

ACHIEVING CUSTOMER BRAND ENGAGEMENT THROUGH BRAND COMMUNITIES

Ph.D. THESIS

by

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**DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ROORKEE
ROORKEE – 247 667 (INDIA)
MAY, 2019**

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A THESIS

*Submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the award of the degree*

of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

MANAGEMENT STUDIES

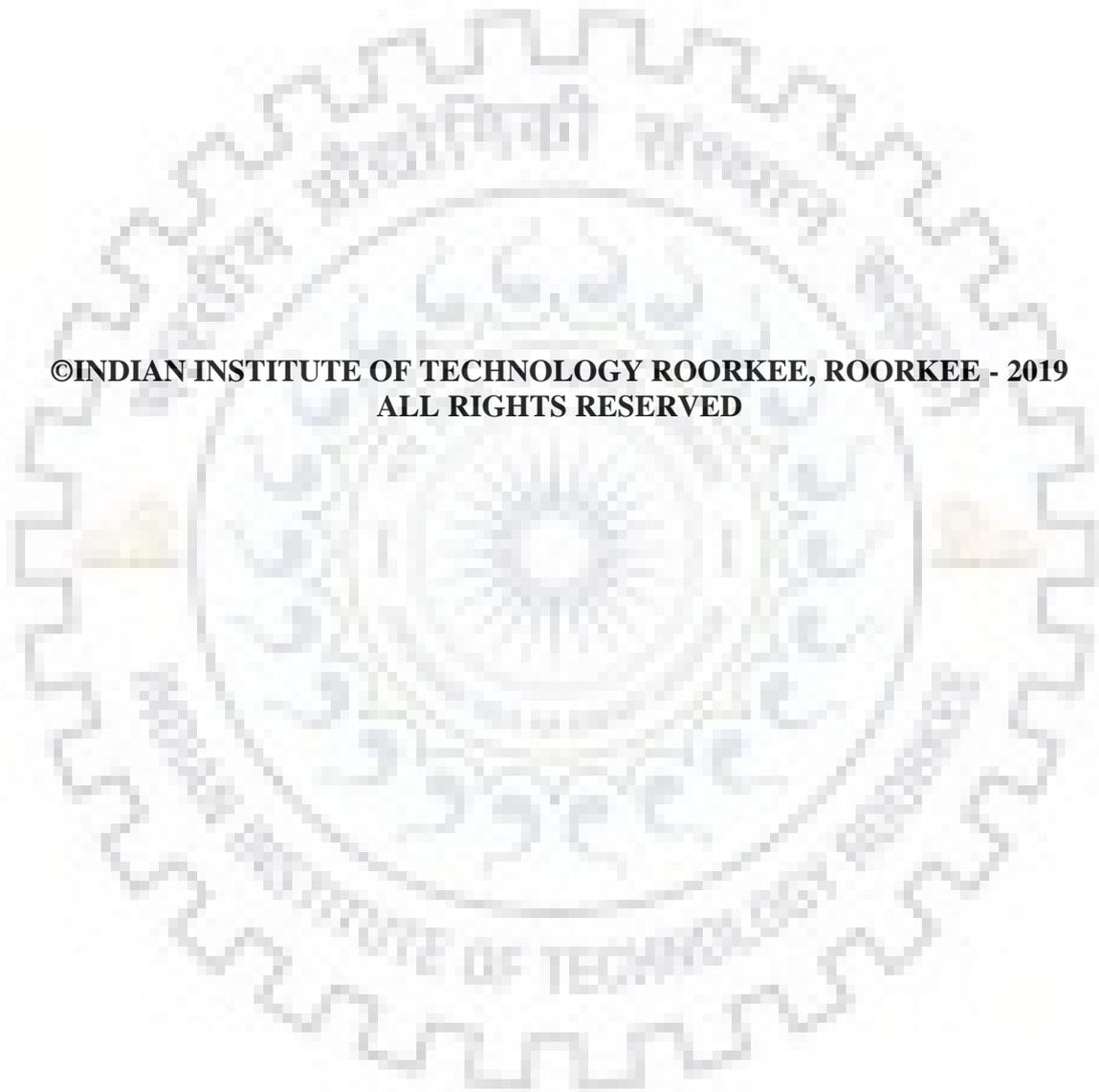
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CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION

I hereby certify that the work which is being presented in the thesis entitled **ACHIEVING CUSTOMER BRAND ENGAGEMENT THROUGH BRAND COMMUNITIES** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy and submitted in the Department of Management Studies of the Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, Roorkee is an authentic record of my own work carried out during a period from December, 2015 to May, 2019 under the supervision of Dr. Jogendra Kumar Nayak, Assistant Professor, Department of Management Studies, Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, Roorkee, Uttarakhand.

The matter presented in the thesis has not been submitted by me for the award of any other degree of this or any other Institute.

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This is to certify that the above statement made by the candidate is correct to the best of my knowledge.

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ABSTRACT

Brands are the necessary source of identification and differentiation of firm's products from competitors but mere creation of brands is not sufficient in the age of competition. Making brands stronger is how brand management is redefined and there comes the role of customer engagement with the brands. 'Customer brand engagement' reflects the customers' total investment or their cognitive, emotional, and behavioural activity in the interactions with the brand that goes beyond traditional purchases and transactions. Since its inception the research on engagement has made a significant progress and management found it an influential tool to manage customers; today it has achieved a feat such that the customer engagement marketing is poised to replace traditional relationship marketing aimed at repeated transactions. Customer brand engagement is contingent on customer-brand interactions which makes the role of engagement inside brand communities of great importance. This is because the brand communities act as unique platforms for multiple direct or indirect customer-brand interactions. The brand communities hold a special place in offering brand relationships a broader meaning as the members not only interact with the brands but other users of the same brand.

Despite a significant growth in the number of studies on customer brand engagement, the concept has still remained in its infancy and the scope for further exploration has been reiterated time and again. The limited number of empirical studies, insufficiency of brand engagement drivers and consequences, absence of contextual focus in its exploration constitute some of the crucial gaps in academic research that require further research attention. Engagement of customers inside brand communities remains underexplored and important as it brings favourable brand based outcomes. The promising role of brand psychological ownership and brand value-congruity in stimulating brand engagement has also remains in its embryonic stages of research. The blurred link between brand engagement and brand attachment and shortage of studies covering brand loyalty as an outcome of brand engagement constitute the specific gaps covered in this research work.

To address these gaps in the literature, this study proposes a conceptual model depicting brand engagement drivers and consequences. Grounded in psychological ownership theory and value-congruity theory, brand psychological ownership and brand value-congruity, respectively, have been proposed as the drivers of customer brand engagement in the context of brand communities. There is evidence in existing literature that brand psychological ownership and the value-congruity can impact consumers' relationships with the brands. The proposed model portrays brand attachment and behavioural brand loyalty as the outcomes of customer

brand engagement as well. Following the descriptive, cross sectional research design, the conceptual model is empirically tested with the data collected from 312 members of brand communities through self-administered survey questionnaire. The data was analyzed with the help of multivariate analysis techniques, viz., confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling.

The findings of this study confirmed the positive effect of brand psychological ownership on customer brand engagement. The results also supported that value-congruity with reference to the brand positively influences customer brand engagement. Additionally, it was found that customer brand engagement affects customers' attachment with the brands and behavioral brand loyalty positively. Overall, the empirical support was obtained for all the proposed structural relationships, thereby supporting the validity of the proposed model.

This study contributes to the theory and practice in certain ways. From an academic standpoint, this study provides support for the application of psychological ownership theory and value-congruity theory in 'customer engagement in the context of brand communities', an area that remained largely obscure of the application of different marketing theories. Psychological ownership towards brands has been covered in a handful of studies and this study adds in that direction by conceptualizing the role of brand psychological ownership in stimulating customer brand engagement. Similarly, this study extends the reach of congruity theory in influencing brand engagement from the perspective of values, i.e., value-congruity with reference to the brand. Apart from this, the study helps in elucidating on the debated ties between brand engagement and brand attachment in existing literature. Lastly, the support for creating brand based loyalty from brand engagement is also offered through this study.

From practical standpoint, the brand managers and brand community managers can benefit from the findings of this study in the direction of engagement of customers with their brands through brand communities. To engage customers with the brands, managers should try to instill a sense of brand psychological ownership towards the focal brands inside their communities. The managers should focus on creating a sense of value-congruity with regard to the brand inside brand communities by identifying the human-values of the target segment. This study can prove beneficial for the managers in a sense that they can achieve the crucial objectives of having emotionally connected and loyal customers through customer brand engagement. Managers are therefore advised to create brand communities to engage customers with the brands and reap the benefits of having strongly connected and loyal customers that will help them in making the brands stronger.

Keywords: Customer brand engagement, Brand psychological ownership, Value-congruity, Brand attachment, Behavioural brand loyalty, Brand community



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This thesis is dedicated to all who supported my endeavours in the hardest of times.

(JITENDER KUMAR)



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS



AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structures
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
BA	Brand Attachment
BL	Behavioural Brand Loyalty
BPO	Brand Psychological Ownership
CBE	Customer Brand Engagement
CE	Customer Engagement
CEB	Customer Engagement Behaviour
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
CMB	Common Method Bias
CR	Composite Reliability
DF	Degree of Freedom
GFI	Goodness of Fit Index
MCAR	Missing Completely At Random
NFI	Normed Fit Index
PO	Psychological Ownership
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SD	Standard Deviation
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
SPC	Standardized Path Coefficient
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index
VC	Value Congruity

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“Put simply, engagement involves investing the “hands, head, and heart”

(Ashforth and Humphrey, 1995, p. 110)

This chapter introduces the topic of the research work and entails important details pertaining to the background of the research, purpose of the research, research objectives, research questions, and the significance of the study. An overview of the key constructs employed in this research and the overall structure of the thesis is also provided by the end of this chapter. All these details will help in understanding the topic under investigation and how the idea was conceived and realized.

1.1 Introduction to the Research Work

In a highly turbulent and dynamic business environment the engagement of the customers with the brands has attracted the attention of both the academia and the practitioners (Brodie et al., 2011; Graffigna and Gambetti, 2015; Vivek et al., 2015; Hollebeek et al., 2019). Engagement with the brands popularly known as customer brand engagement (CBE) has become of special interest in the marketing domain in the past few years (Hollebeek, 2011a, 2011b; Hollebeek et al., 2014; Wong and Merrilees, 2015; Graffigna and Gambetti, 2015; Dessart et al., 2016; Pongpaew et al., 2017; Harrigan et al., 2018). CBE is defined as the customer’s cognitive, emotional, and behavioural investment in specific brand interactions (Hollebeek et al., 2014). These interactions involve voluntary self-investment in the object of engagement (brand) in the form of time, money, and energy beyond mere purchase and consumption (Keller, 2001; Van Doorn et al., 2010; Beckers et al., 2018). There are a number of concepts characterizing customer-brand relationships but the conceptual core of ‘customer engagement’ is entirely different from variables like trust, satisfaction, rapport, flow, etc., and that has been highlighted time and again (Patterson et al., 2006; Van Doorn et al., 2010; Hollebeek et al., 2014; Solem, 2015). More recently, CBE has even been termed as the contemporary customer-brand relationship variable (Dwivedi, 2015; Harrigan et al., 2018) that can be helpful in managing brands in the marketplace (cf. Fournier and Avery, 2011). The value attributed to this concept is due to the increased role of customers in firms’ strategies (ranging from product development to products/brands promotion); rising levels of customer-brand interactions, and the inherent nature of brand engagement in building customer-brand relationships beyond transactions (e.g. Van Doorn et al., 2010; Verhoef et al., 2010; Dessart et al., 2016). The ability of customer

engagement to create customer based brand equity, brand trust, brand loyalty, word of mouth, and increased brand performance (Keller, 2001; Brodie et al., 2011, 2013; Vivek, 2009; Vivek et al., 2012; Wallace et al., 2014; Wong and Merrilees, 2015; Leckie et al., 2016; Hepola et al., 2017) makes the concept worth firms' attention and encourages strategy makers to rely on it for better commercial and relational gains.

