in turn have positive effects on brand trust and trust has positive effects on brand loyalty. They found that brand trust has a fully mediating role in converting the effects of enhanced relationships in brand community to brand loyalty Habibi and Richard (2013).

Beukeboom, C.J., Kerkhof, P., and de Vries, M. (2015) used pre–post-measure experiment compared brand evaluations of ‘current followers’ of a target brand’s Facebook page, with ‘new followers’ instructed to ‘like’ the page and ‘non-followers’ over one month. Results showed a significant positive increase for new followers on brand evaluations, whereas non-followers showed no change. Current followers were most positive in evaluations overall but showed no change over time. This provides evidence that following a brand’s Facebook updates can cause positive
changes in brand evaluations. The effects were explained by perceived conversational human voice, indicating the importance of brand interactivity.

Section 2.2 reveals that

1. Social media especially Facebook has all features necessary for the company to engage in two-way dialogue with their customers.
2. Two-way dialogue enabled by social media is most essential for relationship building.
3. The key relationship variables identified by literature are Trust, Commitment, Bonding and Responsibility.
4. Studies on the effect of Social media and key relationship marketing variables shows that Social media marketing positively impacts key relationship marketing variables but the studies are scarce in India.

2.3 STUDIES RELATING TO CUSTOMER INTENTIONS

Many authors have agreed that the outcomes of Relationship marketing are Purchase and loyalty intentions. Many studies which have been discussed earlier have postulated that trust has a significantly positive influence on consumer purchase intention and positive word-of-mouth has a moderating effect between the influences of trust on consumer purchase and loyalty intentions. Morgan and Hunt in their Trust commitment theory said that Trust leads to Commitment and Commitment leads to Purchase and Loyalty intentions.

2.3.1 Purchase Intention

Dodds et al. (1991) defined Purchase intention as the subjective judgment by the consumers that is reflected after general evaluation to buy products or services (Hsu, 1987; Blackwell et al., 2001 and Shao et al., 2004). Several meanings can be deduced from the statement, which is: (1) Buyer’s willingness to consider buying,
(2) buying intention in the future, (3) decision repurchase. Other than that, purchase intentions refer to the degree of perceptual conviction of a customer to purchase a particular product (or service). Since it is expressed as a customer’s will to promise certain activity related to future consumption, many studies have employed purchase intention to estimate a brand’s future profits.

Van der Heijden et al. (2003) observed that Consumers purchase decisions have been studied to a large extent using frameworks from ‘offline’ and traditional modes of purchasing Purchase decisions have been researched in regards to online websites but minimal work has been studied about purchase behaviour through social networking sites. A common theme in current online purchase decision research indicates online stores are important and highly visible representatives of the ‘new economy’ (van der Heijden and Verhagen, 2002). Thus purchasing online is becoming a common way of shopping (van der Heijden et al., 2003).

2.3.2 Loyalty Intention

According to Henry, A. (1992, p. 87), brand loyalty is “a favourable attitude toward a brand resulting in the consistent purchase of the brand over time.

Marketing literature has paid much importance to loyalty (Evanschitzky, Gopalkrishnan, Plassmann, Niessing, and Meffert, 2006; Harris and Goode, 2004; Oliver, 1999 Dick and Basu, 1994). Company success and long-term sustainability are dependent on how loyal their customers are (Casalo et al., 2007; Flavian et al., 2006; Keating et al., 2003). Research findings suggest loyalty leads to increased word-of-mouth (Hallowell, 1996), lower price sensibility (Lynch and Ariely, 2000), more company stability and larger profits (Knox and Denison, 2000), reduced marketing costs (Griffin, 2002), and decreased levels of customers switching to competitors (Yi and La, 2004). Past research found that it costs approximately five times more to acquire a new customer than to retain an old customer (Srinivasan, Anderson, and Pannavolu, 2002). In sum, the more loyal a
consumer is, the more profit the business can generate from this single customer (Griffin 2002).

