

	adjusted for the degree of freedom (can take values greater than one).	$P < .90 =$ respecify model.	
Comparative fit index, CFI	Reveals the extent to which the model fit in compare to a base model and this is normally done on the null model, adjusted for the degrees of freedom.	$P > .90$	Hoyle (1995)
Chi-square fit Index, χ^2	Specifies the hypothesised model and data and tests the null that the estimated co-variance-variance matrix deviates from the sample variance-covariance matrix only because of sampling error.	$P > .05$	Hu et al, (1992).
Ratio of Chi-Square to degree of freedom, χ^2/df	As a result of the sensitivity of the chi-square test in relation to sample size, the value is only meaningful when degrees of freedom are considered and because of this, the value is divided by the numbers of degrees of freedom.	2 to 1 or 3 to 1	
Standardized root mean squared residual; SRMR.	Estimates the average size of residuals between fitted and sample covariance matrix. It is very sensitive to model mis-specification but less sensitive to sample size. Relatively vigorous against violation multivariate normality.	$P < .08$	Hu and Bentler (1999)
Root means square error approximation, RMSEA	Illustrates the extent to which the model fits the population covariance matrix, taking into consideration the numbers of degrees of freedom. Contrasting to other fit statistics, it can generate a 90% confidence interval, which provides information about precision of the estimate of fit. Satisfactorily, sensitive to model mis-specification.	$P < .05 =$ good fit, $P < .08 =$ adequate fit	Browne and Cudeck (1992); MacCallum and Austin (2000).

8.3 PERCEIVED SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ACTIVITIES (SMMAs)

Table 8-2: Principal Component Analysis of Perceived Social Media Marketing Activities

	Items	eWOM	Int	Cust	Ent
eWOM3	I would like to share my opinion on products and items bought from my clothing retailer's social media with my friends.	.86			
eWOM2	I would like to upload content from my clothing retailer's social media on my own page.	.85			
eWOM1	I would like to share information about products from my clothing retailer's social media with friends.	.83			
Int2	It is possible to have an online conversation with other users through my clothing retailer's social media.		.88		
Int3	It is possible to have a two-way interaction through my clothing retailer's social media.		.81		
Int4	It is possible to share information with other users through my clothing retailer's social media.		.78		
Cust5	My clothing retailer's social media can be used anytime and anywhere.			-.89	
Cust4	It is easy to use my clothing retailer's social media.			-.85	
Trend2	Contents found on my clothing retailer's social media page is trendy.			-.67	
Cust1	It is possible to search customized information on my clothing retailer's social media page.				.84
Cust3	My clothing retailer provides lively feed information that I'm interested in.				.71
ENT2	It is fun to collect information and fashion items on my clothing retailer's social media.				.65
ENT3	It is easy to pass time using my clothing retailer's social media.				.64
ENT1	The content found on my clothing retailer's social media page (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, e.t.c) seems interesting.				.42

Explained Variance	35.6%	12.5%	8.1%	6.7%
Cronbach's Alpha	.84	.78	.82	.82

The 17 items of the scales hypothesized for the perceived social media marketing activities are given in to EFA, the result of which showed a four factor structure (Table 8-2). Although (Kim & Ko, 2012; Godey, 2016), used five factors namely entertainment, Interaction, trend, customization and eWOM, but for this thesis, four factors were extracted during the exploratory factor analysis which was conducted using SPSS 23 and the four factors were extracted with Eigen values greater than 1 therefore what the four factors were measuring is determined by the researcher namely; Word-Of-Mouth, interaction, customization and entertainment. The values examined for the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity are statistically significant at ($p=0.00$) and the value of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of sample Adequacy (KMO) is 0.85, above the minimum level of 0.5 (Kaiser, 1974), signifying that the data or sample is suitable for factor analysis. The result yielded a total variance of 62.8% and according to Hai et al, (2010), a described variance of 60% and less is acceptable in social science research.

A study of both the Eigen-values and the scree plot help in the decision to retain the four factors. As regards to communalities, lower values of items Trend1 (0.39), Int1 (0.39), Cust2 (0.45) indicate the removal of these items and 14 items were retained in total. Communalities value below the minimum of 0.5 is unacceptable, as recommended by Hair et al. (2010). The assessment of factor loadings also assisted the decision.

Taking into consideration existing studies in the online social media marketing activities (Kim & Ko, 2012; Godey 2016) and the content meaning of their factors, Factor 1 is named word-of-mouth (eWOM), which refers to online consumer to consumer interaction/discussion about their brands. Factor 2 is called interaction (Int), which to recap is defined as the information sharing and opinion exchange with others on social media (Godey et al, 2016). Interaction is also defined as the extent to which late messages in an order of communication exchanges link to previous messages and their references are made to previous messages (Beatty, 1988). Factor 3 is named customization (Cust) and it can be described as the level of customization as the degree to which a service is tailored to satisfy an individual's ultimate need (Schmenner, 1986) clothing retailer provides customization as part of their social media marketing activities. Factor 4 is labelled entertainment (Ent), entertainment is defined as the result of the fun and play emerging from the social media experience (Agichtein et al, 2008).

EFA is known as insufficient for providing a decent test for unidimensionality. In this case of perceived social media marketing activities, the EFA came up with four factor

structure measuring higher-order constructs of the perceived social media marketing activities of UK clothing retailers. According to Byrne (2010), after the first order has been tested, a decision must be made whether to model measurement instruments as a first or second order multidimensional construct depending on what the researcher is trying to achieve. In this situation, it is to be of the opinion that a second-order structure is needed although the preceding approaches to perceived social media marketing activities of brands did not conduct CFA to test the unidimensionality of the sub-constructs but this study will go in line with the recommendation of Steenkamp and van Trijp (1991) who stated that; “when the construct consists of four or more sub-constructs, higher-order unidimensionality of the construct can be tested by performing a second-order confirmatory factor analysis on the co-variances among the sub-constructs”.

However, EFA only is not appropriate for testing higher-order structure models (Rubio, Berg-Weger and Tebb, 2001; Hunter and Gerbing 1982). Even though EFA provides vital information about dimensionality, additional tests via CFA should be conducted to sufficiently show the unidimensionality of each construct.

8.3.1 Dimensionality Tests for SMMA

In this study, EFA suggests that a second factor structure comprised of perceived social media marketing activities as a higher-order construct, comprising of four lower-order dimensions, eWOM, Int, Cust and Ent - each of these in turn unidimensional. The reason for the analysis is to find whether unidimensionality exists for each of the first-order dimensions (Steenkamp and van Trijp, 1991). Thus, a second-order CFA using SEM is thought suitable for clarification purposes.

CFA is conducted on the items connecting to perceived online marketing activities, intended at establishing whether there's a backing for the second-order factor structure, and for the unidimensionality of each of the four first-order factor structure. The general fit of CFA models will show the researcher with more strong indication of the 'true' dimensionality of the measurement items (Steenkamp and van Trijp 1991; Kumar and Dillion 1987b). The CFA fit indices are within the acceptable range (see Table 8-3). Although the Chi-Square test is understood to be significant ($X^2 = 108.062$; $p = 0.002$), the ratio of chi-square /degree of freedom is below 2 ($df = 70$, $X^2/df = 1.543$). A ratio between 2 to 1 or 3 to 1 is proof of an acceptable fit (Cote et al, 2001). Additionally, the Goodness-of-Fit Index ($GFI = 0.93$), the Adjusted Goodness Fit Index ($AGFI = 0.89$), the Comparative Fit Index ($CFI = 0.967$), the Non-Normed Fit Index ($NNFI = 0.912$), as

well as the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA = 0.053) all specifies a good fit (MacCallum et al, 1996; Diamantopoulos and Siguaw, 2000).

Lastly, examination of the matrix of standardized residuals (for item pairs with values above 2.58) and the modification indices (Steenkamp and van Trijp 1991; Jöreskog and Sörbom 2001; Gerbing and Anderson 1988) do not specify substantial cross-loadings between any latent constructs. This is a proof of the unidimensionality of the four sub-constructs and evidence of the higher-order factor structure.

	Items	eWOM M	Int	Cust	Ent
eWOM3	I would like to share my opinion on products and items bought from my clothing retailer's social media with my friends.	.85			
eWOM2	I would like to upload content from my clothing retailer's social media on my own page.	.72			
eWOM1	I would like to share information about products from my clothing retailer's social media with friends.	.84			
Int2	It is possible to have an online conversation with other users through my clothing retailer's social media.		.79		
Int3	It is possible to have a two-way interaction through my clothing retailer's social media.		.67		
Int4	It is possible to share information with other users through my clothing retailer's social media.		.76		
Cust5	My clothing retailer's social media can be used anytime and anywhere.			.75	
Cust4	It is easy to use my clothing retailer's social media.			.88	
Trend2	Contents found on my clothing retailer's social media page is trendy.			.73	
Cust1	It is possible to search customized information on my clothing retailer's social media page.				.84
Cust3	My clothing retailer provides lively feed information that I'm interested in.				.57

ENT2	It is fun to collect information and fashion items on my clothing retailer's social media.				.74
ENT3	It is easy to pass time using my clothing retailer's social media.				.72
ENT1	The content found on my clothing retailer's social media page (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) seems interesting.				.78

Consequently, the results revealed satisfactory proof of unidimensionality of each of the four dimensions of online perceived social media marketing activities, eWOM, Int, Cust, and Ent. Even though the result support unidimensionality of each of the four sub-constructs, they are inadequate for the state of construct validity of each (Anderson and Gerbing, 1998). Hence, further examination of convergent validity, discriminant validity and reliability is vital.

8.3.2 Convergent Validity Test for Online Perceived SMMAAs

Convergent validity is checked using three criteria: 1) observed variables/indicators must be significant on the latent construct; 2) the size of each loading must be more than twice its standard error (Steenkamp and van Trijp 1991, Anderson and Gerbing, 1998); and 3) standardized loading of each indicator must be at minimum of 0.5 (Hair et al, 2010; Chin 1998b), if possible higher than 0.6 (Bagozzi and Yi 1988). Nevertheless, according to Fornell and Larcker (1981), loading of at least 0.7 is highly desirable.

All observed variables load significantly on the suitable latent variable, confirming the first evidence of convergent validity (Steenkamp and van Trijp 1991, Anderson and Gerbing, 1998, Hair et al, 2010). This, in addition to the acceptable Goodness-of-fit statistics as earlier discussed, suggests convergent validity (Kumar and Dillion 1987a; Steenkamp and van Trijp 1991). Please refer to Table 8-3:

Table 8-3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Perceived Social Media Marketing Activities

	eWOM	Int	Cust	Ent
Average Variance Extracted	.65	.55	.62	.50
Composite Reliability	.85	.79	.83	.79

In relation to the strength of indicator loadings, Hair *et al.* (2010) argued that the rule of thumb is that all standardized loading estimates should be 0.5 or greater. Shevlin and

Miles (1998) classify item loadings of around 0.5 in a CFA model as an average in strength. Here, the indication of convergent validity is also reinforced by the acceptable loadings of all items greater than 0.5 (Steenkamp and van Trijp 1991; Hildebrandt 1987).

Nevertheless, there are more strict guidelines in the literature in relation to the strength of the factor loadings. Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggests that the standardized loading estimate for each indicator should be at a minimum of 0.7 and statistically significant. Simultaneously, Bagozzi and Yi (1988) and Chin (1998b) argue that a requirement of at least 0.6 and significance for an individual item to be reliable. As presented in Table 8-3, out of 13 items kept, 12 meet the criterion of Bagozzi and Yi (1988) and Chin (1998b). Although the strength of Cust3 is below what is preferred, except there is evidence signifying that it is problematic, the item is retained to support content validity (Hair et al, 2010). Though, regarding Cust1, there was validity concerns until the item was removed.