The concept of engagement transcended from psychology and organization behaviour disciplines (Kahn, 1990; Schaufeli et al., 2002; Saks, 2006) to marketing and regarded as customer engagement (e.g. Patterson et al., 2006; Bowden, 2009; Calder et al., 2009; Van Doorn et al., 2010). Prominent conceptualization of customer engagement concept is based on the subject-object typology where engagement subjects include customers/consumers and objects of engagement involve brand, product, media, and firms/organizations etc. Among all engagement objects the 'brand' caught a special attention (Schultz, 2007) because brands act as relationship facilitators and brands have a long history in possessing relationship development traits (Fournier, 1998; Veloutsou, 2009); brands even act as a source of competitive advantage for the firms (Kapoor and Kulshrestha, 2009, 2011). Specifically, customer brand engagement has been conceptualized by different authors focusing on customer/consumer as subject and the brand as the object (Hollebeek, 2011a, 2011b; Gambetti and Graffigna, 2010; Gambetti et al., 2012; Dwivedi, 2015; Wong and Merrilees, 2015; Graffigna and Gambetti, 2015; Pongpaew et al., 2017). Over the years, the special academic research focus on the concept of 'customer brand engagement' can be seen through the special issues published in Journal of product and brand management (2014), Journal of Marketing Management (2016), and Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science (2017).

Customers having relationships with the brands tend to interact with and extend a hand of relationships towards other brand users/admirers (McAlexander et al., 2002; Veloutsou, 2009; Wang et al., 2011). In this way, the customers tend to organize themselves into groups where they can gather more knowledge about the brand, solve brand-related problems, share their brand experiences, meet and interact with new people, and create social connections; and such formations have been regarded as brand communities (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). Identification of platforms for the customers to engage with the brands is critical (Brodie et al., 2013) and brand community provides perfect settings for this. Customers in these brand communities commonly admire a brand; possess a shared consciousness towards the brand; follow shared rituals and traditions, and share responsibilities centred on a brand (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). The prominence of brand communities is increasing in the marketing domain (McWilliam, 2000) because brand communities provide brand relationships a broader meaning

(Laroche et al., 2012) and help in engaging customers as well (Baldus et al., 2015). The importance of context has been repeatedly highlighted since the conceptualization of customer brand engagement (Hollebeek, 2011a, 2011b; Islam and Rahman, 2016a). The contextual relevance of brand communities for the exploration of brand engagement lies in the fact that brand engagement facilitates customer-brand relationships beyond transactions and brand community itself acts as a setting where the customers' associations go beyond traditional transactions (social relationships in a broader sense). Moreover, the customer-brand interactions are important for the genesis of customer brand engagement and brand community offers enough space for these interactions. Therefore, a brand community acts as a complementing platform for the development of customer brand engagement and constitutes an important context for its exploration. Only a handful of studies have explored brand engagement in a brand community context hitherto (Brodie et al., 2013; Hollebeek et al., 2014; Dessart et al., 2015, 2016; Dessart, 2017; Carvalho and Fernandes, 2018), that creates a ground for the exploration of CBE in a brand community context.

Despite the growing literature on engagement, the understanding about customer brand engagement remains in its early stages (Wong and Merrilees, 2015; France et al., 2016; Leckie et al., 2016) and most of the existing studies are conceptual rather than empirical (Wong and Merrilees, 2015; Carvalho and Fernandes, 2018). The scarcity of empirical studies is overtly limiting the scope of customer brand engagement in marketing (see Dessart et al., 2016). The psychological nature of brand engagement concept is highlighted since its conceptualization (e.g. Bowden, 2009; Brodie et al., 2011, 2013) but the psychological drivers behind this state remain in its infancy (Kumar and Nayak, 2019a). Development of models exploring the antecedents and consequences of brand engagement and exploring the relationships between engagement and new variables in marketing has been repeatedly highlighted (e.g. France et al., 2016; Merrilees, 2016; Leckie et al., 2016; Ahn and Back, 2018) and it has been repeatedly described as a promising research agenda (Bolton, 2011; Islam and Rahman, 2016a). The promising role of brand psychological ownership and brand value-congruity in stimulating brand engagement has also remained in its embryonic state. The blurred link between brand engagement and brand attachment and shortage of studies covering brand loyalty as an outcome of brand engagement persist. Also, a handful of studies have investigated customer engagement in India (Islam and Rahman, 2016a). Marketing scholars have only recently started focusing on the exploration of customer brand engagement in brand communities as well (Hollebeek et al., 2014; Brodie et al., 2013; Gummerus et al., 2012; Wirtz et al., 2013). All these gaps conform to the need for studying brand psychological ownership and brand value-

congruity as the drivers; and brand attachment and brand loyalty as the consequences of customer brand engagement in a brand community context. This can be of potential interest to the theory and practice in the view of the gaps highlighted.

Development of models covering the abovementioned gaps could be helpful in filling the voids in brand engagement literature. In the pursuit of a solution to the existing gaps, this study attempts to identify key drivers and outcomes of customer brand engagement and tests the proposed theoretical model in a brand community context (among brand community members). This study treats 'customer' (brand user) as the 'engagement subject'; 'brand' as the 'engagement object', and 'brand community' as the 'engagement context'. The theoretical model portrays brand psychological ownership and brand value-congruity as two important drivers of customer brand engagement. The proposed influence of brand psychological ownership and brand value-congruity on customer brand engagement is proposed on the premise of psychological ownership theory and value-congruity theory, respectively. Prior literature has suggested that customers develop psychological ownership towards the brands (Chang et al., 2015; Kumar and Nayak, 2019a, 2019c). This sense of psychological ownership is embedded in the control over the brand (Chang et al., 2015) and a sense of self-efficacy derived out of the brand (cf. Pierce et al., 2003). Introducing the applications of theory of psychological ownership in marketing, Hulland et al. (2015) have mentioned that customers in a brand community tend to develop a sense of ownership towards the 'focal brand' of the community. There is evidence in engagement literature also where indirect reference to the state of psychological ownership in stimulating customer engagement behaviours can be seen (Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014). The role of psychological ownership (towards social media brands) in stimulating engagement behaviours is present in literature (Guo et al., 2016) and hence conceivable for consumer brands and customer brand engagement in particular.

Value-congruity is the mental evaluation of the perceived sameness of customer's values with the brand values and seen in inducting the brand into the self-concept of the customer by creating customer brand identification (Tuskej et al., 2013). Customer brand similarity in terms of personalities can be seen in prior literature (Sirgy, 1985) and larger the overlap between the customer and the brand (self-brand congruity), higher will be the customer engagement (De Vries and Carlson, 2014). However, the specific influence of subjective similarity in the values of the customer and the brand (value-congruity) on customer brand engagement is underexplored which is focused upon in this study. The integrated model subsequently proposes the impact of customer brand engagement on brand attachment and behavioural brand loyalty, both being important performance indicators of a brand in the

marketplace. Existing theoretical evidence supports the relationship between proposed variables and the overall model appears promising in realizing the importance of customer brand engagement as discovered in this study. Therefore, this research is aimed at comprehensively exploring drivers and outcomes of customer brand engagement in a brand community context by administering a survey among brand community members in India.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The changing business dynamics and the promising role played by the engaged customers lends itself as the rationale to explore customer brand engagement in brand communities. It is observed in literature that as a strategic move, firms are appointing director level authorities in firms for managing engagement among customers and incurring large budgets to develop engagement strategies (Harmeling et al., 2017). It is worth noticing that an engaged customer is investing him/herself cognitively, emotionally, and behaviourally in the brand (Hollebeek et al., 2014) and he/she can act as a brand marketing agent that can be a powerful way to influence other customers (existing customers) and potential customers (non-customers) in the marketplace (Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014; Hollebeek et al., 2016).

The research conducted by Gallup consulting group reveals that ‘actively engaged customers’ account for a 37 % increase in income in a banking sector; 44 % rise in the visits to favourite online retailers is due to engaged customers; engaged customers’ (visitors) visits to the hotels witnessed a 46 % annual hike in spending than the disengaged customers; actively disengaged customers are emotionally detached and they can wreck havoc on the firm while actively engaged customers can tolerate brand mishaps. The actively engaged customers resonate with the brands discussing about the brands, sharing experiences about the brands, and spreading a positive word about the brand. The marketing function played by the engaged customers is two times more powerful in comparison to radio marketing; seven and four times more effective than print advertising and personal selling respectively (Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1995). Also, the positive word-of-mouth (WOM) spread by the engaged customers about the brand is ten times more influential than television or print advertising (Kirby, 2006). Therefore the engaged customers hold crucial importance for the firms. As the firms are shifting the marketing functions from the firms to the customers (Harmeling et al., 2017), engagement can bring in numerous benefits and advantages to the firms. The engaged customer can surely influence the customer population (Hollebeek et al., 2016); acts as a source of competitive advantage for the brand and the owner firm (Kumar et al., 2010); and helps in developing long-term relationships with the brands (Dwivedi, 2015).

Additionally, the underexplored state of brand engagement and especially the lack of empirical studies on engagement (e.g. France et al., 2016) are marked as the reasons for conducting this study. This study is conducted in order to identify drivers behind customers' engagement with the brands inside brand communities citing the fact brand community settings act as a platform offering multiple opportunities for direct and indirect customer-brand interactions (Dessart et al., 2015, 2016) that has been deemed requisite for customer brand engagement (Brodie et al., 2013).

1.2.1 Objectives of the Study

Objectives are the conceptual scheme based on foundational statements assumed to be true (Malhotra and Dash, 2016). The broad objective of this study is to explore customer brand engagement in brand communities which is done by theorizing a brand engagement model depicting brand psychological ownership and value-congruity as brand engagement drivers; and brand attachment and behavioral brand loyalty as brand engagement consequences. Accordingly, this study has the following research objectives:

Objective 1: To develop a conceptual model of customer brand engagement depicting its antecedents and consequences.

Objective 2a: To examine the relationship between brand psychological ownership and customer brand engagement.