Authors have generally considered Loyalty from two different perspectives: behavioural and attitudinal (Auh, Bell, McLeod, and Shih, 2007; Bloemer and de Ruyter, 1998; Hallowell, 1996). Consumers’ repeat purchase intentions are referred as Behavioural loyalty (Shang, Chen, and Liao, 2006). Oliver (1999) states that loyalty from this perspective reflects a deeply held commitment to re-buy a preferred product or re-patronize a service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand purchasing despite situational influences and marketing efforts. Hallowell states that loyalty behaviour can be explained by a situation when other alternatives exist but the consumer considers these alternatives to be of lower value than the value considered for the original seller. Loyalty from this perspective is considered “a non-random behaviour, expressed over time, which depends on psychological processes and closeness to brand commitment” (Casalo et al., 2007, p.779). As Griffin (2002) points out, non-random is the key as a “loyal customer has a specific bias about what to buy and from whom” (p. 5). This implies that although satisfactory alternatives exist, loyal consumers give preference to a particular brand or company (Casalo et al., 2007).

An attitudinal perspective, which is how loyalty is defined in this study, is a positive attitude toward a company that exists based on an internal evaluation and is distinguishable between “real” loyalty and “spurious” loyalty due to high switching costs (Fuentes-Blasco, Saura, Berenguer-Conti, and Moliner-Velazquez, 2010). “Real” loyalty means that the consumer has a strong preference for the brand (Mowen and Minor, 2006), and that purchases of the brand are guided by “concomitant” strong attitudes toward the brand; This study considers loyalty from an attitudinal perspective because the study is concerned first with the consumer’s internal evaluation of the company based on their experience with the companies’ Facebook page they “like”, and second how the evaluation of this experience with the company influences (re)purchase intentions.
2.3.3 Studies relating to Social Media and Customer Intentions

Cyr (2008) said that e-loyalty is dependent on whether users will switch to other sites. Additionally, e-loyalty from a behavioural perspective can be considered as the intention to revisit the site or the intention to (re)purchase from the site in the future. E-loyalty from an attitudinal perspective can be considered a positive attitude toward the company’s web entity and it is that which fosters a sense of commitment and attachment to the brand.

Fuentes-Blasco et al. (2010) said that the internet provides companies with many opportunities to connect to, message with, and sell products to consumers (e.g., websites, social media applications – blogs, forums, social networking sites). Interest in how these mediated encounters influence consumer loyalty has increased among practitioners and scholars. Online loyalty or e-loyalty within an online context extends the traditional context of loyalty to online consumer behaviour. E-loyalty, like loyalty, is considered both a behavioural and attitudinal measure. From a behavioural perspective, e-loyalty is defined as a “customer’s intention to buy” from a website.

Casalo et al. (2010) considered whether participation in a virtual community dedicated to software predicted loyalty toward the software. After conducting an online survey of virtual community members, it was found that loyalty is directly influenced by participation within the virtual community. Not only were the members loyal to the online community but they were also loyal to the software brand the community was centered on. Thus, the researchers suggested that marketers consider developing virtual communities that encourage participation among members to influence loyalty.

Christodoulides and Michaelidou (2011) proposed a model of motives for online shopping. The model proposes that social interaction will positively affect e-loyalty. The researchers define social interaction very similarly to how other researchers define participation. Specifically, they define social interaction as the
opportunity for “consumers to socialize, interact, and exchange information” about a specific company’s products and about shopping experiences through social networks (e.g. Facebook), blogs and online communities. After conducting an online survey, Christodoulides and Michaelidou concluded that social interaction positively affects e-loyalty. The researchers state that companies who provide opportunities for their customers to socialize online significantly enhance the shopping experience, which has the potential to increase levels of e-loyalty (Christodoulides and Michaelidou; Kozinets, 2002; Srinivasan et al., 2002).