Fornell and Larcker (1981) also suggests that the average variance extracted (AVE) could point out evidence of validity. AVE measures the common variance of a latent variable. The higher the AVE, the greater the amount of variance able to be picked up by a latent construct in relation to the amount of variance of its measurement error (Ping, 2005). A latent construct that is sufficiently convergent should have indicators comprised of a minimum of 50 per cent of the error-free shared variance (that is AVE of minimum of 0.5), (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). As revealed in Table 8-3, all latent constructs meet the criterion

$$\text{Average Variance Extracted (AVE)} = \frac{(\sum \lambda_i)^2}{(\sum \lambda_i)^2 + \sum \epsilon_i}$$

$$(\sum \lambda_i)^2 + \sum \epsilon_i$$

Where λ_i = the standardized loading of each indicator (observed variable)

ϵ_i = the error variance connected to each indicator

In relation to second-order construct CFA (demonstrated in Table 8-4), it is needed for an extra condition to be met to assess convergent validity, whereby the path coefficient estimates among the first order dimensions and the second order global construct SMMAs (that is the coefficient Y in Table 8-4) must be significant (Benson and Bandalos 1992;

Koufteros, Babbar and Kaighobadi, 2009). This is also true for this model (see table 8-4), thus indicating convergent validity.

Table 8-4: Path Coefficient of Second Order SMMAs and its First Order Dimensions

	Path	Estimates
SMMAs → eWOM	Y ₁	.676
SMMAs → Int	Y ₂	.409
SMMAs → Cust	Y ₃	.591
SMMAs → Ent	Y ₄	.960

Note: SMMAs: Social Media Marketing Activities

8.3.3 Reliability Test for Online SMMAs

After unidimensional and convergent validity measurement, has been established and confirmed, the next text is reliability test. This is vital because a construct may have high reliability score and still not unidimensional or not even meeting the convergent validity criteria (Hair et al, 2010; Steenkamp and van Trijp, 1991). Cortina (1993), Gerbing and Anderson (1988) and Hattie (1985) suggested that reliability assessment should be conducted after unidimensionality has been met. It is possible that a construct reveals internal consistency (that is having numerous measures that are thoroughly interrelated and clustered together), yet not homogenous (Hulin et al, 2001). According to Hunter and Gerbing (1982), “*coefficient alpha provides an unbiased estimate of the reliability of the cluster score only if the scale is unidimensional*”.

The Cronbach’s alpha score are shown in Table 8-2 and the Raykov’s rho composite reliability scores are presented in Table 8-3. Observing these tables, all alpha scores are above Nunnally’s (1978) 0.7 cut-off point, signifying acceptable and satisfactory reliability. Regarding composite reliability, each latent construct exceeds the threshold of 0.6 suggested by Bagozzi and Yi (1988). This supports the evidence for the sufficient reliability of the measurement.

$$\text{Composite Reliability (CR)} = \frac{(\sum \lambda_i)^2}{(\sum \lambda_i)^2 + \sum \epsilon_i}$$

Where λ_i = the standardized loading of each indicator (observed variable)

ϵ_i = the error variance connected to each indicator

8.3.4 Discriminant Validity Test for Online SMMAAs

Table 8-5 presents the correlations (below the diagonal) between the latent constructs extending from 0.03 to 0.67. One foundation of measuring distinctiveness is when the inter-construct correlations do not exceed 0.7 (Ping, 2004; Kline, 2005) revealing that all construct measures are discrete.

Table 8-5: Intra-SMMAAs Discriminant Validity Assessment - Average Variance Extracted and Shared Variance Estimates

Constructs	Items	eWOM	Int	ENT	Cust
eWOM	3	0.646	0.036	0.448	0.134
Int	3	0.191	0.550	0.137	0.205
ENT	3	0.669	0.370	0.502	0.310
Cust	4	0.366	0.453	0.557	0.623

A stricter criterion of discriminant validity is when AVE value of a latent construct is higher than the squared correlation among the latent construct and all other latent constructs (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The conception here is that a latent construct should clarify better the variance of its own indicators than the variance of other latent constructs. As shown in Table 8-5, results reveal backing of discriminant validity where all the AVE values exceed the inter-construct value by a high margin.

Table 8-6: X2 Differences – Standard Model vs. ‘Non-Discriminant’ Model of SMMAAs

Construct Discriminant Validity

PAIR	X ² for Std Model	X ² for ‘Non-Discriminant Model’
eWOM (Word-of-Mouth) ↔ Int (Interaction)	242.520	318.302
Int (Interaction) ↔ Ent (Entertainment)	229.674	320.296

eWOM (Word-of-Mouth) ↔ Cust (Customization)	227.339	299.700
Int (Interaction) ↔ Cust (Customization)	219.674	296.775
Cust (Customization) ↔ Ent (Entertainment)	202.036	289.107
eWOM (Word-of-Mouth) ↔ Ent (Entertainment)	174.926	220.856
*($\Delta DF=1$, $p=0.0001$)		

Additionally, for each pair of constructs, a set of CFA model is verified. For each model, the Chi-square (X^2) difference is observed between the standard model and the ‘non-discriminant’ model (the model where the correlation between the two pair of construct is constrained to 1.0) (Bagozzi et al, 1991; Anderson and Gerbing 1988). At this point, the interest is majorly on the chi-square change between the two models). The null hypothesis is that the construct is not discrete. The result suggests that the difference is significant for all the 6 pairs, therefore strengthening the evidence in support of discriminant validity.

These results verify the dimensions of perceived social media marketing activities and are consistent with the previous social media marketing activities (Godey, 2016, Kim and Ko, 2012). Detailed discussion and explanation of dimension have been shown in Chapter 3.

8.4 CUSTOMER RETENTION ((CSATIS) AND (CTRUST))

The second construct for which the dimension needs examination before its insertion into the model is that of customer retention (Customer satisfaction and customer trust). A similar procedure to that shown for perceived social media marketing activities is take on for the assessment of this construct.

The results of the EFA conducted on the six indicators of customer satisfaction (CSatis), three indicators on customer trust (CTrust) indicated a two-factor structure as predicted (Table 8-7).

Table 8-7: Principal Component Analysis of Customer Satisfaction and Trust

(Customer retention)

	Items	CTrust	CSatis
CTrust1	I have strong trust in my clothing retailer.	.848	
CTrust2	My clothing retailer provides precise service information.	.877	
S3SATISSQ	How will you rank your satisfaction in terms of service quality with your clothing retailer(s)?	.827	
Comeff	My clothing retailer(s) communicate effectively via their social marketing activities.		.696
CROSSCON	My social media platforms allow me to cross connect with other platforms therefore enhancing entertainment across platforms.		.557
Quality	The social media activities carried out by my clothing retailer(s) shows that their product is quality.		.750
Satis1	How will you rate your satisfaction in terms of products of your clothing retailer(s)?		.785
Involve	The social media activities carried out by my clothing retailer(s) keeps me involve as a customer.		.789
Price	The social media marketing activities carried out by my clothing retailer(s) shows their price is competitive/affordable.		.598

Explained Variance	17.7%	43.5%
Cronbach's Alpha	.84	.81

The values examined for the Bartlett's test of sphericity ($p=0.00$) and the value of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy ($KMO=0.836$) is significant, revealing that the data is suitable for factor analysis progression. The examination of both screen plot and eigenvalues confirms that the two-factor structure, generating a total variance of 61.1 per cent. Regarding communalities, the low values for Price and CROSSCON may lead to the elimination of these items. The inspection of the Cronbach's Alpha reliability assessment revealed that all items are fit and should be retained.

The decision whether to retain CROSSCON and Price will be made after the CFA in which composite reliability and AVE are assessed. However, the construct Price and CROSSCON seems to have factor loading of lower than 0.7. Given that Cronbach's alpha is influenced against short scale of two or three indicators (Churchill and Iacobucci, 2005), this small shortfall in meeting the threshold is disregarded.

8.4.1 Dimensionality Test for CTrust and CSatis

Table 8-8 clarified the result of the CFA conducted on the items relating to customer satisfaction and trust. The table presents vital statistics such as composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct. All items meet the requirement of Hair et al, (2010), having factor loadings of at least 0.5 excluding CROSSCON (0.43). Comparing the principal component analysis with CFA, the factor loading for price has gone up from 0.598 in principal component analysis to 0.60 in CFA, therefore the item (Price) is retained and CROSSCON is removed.

Generally, given that all items load strongly and significantly on separate dimensions, the results suggest evidence of unidimensionality for the two constructs namely Customer Satisfaction and Customer Trust.

The next step is the evaluation of the second-order construct via CFA, the result shows that the relationship between the second-order CRetention construct and its first-order dimensions (CSatis and CTrust) are all statistically significant (see Table 8-13). This shows sufficient proof of the unidimensionality of the construct.

Table 8-8: Path Coefficient Estimates of Second-Order Customer Retention and its First-Order Dimensions

	Path	Estimate
CRetention → CSatis	Y ₁	0.987***
CRetention → CTrust	Y ₂	0.539***

8.4.2 Convergent Validity Test for CSatis and CTrust

Convergent validity is buttressed given that each item loads significantly at $p < 0.001$ on to the construct it's meant to measure. Loading extending from 0.684 to 0.819, exceed Bagozzi and Yi's suggestion and the AVE values, ranging from 0.501 to 0.633, meet Fornell and Larcker's requirement. As the goodness-of-fit index signifies a well-fitting model (see Table 8-9), and the assumption of convergent validity is reinforced (Steenkamp and van Trijp, 1991).

Table 8-9: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Customer Satisfaction and Customer Trust

	Items	CTrust	CSatis
Ctrust1	I have strong trust in my clothing retailer.	.81	
CTrust2	My clothing retailer provides precise service information.	.89	
S3SATISSQ	How will you rank your satisfaction in terms of service quality with your clothing retailer(s)?	.70	
Comeff	My clothing retailer(s) communicate effectively via their social marketing activities.		.60
Quality	The social media activities carried out by my clothing retailer(s) shows that their product is quality.		.81
Satis1	How will you rate your satisfaction in terms of products of your clothing retailer(s)?		.78

Involve	The social media activities carried out by my clothing retailer(s) keeps me involve as a customer.		.67
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	CTrust	CSatis
Average Variance Extracted	0.644	0.512
Composite Reliability	0.843	0.838

Goodness-of-Fit Statistics

$\chi^2 = 14.345$ ($p = 0.073$); $df = 8$, ($\chi^2/df = 1.793$, RMSEA = 0.063, (PCLOSE = 0.292); GFI = 0.975; CFI = 0.987, AGFI = 0.934; NNFI = 0.966; SRMR = 0.0472.

8.4.3 Reliability Test of CTrust and CSatis

Once more, reliability is evaluated after examining unidimensionality and convergent validity. As can be observed in Table 8-8, composite reliability for each of the two constructs exceeds Bagozzi and Yi's (1988) minimum strength requirement of 0.6, signifying suitable reliability. Additionally, the high composite reliability provides more evidence of unidimensionality (Hattie, 1985). With respect to Price and CROSSCON construct, although the Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability for CSatis are very good (See Table 8-9), the two items (CROSSCON and Price) had to be removed to boost the average variance.