Objective 2b: To examine the relationship between brand value-congruity and customer brand engagement.

Objective 3a: To examine the relationship between customer brand engagement and brand attachment.

Objective 3b: To examine the relationship between customer brand engagement and behavioural brand loyalty.

1.2.2 Research questions

Research questions are the refined statements of the specific components of the problem that provides clear guidelines of how to further proceed with the marketing research problem (Malhotra and Dash, 2016). To accomplish above-mentioned research objectives, below research questions need to be answered by this study:

RQ1: Can brand psychological ownership influence customer brand engagement?

RQ2: Can brand value-congruity influence customer brand engagement?

RQ3: Can customer brand engagement influence brand attachment?

RQ4: Can customer brand engagement influence behavioural brand loyalty?

1.3 Significance of the Study

The research on the concept of engagement in other disciplines like psychology and organization behaviour is decades old, e.g., Kahn (1990) talked about employee engagement and Fredricks et al. (2004) talked about student engagement. But the exploration of customer brand engagement in marketing is not more than a decade old (Hollebeek, 2011a, 2011b; Brodie et al., 2011, 2013). The research on customer engagement was almost absent prior to the year of 2005 and progressed afterwards, and it gained pace after the year of 2010 (Brodie et al., 2011). However, the research on brand engagement is still believed to be insufficient (e.g. Hollbeek et al., 2014; France et al., 2016); there is dearth of studies depicting drivers and consequences of engagement through quantitative analysis (Van Doorn et al., 2010; Bolton, 2011; Solem, 2015); and there is a need for researchers to expand the contextual boundaries of CBE (Dessart et al., 2015; Islam and Rahman, 2016a). The merits of different alternative theories further needs to be investigated for the exploration of brand engagement (Hollebeek, 2011b), which warrants the exploration of integrated model composed of brand psychological ownership, value-congruity, customer brand engagement, brand attachment, and brand loyalty through this study.

This study contributes to current theory and existing practices on customer brand engagement, for instance, the role of consumers' brand psychological ownership and value-congruity in stimulating their brand engagement is tested in a brand community context. Brand engagement is a key component of customer based brand equity (CBBE) model and this work adds in this direction. A sense of ownership towards the focal object is prevalent among members in the communities and the members embrace common values which make these variables of primary research attention in the context of the brand and brand community, and this research contributes in this direction. Hence, there lies a need for greater academic and managerial attention to develop customer brand engagement by focusing on stated variables. The outcomes of brand engagement in this study are of potential managerial importance, viz., brand attachment and brand loyalty. It is seen in the literature that the value created by brand engagement can be transactional as well as non-transactional (Kumar et al., 2010; Maslowska et al., 2016). Brand attachment is important as developing a strong emotional bond is a priority in the age of competition and choice alternatives (Grisaffe and Nguyen, 2011). Similarly, brand repurchases and recommendations (behavioural brand loyalty) are rationally important for the firms so as to generate profits in addition to the development of emotional bonds with the

customers. The application of theories from other disciplines in the engagement of customers is also a unique contribution of this study that creates a fertile ground for its further applications in the marketing discipline.

1.4 Definitions of Key Terms

1.4.1 Brand: The American Marketing Association (AMA) describes a brand as “a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them which is intended to identify the goods and service of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors” (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010, p. 188).

1.4.2 Customer brand engagement: Hollebeek et al. (2014) define customer brand engagement as “a consumer's positively valenced brand-related cognitive, emotional and behavioral activity during or related to focal consumer/brand interactions” (p. 154).

1.4.3 Psychological ownership: Psychological ownership is defined as “that state in which individuals feel as though the target of ownership (material or immaterial in nature) or a piece of it is ‘theirs’” (Pierce et al., 2001, p. 299).

1.4.4 Value-congruity: Value-congruity is defined as “a mental comparison that consumers make in respect to the similarity or dissimilarity of entity’s values and their own set of values” (Tuskej et al., 2013, p. 54).

1.4.5 Brand attachment: Park et al. (2010) define brand attachment as “the strength of the bond connecting the brand with the self” (p. 2).

1.4.6 Behavioural brand loyalty: Behavioural brand loyalty means repeat brand purchases and recommendation behaviours (Johnson et al., 2006).

1.4.7 Brand community: According to Muniz and O’Guinn (2001), “a brand community is a specialized, non-geographically bound community, based on a structured set of social relations among admirers of a brand” (p. 412).

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is structured in five chapters. The first chapter deals with the introduction to the study topic, the purpose of the study, objectives of the research, research questions, and overall thesis structure. In the second chapter, a comprehensive literature review entailing customer brand engagement’s interdisciplinary journey and the meaning and conceptualization of

customer brand engagement is discussed. Theoretical background of other main constructs in the study and the hypothesized relationships are also covered in this chapter. In the third chapter, the research method of the study is discussed that entails the details about how the required information for fulfilling the objectives of the study is collected which includes study context, measurement and scaling, questionnaire design, sampling, and data analysis techniques employed thereon. In chapter four, data analysis results are reported including the measurement theory testing results containing the measurement structure of the different constructs; and structural theory test results providing details about the structural paths between the constructs in the study. The last chapter, i.e., chapter five, contains the discussion about the results of the study that how these results contribute to existing theory and practice. The limitations of the study are reported and the future research directions are provided afterwards. The conclusion of the research is provided at the end of this chapter.

1.6 Conclusion

The increasing reliance on customer brand engagement to create, communicate, and deliver superior brand value in the marketplace has made it imperative on the part of the academia and the industry to understand the 'brand engagement' concept at length. The creation of brand communities as a parsimonious tool to create and manage customers makes brand engagement an important topic worthy of exploration in this context. Present research aims to investigate customer brand engagement inside brand communities created around 'Royal Enfield' brand. This chapter provided an overview of the work done in this thesis highlighting the purpose of the study and the significance of conducting this research work. Finally, organization of overall structure of the thesis is explained in this chapter. The next chapter presents a comprehensive review of literature of the theories and constructs employed in this study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The literature review portrays the theoretical domain of main constructs of the study, the extent to which these constructs have been researched upon, and their potential relevance in this study. We see that customer engagement has been explored in other disciplines for long but remained largely underexplored in the marketing domain and it has become an imperative for the management to achieve customer brand engagement. To explore customer brand engagement, the antecedents and consequences based modelling approach that tells us that how can customers be engaged with the brands and what would brand engagement further result into, is adopted. Brand engagement requires regular interactions between the customer and the brand and in order to accommodate this aspect, brand community setting is employed as the context of this study. For example, brand engagement is an important dimension of the customer-brand relationships where the customer comes in sync with the brand communities, blogs, etc., created around the brand that can help customers in their engagement with the brands (Keller, 2009). In this way, the role of brand communities in brand engagement is crucial. Marketing researchers embarked on the journey of exploration of brand engagement after a special issue appeared in Journal of service research (2010). The articles in these special issues captured the state of engagement including conceptualization in marketing, dimensionality, and measurement; and laid down directions for future research on customer engagement in marketing. This initiative was followed by a surge in academic research on customer engagement and has been scaling up since then.

2.1 Transpiring Journey of Engagement

Prior to its conceptualization in management literature, the 'engagement' was studied in different disciplines, viz., sociology (Morimoto and Friedland, 2013); psychology (Avery et al., 2007; Garczynski et al., 2013), educational psychology (Fredericks et al., 2007; Saveanu and Saveanu, 2012), information systems (Erat et al., 2006), organisational behaviour (Margolis and Molinsky, 2008; Kataria et al., 2012) etc. Engagement has always been described within the boundaries of the subject-object interactions such as 'civic engagement' in sociology (Jennings and Stoker, 2004); 'state engagement' in political science (Resnick, 2001); 'social engagement' in psychology (Achterberg et al., 2003), and 'student engagement' in education psychology (Hu, 2010). Authors in these disciplines have conceptualized engagement by setting their own frame of reference and different goals with a commonality of 'engagement'

being considered as a relationship building function. A cross-disciplinary literature review (see Table 2.1) puts organization behaviour discipline at the top in conceptualizing and describing the construct as the intention in and desire for maintaining relationships (Allen and Meyer, 1990).

Gallup consulting is considered as the pioneer in coining the term “employee engagement” (Buckingham and Coffman, 1999). As per Gallup consulting group, “employee engagement refers to an individual’s involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work” (Harter et al., 2002). This conceptualization seems to overlap with traditional job involvement and job satisfaction constructs. Kahn (1990) explored employee engagement by highlighting the disparity among employees in terms of their self-expressiveness at the workplace; an employee is said to be engaged when he/she is willing to perform extra-role behaviours at the workplace beyond what is required (in-role or complaint behaviour) and this positive attitude towards the job is a psychologically subjective response contingent on the meaningfulness (work goal value proportion), psychological safety (performing job operations without a sense of fear), and availability (resources in place to engage self in work) (Kahn, 1990). Engaged employees exhibit vigour, dedication, and absorption at the workplaces (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Employee engagement and work engagement has been used interchangeably where employee engagement refers to the engagement between the employee and the employer, whereas work engagement covers a wider range of professions (Bakker and Leiter, 2010; Dalela et al., 2018) like a student, a soldier, a driver, a teacher, an executive, an employee etc. Rothbard (2001) described employee engagement as a two-dimensional motivational construct embracing attention and absorption. In organization behaviour, firms have adopted this approach where measuring and maintaining employee engagement can lead to increased efficiency and enhanced profitability (Greenwood, 2007).

On a different side, civic engagement encompasses behaviours and attitudes related to political/quasi-political processes as well as institutions (Jennings and Zeitner, 2003). In education psychology, a student’s extent of motivation and commitment towards institution in terms of his/her academic investment and psychological sense of belongingness determines his level of engagement (London et al., 2007). Social engagement refers to social interactions between different people and groups (Achterberg et al., 2003). Higgins (2006) offered a more general view of engagement by calling engagement as “the state of being engaged is to be involved, occupied, and interested in something. Strong engagement is to concentrate on something, to be absorbed or engrossed with it” (p. 442) and termed it as directed in a positive or negative direction. The hints about the direction of engagement had remained unnoticed until

then and later recognized as a dimension of customer engagement and termed as 'valence' (Van Doorn et al., 2010). This aspect of engagement paved the way to explore engagement-disengagement conundrum lately (Bowden et al., 2015).

