THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL MEDIA BRANDING ACTIVITIES AND BRAND LOYALTY: A SURVEY OF SAUDI TELECOM COMPANIES

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore the relationship between social media branding activities and brand loyalty based on the perspectives of Saudi telecommunication company customers. To investigate this relationship, this study surveyed 108 online customers in March 2019, and one-way ANOVA was used to explore the relationship between demographic information and preferred activities. The study used a five-source model and uses and gratifications theory to determine this relationship. The study concluded that most of the activities contribute to loyalty. Furthermore, functional and emotional branding activities are the most important ones among other activities. This study suggests that the three companies need to find ways to encourage customers to engage in their communities.

Keywords: Brand Loyalty, Saudi Telecom Companies, Social Media Branding Activities.

INTRODUCTION

Achieving brand loyalty is the greatest goal for companies to achieve. Brand loyalty has been considered to be the common method for all organizations to deal with high competition in the marketplace (Nawaz & Usman, 2012). Companies follow many strategies in order to attain this objective. They focus on introducing high quality of services, improving their customer service and delivering a consistent message. In the age of social media, employing technology to build brand loyalty is imperative. Social media sites could eventually compete with more traditional marketing channels, like television and magazines as an effective tool for building emotional association with companies. In order to achieve brand loyalty, companies can get benefits from managing their social media accounts wisely.

In recent years, many firms have used social media to engage customers with the brand, raising brand awareness and attracting more customers. However, researchers agree that those companies have not achieved this goal because they do not fully realize how to build consumer-brand relationship on social media sites, and they still wonder about how brand loyalty can be built and strengthened through social media (Ismail, 2017). Actually, understanding the way to build brand loyalty in brand communities is limited. Only few studies have empirically confirmed that brand loyalty can be developed through user engagement in online brand communities, and few studies provide clear thoughts about what benefits a brand must offer to customers (Zheng et al., 2015).

With the increase of Saudi customers' awareness, many Saudi firms use social media to interact with their customers and to maintain a close relationship. Telecom companies engage with social media for many purposes. This study will figure out the customers' perspectives on these activities. Also, it aims to figure out the relationship between brand loyalty and these activities.

Investigating the relationship between social media branding activities and brand loyalty is important for helping strategic marketers to consider social media seriously in their business. This study is helpful for other companies in different fields to evaluate their presence on social media sites based on customers' perspectives and to promote more activities on social media and try to fix the weakness. Specifically, this study seeks to add to the scholarship related to Saudi telecom, especially after Zain started its business in 2008. Also, it is important for telecom companies to keep up their success by utilizing social media accounts effectively and to find weaknesses which must be improved, or areas that could be used based on scientific base.
For theoretical aspect, this study will give insight on how the five-source model could be used to analyze social media branding activities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview of Social Media Activities and Brand Loyalty

Brands in different sectors engage in social media and build communities for a variety of reasons. They are related to social media features, the market landscape, the products, and the relations with customers. This section highlights those reasons in detail.

Reasons Related to Social Media

Managers want the customers to spread information about the brand through social media sites because they believe that the online environment is the best tools to make their brands well known among the largest numbers of people around the world because geographical and temporal boundaries are readily overcome (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014). The second reason is the low cost and two-way interaction. Social media campaigns are clearly cheaper than television and radio advertising (Valos et al., 2016). From the customers' perspective, they feel comfortable expressing their feelings about the brand and giving their feedback on the products (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014).

Reasons Related to the Market. A competitor's presence on a social media platform is one of the most significant reasons that encourages brands to be involved in social media. A brand can engage to switch customers to its company. The second reason is the financial crisis. Nowadays, companies try to support their brands and, the social media sites is the great way to do so (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014).

Reasons Related to the Product. The brand community seeks to gain brand awareness and how to use the products. Through the social media brand community, customers have a great opportunity to become more familiar with the brand (Tatar & Erdog mus, 2016). Another reason is that fans can support their favorite brands. They can also work as customer service when they fix each other's problems (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014). A brand community can employ as a resource for creative ideas to improve products and services since users openly express their opinions and provide real feedback on how the company works through online brand community (Wirtz et al., 2013).