8.4.4 Discriminant Validity Test of CTrust and CSatis

The results also provide evidence that customer satisfaction and trust possess discriminant validity. Primarily, discriminant validity is assessed by checking the correlation between two constructs in case its greater than (>0.7) may indicate trouble about that specific discriminant validity. The correlation between the items are found to be less than 0.7, providing the first evidence of measurement distinctiveness (Ping, 2004). As shown in Table 8-10, the constructs also exceed the more stringent requirement of Fornell and Larcker (1981), when all the AVE values surpass the squared of the correlation of the constructs.

Table 8-10: Customer Satisfaction and Trust Discriminant Validity Assessment – Average Variance Extracted and Shared Variance Estimates

Constructs	Items	CTrust	CSatis
CTrust	3	0.644	0.227
CSatis	4	0.477	0.512

In addition, when a series of CFA models is conducted for each construct pair in order to examine the X^2 differences between the default model and the constrained model, the discriminant validity is also supported. As show in Table 8-16, all the X^2 differences are statistically significant at $p=0.000$, demonstrating additional evidence of discriminant validity for all the constructs involved.

Table 8-11: X^2 Differences – Default Model vs. ‘Non-Discriminant’ Model of Satisfaction and Trust – Discriminant Validity.

PAIR	X^2 for Standard Model	X^2 for ‘Non Discriminant Model’
CTrust ↔ CSatis	14.345	85.168
*($\Delta DF=1$, $p=0.000$)		

8.5 CONSUMER ATTITUDE (CAttitude)

Another primary construct for which the dimension involves examination before the insertion into the model is that of consumer attitude. A similar process to that presented for perceived social media marketing activities, customer satisfaction and trust is embraced for the assessment of this construct. The results of the EFA on the sample conducted on the seven items measuring consumer attitude towards social media and marketing activities recommends a two-factor structure (Table 8-12). Examination of the Bartlett’s test of Sphericity ($p=0.000$) as well as KMO values (0.841) reveal that all the there’s no issue with the sample and suggesting suitability of factor analysis for the data. The examination of

the eigenvalues and the scree plot further strengthens the decision to retain the two factors. The EFA also show total variance explained to be approximately 69 per cent (Minimum

of 60 per cent is recommended by Hair et al (2010). The communality values were also examined and they were suitable apart from ATSMU1FACT1 (0.456). The decision whether to remove this item or not will be made after AVE and composite reliability test is conducted but the item is retained at this point. Factor 1 is named attitude towards social media use (ATSMU), referring to the consumer attitude towards social media use in general. Factor 2 is labelled attitude towards social media advertisement (ATSMA) which explains the consumer attitude towards social media online advertisement. The first two factor is closely similar to Al-Dhuhli (2013) and Akar (2011). Following, CFA is conducted to complement EFA in examining the psychometric characteristics of the constructs.

Table 8-12: Principal Component Analysis of Consumer Attitude

Items		ATSMA	ATSMU
ATSMA1FACT2	Social media advertisements are more interactive than traditional advertising.	0.864	
ATSMA2FACT2	Social media advertising is more informative than traditional advertising.	0.823	
ATSMA3FACT2	Advertisements through social media are more interesting than traditional advertising.	0.805	
ATSMU1FACT1	I am subscribed to updates and alerts of my clothing retailer through social media.	0.692	
ATSMU4FACT1	It is necessary for clothing retailers to use video sharing sites such as YouTube for the purposes of marketing.		0.923
ATSMU3FACT1	I think that clothing retailers should take part in social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.		0.862
ATSMU2FACT1	I think that marketing with social media is the future of marketing.		0.679

Explained Variance	51.939%	17.287%
Cronbach's Alpha	0.806	0.814

8.5.1 Dimensionality Tests for CAttitude

A CFA is conducted on the indicators associated with consumer attitude construct. The construct is viewed as higher-order encompasses two lower-order dimensions, AT SMA and AT SMU. The complete model fit is acceptable compared with the general cut-off values (please check Table 8-13). The χ^2 value is significant, the ratio between χ^2 and degree of freedom is 1.909 which is less than 2. Furthermore, the value of RMSEA is 0.068 which is less than 0.8, signifying a suitable fit (Browne and Cudeck, 1993; Chen, Curran, Bollen, Kirby and Paxton, 2008; MacCallum et al, 1996). All value regarding goodness-of-fit index reveal excellent fit (Table 8-12).

Table 8-13: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Consumer Attitude

Items		AT SMA	AT SMU
AT SMA2FACT2	Social media advertising is more informative than traditional advertising.	.84	
AT SMA1FACT2	Social media advertisements are more interactive than traditional advertising.	.81	
AT SMA3FACT2	Advertisements through social media are more interesting than traditional advertising.	.75	
AT SMU1FACT1	I am subscribed to updates and alerts of my clothing retailer through social media.	.53	
AT SMU4FACT1	It is necessary for clothing retailers to use video sharing sites such as YouTube for the purposes of marketing.		.69
AT SMU3FACT1	I think that clothing retailers should take part in social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.		.86

ATSMU2FACT1	I think that marketing with social media is the future of marketing.		.77
	ATSMA	ATSMU	
Average Variance Extracted	.551	.603	
Composite Reliability	.827	.819	
Goodness-of-Fit Statistics			
x ² = 24.827 (p = 0.024); df = 13, (x ² /df) = 1.909, RMSEA = 0.068 (PCLOSE = 0.209); GFI = 0.964, AGFI = 0.923, NNFI = 0.958; SRMR = 0.486.			

The next step is the evaluation of the second-order construct via CFA, the result shows that the relationship between the second-order CAttitude construct and its first-order dimensions (ATSMA and ATSMU) are all statistically significant (see Table 8-13). This shows sufficient proof of the unidimensionality of the construct.

Table 8-14: Path Coefficient Estimates of Second-Order Consumer Attitude and its First-Order Dimensions

	Path	Estimate
CAttitude → ATSMA	Y_1	0.843***
CAttitude → ATSMU	Y_2	0.714***

8.5.2 Convergent Validity Test for Consumer Attitude

All factor loadings are statistically significant, revealing that convergent validity has been established with CAttitude (Bagozzi et al, p.434). The assumption of convergent validity is generally strengthened by all loadings having values higher than 0.6 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1998) (Table 8-14). Convergent Validity is also maintained due to the good overall fit of the model (Hildebrandt, 1987; Steenkamp and van Trijp, 1991). In terms of AVE estimates, the values also signify good convergence.

8.5.3 Reliability Test for CAttitude

Once more, the assessment of construct reliability is conducted after convergent validity has been validated. As shown in Table 8-13, the Raykov's rho composite reliability values

exceed Bagozzi and Yi's (1988) 0.6 cut off point, therefore, it can be deduced that all the constructs have acceptable reliability.

8.5.4 Discriminant Validity Test for CAttitude

As presented in Table 8-15, the inter-construct correlation did not surpass 0.7, providing initial evidence that all constructs are discrete from each other. Additionally, the AVE estimates are all greater than the squared correlation between all the construct pair. This provides additional evidence of discriminant validity in fulfilling the more stringent guiding principle of Fornell and Larcker (1981).

Table 8-15: Intra CAttitude Discriminant Validity Assessment – Average Variance Extracted and Shared Variance Estimates

Constructs	Items	ATSMA	ATSMU
ATSMA	4	0.551	0.362
ATSMU	4	0.602	0.603

Table 8-14 shows additional proof of measurement distinctiveness through the verification procedure of discriminant validity following the X^2 difference test methodology (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Bagozzi et al, 1991; Jöreskog 1971). Here, the X^2 difference between the constrained and the non-discriminant model are all significant ($p = 0.000$) with the goodness-of-fit values of the constrained model being noticeably less than their respective non-discriminant model.

Table 8-16: Differences – Standard Model vs. 'Non-discriminant' Model of Consumer Attitude – Discriminant Validity

PAIR	X^2 for Standard Model	X^2 for 'Non-Discriminant Model'
ATSMA ↔ ATSMU	24.827	60.342

*($\Delta DF=1$, $p=0.000$)

8.5.5 Discriminant Validity Assessment between SMMA's and CAttitude

To assess the proof of discriminant validity between the two constructs, another series of corresponding CFA models is treated. Pairs of sub-constructs un-covered in the preceding CFA models are examined. Equally, the focus of the models is on the X² difference between model pairs; which is the standard model (no constraints) vs. 'Non-discriminant model (where the correlation between the construct is constrained to unity, revealing an additional degree of freedom relative to the standard model) of each pair. The result of the analysis is showed in Table 8-16. All the differences of X² are found to be significant (p = 0.000), representing strong support for discriminant validity among all the sub-constructs connected to perceived social media marketing activities and consumer attitude.

Table 8-17: X² Differences – Standard Model vs. 'Non-Discriminant' Model of Perceived Social Media Marketing Activities and Consumer Attitude – Discriminant

Pair	X ² for Standard Model	X ² for 'Non-Discriminant' Model
eWOM ↔ ATSMA	24.966	79.508
eWOM ↔ ATSMU	80.673	125.676
INT ↔ ATSMA	56.475	135.475
INT ↔ ATSMU	62.909	137.673
Cust ↔ ATSMA	68.062	140.635
Cust ↔ ATSMU	83.213	151.827
ENT ↔ ATSMA	37.813	109.968
ENT ↔ ATSMU	23.560	101.345
*(ΔDF=1, p=0.0001)		

8.5.5 Discriminant Validity Test for All Constructs in the Proposed Model (SMMA's, CAttitude, CSatis and CTrust)

To evaluate the proof of discriminant validity between all constructs in the model, another series of complementary CFA is administered. Pairs of sub-constructs that was not

covered in segment 8.3.4 and 8.4.4 above are examined. As in the preceding series, focus is upon the X^2 difference between model pairs, that is, the standard model (no constraint enforced) vs. ‘non-discriminant’ models (the correlation between the constructs is constrained to unity, having more than one degree of freedom in relation to the standard model), of each pair. The outcome of the analysis is shown in Table 8-18, where all the differences of X^2 are found to be significant. ($p = 0.000$). Based on this result, it is concluded that all the constructs and sub-constructs within the research model possess discriminant validity and are discrete from one another.

Table 8-18: X^2 Differences – Standard Model vs. ‘Non-Discriminant’ Model of All Variable – Discriminant Validity

Pair	X^2 for Standard Model	X^2 for ‘Non-discriminant’ Model
eWOM (Word-of-Mouth) ↔ AT SMA (Attitude Towards SM Advertisement)	24.966	79.508
eWOM (Word-of-Mouth) ↔ ATSMU (Attitude Towards SM Use)	80.673	125.676
eWOM (Word-of-Mouth) ↔ CSatis (Customer Satisfaction)	15.853	63.614
eWOM (Word-of-Mouth) ↔ CTrust (Customer Trust)	6.977	93.805
INT (Interaction) ↔ AT SMA (Attitude Towards SM Advertisement)	56.473	135.188
INT (Interaction) ↔ ATSMU (Attitude Towards SM Use)	62.909	137.673
INT (Interaction) ↔ CSatis (Customer Satisfaction)	26.710	96.630
INT (Interaction) ↔ CTrust (Customer Trust)	6.209	92.933
Cust (Customization) ↔ AT SMA (Attitude Towards SM Advertisement)	68.062	140.635
Cust (Customization) ↔ ATSMU (Attitude Towards SM Use)	83.213	151.827
Cust (Customization) ↔ CSatis (Customer Satisfaction)	48.982	108.143
Cust (Customization) ↔ CTrust (Customer Trust)	23.843	123.311
ENT (Entertainment) ↔ AT SMA (Attitude Towards SM Advertisement)	37.813	109.968
ENT (Entertainment) ↔ ATSMU (Attitude Towards SM Use)	23.560	101.345

ENT (Entertainment) ↔ CSatis (Customer Satisfaction)	28.053	98.457
ENT (Entertainment) ↔ CTrust (Customer Trust)	20.116	140.678

8.6 SUMMARY

This chapter has discussed and examined the process of measurement model assessment in the study. The measurement items of all constructs have been assessed through both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses to test constructs' dimensionality, reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity and the results are satisfactory. The procedure has revealed and confirmed two higher-order structures; that is, perceived social media marketing activities and consumer attitude.