The genesis of the engagement concept in marketing is deeply rooted in the recurring subject (customer/consumer)-object (firm, product, brand, media, brand community) interactions (Patterson et al., 2006; Calder et al., 2009; Baldus et al., 2015; Fang, 2017) and the resulting interactive experiences (Merrilees, 2016; Tefesse, 2016). It indicates that the customers can be engaged at multiple layers such as brand, product, and/or firm level (Peppers and Rogers, 2006; Stringer, 2006). Customers voluntarily invest their personal (cognitive, emotional, and behavioural) resources in the focal objects of engagement (Keller, 2001; Hollebeek, 2011a, 2011b; Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014) and the nature of these relationship investments largely remains non-transactional (Keller, 2001; Verhoef et al., 2010; Van Doorn et al., 2010; Kumar et al., 2010; Dessart et al., 2016). For instance, Patterson et al. (2006) described customer engagement as "the level of a customer's various "presence" in their relationship with a service organisation. The presences include physical presence, emotional presence and cognitive presence". They proposed four components of engagement state, viz., vigour (energy level and mental resilience), dedication (a sense of belongingness), absorption (full concentration and engrossment), and interaction (multiple recurring interactions) while interacting with firm, brand, employees, and/or other customers (with special focus on service organizations). The concept of customer engagement has also been termed as a loyalty building process for existing as well as new customers (Bowden, 2009). Emphasizing on the behavioural dimension of engagement, Van Doorn et al. (2010) theorized that "customer engagement behaviors go beyond transactions, and may be specifically defined as a customer's behavioral manifestations that have a brand or firm focus, beyond purchase, resulting from motivational drivers" (p. 254). They proposed five dimensions of customer engagement behaviour, viz., valence, modality, scope, nature of impact, and consumer goals. 'Relationships beyond transactions' became inextricable to the engagement concept as evident from its conceptualizations, e.g., Marketing Science Institute (MSI) described engagement as "customers' behavioral manifestation toward a brand or firm beyond purchase" (MSI, 2010, p. 4) and inducted customer engagement in the MSI research priorities manual year after year (MSI, 2012, 2014, 2016).

Taking a psychological perspective, customer engagement has been posited as a psychological state (Brodie et al., 2011) attained through interactive relational experiences built on the premise of relationship marketing and S-D (service dominant) logic of Vargo and Lusch

(2004). The recurring interactions have been attributed as a precursor to the engagement state (Brodie et al., 2011; Zhu, 2006). From customer management perspective, the ignorance of non-transactional cognitions and behaviours could have compromised the right valuation of the customers (Verhoef et al., 2010; kumar et al., 2010). Therefore, taking the perspective of right customer evaluation by considering the transactional as well as non-transactional value added to the firms, total customer engagement value was computed as the sum total of customer lifetime value (CLV), customer referral value (CRV), customer influence value (CIV), and customer knowledge value (CKV) (Kumar et al., 2010). The rationale behind this assertion is that customers engaging with the firm can contribute to the firm not only in terms of transactions but through their referrals, their social influence, and knowledge about the firm (brand).

From the lens of relationship marketing (RM), Vivek et al. (2012) conceptualized customer engagement as “the intensity of an individual’s participation in and connection with an organization’s offerings or organizational activities, which either the customer or the organization initiates” (p. 133). The engagement is free of the purchase or ownership of the focal object (brand, product) (Vivek et al., 2012, 2014; Kumar and Nayak, 2019c). Complementary to this proposition is the evidence of engagement behaviours towards free offerings among non-paying individuals (non-customers) (Groeger et al., 2016). The engagement of non-customers can also be supported with Bowden’s (2009) conceptualization of engagement as a loyalty-building psychological process for current as well as potential customers (who are yet to become the customers of the brand). Considering the process perspective, customer engagement was defined as a cyclic process marked by different stages, viz., connection, interaction, satisfaction, retention, commitment, advocacy, and engagement (Sashi, 2012).

Along with the researchers’ inclination towards customer engagement exploration (Liu et al., 2018), the practitioners’ have also paid due attention to conceptualize and understand engagement concept since its inception (Sashi, 2012). The firms/entities being at the forefront of this endeavour include Advertising Research Foundation (ARF) (2008), Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU) (2007a, 2007b), Forrester Consulting (2008), and Gallup Consulting (2009, 2010). For instance, engagement was defined as “turning on a prospect to a brand idea enhanced by the surrounding context” (Advertising Research Foundation, 2008) and as “an intimate long-term relationship with the customer” (EIU, 2007a, 2007b). A worldwide managerial survey (public and private sector firms) conducted by Adobe in 2008 showed that firms are keen on the creation of customer engagement. Firms such as Anheuser-Busch started

planning a budget worth 200 billion USD every year for engagement marketing (Barris, 2015). Firms have even created separate departments to deal with the issues of customer engagement and appointed 'director' level authorities to tackle customer engagement (Brodie et al., 2011).

The advent of internet and web has provided a new object for customer engagement, i.e., social media. Customer engagement with a website (communication media) is defined as "a collection of experiences with the site" (Calder et al., 2009, p. 322). After the realization of brand communities in marketing literature (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001), engagement with brand communities also caught attention. Algesheimer et al. (2005) described brand community engagement as "the consumer's intrinsic motivation to interact and cooperate with community members" (p. 21). Baldus et al. (2015) described online community engagement as "the compelling, intrinsic motivations to continue interacting with an online brand community" (p. 979).

Brand communities have also acted as a prominent context to explore customer brand engagement because geographical boundaries preventing customer-brand interactions diminish on these platforms (Laroche et al., 2012; Wirtz et al., 2013; Dessart et al., 2014, 2016; Habibi et al., 2014; Zheng et al., 2015; Rosenthal and Brito, 2017). Customer brand engagement models have been tested in the context of Facebook and Twitter-based communities (Gummerus et al., 2012; Ibrahim et al., 2017). The role of engagement in generating electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) can be seen in social relationships on social networking sites (Chu and Kim, 2011). The role of engagement as a critical source of competitive advantage for the firm is also seen in literature where customer engagement and employee engagement are studied together (Kumar and Pansari, 2016).

The nature of customer engagement has changed the face of traditional relationship-based marketing approach which is being replaced by 'customer engagement marketing' and described by Harmeling et al., (2017) as "a firm's deliberate effort to motivate, empower, and measure a customer's voluntary contribution to the firm's marketing functions beyond the core, economic transaction" (p. 313) and they defined customer engagement as "a customer's voluntary resource contribution to a firm's marketing function, going beyond financial patronage" (p. 316). This perspective has been built on the premise of customers' voluntary resource contributions with a brand/firm focus in a multi-stakeholder system, but beyond fundamental transactional perspective attached to engagement concept (Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014). This new theory in marketing has offered a strategic approach to induce customers to contribute resources and act as brand marketers or pseudo marketers per se. This theory exhibits similarity with how engagement was described by Keller (2001, 2003) (in terms

of resource contribution by the customers like time, money, knowledge, and energy etc. characterising the customer engagement construct).



Table 2.1
Multidisciplinary definitions of engagement

Work engagement
"Work Engagement is the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles. While engaged people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, emotionally and mentally during role performances" (Kahn, 1990).
"Work engagement is a motivational concept where engaged employees feel compelled to strive towards a challenging goal in a pursuit to succeed" (Bakker et al., 2010).
Student engagement
"Engagement includes both behavioural and emotional components. Students who are engaged show sustained behavioural involvement in learning activities accompanied by positive emotional tone" (Skinner and Belmont, 1993).
"The multidimensional nature of student engagement exists in the following dimensions: Cognitive (Willingness to master certain skill), Emotional (Positive or negative reactions to teacher and behavioural Participation (In academic/extracurricular activity)" (Fredricks et al. 2004).
"A student's level of academic investment, motivation and commitment with their institution, perceived psychological connection, comfort and sense of belonging toward their institution" (London et al., 2007).
State engagement
"Iterative process aiming to influence political behaviour of a target state through maintained contacts with that state across multiple issue areas (e.g., diplomatic, economic) and focused on generating a relationship of increasing interdependence" (Resnick, 2001).
Employee engagement
"A positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind and work related activities" (Schaufeli et al., 2002)
"Employee engagement refers to an individual's involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work" (Harter et al., 2002).
Social engagement
"A high sense of initiative, involvement and adequate response to social stimuli, participating in social activities, interacting with others" (Achterberg et al. 2003).
Civic engagement
"Civic engagement includes both behaviours and attitudes with respect to political and quasi-political processes and institutions" (Jennings and Zeitner, 2003).
"Civic engagement refers to the ways in which citizens participate in the life of a community in order to improve conditions for others or to help shape the community's future" (Adler and Goggin, 2005).
"Civic engagement refers to participation in civic and community activities" (Shah et al., 2001).
Occupation engagement
"A lifestyle characteristic including the external/objective and internal/subjective aspects of occupational performance, which involves both anticipation and comprehension thereof, and serves as the basis for an ongoing, cyclical means of maintaining a sense of self and well-being" (Bejerholm and Eklund, 2006).
Task engagement
"It is the vigilance performance on a particular task; attentional resource availability, sustained attention, and alertness" (Matthews et al., 2010).

2.1.1 Meaning and conceptualization of customer brand engagement

The attention paid to the meaning spontaneity and subjectivity attributed by consumers to their experience of 'engagement' with a brand has remained on a piecemeal basis and there had been little consensus on the conceptualization of customer brand engagement until now (Graffigna and Gambetti, 2015; France et al., 2016). Despite the lack of consensus in the concept's underpinnings, the past decade has offered a range of definitions in the marketing literature for different engagement structures illustrating the concept from different stakeholder and/or contextual perspectives (e.g. media engagement, consumer-brand engagement and brand engagement in self-concept) (Calder and Malthouse, 2008; Bowden, 2009; Sprott et al., 2009). Few selective definitions of customer engagement have been outlined in Table 2.2 guiding its conceptualization over the years and the focus on brand as an engagement object by the authors. Customer brand engagement has evolved as an independent construct that can stand on its own under the broader ambit of customer engagement with a particular focus on 'brand' as the engagement object. Only a few studies used the construct of consumer brand engagement or brand engagement before 2005 (Brodie et al., 2011). 'Brand' as an engagement object grabbed special attention because brands have their own relationship building capabilities (Schultz, 2007; Veloutsou, 2009). Understanding customer brand engagement is potentially critical to a brand management program because customer brand engagement engenders customer value (Hollebeek, 2013), brand equity (Hoeffler and Keller, 2002; Hepola et al., 2017), brand loyalty (Brodie et al., 2011, 2013; Leckie et al., 2016; Thakur, 2019), superior brand performance (Wong and Merrilees, 2015), and a positive word of mouth (Vivek et al., 2012; Wallace et al., 2014).

CBE focuses on specific customer-brand interactions where customers exert cognitive, emotional, and behavioural resources in specific brand interactions (Sedley, 2010; Hollebeek, 2011b; Hollebeek et al., 2014). Three specific dimensions have been recognized as immersion (cognitive resource investment), passion (emotional resource investment), and activation (behavioural resource investment) during these brand interactions (Hollebeek, 2011b). Another similar conceptualization describes CBE as the level of an individual customer's motivational, brand-related, and context-dependent state of mind characterized by specific levels of cognitive, emotional and behavioural activity in direct brand interactions with three dimensions: activation, absorption, and identification (Hollebeek, 2011a). All these conceptualizations purport the multidimensional nature of customer brand engagement (CBE) that follows the collective effect of thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Customer engagement goes beyond purchase and is the level of the customer's (or potential customer's) interactions and connections with the brand or firm's offerings or activities, often involving others in the social network created around the brand (Vivek et al., 2014). This conceptualization extends to the social dimension in the nomological network around the brand/firm and proposes three dimensions of engagement: conscious attention, enthused participation, and social connection. This idea is further supported by Kozinets (2014) by introducing the social side of brand engagement by asserting the role of social connections in engagement and argued that engagement cannot happen in isolation. Wallace et al. (2014) in their study on self-expressive brands have also focused on the social dimension to examine the relationship between brand liking and its outcomes.