Reasons Related to the Customers. Customers engage in branding communities for a variety of reasons. The first reason is looking for information. Consumers use social media tools to get knowledge about products they want with the best price (Azar et al., 2016). Contacting customer services to ask about a product or solving a problem is another thing consumers look for (Nisar & Whitehead, 2016).

Some reasons are related to the social and psychological aspects. Asking other customers about their experiences with using a specific product is one of these reasons. Furthermore, repeated conversations may develop friendships that may continue at an interpersonal level. Interactions in branding community indicate that some users continue to interact beyond the brand's community page (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014). Another motivation is social identity because customers generally seek for positive self-esteem, and self-esteem can be resultant from engagement in social groups membership. Social identity is enhanced and improved in social group members through in-group, out-group comparisons (Wirtz et al., 2013). Reward is another motivation to engage with a brand community because it is a comfortable way to get brand campaigns, discounts, and jobs, customers are willing to engage in brand communities (Azar et al., 2016).

Social Media Branding Activities

Companies can provide some activities directly related to their brands and to their customers' daily lives. The first idea is to collaborate with other helpful websites for customers. For example, hotels' pages could include links to airport companies' discounts or free tours (Tatar & Erdog ̆mus, 2016). The second activity is devising competitions with prizes and launch of new products or services. Firms can introduce a new product with all information customers need (Nisar & Whitehead, 2016). The third activity is communicating daily with the users (Park & Kim, 2014). It is important to post some product-related messages without bothering the customers. To communicate daily with the customers, employees may post or tweet simple messages like "Good morning" or "Have a nice week" or ask users how they feel today or what they plan to do within the day or the weekend. The other way to communicate is giving valuable information and advice for the life (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014). The fourth activity is conducting campaigns, considering that the most successful campaigns integrate multiple communication channels like offline and online (Platon, 2014). The research in this area is limited, as there is no research focused on what activity mostly affects brand loyalty.

Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty can be divided into behavioral loyalty and attitudinal loyalty. Behavioral loyalty means that consumers will repurchase products or services from the same distributor. Attitudinal loyalty refers to consumers' commitment or preferences when considering special values correlated with a brand. Brand loyalty as attitudinal loyalty focuses on a feeling of attachment to certain brands and companies (Nisar & Whitehead, 2016).
The importance of brand loyalty is based on the idea that by maintaining customer loyalty, a firm can develop long-term,mutually beneficial relationships with customers. This importance appears obvious under high competition when customers prefer a specific brand among other competitors (Zheng et al., 2015).

Telecom Experiences in using Brand Activities and Importance of Loyalty

Few studies have been done in regard to the telecom sector and branding activities. Bruhn et al. (2012) declare that social media has a strong impact on the telecommunication sector. Therefore, a firm should consider improving their public image through social media communities. Another study found that service including employees plays a critical key in

determining brand loyalty (Alamro, & Rowley, 2011). That can be applied through social media by hiring skilled employees.

Kuusik and Varblane (2009) found that, in regard to telecommunication sector in Estonia, the foundation of loyalty is built through increasing the satisfaction and importance of a relationship. Furthermore, the reliability of products and trustworthiness of the vendor are most critical for behavioral loyalists, and image creation is the main tool for getting committed customers. There is a clear connection between loyalty and satisfaction.

Another study found that the telecom companies use social media tools to keep up the relationship with the customers by offering different types of activities, especially entertainment ones. For example, TLC use some funny questions and asking about its customers lives to catch their attention. However, results indicate that TLC companies do not fully use of the web tools to improve their relationship with customers, especially for entertainment posts because they did not get high engagement for them (Della Corte et al., 2015).

Social media branding communities in regard to telecom companies benefit both managers and customers. The social media tools represent a good way to listen to customers' needs and complains (Della Corte et al., 2015).