Erdoğan, I.E., and Cicek, M. (2012) identified the effect of social media marketing on brand loyalty of the consumers. The scope of the study consists of customers who follow at least one brand on the social media in Turkey and the data were collected through the administration of a structured questionnaire with a sample of 338 people and tested via stepwise multiple regression analysis. The results of the study showed that brand loyalty of the customers is positively affected when the brand offers advantageous campaigns, offers relevant content, offers popular content, appears on various platforms and offers applications on social media. Customers prefer to share music, technological-related, and funny content on social media platforms. Based on the above, they recommended companies may work on creating more engaging, participative and interesting applications to capture consumer interest.

Tseng, Kuo, and Chen (2014) in their study, stated that “E-WOM was found to play a very important role on purchase intentions. Furthermore, this study found that positive E-WOM is positively related to purchase intentions and has a greater effect on purchase intentions than ads. Their findings suggest that firms should encourage members to share their knowledge or experience rather than just posting ads, especially in non-transaction virtual communities. In addition, low-involvement ads have negative effects in virtual communities, so firms should design high-involvement ads, such as virtual props, blogs, and rich media, to attract the attention of potential customers”.

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**Balakrishnan et al. (2014)** studied the impact of social media marketing medium towards brand loyalty and purchase intention in Generation Y. Surveys were conducted randomly and questionnaire distributed to undergraduate students of Malaysian universities. Two Hundred questionnaires were distributed with 75 percent response rate. The result indicated that the **online marketing communications, specifically, EWOM, online communities and online advertisement are effective in promoting brand loyalty and product purchase intention through company website and social media platforms.**

**Thom (2016)** investigated the relationship between Facebook advertisement and online purchase intention through studying about the way that Facebook advertisement improves **brand attitude, brand image and brand equity and the way three of them changes customer purchase intention.** Their results show that Facebook advertisement has a positive effect on brand attitude, brand image, brand equity and purchase intention. Brand image affects brand attitude and brand equity but does not have any relation with purchase intention. In contrast, brand attitude and brand equity positively affect purchase intention. It indicates a direct relationship between Facebook advertisement and online purchase intention through increasing brand attitude and brand equity.

**Pongpaew, W. et al. (2016)** looks at how customer brand engagement through corporate Facebook pages impacts brand trust, and indirectly brand loyalty. Perceived social presence is an important element in using the corporate FB page well. A survey of 425 users of corporate FB pages of smart device brands (laptops, tablets, smart phones) in Thailand shows that customer brand engagement and perceived social presence both have a significant impact on brand trust. Brand trust has a large impact on brand loyalty but perceived social presence also has a smaller, but significant impact. Customer brand engagement does not have a direct impact on brand loyalty but works indirectly through brand trust.
2.3.4 Studies relating to Relationship Marketing and Customer Intentions

Though relationship marketing through social media is new, there are many studies which shed light on the outcomes of relationship marketing. The outcomes of Relationship marketing documented are favourable customer intentions such as Purchase intention, Loyalty intention, Word-of-mouth, revisiting the theatre etc. This section throws light on the various research studies which have been conducted on this subject.

Garbarino and Johnson (1999) studied the mediating role of customer satisfaction, trust and commitment between component attitudes (Actor satisfaction, familiar actors, theatrical facility satisfaction) and Future intentions (Intention to purchase more tickets) in a theatrical setting. They differentiated the customers as low relational customers or casual customers and high relational customers. High relational customers, according to them are those who have partnership orientation with the company. They investigated two structural models. They found that for low relational customers, only satisfaction mediates the relationship between Component attitudes and future intentions. However, for high relational customers who expected more of a relationship, Trust and commitment operated in serial between component attitudes and future intentions.

Mattila (2001) suggested that the customers who felt strong emotional bonds with the restaurant in question held favourable intentions, that is to visit the restaurant more often and dine. Their study gives empirical support to the concept that the affective commitment to the service provider strengthens the social and personal bonds which result in favourable Behavioural intentions such as Purchase and loyalty intentions in customers.