Gambetti et al. (2012) provided the practitioners' perspective on customer brand engagement as "CBE is seen by practitioners as a dynamic and process-based concept evolving in intensity on the basis of the brand capability of increasingly intercepting consumers' desires and expectations using all possible physical and virtual touch points between brand and consumers" (p. 659). Emphasis was also given on the reduction of the gap between academic and practitioners' understanding of brand engagement.

Customer brand engagement has also been studied by taking the firms' perspective that characterized customer brand engagement with its unique features, viz., positively featured expressions, highly interactive nature, and multi-dimensionality (Wong and Merrilees, 2015). Graffigna and Gambetti (2015) adds a new meaning to customer brand engagement by asserting that a brand passes through different relational life stages, i.e., friendship, intimacy, and symbiosis and called a brand as 'engaging' when the customers perceive it as a 'life partner'.

It is evident from the available literature that research on CBE focuses on a particular brand only with the exception of Spratt et al. (2009) who focused on customers' propensity towards a set of brands envisaged as a part of customers' self-concept. It is also evident from above conceptualizations that a brand should be equipped with specific attributes so as to enter into customers' lives and able to harness a relationship where the customer considers the brand as a part of his/her self.

Table 2.2

Conceptualization of customer engagement

Authors	Definition
Higgins (2006)	“The state of being engaged is to be involved, occupied, and interested in something. Strong engagement is to concentrate on something, to be absorbed or engrossed with it.”
Patterson et.al. (2006)	“Customer engagement describes the level of a customer’s various “presence” in their relationship with the organisation. The presences include physical presence, emotional presence and cognitive presence.”
Sprott et al. (2009)	“Brand engagement in self-concept (BESC) is a generalized view of brands in relation to the self, with consumers varying in their tendency to include important brands as part of their self-concepts.”
Van Doorn et al. (2010)	“Customer engagement behaviours go beyond transactions, and may be specifically defined as a customer’s behavioural manifestations that have a brand or firm focus, beyond purchase, resulting from motivational drivers.”
Mollen and Wilson (2010)	“A cognitive and affective commitment to an active relationship with the brand as personified by the website.”
Hollebeek (2011a)	“The level of an individual customer’s motivational, brand-related and context-dependent state of mind characterised by specific levels of cognitive, emotional and behavioural activity in direct brand interactions.”
Hollebeek (2011b)	“The level of a customer’s cognitive, emotional and behavioural investment in specific brand interactions.”
Vivek et al. (2012)	“The intensity of an individual’s participation and connection with the organizations offerings and activities initiated by either the customer or organization.”
Gambetti et al. (2012)	“CBE is seen by practitioners as a dynamic and process-based concept evolving in intensity on the basis of the brand capability of increasingly intercepting consumers’ desires and expectations using all possible physical and virtual touch-points between brand and consumers. CBE appears as an overarching marketing concept encapsulating different consumer decision-making dimensions, from brand preference to brand purchase. Furthermore CBE emerges as a multi-dimensional construct that beyond traditional cognitive, emotional and conative dimensions seems to be based on emerging experiential and social dimensions that appear as its central elements.”
Brodie et al. (2013)	“Consumer engagement in virtual brand community can be defined as a context dependent, psychological state characterised by fluctuating intensity levels that occur within dynamic, iterative engagement processes.”
Hollebeek et al. (2014)	“A consumer's positively valenced brand-related cognitive, emotional and behavioural activity during or related to focal consumer/brand interactions.”
Wong and Merrilees (2015)	“Brand engagement goes further than simply selling products and rather, investigates the deeper ways that firms get customers to be more passionate and involved about the brand.”
Graffigna and	“A brand is perceived by consumers as engaging when it is

Gambetti (2015)	emotionally lived as a 'life mate'. Furthermore CBE emerges as a dynamic process that evolves in three progressive relational phases: friendship, intimacy and symbiosis.”
Pansari and Kumar (2016)	“CE is the mechanics of a customer's value addition to the firm either through direct and/or indirect contribution.”
Groegeer et al. (2016)	CEBs are defined as “a non-paying consumer’s motivationally driven, positive behaviours toward a product, brand or firm, which are predicated on free offerings.”
Pongpaew et al. (2017)	“Brand engagement is defined as the intensity of an individual’s participation and connection with an organization’s offering and/or organizational activities, or a customer’s behavioral manifestations that have a brand or firm focus, beyond purchase.”

Notes: The boldfaced authors discuss customer engagement with brands specifically; CBE = Customer brand engagement; CEB = Customer engagement behaviour; CE = Customer engagement

2.1.2 Customer brand engagement dimensionality

Dimensionality of customer brand engagement is an important aspect as the concept has been termed one-dimensional, i.e., behavioural (e.g. Van Doorn et al., 2010) and two-dimensional, i.e., cognitive and affective dimensions (e.g. Mollen and Wilson, 2010). But the majority of the works have conceptualized and considered customer brand engagement as a three-dimensional concept (Hollebeek, 2011a, 2011b; Hollebeek et al., 2014; Hollebeek and Chen, 2014; Kaltcheva et al., 2014; Dwivedi, 2015; Leckie et al., 2016). The concept is treated as a higher order construct by numerous researchers despite its first order three-factor structure (Patterson et al., 2006; Calder et al., 2009; Mersey et al., 2010; Gambetti et al., 2012; Dwivedi, 2015; Thakur, 2016). The higher order character of the engagement has been acknowledged in tourism as well (So et al., 2016; Devashish, 2011). The concept of CBE is contextual in nature, which means different dimensions can come into play and different levels of CBE are generated (Bowden, 2009; Brodie et al., 2013; Van Doorn et al., 2010; Vivek et al., 2012).

The conceptualization, as well as operationalization of CBE for this study is taken from Hollebeek et al. (2014) who defined CBE as "a consumer's positively valenced brand-related cognitive, emotional and behavioral activity during or related to focal consumer/brand interactions" (p. 154). In line with the above discussion, customer brand engagement has been considered as a higher order construct to comprehensively understand brand engagement as adopted in previous literature (e.g. Kumar and Nayak, 2018). Moreover, this conceptualization of CBE fits in the specific context of brand communities as employed in this study. Elaborating upon the three dimensions of customer brand engagement, cognitive dimension of CBE is 'cognitive processing' and described as “a consumer's level of brand-related thought processing and elaboration in a particular consumer/brand interaction”; the emotional dimension of CBE is

'affection' and described as "a consumer's degree of positive brand-related affect in a particular consumer/brand interaction"; the behavioural dimension of CBE is 'activation' and described as "a consumer's level of energy, effort and time spent on a brand in a particular consumer/brand interaction" (Hollebeek et al., 2014, p. 154). Therefore a higher order measurement of CBE construct encompasses all these aspects as a whole.

2.2 Brand Psychological Ownership

2.2.1 Theoretical background

"We are what we have" is one of the powerful narratives in consumer behaviour (Rosenbaum, 1972) and "a man's self is the sum total of all that he can call his" (James, 1890). Both of these assertions share a common thread that an individual is not just made up of his sole inner self but everything which is a part of his extended self (Belk, 1988). The idea of connecting self with objects of possessions is decades old (Dittmar, 1991) and the role played by possessions in shaping the identities of individuals and becoming a part of extended self is evident in the literature (Belk, 1988; Dittmar, 1992). Possessions offer individuals with a sense of belongingness, a feeling of shelter, and enrich and gratify one's self-concept (McCracken, 1986). Departure from possessions causes grief and a loss of self (Bowlby, 1980). The conceptual schema of psychological ownership is deeply embedded in possessions itself and psychological ownership is defined as a mental state where the target of ownership is considered as 'me' or 'mine' (Pierce et al., 2001, 2003, 2004). Customers have an inherent tendency to own products and brands either to create, maintain and/or enhance their self-images for themselves or to present self to others in the society (Fournier, 1998; Escalas, 2004; Escalas and Bettman, 2003). This drive for extracting self-related meaning through brands (as possessions) has extended its reach to marketers as well. Marketers are devising different ways to instil these properties in brands by introducing self-expressive or hedonic brands (Belk, 2010), which makes customers experience similarity with the brands.

Role of branded possessions in marketing is there for decades (see Belk 1988; Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Wallendorf and Arnould, 1988). Brands as elements of possession play an important role in individuals' community integration as well and act as barriers to defection while thinking of divorcing a brand community (McAlexander et al., 2002). At an individual level, brands act as a possession through which the customers can satisfy their self-esteem needs, i.e., achieve ideal self-concept (Malar et al., 2011). Therefore brands act as integral objects of individuals' possession and customers experience a sense of psychological ownership towards the brands (Chang et al., 2012; Chang et al., 2015; Kumar and Nayak, 2019a).

2.2.2 Psychological ownership in Organizational behaviour

Psychological ownership (PO) has been defined as a mental state where individuals consider the target of ownership or a part of it as ‘theirs’ (Pierce et al., 2001). Individuals' sense of ownership towards the targets of possession such as home, electronic gadgets, automobiles, places, and other people is a common phenomenon (Dittmar, 1992). These possessions shape the identity of the people as they become a part of the extended self of the customers (Belk, 1988; Dittmar, 1992; Belk, 2013). The role of possessions in shaping the identities of people and constituting extended-selves of the customers is complementing to the findings of Aron and Aron (1996) that individuals have a tendency to expand themselves to achieve certain goals and in this pursuit they strive to acquire resources based on relevance and pertinence. Such ownership of objects could be psychological, not necessarily legal. A similar assertion was made by Vandewalle et al. (1995) for the employee's sense of PO towards organizations.

The emergence of ownership concept in organizations goes back to the idea of exposing employees to ‘financial ownership’ or ESOP (employee stock ownership plan), which leads to favourable employee attitudes towards the company such as high turnover and low absenteeism (Florkowski, 1987; Klein, 1987; Buchko, 1992). Ownership had always been known as ‘the legal right of possession’ (Monks and Minow, 2001). Later it was followed by a theory that psychological ownership itself can shape positive cognitive and behavioural attitudes of employees towards the organizations and these attitudes can motivate them to exhibit extra-role behaviours for the welfare of the organizations (Vandewalle et al., 1995) such as voluntary behaviours (Van Dyne et al., 1994; Van Dyne and Pierce, 2004). Employees were found holding a sense of PO towards organizations (without actual ownership) (Vandewalle et al., 1995; Chang et al., 2012). All these studies supported the premise of psychological ownership and negated the idea of ownership of legal possessions only. Nodal argument of delineation of psychological ownership with legal ownership is that one may acquire something legally but not necessarily emotionally. The rallying point in case of psychological ownership is “what I own feels like a part of me” (Mann, 1991, p. 211). In this way, the possessiveness and psychological ownership go hand in hand.