Overview of Social Media and Brand Loyalty in Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia has witnessed a notable economy transformation in the last three decades and challenging many obstacles to develop all business sectors. Recently, the Saudi government seeks to vary the economy revenues reflecting the new vision that promotes this perception (Saudi Vision 2030, 2020). Many business sectors were established, and most of them have used social media to interact with customers to attain their loyalty, especially because Saudi Arabia has a notable purchase power among Middle East countries. However, studies in this context that examine the impact of social media activities on brand loyalty in different sectors are still limited (Al Saud & Khan, 2013).

Al Saud and Khan (2013) in their studies claimed that Facebook and Twitter are one of the most important tools to build the brand image and recall in Saudi Arabia. Ajina (2019) studied a specific sector, in which he examined the impact of social media engagement on achieving the brand loyalty in the banking sector. The study concluded that engagement through online activities is in favor of loyalty to the banks. Recently, Alanazia (2023) looked for small and medium enterprises (specializing in fashion) and their impact on customers in Saudi Arabia because Saudis tend to shop online those products. The study found out that all kinds of social media activities especially word of mouth affect positively the loyalty to those brands. According to the researcher's knowledge, there is no study exists to examine the telecom sectors and social media activities although it is an important sector as the literature review has shown previously.

Theoretical Background

Five sources model presents five drivers to engage in a brand community. They are functional, emotional, self-oriented, social "personal," and relational. These main drivers give directions to companies to enhance the relationships with the customers. This model could be used as a framework to assess customers' perspectives toward activities (Davis et al., 2014).

For functional aspect, consumers contact brands with the five primary functional motivations in their minds: solving problems, asking questions, looking for information, evaluating the service before purchasing and to get benefits from special deals (Davis et al.,

2014). Beside that, Davis (2015) states that small business may engage their customers functionally by providing good knowledge in regard to the products and offering rewards.

For emotional aspect, the most common emotional motivations for brand interaction through social media include reducing personal conflicts, feeling privileged and valued by a brand, enjoyment and satisfaction of curiosity (Davis et al., 2014). Davis (2015) asserts that customers need for an experience that provides a kind of fantasy or escapism that creates emotional relation with a brand.

Self-oriented includes three motivators, and they are: self-actualization, self-perception enhancement and self-branding (Davis et al., 2014). Davis (2015) adds that companies need to be consistent with its customers' values, interests, and beliefs to be more relevant to them.

Social aspect achieved by letting the customers interact with each other and give them a space to share their personal brand experiences with others to benefit them (Davis, 2015). For relational brand consumption, this value is characterized by three main motivations: co-creation of the service offering, the intention for personalized brand interaction, and the desire to recognize the real people behind the brand. The "human" element is a significant aspect of the relational aspect of brand consumption (Davis et al., 2014). Davis (2015) adds that social media shorten a distance between customers and brands and establishes a concept that there is always someone who listens to customers' complains and fix problems. Also, this value could be achieving by providing customers a personalized message.

Uses and gratifications theory is a secondary theory that is used. Uses and gratifications theory assumes that individuals are alert recipients of media content and active processors of information (Siraj, 2007, as cited in Li et al., 2013). This theory is related to social media due to its roots in communications research. Hanson and Haridakis (2008) indicate that in the new era of the publishing environment, individual users are playing an important role in disseminating videos and written content as well, so researchers and practitioners should notice the importance of conducting research on social media from an audience-centered perspective, and uses and gratifications is one of these perspectives. Also, it assumes that a user is active and interacts with the medium in different ways. Additionally, the theory does not ignore influence of characteristics on the usage (Katz et al., 1973).

RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHESES

While some studies have examined the relationship between social media activities and brand loyalty, few of them have addressed that in the telecom sector. Therefore, the correlation between social media branding activities and brand loyalty should be addressed because there is a lack in this field and some aspects were not examined like targeting specific segment. Also, telecom companies do not fully exploit social media tools (Della Corte et al., 2015). Besides that, loyalty to telecom companies is critical value based on the literature.