The next chapter of data analysis comprises of the estimation of the structural model which is also examination of nomological validity. The proposed structural model is presented below, takes after the partial aggregation approach and 'level of abstraction' accepted by the present analysis (Bagozzi and Edwards, 1998).

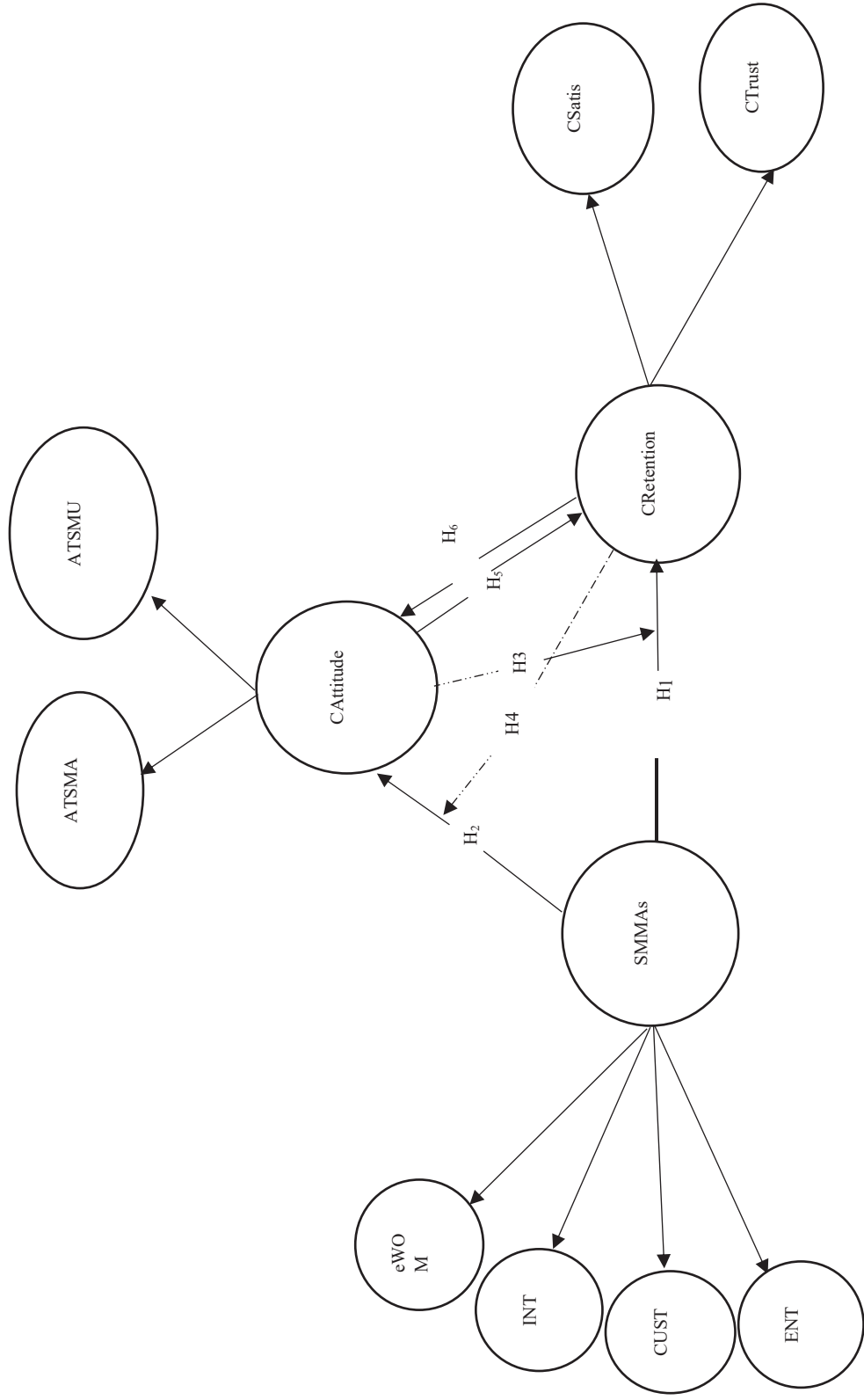


Figure B2: Hypotheses for testing

- H₁: Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) has a positive influence and direct effect on Customer Retention.
- H₂: Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) has a direct and positive effect on Consumer Attitude.
- H₃: Consumer Attitude will moderate the relationship between Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) and Customer Retention.
- H₄: Customer Retention will moderate the relationship between Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) and Consumer Attitude.
- H₅: Customer Retention has a direct and positive effect on Consumer Attitude.
- H₆: Consumer Attitude has a direct and positive effect on Customer Retention.

Chapter 9

DATA ANALYSIS III - EVALUATION OF STRUCTURAL MODEL

9.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the third phase of the data analysis concerning the structural model. The first phase of the data analysis (Chapter 7) which is the beginning of the analysis of the primary data discusses the response rate and general description of sample in detail. The second phase of the data analysis (Chapter 8) discusses the valuation of the measurement model which includes discussion of model fit statistics, purification of the item and the dimensionality test for all the constructs. This chapter discusses the evaluation of structural model to test whether construct can be added to the model and whether the model is statistically fit.

9.2 EVALUATION OF STRUCTURAL MODEL

To start with, regarding the overall fit of the structural model, the indices are all within the range indicating acceptable fit: $\chi^2 = 432.029$ ($p=0.000$), $df = 271$, $\chi^2/df = 1.59$, $RMSEA = 0.055$, $GFI = 0.863$, $NNFI = 0.861$, $CFI = 0.934$, $SRMR = 0.067$. Proceeding on to the sign of the parameter estimates signifying the hypotheses, the outcome reveals that all the signs of connection between the constructs are in correspondence with the hypothesised relationships. This provides backing for the nomological validity of all constructs establishing the model. The squared multiple correlations for the structural equation are 0.538 (Consumer Attitude) and 0.93 (Customer Retention), suggesting that a respectable amount of variance of the endogenous construct has been explained by the respective proposed predictors (see figure 9 and Table 9-1).

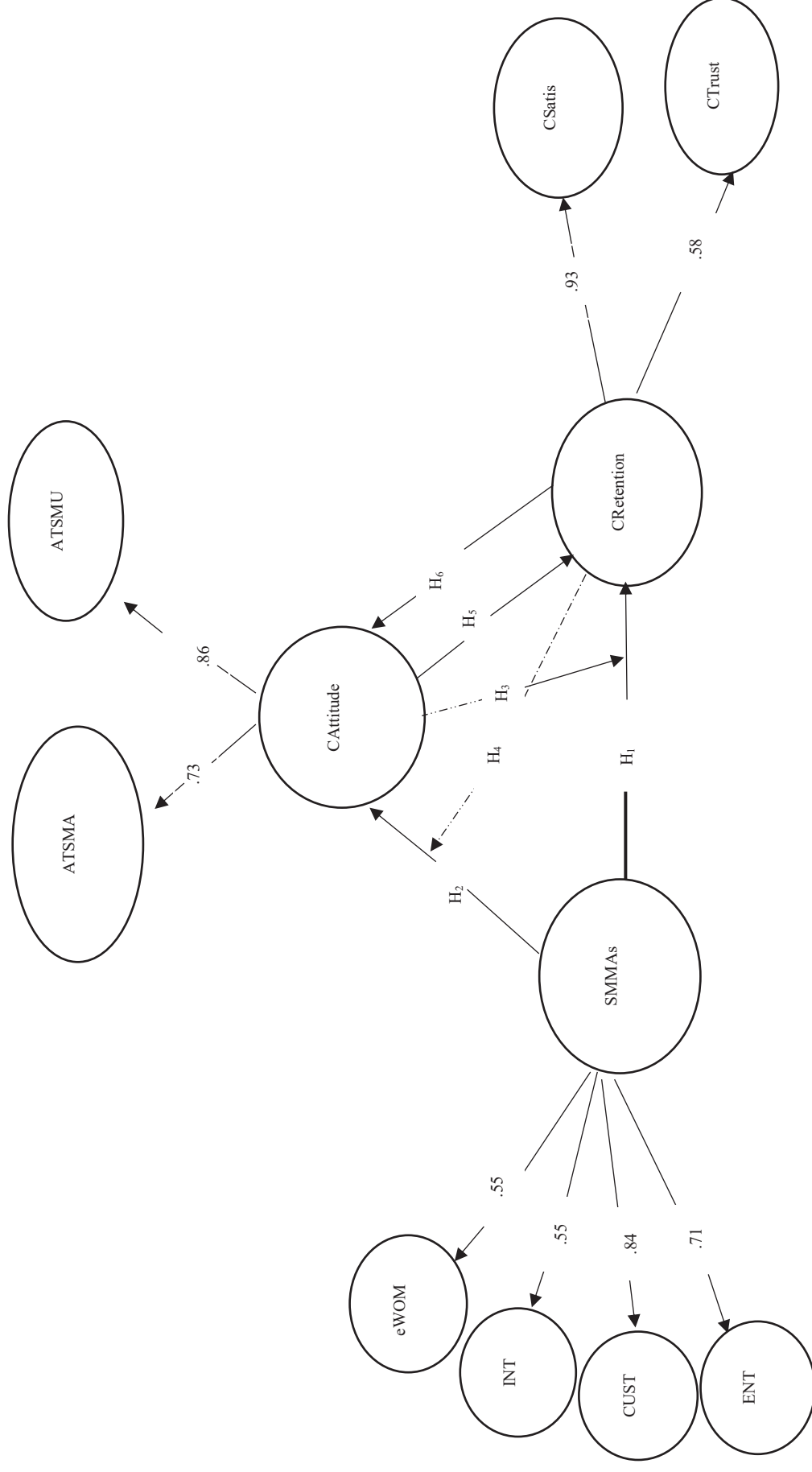


Table 9-1: Results for Structural Model Assessment

Hypothesised Parameter	Std. β	SE	t-value	Sig.	R ²	Hyp.	Result
SMMAs $\rightarrow$ CRetention	.61	.218	6.146	.000	.97	H ₁	Supported
SMMAs $\rightarrow$ CAttitude	.51	.655	8.295	.000	.56	H ₂	Supported
SMMAs*CAttitude $\rightarrow$ CRetention	.97	.938	54.504	.000	.94	H ₃	Supported
SMMAs*CRetention $\rightarrow$ CAttitude	.97	.907	54.736	.000	.94	H ₄	Supported
CRetention $\rightarrow$ CAttitude	.54	.659	8.528	.000	.25	H ₅	Supported
CAttitude $\rightarrow$ CRetention	.50	.579	8.126	.000	.25	H ₆	Supported

9.2.1 Direct Effect

All the direct effect hypothesised and tested by the structural model (Figure 9-1), namely; Perceived Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) $\rightarrow$ Retention (CRetention) (H₁), Perceived Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) $\rightarrow$ Attitude (CAttitude) (H₂), customer retention (CRetention) $\rightarrow$ customer attitude (CAttitude) (H₅), customer attitude (CAttitude) $\rightarrow$ customer retention (CRetention), all these paths are all true with the hypotheses.