2.2.3 Psychological ownership in marketing

The concept of psychological ownership transcended to the management of customers who are believed to be the most important resource of an organization in contemporary settings. There were a handful of studies discussing the role of psychological ownership in marketing before the year 2015. The publication of a special issue on 'psychological ownership' in *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice* (2015) marks the importance of the application of psychological ownership theory in marketing literature. Different articles published in the special issue highlight the potential held by this concept and its desired application in understanding consumer behaviour. Theoretical works of Jussila et al. (2015) and Hulland et al. (2015) have thoroughly analyzed the concept of PO and offered many future research directions for its exploration in marketing literature.

The manifestation of a sense of PO at the individual level is said to be taking place at four different layers of self: core self, learned self, lived self, and perceived self (Hillenbrand and Guy Money, 2015). 'Core self' symbolizes the innermost aspects of an individual's personal identity, often only unconsciously known even to that person (Hoyle et al., 1999). 'Learned self' manifests itself in a set of conscious and unconscious roles and rules (Schlenker, 1985). 'Lived self' represents a range of activated cognitions, emotions, and day-to-day behaviors (Bagozzi, 1992; Deci and Ryan, 2000; Swann et al, 2007). 'Perceived self' means how we are seen by others (Kenny and DePaulo, 1993; Tice and Wallace, 2003). 'Perceived self' together with the 'lived self' sits at the boundary between the personal identity and the social identity. All these layers of self might play an important role in constituting the inner as well as extended self of consumers described by Belk (1988) and corresponding sense of PO towards the reference objects.

As far as the consumer behaviour studies are concerned, PO has been studied along with mental imagery (Kamleitner and Feuchtl, 2015); consumer technology appropriation (Kirk et al., 2015), and social media usage (Karahanna et al., 2015). PO has been studied with user imagery to induce important consumer outcomes such as attachment and other behavioural outcomes (Kamleitner and Feuchtl, 2015). Kirk et al. (2015) explained the role of PO in technology appropriation (technology acceptance) and found that the process of choosing technology artifacts influences his/her sense of PO for the technology and the sense of PO further enhances technology valuation and word of mouth. A customer trying to satisfy the motivations to psychological ownership get engaged with social media as it has the potential to satisfy these motivations (Karahanna et al., 2015).

The sense of psychological ownership is inextricably linked to the control over the target (Pierce et al., 2003). Drawing on this premise, Peck and Shu (2009) designed a study where they theorized that touching an object is an influential driver of psychological ownership. The study revealed that since touching an object creates a sense of control among people, it can influence the ownership quotient. The touching experience and the sense of PO collectively enhance the valuation of the focal object as well (Peck and Shu, 2009; Shu and Peck, 2011). Lately, Lessard-Bonaventure and Chebat (2015) introduced PO as a mediator between touching object and willingness to pay and found that PO will increase only if the risk involved is low. Apart from merely touching objects, feelings of PO were found to be stimulating at the mere sight of the object (Kamleitner and Feuchtl, 2015); by naming the products (Stoner et al., 2018), and by co-designing the innovations (Sembada, 2018). All these studies solidify the premise that a sense of PO develops with an increase in control over the object and when the customers start feeling self-efficacious with reference to the object.

The theory of PO has been applied in tourism as well (e.g. Asatryan and Oh, 2008; Kumar and Nayak, 2019b). A sense of psychological ownership towards the destinations increases the hikers' willingness to pay to preserve the destination (Lee et al., 2013). An integrated model portraying customers' perceived control over, participation in, belongingness to, and identification with the restaurant as antecedents of a sense of psychological ownership towards the restaurant; willingness to pay more, word of mouth, and competing resistance (loyalty) as consequences of this state was proposed and empirically validated by Asatryan and Oh (2008). Tourists developing a sense of PO towards the destinations are willing more to visit the destination and spread a positive word about the destination (Kumar and Nayak, 2019b). The concept of PO has even been explored in the social media context. Social media has the affordances to cater to the needs for PO and this PO enhances the usage of social media (Karahanna et al., 2015). Lee and Suh (2016) explained that customers can feel a sense of PO in brand communities because these communities offer autonomy, long durations to stay, and self-discrepancy. A sense of psychological ownership is found to exist towards the brands in the context of brand communities as well (Dayal, 2016).

The development of a sense of psychological ownership leads to many favourable outcomes. PO in virtual communities results in increased satisfaction, self-esteem, and increases the quality of contribution in the community (Lee and Suh, 2015). A sense of PO in social media also results in engagement behaviours (Guo et al., 2016). PO towards social media positively influences the members' loyalty towards the media as well (Zhao et al., 2016). The sense of psychological ownership towards the domestic market (country) products appreciates

the quality as well as increases the willingness to pay for the focal products (Gineikiene et al., 2017). PO can also result in positive outcomes for the focal object such as attachment to the brands (Kamleitner and Feuchtl, 2015), willingness to pay more (Lessard-Bonaventure and Jean-Charles Chebat, 2015), and higher valuation as well as positive word of mouth (Kirk et al., 2015).

2.2.4 Brand psychological ownership

Extant literature talks about a series of objects towards which the individuals develop a sense of psychological ownership; few highlighted ones include individuals' creations, workplaces, organizations, places, destinations, restaurants, products (objects), social media, virtual brand communities, and brands. The focal construct of our interest is 'brand psychological ownership'. The concept of 'brand psychological ownership' was first mentioned by Chang et al. (2012) in the context of corporate brand (organization) taking the perspective of the employees and described it as "the psychological experiences that make employees produce positive brand cognitions and brand attitudes, such as feelings of ownership toward corporate brand, altruistic spirit toward brand-related activities" (Chang et al., 2012, p. 630-631). Lately, in advertising literature, Chang et al. (2015) described brand psychological ownership as "a psychological state in which people feel possessive of a brand and as if they have control over the brand" (p. 595). It implies that the degree of control experienced by the consumers determines the extent of PO felt towards the brand. However, the study sheds light on the negative consequences of a sense of brand psychological ownership stating that when a brand is acquired by another country or group, the consumers dissociate with it. Excessive control exercised by the individuals (customers) bringing adverse consequences has been marked in previous literature as well (see Pierce et al., 2003).

Taking the widely regarded view of positive outcomes of PO into consideration and concentrating on consumer brands, brand psychological ownership (BPO) has been described in marketing as "a mental state where the customers consider the target brand or a part of it as "theirs". This state of BPO is manifested in a feeling of possession toward the brand where the brand is experienced closer to the self-concept or it becomes a part of the extended self of the customer" (Kumar and Nayak, 2019a, p. 169). The concept of brand psychological ownership and its positive consequences are less explored in marketing literature and require academic research attention (Jussila et al., 2015; Hulland et al., 2015; Dawkins et al., 2017). This gap in the exploration of brand psychological ownership is covered in this study. Moreover, the theory of ownership involves a person and an object in a cultural or social context (Belk, 2018). The

brand is the *raison d'être* for a brand community (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012) and therefore the link between brand psychological ownership and customer brand engagement is explored in a brand community context in this study.

2.3 Value-Congruity

2.3.1 Theoretical background (Congruity theory)

Self-concept is defined as the “totality of the individual’s thoughts and feelings having reference to himself as an object” (Rosenberg, 1979, p. 7). It is also identified as the collection of self-schemas made up of generalizations about the self (Barone et al., 1999). Self-concept has been conceptualized as one dimensional as ‘actual self-concept’ (Belk, 1988); two dimensional as ‘actual and ideal self-concept’ (Malhotra, 1988); and four-dimensional as ‘actual self-concept, ideal self-concept, social self-concept, and ideal social self-concept’ (Sirgy, 1982). Actual self-concept means an individual’s perception about himself/herself; ideal self-concept means how an individual wants to be (desired self); social self-concept means perception of a person of himself/herself being viewed by others, and ideal social self-concept means perceived self-portrayal one aspires to present to others (Johar and Sirgy, 1991). Depending upon the situation, an individual exhibits a unique self to achieve favourable personal and social outcomes and this phenomenon is termed as situational congruity (Schenk and Holman, 1980).

The conspicuous similarity in self-schema with others is termed as congruity and the compatibility of different self-concepts (self-imagery) and product imagery is known as self congruity (degree of sameness of actual self-image and product image); ideal congruity (degree of congruence of ideal self image and product image); social congruity (degree of congruence of social self image and product image), and ideal social self congruity (degree of congruence of ideal social self image and product image) (Johar and Sirgy, 1991). The need for congruity between self and product/brand is stimulated by certain motives, objectives, and needs, viz., self-esteem and/or self-consistency (Epstein, 1980); social consistency and social approval (Johar and Sirgy, 1991). Consumption led self-expressions motivate individuals to modify their behaviour even by buying products to maintain and protect the self-concept (Sirgy, 1982). There is evidence in the literature that individuals prefer the products/brands matching their own self-concept and consumer behaviours are directed in a direction of the enhancement of the self-concept, popularly known as the theory of self-congruity (Sirgy, 1982). Congruity theory asserted that consumers are likely to have favourable attitudes and behaviours towards the objects they feel congruence (similarity) or consistency in terms of attitudes and beliefs

(Osgood and Tannenbaum, 1955). This similarity based paradigm has been supported by Festinger (1964) who said that individuals try to avoid any disharmony and conflict between their attitudes and behaviours and to do so they are always prepared to avoid any sort of dissonance and incongruity. Self-congruity is seen through the comparison lens of self-image and brand image by Sirgy (1986).

Usage of products' personalities to describe individuals is quite old in consumer research (Tucker, 1957). Levy (1959) argued that consumers are not moved just by the functionality (utilitarian perspective) of products but the value-expressive attributes also affect consumer behaviour. Even before the concept of brand personality came into being (Aaker, 1997), there was a growing consensus that the personality held by a product is the stereotypic image of typical brand user projected on to the brand (Sirgy, 1982). Similarly, Aaker (1997) also emphasized on the role of brand user imagery having a great influence in shaping the personality of a brand. The two concepts: self-brand congruity and brand personality congruity are conceptually different and even measured differently (Parker, 2009). Self-brand congruity is measured by calculating the distance in the scores of brand user imagery and self-image of user (Sirgy et al., 1991), known as user-image self-congruity (UIC); whereas, brand personality congruity is measured by comparing brand personality and self-image scores and called brand personality congruity (BPC) (Aaker, 1996).

The concept of self-congruity is significantly important in the target market segmentation so as to choose image attributes for the products/brands (Sirgy, 1986). This concept offers specific psychological insights about the target market. The role of value-expressive brands (hedonic brands) in offering symbolic user imagery is seen in the literature (Levy, 1955). More recently, the theory of congruity has been specifically applied to the similarity in terms of values and 'value-congruity' construct is described as the congruity/similarity between the values of the customer and the brand (e.g. Tuskej et al., 2013; Lee and Jeong, 2014; Islam et al., 2018). The congruity theory had long been employed in branding literature and remained focused on self-brand congruity (e.g. Jamal and Goode, 2001; Kressmann et al, 2006; De Vries and Carlson, 2014; France et al., 2015) but the focus on the subjective similarity in values remained largely absent. This perspective is relatively new to the branding literature as customers evaluate brands on the basis of the values and meaningfulness of the brands and merely not considering the functionality and the utilitarian features of the brands (cf. Keller et al., 2011).