Wulf et al. (2001) in their research, investigating retailer-consumer relationships, showed that different relationship marketing tactics have a differential impact on consumer perceptions of a retailer’s relationship investment; demonstrated that perceived relationship investment affects relationship quality,
ultimately leading to behavioural loyalty; and finally revealed that the effect of perceived relationship investment on relationship quality is contingent on a consumer's product category involvement and proneness to engage in retail relationships. The authors empirically cross-validate the underlying conceptual model by studying six consumer samples in a three-country, transatlantic, comparative survey that investigate two industries. The important contribution of this study is that consumer’s product category determines the key relationship marketing variables that affect relational outcomes.

Mukherjee and Nath, P. (2003) studied the role of trust encompasses the exchanges and interactions of a retail bank with its customers on various dimensions of online banking. They specifically laid stress on the bank-to-customer exchanges taking place through the technological interface. They hypothesize shared value, communication and opportunistic behaviour as antecedents to trust and found that trust and commitment have a causal relationship in an online banking context. With a sample of 510 Internet users of various profiles in India, they developed a structural equation model (Lisrel) and observed that shared value is most critical to developing trust as well as relationship commitment. Communication has a moderate influence on trust, while opportunistic behaviour has a significant negative effect. They found that higher perceived trust enhanced significantly customers’ commitment in online banking transaction.

Neng-pai, James and Ching (2003) suggested that relational bonding strategies foster customer trust and commitment in a financial services industry. These relational bonds are of three types. i.e. Economic, social and structural. All these bonds are positively correlated with the trust and commitment. Moreover, the customer’s use of corporate website significantly strengthens the relationship between trust and commitment and social bonds.

Algesheimer, Dholakia, and Herrmann, (2005) believe that the consumer's sense of belonging to the brand community influences his behavioural intentions such as loyalty and repurchase. They developed and estimated a
conceptual model of how different aspects of customers’ relationships (Trust, commitment) with the brand community, influence their intentions and behaviours.

Gounaris (2005) investigated the role of trust and commitment on the behavioural intentions (intention to maintain and invest into an existing relation) of corporate clients of professional service providers. Moreover, to underpin the comprehension of the process through which trust and commitment develop. It was revealed that service quality and bonding strategies employed by the company lead to trust. Trust leads to commitment. Commitment leads to a higher sense of connectedness which in turn leads to behavioural intentions.

Algesheimer, Dholakia, and Herrmann (2005) believe that the consumer’s sense of belonging to the brand community influences his behavioural intentions such as loyalty and repurchase. They developed and estimated a conceptual model of how different aspects of customers’ relationships (Trust, commitment) with the brand community influence their intentions and behaviours.

Liang and Wang (2005) empirically tested a conceptual model examining the interplay between relationship bonding on customer satisfaction, trust / commitment, and customer behavioural loyalty in a relationship marketing system in financial services. Based on three groups of samples from XYZ bank, one of the well-established merchant banks in Taiwan, the study's findings suggest that financial products with different product attributes will benefit the most from individual types and levels of relationship investment that can be applied directly to each product.

Mukherjee and Nath (2007) studied whether Commitment trust theory held good in an online context where there is no physical interaction between the buyer and the seller. They used structural model to test their results. Their study found that Websites can gain the trust using proper privacy and security features of the website along with shared values which act as antecedents of trust, which in turn positively influences relationship commitment. Behavioural intentions of
customers (Purchase intention, word-of-mouth and revisiting intention) are consequences of both trust and commitment operating in serial.

Keh and Xie (2009) in their research said that Customer trust, Customer Commitment and customer identification with brand communities (based on social bonds) together serially mediate the relationship between Corporate reputation and customer purchase intention. They tested the model by using data from 351 customers of three Chinese B2B service firms. Results indicate that corporate reputation has a positive influence on both customer trust and customer identification. Customer commitment mediates the relationships between the two relational constructs (customer trust and customer identification) and behavioural intentions. Customer identification and customer commitment relate closely, but they are distinct constructs in the B2B setting. Customer identification with the brand community is based on the deep social bonds or sense of connectedness with other members.