Certainly, as written in the hypotheses, perceived social media activities act as a positive predictor of customer retention and consumer attitude. The statistically significant path coefficients proved the relationship between perceived social media activities (SMMAs) and customer retention

(CRetention) for H₁ is direct and positive. The impact of social media marketing activities on customer retention is significant at $p < 0.0001$ and account for 38% of the explanation of customer retention variance in the tested sample, also the relationship between perceived social media activities (SMMAs) and consumer attitude (CAttitude) is significant for H₂ ($p = 0.000$, one-tailed). Furthermore, as hypothesised, customer attitude contributes positively and significantly to the fostering of customer retention ($p = 0.000$, one-tailed), H₅ is therefore supported. Lastly, customer retention also contributes positively and significantly to the development of consumer attitude, therefore H₆ is supported.

9.2.2 Mediation Effect

H₃ Result which is testing that consumer attitude (CAttitude) will mediate the relationship between perceived social media marketing activities (SMMAs) and customer retention (CRetention) is not supported as well as H₄ which is testing that customer retention (CRetention) will mediate the relationship between perceived social media marketing activities (SMMAs) and consumer attitude (CAttitude) and it's not supported. Subsequently, all the possible indirect (mediated) effects in the model are checked in term of their direction of effects, magnitude and significance level. Regarding this thesis' structural model, there are two possible indirect effects namely;

- Perceived social media marketing activities → consumer attitude → customer retention; where the relationship between perceived social media marketing activities and customer retention is possibly mediated by consumer attitude.
- Perceived social media marketing activities → customer retention → consumer attitude.

For this reason, the bootstrap re-sampling technique (Efron, 1979, Efron and Tibshirani 1982; Henseler, 2010) is conducted through AMOS with bias-corrected confidence intervals demanded, to evaluate the standard errors, confidence interval and significance levels of these effects (Zhao, Lynch and Chen, 2010; Hayes, 2009; Preacher and Hayes, 2008). The SEM tool with the bootstrap technique (rather than the Sobel test) is the most vigorous method till date for creating unbiased estimation of the mediating effect of latent variables (Cheung and Lau, 2008; Kenny, 2008). Table 9-3 provides the results from the bootstrapping process, unfolding the estimated direct, indirect and total effect between these three constructs. For example, the unstandardized indirect effect of perceived social media marketing activities on customer retention through consumer attitude is estimated for paths Perceived social media marketing activities → consumer attitude → customer retention.

Table 9-2 and 9-3 presents the results from the standard regression weights and the bootstrapping process, the number of bootstrap sample was set to 2000 instead of default 200 to perform iterative bootstrapping 2,000 times instead of 200 times to produce more reliable estimates. Describing the estimated total effect, direct and indirect effect between these three constructs, for example, in table 9-3, the indirect estimate effect of perceived social media marketing on customer retention as a product of the coefficients for paths SMMA → Consumer Attitude and Consumer Attitude → Customer Retention,

i.e. -0.093. This reveals that SMMA's has negative indirect effect on consumer attitude that is transferrable to customer retention. The effect of -0.093 is that the customer retention level is projected to decrease by about -0.09 standard deviations for every full standard deviation (SD) increase in SMMA through customer retention's initial impact on consumer attitude. Total effect, alternatively, is the addition of both direct and indirect effects. For example, the total effect of SMMA on Customer Retention is the addition of its direct effect (1.608) and indirect via consumer attitude (-0.093); that is 0.975 altogether, meaning that when SMMA's rises by one SD, customer retention is forecasted to be stronger by 0.975 SD through both direct and indirect effects among the constructs. Nevertheless, no consumer attitude mediation is found to influence the link between SMMA's and Customer Retention at the 0.1 confidence level ($p = 0.673$, two-tailed), this is because, the indirect effect could not influence the significance of the direct effect of SMMA's on customer retention, in other words, the total effect is still significant which means that the presence of consumer attitude as a mediator could not cause any change to the significance of the direct effect between SMMA's and customer retention.

Table 9-2 reveals the result for mediating effects on AMOS through the use of standardized regression weights on the other hand reveals that the relationship between SMMA's and customer retention is being partially influenced indirectly by the mediator (consumer attitude) in which its p value is (0.179) and therefore not significant, the result also reveals that the direct relationship between SMMA's and customer retention is significant at (0.001) without the mediator (consumer attitude) and also directly significant at (0.001) with the mediator (consumer attitude). The result of the mediating effect through standardized multiple regression is in support of the bootstrapping effect result.

Table 9-2 Result for Mediating Effect on AMOS Through Standardized Regression Weights

Relationship	Direct without Mediator	Direct with Mediator	Indirect
SMMA's → CA → CR	0.991 (sig at 0.001)	1.074 (sig at 0.001)	0.179 (not sig)
SMMA's → CR → CA	0.729 (sig at 0.001)	0.865 (not sig at 0.1)	0.423 (not sig)

It can be examined from Table 9-3 that the indirect effect of SMMA on Consumer Attitude via customer retention is not statistically significant at 10 per cent confidence level. ($p = 0.423$, two-tailed). Nevertheless, the total effect (mediated effect) between the same construct via customer retention is statistically significant at the 0.1 level ($p = 0.001$, two-tailed). However, the bootstrapping result from Table 9-2 reveals that the direct effect of SMMA on Consumer Attitude without the mediator (Customer Retention) is statistically significant at the 1% confidence level ($p = 0.001$, two-tailed) but not statistically significant at the 0.1 confidence level ($p = 0.865$) directly with the presence of the mediator (consumer attitude) and indirectly not significant at the 0.1 confidence level ($p = 0.423$). The result in Table 9-3 reveals there's partial mediating effects between the constructs because the indirect effect between SMMA and consumer attitude via customer retention is not significant but total effect for both constructs are significant which means although there's some sort of effect (total effect) of SMMA on consumer attitude but the mediator had no impact on the significance (Baron and Kenny, 1986; Kline, 2005). SMMA $\rightarrow$ Customer Retention $\rightarrow$ Consumer Attitude, i.e. the relationship between SMMA and Consumer Attitude reveals partial mediation by customer retention. In other words, the regularity of the connection between SMMA and consumer attitude is partially mediated via customer retention and the total effect is significant at 1% ($p = 0.001$) the direct and indirect effect were not significant as presented in Table 9-3, this reveals that either direct effect or indirect effect could influence the total effect's significance. As presented in Table 9-3 and 9-2, although the indirect (mediated) effect of SMMA on consumer attitude is -0.151; i.e. because of the mediated effect of customer retention on the SMMA and consumer attitude, an increase of SMMA by one SD envisages a reduction of consumer attitude by 0.15 SD. Additionally, the effect of SMMA on consumer attitude mediated by customer retention lies between -0.433 (lower bound) and 0.139 (upper bound) and this effect is negative. This empirical evidence of partial mediating effect of customer retention on SMMA and consumer attitude is another contribution of this study to the literature.

Table 9-3: Decomposition of Structural Effect Via Bootstrap

Effect on Retention	Standardized B	SE	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Sig (two-tailed)

(SMMA)					
Direct Effect	1.608	.497	.910	2.335	.001
Indirect Effect (via consumer attitude)	-.093	.394	-.835	.259	.673
Total Effect	.975	.273	.570	1.166	.001
Effect on Consumer Attitude					
(SMMA)					
Direct Effect	0.943	.167	-.403	.158	.444
Indirect Effect (via customer retention)	-.151	.176	-.433	.139	.423
Total Effect	.793	.167	.597	1.139	.001

Additionally, the total effect of SMMA on consumer attitude is significant ($p = 0.001$; two-tailed), reveals the importance of SMMA as a key factor of consumer attitude formation either directly or mediated through customer retention. Although the link of customer retention $\rightarrow$ consumer attitude may be negative but the overall total effect of SMMA $\rightarrow$ Consumer Attitude is statistically significant. More specifically, as explained in Table 9-3, for every increase of SMMA by one SD, consumer attitude is predicted to increase by 0.79 SD, through the whole supposed indirect or direct causal link between these constructs in the model. As shown in Table 9-2, there is a direct effect between SMMA $\rightarrow$ Customer Retention, 0.991 (sig at 0.001) without the mediator and direct effect between SMMA $\rightarrow$ Consumer Attitude, 0.729 (sig at 0.001) without the mediator as well. The result from Table 9-3 revealed that there's no mediating effect between SMMA $\rightarrow$ Consumer Attitude $\rightarrow$ Customer Retention but a partial mediating effect between SMMA $\rightarrow$ Customer Retention $\rightarrow$ Consumer Attitude.

9.2.3 Summary

This chapter is a continuation of the preceding chapter on the measurement model, and as explained in three parts of the structural model developed in this thesis. The first part examined the direct hypothesised relationships among the constructs. The second part examined the possible mediation effects among relationships which was shown through the Table 9-2 and 9-3 in the final part of this chapter, an interaction effect was also tested although it's not included in the aims and objectives. Illustrating from the findings reported in this chapter, the next chapter attempts to further discuss these findings in relation to research aims and objectives and hypotheses formulated in the previous chapters.

CHAPTER 10

RESEARCH DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

10.1 INTRODUCTION

The earlier chapter discussed in detail the results of the analyses conducted to test the hypotheses that was identified in this study. Based on the research aims and objectives identified in Chapter 2, this segment discusses the research findings connected to the research objectives, which is the basis for the hypotheses tested in Chapter 8 and 9. Chapter 6 is a secondary research and was used to answer the first objective in Chapter 2 (the role of marketing communication in the UK retail clothing sector). Chapter 7,8,9,10 and 11 was dedicated to answering the rest of the aim and objectives.

The present segment is divided in to three parts. The first part starts with the research outline and the summary of the research objectives. The second part discussed the fundamental dimensions of perceived social media marketing activities of UK clothing retailers extracted in the exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. The third part progresses with the discussion of the findings of the hypotheses tests which were accepted using structural modelling. The concluding parts highlights the summary of the findings.

10.2 SYNOPSIS OF THE STUDY

Customer retention parameters were extracted from four models of relationship commitment and retention models, those parameters are customer trust, customer satisfaction.

Ranaweera and Neely (2003) argued that the better the imaginary price is, the greater the level of repurchase intentions. Fornell (1992) indicated that the more satisfied an organisation customer is, the more loyal they are to the organisation, Ranaweera and Prabhu argued that the more satisfied customers are the more they remain loyal to the organisation while Richard (1996) opposed the argument that although a customer is satisfied, they might still not be retained. In many literatures, trust, satisfaction, relationship commitment and retention are synonymous. Succeeding the work of Kim and Ko (2012) this study identifies the perceived social media marketing activities by UK clothing retailers namely, entertainment, Word of Mouth, trendiness, customization and Interaction and its impact on retention.

To summarise, the main objective of this research is to identify the UK clothing retailers perceived social media marketing activities and its influence on customer retention. The precise objectives of this study are first, to identify and explore the role of marketing communication (social media marketing) in the UK retail clothing sector (focusing on UK large clothing retailers) and this was examined in chapter 6 through secondary research. Secondly, the study aims to identify perceived social media marketing activities of large clothing retailers and to what extent these activities impacts customer retention. The third objective is to identify and explore the impact of the perceived social media marketing activities on consumer attitude towards social media. The fourth is to explore the relationship between customer retention and consumer attitude towards social media and marketing activities. Lastly is to provide recommendation regarding the use of social media marketing by clothing companies in the future.