To fill this gap, this study addressed the relationship between social media branding activities and brand loyalty based on the customers' perspectives and in light of the five-source model and uses and gratifications theory.
The following research questions and hypotheses guided the survey:

RQ1: What is the relationship between Saudi telecom companies' activities and brand loyalty?

H1: Customers' brand loyalty is positively influenced when the brand offers functional activities.

H2: Customers' brand loyalty is positively influenced when the brand offers emotional activities.

H3: Customers' brand loyalty is positively influenced when the brand offers social activities.

H4: Customers' brand loyalty is positively influenced when the brand offers relational activities.

H5: Customers' brand loyalty is positively influenced when the brand offers self-oriented activities.

RQ2: How do customers of Saudi telecom companies use their telecom companies accounts on social media?

RQ3: How does the customers' demographics influence the preferred activities that contribute to brand loyalty?

METHODOLOGY

This research is conducted to enhance the knowledge of the relationship between social media activities and brand loyalty. The research is quantitative because the research aims to discover the relationship between the branding activities and brand loyalty. Thus, statistics are needed to perform some tests in order to test the hypothesis. An online survey is distributed to Saudi telecom customers to collect data. Data were collected through an online survey.

The online survey method is chosen to target a large number of participants from Saudi Arabia without incurring major costs. Furthermore, a survey can gather information from a variety of individuals in a relatively short period of time (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). Additionally, many studies that measured the relationship between social media activities and brand loyalty used a survey (Tatar & Eren-Erdoğmuş, 2016).

Population and Sample

The target population comprises customers of Saudi telecom companies who are 18 and older either live in Saudi Arabia or the United States. The researcher depends on convenience sample, snowball sampling. It is a nonprobability sampling technique where existing study subjects ask their friends and families to participate. As the sample participation increases, the target data based on the determined time will be collected (Lodico et al., 2010).

The majority of participants were female (75.93%) and had earned bachelor's degrees (59.26%), and 40.74% of the participants were employed. With regard to age, participants aged 28-32 and 23-27 were equally represented, with 35.19% for each.

Procedures

The survey was created in Qualtrics, an online survey application chosen because it is an advanced website that provides charts of results, some statistical analysis, as well as the ability to exclude some that are not relevant to the research which will be apparent after the use of filter questions.

To recruit the customers, a link to the survey was sent through the messaging application WhatsApp to the researcher's friends and will be posted on different social media platforms, and the invitation to fill out the survey asked people to share the link among their friends and families. At the beginning, there are two filter questions: Are you customer to one of these telecom companies, and do you follow their activities on social media? If the participant says yes, he or she will proceed to the rest of the questions. If he or she answered no to either question, he or she was thanked for their participation. The invitation stated that completing the survey will make the participants more aware of branding activities. A link to the survey was available for three weeks in March 2019. The survey requires five minutes or less for

completion. 108 responses were analyzed after excluding the responses that did not meet the criteria.

Measure

The questions are designed to assess which activities that lead to brand loyalty. Brand loyalty could be defined as: "(1) the biased (i.e. non-random), (2) behavioral response (i.e. purchase), (3) expressed over time, (4) by some decision-making unit, (5) with respect to one or more alternative brands out of a set of such brands, which (6) is a function of psychological (decision making, evaluative) processes resulting in brand commitment" (Bloemer & Kasper, 1995). Although the participation was voluntary, participants were required to answer all questions to submit the survey except for the open-ended question.

The survey depends on structured questions. Questions will be multiple choice, and one question evaluates statements based on a five-point scale. The survey in this study was composed of the following sets of measures: using Saudi company's accounts on social media, functional, emotional, social, self-oriented, brand consumption, and relational brand consumption activities based on the five-source model (Davis et al., 2014). Questions regarding using the companies accounts on social media ask about time spent on the accounts, frequency of usage, and the number of accounts being followed.