2.3.2 Value-congruity: theoretical background and importance

One of the most influential definition of social sciences' discipline call "value as criterion" and define personal value as "an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence" (Rokeach, 1973, p. 5). The values play a dominant role in the making up of the psychological self of the customers (Wade-Benzoni et al., 2002). Values constitute the principle linking element between the consumers and the brands (Allen et al., 2002) and 'values' constitute the motivation behind a majority of customer purchases (products/brands) (Gutman, 1982). The concept of 'value congruity' was conceptualized as the sameness between the individual's and the organization's values (Chatman, 1989). Similar approach was adopted in theorizing value-congruity as the similarity in terms of the values of the person and the perceived values of the reference object (hotel website) (Zhang and Bloemer, 2008). In attraction-similarity theory, attraction among individuals based on similarity is widely recognized in the literature (Byrne et al., 1967; Morry, 2007). It implies that the people always prefer affirmation of their ideas, principles, beliefs, images, values, etc., and in this pursuit, they look for those who are similar to them and try to sustain the relationship with the perceivably similar entities. This entity can be an organization, a product or a brand. This similarity based perspective is deeply rooted in theories founded on the premise of subject-object similarities such as congruity theory (Johar and Sirgy, 1991), customer-brand congruity (Aaker, 1997), and affective self-affinity (Aspara et al., 2008). Following the works of Tuskej et al. (2013) a 'brand value congruity', popularly known as value-congruity in branding literature is described as the mental comparison of the consumers' own values and the brand's values, and this definition has been adopted in this study.

Value-congruity acts as a strong human motivation in developing and maintaining relationships with the objects (Gaunt, 2006; Zhang and Bloemer, 2008). The importance of value-congruity has been reckoned in multiple disciplines like psychology (Edwards and Cable, 2009), organization psychology (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), and marketing (Tuskej et al, 2013). In organization behaviour discipline, the researchers' inclination to look at the relationship between the employees and the organization from the lens of value-congruity can be observed. The employees sensing a similarity in values get committed to the organizations (Morgan and Hunt, 1994); similarity between personal and organizational values lead to the satisfaction and increased performance of the employees (Cable and Judge, 1997; Arthur et al., 2006). The commitment of the employee is also a resultant of value-congruity that creates such a bond that the employees are not willing to leave the organization (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

In social psychology discipline, the role of value-congruity has been discussed and different terminologies such as similarity, overlap, and match are used on an interchangeable basis to represent congruence (Zhang and Bloemer, 2008).

The support for the similarity-attraction theory was established and the idea of attraction between opposites was further discarded by Aron et al. (2005). The attraction among the similar set of people was also grounded by Smith (1998) and the role of similarity in reinforcing the individual self-esteem and maintenance of his/her identity was acknowledged. Borrowing support from the premise of cognitive-dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957), the role of similarity-attraction was established through the highlight of a reduction of cognitive dissonance (Cable and Judge, 1997). The group of people who have similar values have a commonality in their cognitive processing and interpretations, and it could facilitate interpersonal relationships (Cable and Edwards, 2004). Moreover, the people always strive for the affirmations of their ideas, attitudes, and beliefs and in this pursuit, they look for partners (marital and social) with similar psychological features; thus sameness in values can help them in avoiding conflict in their lives (Arthur et al., 2006). Also, the people experiencing a regulatory fit (feeling support in pursuit of personal goals) tend to engage highly with the task at hand (Higgins, 2000; Higgins and Scholer, 2009). Values are the end goals/life goals of personnel in life (Rokeach, 1973) and a sense of regulatory fit is conceivable when consumers experience confirmation of their values, with no sense of conflict around. It highlights the importance of value-congruity among individuals.

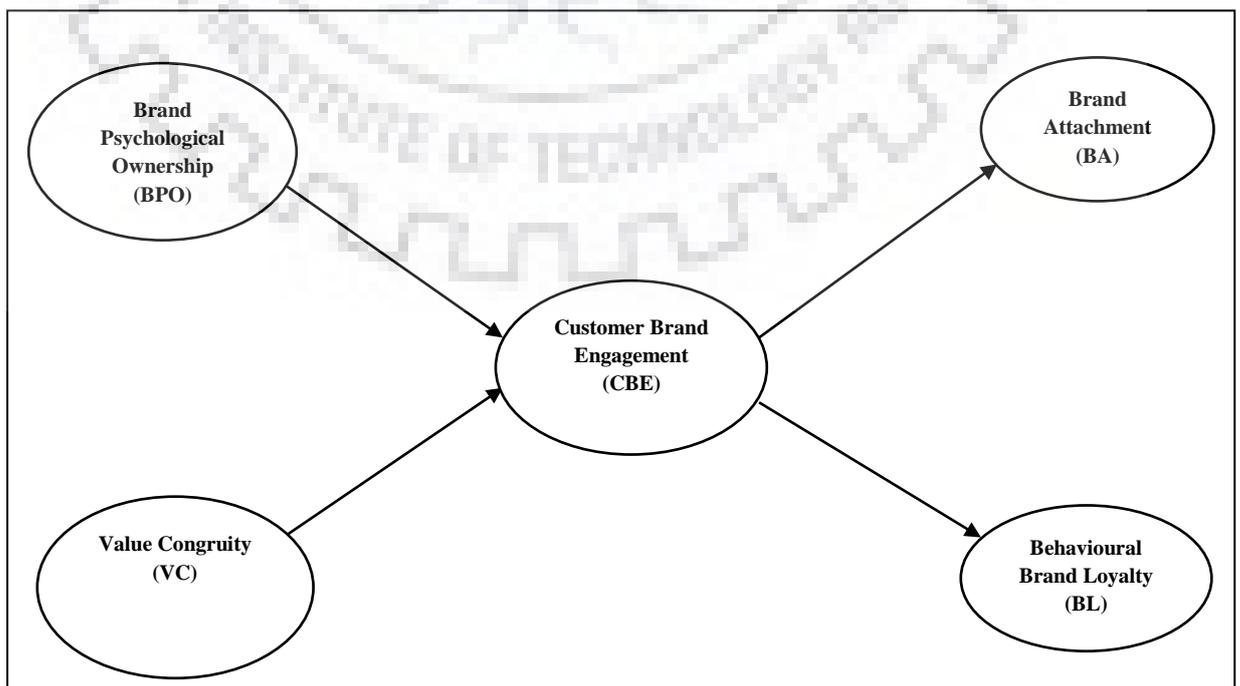
The concept of value-congruity transcended from other disciplines like organization psychology to the marketing literature and empirically investigated in firm-supplier relationships (MacMillan et al., 2005); manager-sales team relationships (Brashear et al., 2003); buyer-seller relationships (Nicholson et al. 2001), and customer-brand relationships (Zhang and Bloemer, 2008; Tuskej et al., 2013). It is evident in the marketing literature that consumers' purchase, consumption, and usage of products and services are closely related to their drive to achieve or confirm their own values (Gutman, 1982; Homer and Kahle, 1988; Zeithaml, 1988; Lages and Fernandes, 2005). Prior literature states that consumers evaluate brands not on the basis of what brands promise to offer, but in terms of the meaningfulness of the brand or 'what the brand means to them' (De Chernatony et al., 2010). The meaningfulness of a brand covers the functional as well as perceived value attributes of a brand (Sirgy et al., 1997, 2000). This changing paradigm puts the role of perceived brand values at the centre of brand success strategy (De Chernatony et al., 2004). Consumers' cognitive product choice decisions rely on value-congruence (Brangule-Vlagsma et al., 2002) and in this way values

offer a meaningful path to reach out to customers (Durgee et al., 1996). Nevertheless, the value-congruity experienced with the brand leads to the consumers' identification with the brand and a commitment toward the brand (Tuskej et al., 2013), that sets the stage to explore the link between value-congruity and customer engagement with the brands.

2.4 Theoretical Model and Hypotheses Development

The theoretical model portraying the relationships between different variables of interest should be based on the relevant aspects of the theory (Malhotra and Dash, 2016). The studies in the past have individually explored the concepts of brand psychological ownership, value-congruity (brand), customer brand engagement, brand attachment, and brand loyalty but the simultaneous assessment of all these variables is absent. The proposed framework of this study is grounded in psychological ownership theory (Pierce et al., 2001) and value-congruity theory (Tuskej et al., 2013). Individuals like to possess objects in a bid to strengthen their self-concept by nature or nurturance; and brands are an important part of customer possession drive (Belk, 1988). Therefore a relationship between brand psychological ownership and customer brand engagement is proposed on the premise of psychological ownership theory (Pierce et al., 2001). Deeply rooted in congruity theory (Johar and Sirgy, 1991), the perceptual value compatibility (with the brand) notion among customers known as 'brand value-congruity' is proposed as another predictor of brand engagement. The conceptual model also portrays brand attachment and behavioural brand loyalty as the psychological and behavioural consequences of customer brand engagement (see Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 Proposed conceptual model



2.4.1 Influence of brand psychological ownership on customer brand engagement

Brand psychological ownership is the state in which the customers feel that the target brand or a part of it belongs to them or a part of themselves (Kumar and Nayak, 2019a). The customers tend to develop a sense of psychological ownership towards the brands while coming in contact of the brands, e.g., by naming brands (Stoner et al., 2018) and by co-designing innovations (brands) (Sembada, 2018). These propositions support the premise that customers develop ownership feeling towards the brand if they feel like control over the brand (in its creation and its movement from one stage to another). A sense of ownership towards the brand is conceivable in the context of brand communities because the brands are the focal constituting element of a brand community and the customers in a brand community experience and exercise control over the brands.

Based on the existing literature on PO and theory of possessions and self (Belk, 1988), we argue that individuals join brand communities in a quest for informational learning, self-identity, and/or self-enhancement (e.g. Wu et al., 2015; Coelho et al., 2018) and subsequently experience a sense of brand psychological ownership. Acting as a platform for sharing similar brand values and brand experiences, a community facilitates members' identification with the brand (Stokburger-Sauer, 2010), making 'brand' an essential part of their identity. Psychological ownership towards the brand (object) is deeply rooted in self-identity and the control and self-efficacy experienced by the customers towards the brands inside brand communities can lead to a sense of brand psychological ownership (cf. Pierce et al., 2003).

Psychological ownership is seen increasing active involvement in brand interactions (Reynoso, 2010). Psychological ownership results in satisfaction and enhanced behavioural contribution in the community (Lee and Suh, 2015); brand psychological ownership stimulates engagement behaviours in social networks (Guo et al., 2016). Brand psychological ownership has a direct link with a sense of engagement (Sembada, 2018) and it exerts indirect influence on customer brand engagement behaviours as well (Gong, 2018). Building on these assertions, we argue that under the sense of brand psychological ownership, members of a brand community involve more in brand-related activities, externalize their knowledge about the brand, and perform brand favoured behaviours which may influence their engagement with the brand.