In order to achieve these objectives, customer retention parameters were drawn from four authors' models and theories namely, Richard (1996), Ranaweera and Prabhu (2003), Ranaweera and Neely (2003) and Sharma and Patterson (1999) and is used as the foundation and Kim & Ko (2012) is used as the foundation for perceived social media marketing activities. To recap, no previous research has examined the impact of perceived social media marketing activities on customer retention and consumer attitude. While Kim & Ko (2012) has researched on the relationship between online social media marketing activities and customer relationship and purchase intention, Godey et al. (2016) also researched the influence of social media marketing effort of luxury brands on brand equity and consumer behaviour between four countries namely; China, India, France and Italy. No empirical study has examined the impact of social media marketing activities on customer retention in the UK retail clothing sector and the research available so far has been conducted in other part of the world and not the UK and this makes this research unique.

10.3 IDENTIFIED PERCEIVED ONLINE SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ACTIVITIES DIMENSION

Kim & Ko (2012) and Godey (2016) have identified five major activities that fashion brands carry out online, therefore this study used the same social media activities constructs as Kim & Ko (2012) and Godey (2016) which was also confirmed during the pilot studies as more than 70% of the respondents support that their clothing retailers

carry out the five social media marketing activities namely; entertainment, interaction, Word-of-Mouth, trendiness and customization.

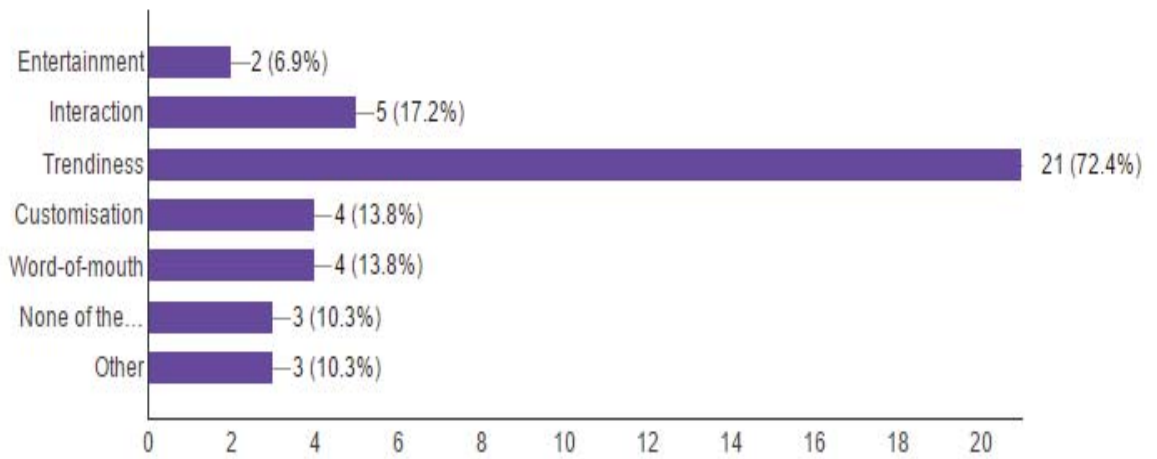


Figure 20: SMMA Pilot Study Result (March, 2016)

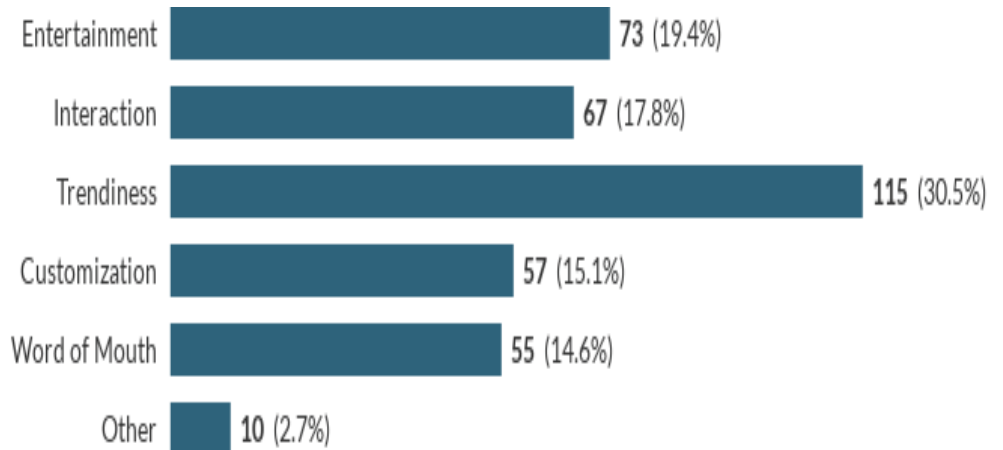


Figure 21: SMMA Real Survey Result (June, 2016)

Kim & Ko (2012) study regarding social media marketing activities was confirmed in figure 9 and 10 by London respondents. Therefore, these social media activities were used as an independent variable to test the following hypotheses:

H₁: Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) has a positive influence and direct effect on Customer Retention.

H₂: Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) has a direct and positive effect on Consumer Attitude.

H₃: Consumer Attitude has a mediating effect on the relationship between Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) and Customer Retention.

H₄: Customer Retention has a mediating effect on the relationship between Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) and Consumer Attitude.

H₅: Customer Retention has a direct and positive effect on Consumer Attitude.

H₆: Consumer Attitude has a direct and positive effect on Customer Retention.

10.4 HYPOTHESES TEST RESULTS

Table 10-1 recapitulates the research findings. Four out of six remaining hypothesised relationships are discovered to be significant.

Table 10-1: Summary of Research Results

Hypothesised Parameter		Results	
H ₁	Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) has a positive and direct effect on customer retention.	Supported (+)	***
H ₂	Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) has a direct and positive effect on Consumer attitude.	Supported (+)	***
H ₃	Consumer Attitude has a mediating effect on the relationship between Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) and Customer Retention.	Negated	
H ₄	Customer Retention has a mediating effect on the relationship between Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) and Consumer Attitude.	Negated	
H ₅	Customer Retention has a direct and positive effect on Consumer Attitude.	Supported (+)	***
H ₆	Consumer Attitude has a direct and positive effect on Customer Retention.	Supported (+)	***

Other outcomes

Customer retention has a partial mediating effect on the relationship between social media marketing activities (SMMAs) and consumer attitude.	***
Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) have a positive and direct influence on cumulative consumer satisfaction.	***
Marketing Activities on social media (SMMAs) will have a positive and direct influence on customer trust.	***

*** = Significant at the 1% level

10.4.1 SMMAs → CRetention (H₁)

The result supports H₁, which hypothesizes that social media marketing activities has a direct and positive influence on customer retention. A few studies keep records of theoretical and practical implications of social media marketing and the influence on brand equity, customer relationship, purchase intention and consumer behaviour (Godey *et al*, 2016; Kim and Ko, 2012) and many management opportunities and threats these demands (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). There have also been some recent studies on the influence of social media marketing on customer loyalty towards clothing stores in Sri Lanka (Kodippili *et al*, 2016) but this was not done in the UK and does not address retention. Thus, researchers have not made effort to find empirical proof of how SMMAs influence customer retention in the UK retail clothing sector. Social media marketing is a challenging area for customer retention measurement because of several conceptual and measurement issues (Schultz, 2011; Schultz and Peltier, 2013; Morgan and Hunt 1994; Fornell, 1992). The findings confirmed that customer satisfaction and customer trust are a good predictor of customer retention. As earlier discussed that two factors have been identified in this study to predict customer retention, in his light, this study has confirmed through its findings that there's a direct and positive effect of social media marketing activities on customer trust and customer satisfaction, hence when customers are satisfied and trust their clothing retailers, they will be retained. This research bridged the gap in the literatures by offering a study on establishing clothing retailers in social media and

the result reveals that social media marketing activities has a positive and direct effect on customer retention. The UK clothing retailers is the basis for the study because previous researches already outlined that other brands apart from clothing retailers seem to have successful ways of appealing to the customers and influencing their customers through new media. (Kim & Ko, 2012; Phan et al, 2011). Although existing literatures accepted and understood the different SMMA elements (Kim & Ko, 2012; Godey *et al*, 2016), this thesis itemises their relative importance and should be taking of great importance in retention of customers when preparing for social media activities and from the customers point of view, all the elements are unique in the social media activities of clothing brands.

10.4.2 SMMA → CAttitude (H₂)

The findings also confirm the hypothesis that SMMA is associated directly and positively with consumer attitude. This agrees with the notion that social media advertisements are more interesting than traditional advertising, which reveals that marketers should shift their promotional efforts from traditional way of marketing to the creating more social media marketing activities. The result also make known that customers found social media advertising more informative than the traditional marketing, customer get to have a chat directly with their clothing retailers online, they check reviews about a product and customer get to read details about products before making a purchase decision which confirms that social media marketing can be revealed in a more effective way than traditional marketing. The impact of SMMA on consumer attitude is found to be very significant at (standardized coefficient = 0.51, $p < 0.001$), (see Table 9-1, Chapter 9). This is the evidence that consumer attitude towards social media marketing is positive.

10.4.3 SMMA → CAttitude → CRetention (H₃)

The analysis of direct and indirect effects in the model shows that the total effect of SMMA on customer retention is significant as well as the direct effect. The result of bootstrapping shows that this effect is significant. It is evident that overall, perceived online social media marketing activities will directly retain customers. Remarkably, the result also reveals that the influence of social media marketing activities on customer retention is not mediated by consumer attitude. As mentioned previously, consumer attitude is a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favourable or unfavourable manner with respect to a given object” whereas customer retention is the customers’ intention to repurchase a product as many times as possible. When customers respond in a favourable manner towards social media marketing first and to a product, they will

purchase the product but that doesn't mean they will be retained. This research reveals that positive consumer attitude towards social media marketing and clothing brands does not explain or alter the relationship between social media marketing activities and customer retention, in other words the reason for customer retention cannot be explained by consumer attitude.

10.4.4 SMMAs → CRetention → CAttitude (H₄)

The examination of all direct and indirect effects in the model reveals that the total effect of social media marketing activities (SMMAs) on Consumer Attitude (CAttitude) is positive and significant but the indirect effect is negative in terms of direction. The result of bootstrapping also reveals that this effect is significant. The result also reveal partial mediation of customer retention between the relationship of social media marketing activities and consumer attitude. This evidently reveals that overall, high perceived social media marketing activities in the online market place will disallow the formation of attitude in purchasing from the clothing retailer.

Interestingly, the results also indicate that the impact of social media marketing activities on consumer attitude is partially mediated by customer retention. In other words, social media marketing activities has a partial indirect effect on consumer attitude through customer retention. As mentioned previously, "customer retention is the intention of customer to repurchase from a product/service provider" where attitude is attitude is a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favourable or unfavourable manner with respect to a given object" (Morgan and Hunt 1994). Therefore, the findings reveal that customer retention as a mediator alter or explain the relationship between social media marketing activities and consumer attitude. In other words, customer's attitude towards social media marketing of their clothing retailers is partially influenced by the intention to repeatedly repurchase from the clothing retailer. Currently, people increasingly search for products online before making a purchase decision, social media exploits a pull strategy that enables customers to reach products, services and brand associated to their own experiences (Akar, 2010). Most purchasing decisions are affected by social influence and ultimately form customer attitude towards a particular clothing retailer. When making purchasing decisions, customers ask for advice from others. Consumers are making more purchasing decisions online every day. Social media marketing activities helps consumers by online, communicate with one another, socialize, and influence one another online.