Function dimension means controlling over the customers and developing the community by providing valuable things (Davis, 2015). To operationalize functional dimension, the following items will be measured: responding to negative comments, conducting social campaign, making connections with useful websites or applications, introducing new products, conducting survey or polls, frequently tweeting (daily), giving advice, providing prizes and competition, and getting the advantage of positive customers experience with the brand.

Emotional aspect means putting strategies that leverage the community in a new way to promote collective feelings and emotional value (Davis, 2015). To operationalize emotional dimension, the following items will be measured: asking about customers feeling and responding to positive comments.

Social aspect means that a brand has to begin improving relationship by fostering closer social linkages within the community or society (Davis, 2015). To operationalize social dimension, the following items will be measured: asking for mention or retweeting, and live streaming.

Self-oriented evolves around developing the brand image in line with community members (Davis, 2015). To operationalize self-oriented dimension, the following items will be measured: retweets or sharing customers' messages and giving them a specific post to express their thoughts.

Finally, relational brand consumption means that the relationship with customers will be changed in which a brand is no longer a stand-alone observer, and it should provide personalized messages (Davis, 2015). To operationalize relational brand consumption dimension, the following items will be measured: targeting specific segment and creating domestic pages if the company has branches in different countries.

RESULTS

The Relationship between Social Media Branding Activities and Brand Loyalty and Preferred Activities

With regard to preferred activities and based on the average, among function activities, frequently tweeting most strongly impacts loyalty to the company positively (M=2.35, SD= 0.84). Among emotional activities, asking about customers feelings has the strongest positive impact on loyalty to the company (M=2.70, SD=1.07), while among self-oriented activities, retweeting customers' messages most strongly impacts loyalty (M=2.17, SD=0.86). Within socialization activities, asking for mention or retweeting has the strongest impact on loyalty (M=2.70, SD=1.07). Among relational brand consumption, creating domestic pages (M=2.24, SD=0.94) and targeting specific segments (M=2.13, SD=0.90) are almost equal in influencing the loyalty of customers positively. Among the variety of activities, functional and socialization activities most strongly affect loyalty positively, while relational brand consumption has the least effect. Within the suggested branding activities, activities conducted via WhatsApp and celebrity endorsements are the most popular. Also, participants mentioned that the companies need to find effective ways to respond to their complaints through social media.

The frequencies are calculated to examine to what extent the participants believe that the activities affect their loyalty positively.

Table 1
FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

#	Items	Strongly agree		agree		Neither agree nor disagree		disagree		Strongly disagree		Total
1	Responding to negative comments	25.93%	28	53.70%	58	12.96%	14	7.41%	8	0.00%	0	108
2	Social campaigns	12.96%	14	62.96%	68	22.22%	24	1.85%	2	0.00%	0	108
3	Making connections with useful websites	24.07%	26	51.85%	56	16.67%	18	7.41%	8	0.00%	0	108
4	Introducing new products	35.19%	38	42.59%	46	16.67%	18	5.56%	6	0.00%	0	108
5	Frequently tweeting or posting	12.96%	14	50.00%	54	25.93%	28	11.11%	12	0.00%	0	108
6	Giving Advice	24.07%	26	46.30%	50	14.81%	16	12.96%	14	1.85%	2	108
7	Prizes and competitions	40.74%	44	35.19%	38	11.11%	12	12.96%	14	0.00%	0	108
8	Sharing positive experiences of customers	38.89%	42	35.19%	38	12.96%	14	7.41%	8	5.56%	6	108
9	Conducting surveys	22.22%	24	44.44%	48	18.52%	20	12.96%	14	1.85%	2	108

The table 1 shows a huge agreement with the statements that indicate that functional activities contribute to brand loyalty. The majority 62% agreed that social campaigns affect their loyalty positively, while 53 % agreed that response to negative comments affect their loyalty positively. 51 % agreed that making connection with useful websites contribute to earning loyalty. On the other hand, a small percentage show disagreement. Only 12.96% disagreed that prizes and conducting surveys affect loyalty to the telecom companies positively.