Hsu et al. (2010) explored the consumer’s views on enterprises conducting relationship marketing through micro-blogging. The basis of this study is the based on commitment-trust theory with the influences of consumer’s satisfaction with the micro-blog page of enterprises, corporate images, commitment, trust, and sense of connectedness to community (social bonding) on consumer’s behavioural intention. The result of this study shows that consumer’s satisfaction has positive influences on commitment, trust, sense of connectedness to community, and behavioural intentions. The influences of corporate images on commitment and trust are supported, but the influences on behavioural intentions must go through the mediators, trust, commitment and sense of connectedness to community. Lastly, the influences of commitment and sense of belonging to community (Social bond) on behavioural intentions exist.

Sashi, C.M. (2012) said that the desire for relationships with customers is implicit in marketing and marketing in Social media is no different. For effective customer engagement, developing trust and commitment is important.
Affective Commitment leads to development of emotional bonds. They developed a model which arrayed the customers in a customer engagement matrix according to the degree of relational exchange and emotional bonds that characterize their relationship with sellers. Four types of relationships emerge transactional customers, delighted customers, loyal customers, and fans. Transactional customers have the lowest emotional bonds whereas the fans have the highest emotional bonds.

Turri et al. (2013) examines how emotional, or affect-based brand relationships, are developed in online social communities. It explores this phenomenon in the context of personal branding for music artists and uses Facebook as a social medium. A conceptual model is developed and empirically tested. Findings indicate that emotional relationships are cultivated by the intimacy and self-connection a consumer has toward the brand or artist. This intimacy and connection or affective commitment can lead to an emotionally based attachment and bond, Strong affective commitment from the consumer can be extremely valuable to the branded artist and his/her music because it leads to loyalty in the form of purchase behaviour, reduced digital piracy, support of artistic vision and advocacy for the artist. However, value co-creation also plays an important role in developing emotionally based brand relationships and value-co-creation interacts with the impact of affective commitment on loyalty and advocacy.

Bilgihan, Okumus, F. and Cobanoglu, (2013) in their study aimed to develop a theory-based model of relationship commitment in an online social network (OSN) context for Generation Y travellers. An online questionnaire was sent to a systematic random sample of 12,000 students at six U.S. universities. A total of 513 respondents participated in the study. Study results suggest that perceived utility and trust are positively related to both affective and calculative commitment. This study highlights the pivotal role of affective commitment in developing loyalty to travel-related OSNs.

Lombard et al. (2014) explored the relationship between key variables and customer loyalty within the independent financial adviser environment in Gauteng.
The population was defined as all the clients of independent financial advisers in the Gauteng region. A convenience non-probability sampling technique was applied and self-administered questionnaires were distributed to the clients in Gauteng who matched the sampling frame. A total of 123 questionnaires were completed and could be used in the analysis. Descriptive and standard multiple regression analysis, as well as the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) technique was used to analyse the results. Trust and commitment were proved as predictors of customer loyalty within the independent financial adviser environment in Gauteng and must form part of the core of the financial adviser’s relationship building strategies. It is, therefore, important for independent financial advisers to ensure that their clients have confidence in their ability to provide sound financial advice. Clients must be convinced that financial advisers have their best interest at heart and as such, should remain committed to their practices.

Ponder et al. (2016) examined the mediating effects of interactive communication and social bonds on the trust–commitment relationship in the professional services context. Qualitative and quantitative data are gathered from respondents engaged in attorney–client and real estate–client relationships. Study hypotheses are examined and mediation tests are conducted utilizing the serial multiple mediator model proposed by Hayes (2013). The findings indicate that intimate relationships in the professional services context are characterized by interactive communication and social bonds. The variables act as full mediators of the trust commitment relationship. Though trust has a positive and significant effect on commitment in isolation, this relationship becomes non significant when simultaneously accounting for the effects of the two variables.
2.4 IDENTIFICATION OF RESEARCH GAPS

This chapter has studied in depth the dimensions of Social media, theories pertaining to Social media, how customers are engaged in social media, the evolution of relationship marketing, Key variables of relationship marketing such as trust, commitment, bonding and responsibility, Study of effect of social media variables on relationship marketing, the relationship marketing outcomes such as purchase and loyalty intentions. The study is nascent in that there are few studies relating to Social media and Brand trust and Social media and Purchase intentions. Many studies are also there linking relational marketing constructs and Purchase and loyalty intentions.