10.4.5 CRetention → CAttitude (H₅) and CAttitude → CRetention (H₆)

One of the aims of this research is to explore the relationship between customer retention and consumer attitude towards social media marketing activities. The findings reveal that customer retention has a direct and positive effect on consumer attitude. In other words, the intention to repeat purchase with a clothing retailers will determine consumer's attitude towards that clothing retailer. Motwani *et al* (2014) examined consumer attitude towards social media marketing and found that consumer found social media marketing activities exciting but no studies so far has examined the relationship between customer retention and consumer attitude and this is another contribution to existing literatures on social media marketing. The findings from this study also reveals that consumer have positive attitude towards clothing retailers when they have the intention to repeat purchase with that retailer compared to one off transactions.

10.4.6 Summary

This chapter has explained and discussed the empirical findings demonstrated in chapter 8 and 9. Research hypotheses relating to the direct influence of social media marketing activities on customer retention and consumer attitude. The research findings have found that social media marketing activities has a positive and direct effect on customer retention and consumer attitude.

The total effect (combination of direct and indirect effects) of social media marketing activities on consumer attitude is significant, although the indirect effect is negative in terms of direction but the overall effect is significant. It has also been found that customer retention has acts as a partial mediator in the social media marketing activities and consumer attitude relationship.

With respect to the mediating role of consumer attitude, the result reveal that consumer attitude does not have a mediating effect on the relationship between social media marketing activities and customer retention. The result also reveals that customer retention have a direct and positive effect on consumer attitude.

The next chapter concludes the thesis by highlighting the contribution of the research to theory and practice, discussing its limitations and also suggesting possible future research avenues.

CHAPTER 11

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

11.1 INTRODUCTION

This research was set out to examine the impact of social media marketing on customer retention which focuses specifically on the activities of the UK clothing retailers carry out and their impact on customer retention and consumer attitude. This chapter put forward the summary and conclusions of this study, it also places interest on the contribution of the study, it's limitation, recommendation and suggestions for future research.

Examining the impact of five components of online social media marketing activities, this thesis has developed a model of online customer retention for B2C relationships in UK clothing retail sector, based on the theory of social exchange and Ranaweera and Prabhu's (2003) holistic approach. The research has majorly utilised quantitative approaches to explore the nature of online social media activities and their dimension and some secondary research in chapter 5&6.

11.2 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

To reiterate, this research aims to contribute to an improved understanding of the nature, dimension of perceived social media marketing activities in the UK retail clothing industry. This thesis embraces the major perceived social media marketing activities of clothing retailers which namely; Entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization and word of mouth. It also investigates if there's an existence of relationship between social media marketing activities and customer retention as well as the relationship between customer retention and consumer attitude. Social Exchange theory and Ranaweera and Prabhu's (2003) holistic approach were the major theories used in this research.; two factors is identified in this study because of time limitation that determines customer retention and the rest of the factors has been recommended for further research: customer satisfaction and customer trust.

This thesis first, highlights several limitations of previous studies. Firstly, there is limited knowledge about the nature and impact of online social media marketing activities on customer retention for UK clothing retailers.

As regard to these, this study contributes to the growing empirical research on customer retention and consumer attitude towards online UK clothing retailers.

Secondly, preceding research has been found most of the time to deliver inconsistent and contradictory results with regards to whether satisfaction alone can keep customers committed to their retailers. Several researchers have highlighted that these issues could be because of limitation associated with measuring satisfaction as Boulding *et al.* (1993) and Andreassen (2000) measure their satisfaction as transaction specific and Johnson *et al.* (1991) in his study view satisfaction as cumulative customer experience with their product/service as well as from the various contexts in which those researches were conducted (for example, online vs. offline environment, combination of online and offline environment, transaction vs. contractual-based relationships, nature of the product/service, etc.). This research contributes to the literature conceptualising and operationalising customer perceived online social media marketing activities in the UK retail clothing sector and the result has proved that customer satisfaction is a vital factor in retaining customers as well as customer trust. The measurements have been thoroughly tested for validity and reliability via confirmatory factor analysis, where four out of five vital and significant statistically distinctive dimensions have been confirmed from Kim and Ko (2012) and Godey (2016) study. These dimensions of online social media marketing activities are electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM), interaction, customization and entertainment. They represent different facets of online social media marketing activities arising from time and effort. Thus, research has undertaken a more comprehensive investigation of social media marketing activities on customer retention. Additionally, previous studies have examined the influence of social media marketing activities on brand equity and consumer behaviour, also on customer relationship and purchase intention but no study so far has been conducted in the UK and on clothing retailer.

Thirdly, this study makes a significant contribution in terms of consumer attitude towards social media marketing activities of clothing retailers. Past research has been conducted on the impact of social media on consumer behaviour and consumer attitude but no research so far has been conducted to explore consumer attitude towards social media marketing in the clothing retail sector and in the UK. This study has conceptualised and tested consumer attitude towards online social media marketing activities in the light of their attitude towards social media marketing and social media usage as no research has been conducted in the UK in his area. This research may be regarded as contributing to the literature in this respect.

Next, this research has brought to light number of significant relationship between social media marketing activities and customer retention (customer satisfaction and customer trust) as well as consumer attitude, which has not existed empirically in the previous literature. Specifically, these are as follows:

- The catalytic effect of online perceived social media marketing activities in strengthening customer satisfaction and customer trust and ultimately customer retention because customer satisfaction and trust were the two factors use to measure customer retention in this study.
- The direct and positive effect of perceived social media marketing activities on consumer attitude.
- The role of customer retention's partial indirect effect on the relationship between social media marketing activities (SMMAs) and consumer attitude.

The discussion has highlighted the theoretical contribution of this thesis. The next segment presents several practical contributions of the study.

11.3 MANAGERIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The result of the study provides several implications for UK clothing retailers. In agreement with social media marketing activities of brands, the result reveal to further emphasise the importance of social media marketing activities in maintaining a committed customer base as well as consumer attitude towards social media marketing activities with in the highly competitive UK clothing retail industry. The UK clothing retail sector is experiencing intense competition especially from unction sites such as EBay, Amazon and non-specialist clothing retailers. To survive in this industry, marketing managers and managers in general must be innovative by finding new ways to do things that other competitors are not doing. The sustainability and survival of any clothing retailer in this industry, especially the specialised ones will largely depend upon how innovative they are, therefore managers need to continually search for ways to deliver products, maximise their digital and social media channels and sensitive to customers changing attitudes and needs.

11.4 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

The research findings suggest that clothing retailers should strategically research into what keeps a customer satisfied which may vary from one customer to the other. This study finds out that cumulative customer satisfaction is one of the factors that retain customers. Identifying what satisfies customers and keeping them satisfied is a vital factor

in customer retention. A clothing retailer is differentiated when it provides something of value that is not offered by the competitors. Customers will perceive few alternatives in the market place when the retailer makes effort to satisfy its customer base, thereby increasing possibility of retention. As a result of the competitive and fast paced retail environment and since retailers have little control over the behaviour of their competitors, as a result retailers interested in improving customer retention should make effort to reduce dissatisfaction to the minimum level. Although there are customers that will never be satisfied no matter what a retailer does and there are some that will not stay committed even if they are satisfied but this research has proved that customer satisfaction is a vital factor in retaining customer. Therefore, clothing retailers should reduce dissatisfaction for example by research and development in to what satisfies every segment of customers by encouraging a wider usage of the service through product reviews and engagement on social media.

11.5 CUSTOMER TRUST

This study makes recommendation that clothing retailers should strategically develop trust in the heart of their customers. Particularly, the lack of perception of no trust forms a formidable barrier to exit and hence a vital factor in customer retention. A retailer is differentiated when it can be trusted by its customers. Given the highly competitive clothing retail environment, retailers interested in retaining more customers should make every effort to reduce the perception of lack of trust and this can be achieved through timely delivery; encouraging a wider usage of product through product review; online retailers should let the product be “as seen on screen” in other words, be exactly the same as the one customer view via social media or website and even if there are differences, it shouldn’t be much, strategic next day delivery for customers that wants to purchase due to emergencies.

11.6 LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

First, while this study has investigated the customer perception of four unique online social media marketing activities of UK clothing retailers, it has not focused on examining the importance placed by each customer on each dimension. For instance, the role of each dimension of social media marketing activities on customer retention and consumer are yet to be tested. There are strong reasons to expect that entertainment impact on customer retention will differ from the impact of customization. This can indeed be a focus for future research.

Secondly, this research has found no moderating effects of consumer attitude on the social media marketing activities and customer retention and partial moderating effect of customer retention on the customer attitude and social media marketing activities relationship. This study has also not addressed: 1) the moderating effect of social media marketing activities or their dimension at different level of customer retention; 2) The interplay between social media marketing activities and consumer attitude when customer retention is at various levels. Although no previous studies have addressed the above 1) and 2), in the past, however, future study should be using multidimensional measurement of social media marketing activities to investigate social media marketing activities at different levels of retention.

The third limitation of the research is that whilst the construct of the five social media marketing activities has been measured via prior measures that have been validated by (Godey, 2016), and the items have covered social media marketing activities, the process of measurement purifications in this research has resulted in one item scale (Trendiness) to be joined to other items. Therefore, future research should further assess the measurement scale of social media marketing activities to verify the results.

Next, the scope of this research is confined to both Bricks and Clicks as well as pure-play online retailers. Based on the study of Shankar *et al*, (2003), online loyalty does ‘transfer’ from the loyalty of the traditional (offline) settings. Therefore, future research comparing Bricks and Click and pure-players might reveal some light on the role of perceived social media marketing activities as a retention tool. By considering the different retail forms, comparative studies will help clothing retailers to make strategic decision about how to retain customers.

Next, e-commerce was discussed in Chapter 2 and its subclasses such as m-commerce and s-commerce and how important they are to both large and small businesses. Hence, the research in this area is limited and the use of it is growing fast as mobile phones are used to access the internet by 71% of the adults in Great Britain. Therefore, more research is recommended in this area to build on Jelassi *et al*, (2008) study of leveraging wireless technology for mobile advertising.

Future research is recommended in terms the role of social media marketing activities based on pure-play clothing retailers. In addition, two factors were used to measure customer retention in this study, other factors that keeps a customer committed and retained had been identified, however could not be explored because of time

limitation. Therefore, this factors has been discussed thoroughly in this study but its recommended for future research, other factors responsible for retention as identified by (Ranaweera and Prabhu (2003); Morgan and Hunt (1994); Sharma and Patterson (2000); Richard (1996); (Ranaweera & Neely, 2003); Peng and Wang (2006)) is discussed below.

11.6.1 Switching Barrier

Ranaweera and Prabhu (2003) conceptualized switching barriers as consumer's appraisal of the resources and the opportunities needed to achieve the act of switching as well as the restrictions to perform the act. Hence the higher the level of perceived switching cost, the higher the tendency for the customer to remain. Morgan and Hunt (1994) identified that the factor of switching or termination costs contributes to the maintenance of relationships. Sharma and Patterson (2000) highlighted that switching cost may act as exit barrier even when the performance of the core service is not satisfactory. Customer switching behaviour is changing due to price, trouble, promotion, competition, packages, ethical manners, advertisement, corporate image and brand loyalty. Sharma and Patterson (2003) discovered that switching cost has a positive impact on customer loyalty. This study has defined customer retention as the customer's intention to stay loyal to a product/service. Switching cost established a link between customer loyalty and satisfaction (Jonathan et al, 2000). Fornell (1992) highlighted that switching cost has inclined a link between customer loyalty and satisfaction. Switching barrier is one of the factors for measuring customer retention, therefore, this is suggested for future research as a factor that drives customer retention.