#	items	Strongly agree		Agree		Neither agree nor disagree		disagree		strongly disagree		Total
		Table 2 **EMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES**										
1	Asking about customers' feelings	29.63%	32	44.44%	48	12.96%	14	12.96%	14	0.00%	0	108
2	Responding to positive comments	37.04%	40	42.59%	46	16.67%	18	1.85%	2	1.85%	2	108

The table 2 shows a huge agreement with the statements that indicate that emotional activities contribute to the telecom companies' loyalty. 44.44% agreed that asking about customers feeling contribute to loyalty, while 42.59% agreed that responding to positive comments do that. However, a small percentage shows disagreement. Only 12.96% disagreed that asking about customers feeling contribute to loyalty.

#	Items	strongly agree		Agree		Neither agree nor disagree		disagree		strongly disagree		Total
		Table 3 **SOCIALIZATION ACTIVITIES**										
1	Asking for mentions or retweets	14.81%	16	29.63%	32	27.78%	30	25.93%	28	1.85%	2	108
2	Live streaming	14.81%	16	38.89%	42	38.89%	42	7.41%	8	0.00%	0	108

The table 3 shows a huge agreement with the statements that indicate that socialization activities contribute to the telecom companies' loyalty. 38.89% agreed that live streaming contribute to loyalty, while 29.63%% agreed that asking for mentions or retweets do that. However, a small percentage shows disagreement. Only 25.93% disagreed that asking for mentions contribute to loyalty. A considerable percentage of the participants (38.89%) neither agreed nor disagreed that live streaming affect their loyalty positively.

#	items	Strongly agree		agree		Neither agree nor disagree		disagree		Strongly disagree		Total
		Table 4 **SELF-ORIENTED ACTIVITIES**										
1	Retweeting or sharing customers' messages	20.37%	22	51.85%	56	18.52%	20	9.26%	10	0.00%	0	108
2	Giving customers specific space to provide their thoughts	33.33%	36	44.44%	48	16.67%	18	3.70%	4	1.85%	2	108

The table 4 shows a huge agreement with the statements that indicate that self-oriented activities contribute to the telecom companies' loyalty. 51.85% agreed that Retweeting or sharing customers' messages contribute to loyalty, and 44.44% agreed that giving customers specific space to provide their thoughts. However, a small percentage shows disagreement. Only 9.26% disagreed that retweeting or sharing customers' messages contribute to loyalty.

#	items	strongly agree		Agree		Neither agree nor disagree		disagree		strongly disagree		Total
						Table 5 **RELATIONAL BRAND CONSUMPTION**						
1	Targeting specific segments of the population	20.37%	22	48.15%	52	20.37%	22	9.26%	10	1.85%	2	108
2	Creating domestic pages if the company has branches in different countries	18.52%	20	62.96%	68	9.26%	10	5.56%	6	3.70%	4	108

The table 5 shows a huge agreement with the statements that indicate that relational brand consumption activities contribute to the telecom companies' loyalty. 62.96% agreed that creating domestic pages if the company has branches in different countries contribute to loyalty and 48.15% agreed that targeting specific segments of the population, such as teenagers. However, a small percentage shows disagreement. Only 9.26% disagreed that targeting specific segments of the population contribute to loyalty Table 6.

Table 6
THE ORDER OF THE PREFERRED ACTIVITIES

#	activities	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	functional	1.00	5.00	2.09	1.24	1.53	108
2	emotional	1.00	5.00	2.83	1.27	1.62	108
3	socialization	1.00	5.00	3.00	1.39	1.93	108
4	self-oriented	1.00	5.00	3.09	1.27	1.60	108
5	relational brand consumption	1.00	5.00	3.98	1.22	1.50	108

In order to determine the order of preferred activities, the mean is calculated. The functional activities came first (M= 2.09, SD= 1.24), and emotional is the second (M=2.83, SD= 1.27). Socialization came third (M=3, SD= 1.39), and self-oriented came fourth (M=3.09, SD= 1.27). The relational brand consumption is the last preferred activities (M=3.98, SD= 1.22).