2.4.1 Studies Relating to Serial Mediation Relationship Existence between Trust, Commitment, Bonding and Percieved Responsibility

Wilimzig, B.J. (2011) suggest that Online communities in facebook can be built by company facebook pages It was identified that online brand community members on facebook have high feelings of association with the online brand communities they patronize. Members perceive the information within online brand communities as objective, trustworthy, and derived from opinion leaders. Members of online brand communities do not seem to feel obligated or committed to the associated brand, but have high purchase rates and are likely to recommend the brand to friends or associates. Kim and Ko (2012) suggested that trust and intimacy mediate the relationship between social media marketing and Purchase intentions in high fashion retail in Korea.

Bilgihan, Okumus, and Cobanoglu, (2013) suggest that perceived utility and trust are positively related to both affective and calculative commitment. They said that in tourism, developing loyalty to travel-related Online social networks depends on how effective the Company is in building trust and commitment. Habibi and Richard, (2014) say that Brand use and Impression management practices by companies through social media positively influence
brand trust. Xu et al (2015) says increases in consumer belief in a brand’s performance competence and/or benevolence made possible by social media will positively impact on overall brand trust. Pongpaew (2016) looks at how customer brand engagement through corporate Facebook pages impacts brand trust in smart devices segment. So though the studies are scarce, there are still studies which have empirically proven that Social media marketing in facebook pages will lead to customer trust.

Achrol (1991) also claims that trust is among the major determinants of relationship commitment. Moorman et al. (1992) indicate that trust in their service providers significantly influences customer commitment to the relationship. The positive relationships between relational constructs (i.e., trust and commitment) and favourable behaviours are well-documented in the marketing literature (e.g., Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2002). In particular, Doney and Cannon (1997) indicate that the buying firm's trust in a supplier firm is positively related to the buying firm's anticipation of future interaction with the supplier. Commitment has been shown to be positively related to favourable intentions such as repeat purchases, making recommendations, acts of price insensitivity and cross-buying (Musa, Palliste and Robson, 2005). Mukherjee and Nath, P. (2003) found that Trust and commitment have a causal relationship in an online banking context. Garbarino and Johnson (1999) found that Trust and commitment operate in serial between component attitudes and favourable intentions in a theatre setting. Liang and Wang (2005) examined the interplay between customer satisfaction, trust/commitment relationship bonding, and customer behavioural loyalty in a relationship marketing system in financial services.

Devito’s six stage relationship model state that the natural consequence of commitment, that is desire to maintain long-term relationship, is a sense of belonging that leads to formation of social bonds, (Devito 1993) Gustafsson et al., (2005) suggest that affective commitment, results in an emotional bond
between seller and customer that “captures the trust and reciprocity in a relationship” Hsu et al (2010) suggest that relationship marketing through microblogging such as twitter influences behavioural intentions through the mediators, trust, commitment and sense of connectedness (Bonding) to community. Keh and Xie (2009) suggested that Customer identification with brand community mediates the relationship between Trust/commitment and Loyalty. Neng-pai, James and ching (2003) suggested that the relational bonding strategies foster customer trust and commitment in a financial services industry. Ponder et al (2016) said that intimate relationships in the professional services context are characterized by interactive communication and social bonds, and that the variables act as full mediators of the trust commitment relationship. Turri et al. (2013) examine how emotional, or affect-based brand relationships, are developed in online social communities using facebook brand pages as the medium. Findings indicate that emotional relationships are cultivated by the intimacy and self-connection a consumer has toward the brand or artist. This intimacy and connection or affective commitment can lead to an emotionally based attachment and bond, Yim et al., (2008) find that stronger personal bonds among buyers and sellers lead to a greater feeling in buyers that the sellers are responsible and lead to Purchase and loyalty intentions. Kaufmann and Stern, 1988 examine other norms of relationship such as role integrity which leads to perceived responsibility.