11.6.2 Communication Effectiveness

Sharma & Patterson (2009) communication effectiveness can be explained as the formal and informal sharing of important and timely information between organisation and their customers. The purpose is to keep customers informed about their products for example in the retail clothing sector, firms advertises and markets new clothing on social media just to keep their customer informed. Consequently, the better the communication effectiveness the stronger the relationship commitment (Sharma & Patterson, 2009). Therefore, this is suggested for future research as a factor that drives customer retention.

11.6.3 Customer Involvement

Rothschild (1979) defined involvement as an inspirational state of excitement and interest, induced by external factors; situation, the product and communications and internal factor such as central values. In other words, consumers will become excited and

want to participate in an object of interest (e.g. product, service or promotional messages) is sensed as being important in meeting their needs, values and goals (Engel *et al*, 1993). The more customers participate in an online discussion, the more careful they will be in terms of the choice they make and they tend to stay with their choices once it's made, the reason is because involved choices can sometimes be surrounded by "walls" of validation. Furthermore, when dissatisfaction sets in, the first thing a dissatisfied but involved consumer will do is not to seek an alternative but to try to fix the relationship. Unlike uninvolved dissatisfied customer, they do not care about a relationship to fix it, they just switch to an alternative. Richard (1996) argued that involvement create room for dissatisfaction and uninvolved customer can switch even when they are satisfied, therefore, it is suggested for future research as a potential factor that retains customers.

11.6.4 Price

Jacoby and Olson (1977) defined perceived price as the consumer's emotional representation or subjective feeling of the objective price of the product. Customer perception of price of a company's product are important criterion for the consumers to be retained by their firms (Abrat and Russel, 1999). Consumers switch their clothing brands if the prices of the products are too high. Schriver (1997) argued that if consumers are given more alternatives, they are more eager to trying other brands, especially if they are not satisfied with their current brand. Consumers who are price conscious are usually not ready to pay certain prices for some product if they perceive the price is not reasonable (Martin-Consuegra, 2007). Price conscious consumer will make their choice to purchase a product if the price is worth the value, therefore brands should charge price that's worth the product. (Munnukka, 2005). Peng and Wang (2006) highlighted that consumers often switch their brands majorly due to pricing issues, therefore, this is suggested for future research as a factor that drives customer retention.

11.6.5 Quality

Quality can be defined broadly as superiority or excellence (Ranaweera & Neely, 2003, Reichheld, 1996; Zeithalm & Bitner, 1996; Zeithalm, 1988). Quality is a consumer appraisal of a product or service overall excellence or superiority, the author further argued that consumers may place a better importance on the quality of the product rather than the cost they use in acquiring the product (Ranaweera & Neely, 2003). Hence, this study defines quality as an overall excellence of a product. Therefore, this factor is suggested for future research as a factor that drives customer retention.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

A.1 Social media platforms

Bebo

This social networking site is one of the earliest in comparison with the other social networking sites, it was created in 2005 and its name stands for “Blog Early, Blog Often” AOL acquired the social networking site and people with Skype and AOL account holders can add people during login. It was formerly designed and it’s an extension for college and high school student. This sites involves creativity and companies and businesses post their marketing videos to promote their products. This sites is majorly used by teenagers. Blellow

Blellow is majorly used in America, the way it works resembles that of Twitter in terms of social media for business, this platform allows short text-only together with optional mugshot. It has a tab for discussion and seeking advice regarding a particular project or topic, also advertising a job, users can also set up a meeting. Blellow is very good and offers an excellent networking and marketing opportunities for smaller businesses.

Blogger

In the year 1999, a company named Pyra Labs started up by doing other stuff until they made a piece of software called Blogger. This is different in such a way that people can gather links, thoughts and share it with anyone who is interested. It is easy to get on, all the interested user needs to do is to log on and set up an account and start blogging. Users are free to add pictures videos and just anything they want to share that they think their clients or group or individuals might be interested in.

This is a universal way to drive positive word of mouth recommendations through the content that a company publishes. Blogs allows businesses to establish and build meaningful relationships with their target market thereby increasing customer loyalty and third party promoter for the business. A blog is said to be a successful marketing tool when the conversation on the blog turn into an online buzz for the business in other words people are talking about it (Niederhoffer et al, 2007). A business blog can be used as marketing tool by using the forum to offer advice, hold contests, answer questions and publicly respond to stakeholders’ comments just to keep the conversation flowing.

Facebook

Facebook started as an idea for academic people, it was designed to keep alumni of a college in touch after they are done with school when they haven’t got time to keep

in touch properly but after a while, it spread beyond academic and some people actually paid using this platform to keep in touch with colleagues, this keeping touch continued until it spread outside colleges and huge number of people are now using it to keep in touch. Facebook is one of the major social networking site that individuals and business people uses today to target and retain customers. According to Dana French (2012), she identified that social media has one out of every six minutes spent online. Facebook has the largest population in terms of sheer numbers up till date in spite of what twitter and other social networks are doing.

This thesis will focus on the major social networks and their role in viral marketing and customer retention. Individual can talk to more people on this platform compared to the rest. Once people add you a their friends, they can see your pictures and updates and they can comment on these updates, there's also opportunity to upload video on this site as well and there are exchanges of private and public messages. The advantage of Facebook compared to other networking sites is that there's every probability of spending more time on the site by either checking the messages or updating status or playing games or chatting with friends. Facebook has clear opportunities for a business that wants to promote itself through in the sense that it's got more people devoting their time. (Clapperton, 2009)

Friend feed

This social networking site was bought by Facebook in 2009, this is aimed at small businesses, and this platform gives the opportunity of reaching out to new customers as well as communicating with existing ones. This is one of the networking sites that uses internetworking with other log-ins in the sense that it allows you to use your own twitter or Facebook account to log-in with your permission to join the service. Friend feed help read twitter field, check Facebook contacts when the permission is given and also check go ogle mail contact. This site is majorly used by young audience and not just young audience, the ones that are male dominated and the kind of audience found on this site like gaming. The extra value this site provides lies in bringing all the feeds together and the ability to start and join groups hence you can comment on what they're doing and bring up something interesting you can sell to the group.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a business site and network, it's majorly for those in the business sector and less needed by the companies who sell directly to the consumer. One of the prime features is that it involves a bit more work in terms of making contact with people and searching

for them as well, the person contacting people has a bit more work to do in the sense that the individual has to make it work. Most of the time people are recommended by their colleagues so individual are in a listening mode for business proposals but you can't just send a proposal without someone's recommendation who is also on LinkedIn. LinkedIn is not like Facebook and the others, people join on this platform and also invite others in their network to join, and you can update status on this platform just like the rest and start a group discussion as well. LinkedIn allow users to build their profiles and also leave a recommendation for someone you've worked with and they can do the same as well.

Twitter

Twitter is a form of short announcement of about 140 characters to anyone who happens to be reading and these announcements are called 'tweets'. It's really simple and is one of the major reasons why it works (Clapperton, 2009). Twitter did not attract a lot of people immediately, the founders put the service on the web page for people to make their announcement, and people were putting a lot of stuff like what they had in the morning, afternoon and night and this wasn't exciting at all.

After a while, people started putting exciting stuff and the founders allow a little bit of interaction, eventually, they allow people to reply to tweets and this made it more fun and a lot of people started participating. Twitter has now grown to a network of majorly celebrities and they share their thoughts with the world most of the time. This is good for business in the sense that it offers an opportunity to listen and react to negative comments of customers as they receive tweets straight on their phone wherever they are and it's simple to use. Statistics showed that there are a lot of middle aged people between 35years-45years than people might think. According to (Bercovici, 2012,), 31% of the population of users on twitter are between the age of 18 and 24years and 19% are between the age of 30 and 49years.

Instagram

Like modern fairy tale story, Instagram begins its journey in San Francisco coffee bar, the founder Kevin Systrom had designed Burbn to include any trendy app, the founder figured out with Instagram product manager Gregor Hochmuth that it's too complicated so they resolved to something simple which is fast and easy to share. Instagram went live on iPhone app October 6, 2010, it was downloaded 100,000 times during the first week, and the download was driven by stellar review lauding, its speed and ease to use. There are so many apps and too often they acted as either photo utility with a lot of wonky features for cameras or as a web-style sharing services. What actually brought about photo

sharing on Instagram was that Krieger who started Instagram together with Systrom recollected someone took a picture at a concert and was struggling to share the picture on Instagram but she doesn't know how to, that individual had another option to share them on Facebook and that immediately done on Systrom and Krieger that photos are more than images to be shared and admired as they are brand new ways to communicate, in this new age, photos are communication, status update. At the end of February 2011, the service 1.75 million users and in order to capture more people's attention, they introduced what is called hashtags and big companies such as Pepsi, Red bull, CNN and other celebrities such as Snoop Dog and Justin Bieber. Since the service is growing, there is the question of how to make money, Systrom suggested that he will not get serious about making money until the users hit 70 million because until a company gets to a market leader position an advertising opportunity doesn't make sense (Carr, 2013,). One of the ways businesses reaches their customer today is through Instagram with images to communicate.

APPENDIX B

B.1 Survey Questions

The Impact of UK Clothing Retailers' Social Media Marketing on Customer Retention

Page 1: My name is Josephine Abiola Lawal and I'm a PhD by research student undertaking a research project to examine the impact of large UK Clothing Retailer's Social Media Marketing on Customer Retention. Important Note: If you have not made any online purchases of clothing in the past 12 months, you should not take part in this survey, we thank you for your cooperation and interest in this study. Instructions: This survey asks you a number of questions regarding the online clothing retailers from which you often make purchases and your general shopping habits with this online retailer. Please try to answer all the questions although some of them may sound similar, it is important that you answer them ALL. Please understand that there are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in

your opinions and your answers are completely confidential. Please mark the appropriate box with a tick (✓). Some questions ask you to mark all parts that apply. Preliminary Questions: Please think of the ONE online retailer from which you have PURCHASED MOST FREQUENTLY during the past 12 months. This company should not be an online auction site, such as eBay, Amazon or Groupon. Most of the questions contained in this survey relate to your thoughts and opinions about your online shopping experiences with this specific clothing retailers.

Page 2: Preliminary Question

1. Which of the following clothing retailer(s) do you use?

Top Shop	Zara	Next
VERY	Primark	NewLook
House of Fraser	Tbdress	ASOS
H&M	Monsoon	River Island
Marks and Spencer	Matalan	Blue Inc
Dorothy Perkins	Boohoo	Mango
Miss Guided	F&F	Forever 21
SELECT	Oasis	Peacocks
BHS	Banana Republic	Nike
Adidas		

1.a. If you selected Other, please specify:

1.b. Which of the following social media platforms do you use to connect in terms of connecting to your clothing retailer(s), *(Please tick all that apply)*.

Twitter	Youtube	Instagram
Facebook	Tumblr	Google+
Pinterest	Snapchat	Other

1.b.i. If you selected Other, please specify:

1.b.ii. Do you follow your clothing retailer(s) on social media?