Usage Saudi Telecom Social Media Accounts

In order to examine how participants use telecom companies' social media accounts, the percentages of agreement are considered. For the participants who are exposed to Saudi telecom social media accounts from time to time, with 108 participants, customers of Mobily contributed the most to the study.

45% do not remember from which time they began following the accounts, and 20 % of the participants check the followed accounts from five years or longer. Among different platforms, Twitter (with 43.53% of the participants it is the most followed site), Snapchat and Instagram (with 18% of the participants) are the most commonly followed social media platforms. Facebook came at last with 12.94%. The majority (60.00%) of the participants spends less than five minutes online when they check any account. 43.64% of the participants check a Saudi telecom account when they receive notifications, and 21.82% of the participants do that daily. A considerable percentage, which is 12.73%, is exposed to the accounts twice a month.

The Relationship between Demographic Information and Preferred Activities

One-way ANOVA test was used to see if demographic information affects the preferred activities, and the study found that there are no significant differences based on that.

DISCUSSION

Customers of Saudi telecom companies agreed that most of the social media activities lead to brand loyalty. The study confirms previous findings regarding the importance of functional activities like collaboration with helpful websites and conducting competition between customers (Tatar & Erdoğmus, 2016). Furthermore, the study confirms the idea that communicating daily with users is a great idea (Park & Kim, 2014). Also, the researchers agree that conducting campaigns using multiple communication channels like offline and online is one of the most significant strategies (Platon, 2014). Finally, this study suggests that emotionally contact with customers is a great activity, as Tsimonis and Dimitriadis (2014) assert.

The study found that Twitter is the most followed account among others, and this result is consistent with heavy Twitter usage among Saudis. This shows that customers like short, focused messages, as Twitter naturally claims. Since the majority of customers spend less than five-minutes on the site, messages presented through social media should be short and focused.

Although the study found that demographic information has no impact on preferred activities that may not be entirely true because the sample is small. Furthermore, the sample does not represent the society very well because most of the participants had bachelor's degrees and were females in their twenties.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Although there is an acceptable number of a customer who are exposed to Saudi telecom companies' accounts on social media and who agree that different activities contribute to loyalty, there are many customers who are not exposed to these accounts. Therefore, there is a need to investigate why this is so. Companies need to hire experts to encourage customers to

engage in communities and provide a space to offer comments and complaints, especially with regard to service quality, which is the first factor customers consider in the telecommunication sector (Sharma, 2014).

This study adds knowledge to the marketing field because it could be applicable to other business sectors in Saudi Arabia since the majority of the entrepreneurs has accounts on different social media platforms, and they have millions of followers. All industry provides services or products and has a high competition, and ultimately, they need to know what customers are seeking for from their accounts.

Another importance appears in testing five sources model to evaluate companies' social media activities. The model shows that it is applicable to evaluate social media activities because all the activities can fit under the five categories. This model is a good one because it depends on previous literature to list the evaluation standards and uses five source models as a framework for these standards. Moreover, some criteria were used based on the author's knowledge, for example, using surveys and live streaming on social media.

Direction for Future Studies

Studies with a large and representative population should be conducted. Additional surveys of companies in different sectors in Saudi Arabia can be conducted by using this model to see which specific activities may build brand loyalty. Once the model does not reflect high reliability, it should be tested, and additional criteria may be included, such as quality of photos or videos, deep evolution of content and making use of customers' ideas to improve products. In the telecom sector, depending on some programs to measure user engagement in the brand community is a significant area to study. Furthermore, it is important to measure managers' perspectives in some issues, like having more than one social media account for a company and difficulties they face to engage with customers.

Limitation

This study has some limitations. The researcher has conducted the survey in English, though not all of the Saudi customers knew the language. Furthermore, while many customers said that they were not exposed to telecom companies accounts on social media, the researcher could have asked what might have encouraged them to engage or indicate the reason on why they do not follow Saudi telecom accounts in social media. Finally, the study did not take advantage of page analysis matrices to measure what customers are likely to engage in to support the results.

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