Wulf et al. (2001) in their research, investigating retailer-consumer relationships, showed that different relationship marketing tactics have a differential impact on consumer perceptions of a retailer’s relationship investment and is very much dependent on the product category. The authors empirically cross-validate the underlying conceptual model by studying six consumer samples in a three-country, transatlantic, comparative survey that investigate two industries. The important contribution of this study is that consumer’s product category determines the key relationship marketing variables that affect relational outcomes. Schivinski and Dabrowski (2014) studied the effects of firm-created and user-generated social media communication on brand equity, brand attitude, and purchase intention.
They also tried to study the measurement invariance according to four different industries using multi group structural model according to different product categories. Their model did not show any measurement invariance.

As the literature review indicates authors have researched extensively on social media in various countries like Korea, Taiwan and agreed that it has the capability to build trust. Some authors like (Kim and Ko 2012) have explored the mediating role of trust and intimacy operating in parallel between Social media and Purchase intentions. Though the relationship between Trust and commitment is well documented in the literature of Relationship marketing, only a few studies (Turri et al 2013) have explored whether Commitment-Trust theory by Morgan and Hunt (1994) in the Social media context. Literature review brought out the fact that there are contradictions in relationship marketing literature as to whether Commitment induced bonding or vice versa. Authors like Gustafsson et al., (2005) suggest that affective commitment, results in an emotional bond between seller and customer whereas Ponder et al (2016) said that intimate relationships fostered by Social bonds mediate the relationship between Trust and commitment. Keh and Xie (2009) suggested that Customer identification with the brand community (sense of belongingness or bonding) mediates the relationship between Trust/commitment and Loyalty. Still others feel that Relational bonding strategies lead to trust and commitment and finally favourable intentions (Neng-pai, James and Ching (2003).

Hence there is no consensus among the authors on the role of emotional bonds in the path from SMM to purchase intention. Toffler (1986) referred to Causal responsibility as the fact that if the business has caused harm, it has a moral responsibility to rectify its mistake and also stated that the business has the responsibility to deal with the situation if one has the capability to do so. In other words, it is the indicator of the capability of the business. So though Perceived responsibility of the seller is a very important key relationship marketing variable, especially in Social media context, there are no studies which link social media communications to this variable and tell us the importance of this variable on
Purchase and loyalty intentions. Also, very few studies have been conducted in India on this subject. So this study aims to relate Social media marketing with customer intentions through key relationship marketing in four different product categories in India. This study also aims to find the interrelationship among Relationship marketing variables themselves before it leads to favourable customer intentions. Though Perceived responsibility of the seller is a very important key relationship marketing variable, there are no studies which tell us the importance of this variable on Purchase and loyalty intentions. So this study aims to relate Social media marketing with customer intentions through key relationship marketing variables in four different product categories in India. This study also aims to find the interrelationship among relationship marketing variables themselves before it leads to favourable customer intentions.
2.5 THE PROPOSED MODEL

Figure 2.1 The proposed model
Therefore we propose a model with social media as an independent variable, relationship marketing variable (trust, commitment, bonding and responsibility) acting in serial as mediating variables and customer intention (purchase and loyalty) as dependent variables.

2.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What type of content of facebook pages that help companies engage the customer?

2. What are the effect of demographic characteristics (i.e., gender, age, income level and education level) on the social media variable, relationship marketing variables and customer?

3. How are the factors of social media variables related to relationship marketing variables and customer intentions?

4. Do relationship marketing variables have a mediating role between social media variables and customer intentions?

5. Is there a significant model fit among dimensions of Social media marketing variables, relationship marketing variables and customer intentions in four industrial segments vis a vis Clothing, Jewellery, Mobile phones and Mutual funds?

The next chapter sheds light on the research methodology used.