H1: Brand psychological ownership has a direct and positive effect on customer brand engagement.

2.4.2 Influence of brand value-congruity on customer brand engagement

Value-congruity is the perceived similarity between the customers' values and brand values (Tuskej et al., 2013). The mental comparison of consumers' self-schema and perceived brand-schema is present in extant literature as described in congruity theory (Johar and Sirgy, 1991; Sirgy et al., 1991). Customers tend to express themselves from perceivably similar brands and when the brands are perceived as identical, customers would be investing more of their selves and resources in specific brand interactions. The urge to belong to others is universal among individuals (Veloutsou, 2009) and this cognitive identification (with firms, brands, and others) phenomenon is a function of value-congruence that reduces uncertainty quotient between the relationship partners (Wolter and Cronin, 2016; Kwon et al., 2017). The application of congruity principle between the two parties (customers and the inanimate objects (brands)) can be supported by the fact that customers employ brands as means of self-expression (Belk, 1988).

The argument is that when the brands are perceived as identical, customers voluntarily invest their selves in brand interactions and to appear identical a similarity between the values of the customers and the brands acts as a prerequisite. A perceived similarity with the brand results in brand preference and strengthens customer-brand relationships (Aaker, 1997; Jamal and Goode, 2001; Parker, 2009). Therefore, a value-congruity can facilitate the cognitive and emotional customer-brand connections and thereby ascribing relational benefits to the brands (Davvetas and Diamantopoulos, 2017), hence important for stronger customer-brand relationships and can have a potential role in stimulating customer brand engagement. Noticeably, for a brand to be engaging, it should carry the values perceived as important by the customers (Graffigna and Gambetti, 2015). In a brand community, the members share similar brand values by identifying with the community and the focal brand (e.g. Stokburger-Sauer, 2010). The similarity-based affective brand state, i.e., brand identification, influences customer brand engagement (Tuškej and Podnar, 2018). The role of self-brand congruity is evident in generating engagement with the brand as well (De Vries and Carlson, 2014; France et al., 2016; Islam et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2018). The role of value-congruity in generating positive outcomes like enhanced satisfaction with the brand (Edwards and Cable, 2009; Lee and Jeong, 2014) is also seen in the literature. Based on these arguments, it is proposed that the akin to the role of general customer-brand congruity, subjective fitment in the values of the customer and his/her perceptions about the values of the brand can make him/her engage with the brand because the customers draw from their values the decisions they make and the actions they take (cf. Edwards and Cable, 2009).

H2: Value-congruity has a direct and positive effect on customer brand engagement.

2.5 Consequences of Customer Brand Engagement

The problem faced by the management as portrayed in the literature is not limited to the identification of the drivers of customer brand engagement. The understanding of the potential outcomes of customer brand engagement is equally important as it can answer why engagement of customers with the brands is important which adds more value to the proposed role of customer engagement. Customer brand engagement has previously been rated higher than the traditional brand relationship variables such as brand satisfaction and commitment (Hollebeek et al., 2014). This study proposes brand attachment and behavioural brand loyalty as the outcomes of customer brand engagement. The exploration of the relationship between brand engagement and brand attachment becomes important as an attachment with the brands has become important in the age of competition where the emotional bonds are becoming important than rational connections for the consumers and it is also catching the marketers' attention. The behavioural loyalty as another outcome of customer brand engagement itself covers both the transactions based and non-transaction based behavioural outcomes in the form of repeat brand purchases and positive word-of-mouth about the brand.

2.5.1 Influence of customer brand engagement on brand attachment

Brand attachment is the strength of the bond connecting the brand with the self (Park et al., 2010) and it is known as a strong indicator of brand strength (Karjaluoto et al., 2016). This is because brand attachment elicits emotions towards the brand (Kang et al., 2017). In consumer psychology, it is mentioned that consumers possess emotional attachment towards gifts, places, buildings, and brands etc. (Thomson et al., 2005). As per the postulates of landmark attachment theory (Bowlby, 1979, 1980), the attachment with the brand predicts the nature of how individuals interact with the brand and the level of sacrifice they can make for the brand. High level of attachment with the brand also means strong affective ties facilitating proximity (Hazan and Zeifman, 1999) and willingness to promote the brand relationship by putting self-interests at stake (Van Lange et al., 1997). Brand attachment facilitates brand trust (Smaoui and Behi, 2011b) and brand love (Loureiro et al., 2012; Kaufmann et al., 2016) and instils a fear of loss or separation in the minds of the customers due to which customers exhibit voluntary behaviours to maintain that relationship (Park et al., 2010; Batra et al., 2012). Attachment with the brand becomes important as it reflects a resonance with the brand that enhances the salience and prominence of the brand (Keller, 1993, 2001; Fedorikhin et al., 2008).

The concept of engagement is embedded in recurring interactions between the customer and the brand that reinforces the emotional bonds between the two (Sashi, 2012; Islam and Rahman, 2016b). Engaged customers happen to pursue continuous connections with the brand which can reinforce the position of the brand in the minds of the customers and elevate the brand bondage from functional performance to imagery and feelings, which symbolizes the attachment to the brand. Engagement with the brand results in psychological consequences such as enhanced self-brand association/connection (Hollebeek et al., 2014; Harrigan et al., 2018) and brand possession recall (Sprott et al., 2009), both of these outcomes are seen as two dimensions of brand attachment (Park et al., 2010). Self-brand connection acts as a formative indicator of brand attachment (Van Der Westhuizen, 2018). Attachment is described as a psychological consequence of brand engagement in virtual brand communities in the conceptual works of Brodie et al. (2011, 2013). Engagement results in affiliation with and positive evaluation of the brand, which is termed as the brand attachment (Tiruwa et al., 2016). Also, the brand attachment is contingent upon the long-term association with the brand (Thomson et al., 2005), which could be led by the recurring interactions (direct and indirect) at the heart of brand engagement inside brand communities. The long term associations bring the brand into customers' self-concept and make the brand an essential part of their identity. This identification, as facilitated by engagement, drives the members' attachment to the brand (Zhou et al., 2012). Drawing on these observations, the relationship between brand engagement and brand attachment is proposed.

H3: Customer brand engagement has a direct and positive effect on brand attachment.

2.5.2 Influence of customer brand engagement on behavioural brand loyalty

Brand loyalty has been described as a measure of customer-brand relationship strength (Veloutsou, 2015). Loyalty is generally described as a two-dimensional concept: attitudinal and behavioural (Jacoby, 1971; Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001; Jaiswal and Niraj, 2011). Attitudinal loyalty covers the customers' attachment to, commitment for, and intention to repurchase the brand (Russell-Bennett et al., 2007; Das Gupta, 2007; Gupta and Sharma, 2009); behavioural brand loyalty focuses on repeat brand purchases and recommendation behaviours (Johnson et al., 2006). Loyal customers are important for the success of the brand in many different ways (Dick and Basu, 1994), e.g., in terms of repeat purchases, lesser price sensitivity, and lower service costs. Behavioural loyalty contributes towards creating equity for the brand (Yoo and Donthu, 2001) because it endows more value to the products coming from a brand as

stronger patronization is present and lesser sensitivity towards the marketing programs from other organizations responsible for causing switching behaviours.

It is observed in literature that the consumers engaged with the brand tend to develop positive attitudes towards the focal brand in comparison to non-engaged ones (Hollebeek, 2011a). Customer engagement increases the liking towards the engagement objects (Halaszovich and Nel, 2017). Engaged customers are seen developing attitudinal loyalty towards the brands in prior literature (e.g. Dwivedi, 2015; Leckie et al., 2016; Solem, 2016; Thakur, 2016).

A brand based outcome such as brand purchase is strongly targeted out of members' participation in brand communities (Hook et al., 2018), however, customer engagement with the brands in a brand community resulting in loyalty behaviours towards the brands is less developed. Taking the customer-brand interactions perspective, we formulate this hypothesis on the premise of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) as members' evaluation of the brand offerings depends on their brand engagement levels and they may tend to reciprocate with purchasing and recommending the brand. Additionally, the information accrued through interactions at the heart of engagement form beliefs and these beliefs shape brand attitudes, subsequently driving behaviours such as purchases and recommendations (cf. Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Therefore it is proposed that:

H4: Customer brand engagement has a direct and positive effect on behavioural brand loyalty.

The information required in this study pertains to the brands inside brand communities. For this purpose, the information is to be obtained from brand community members who assimilate around the brand.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter contained the detailed literature review of all the theories and relevant constructs in a comprehensive way and provided the theoretical framework of the study. The chapter started with the journey of engagement concept from other disciplines to marketing and covering details about the meaning and dimensionality of customer engagement. Relevant literature on psychological ownership theory and value-congruity theory was provided and the theoretical rationale behind its employment in this study was provided. In the end of the chapter the proposed theoretical model depicting the antecedents and consequences of brand engagement was presented and the hypothesized relationships were elaborated upon. The next chapter provides the research method adopted to conduct this study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology or research method is a blueprint or a roadmap demonstrating how the required information addressing the marketing research problem is collected. This step is a critical one and considered as the backbone of the marketing research project (Malhotra and Dash, 2016). This is because the information or the data collected will be used to test our hypotheses related to the solution to the research problem at hand, to find correct answers to our research questions and ultimately meet research objectives. Any information not matching the set criterion could result in confounding and misleading results and compromise the whole research project and consequently the cost and time so involved will also increase. A number of steps are involved in choosing the appropriate method to conduct the research. These steps are described in the sections below in great detail.

3.1 Research Design

This study has undertaken a descriptive research design as the objective of the research is to find out the degree of association between multiple marketing variables where the understanding about the problem is present and preliminary information about the variables of interest exists in the literature (Chandra et al., 1999; Kapoor and Kulshrestha, 2010; Malhotra and Dash, 2016). The cross-sectional research design was adopted as the information from the respondents was obtained only once. The respondents in this study were the brand community members who participated in the brand community events. Being an informal gathering of the members, it was very difficult to solicit the same individuals repeatedly over the period of time, supporting the adoption of current design.

A personal survey method was used to obtain information from the respondents and the questions were asked in a written format (pen and paper questionnaire). The questionnaire was a structured one as the questions were systematically arranged in the survey questionnaire with defined response categories (cf. Malhotra and Dash, 2016). Personal survey method also offers the researchers an opportunity to observe the respondents, oversee the survey administration process, and the respondents have the liberty to consult the researcher in case there is an ambiguity about the questions in the survey. The questions in the survey included the set of measures used to record unobservable latent constructs from existing literature and pre-existing scales.

3.1.1 Rationale for survey technique

The concept of brand engagement is relatively new to the marketing literature (Hollebeek et al., 2014; Dwivedi, 2016) and a majority of the works have taken a theoretical approach to explore this concept (Islam and Rahman, 2016a). As far as the empirical research on brand engagement is concerned, most of the studies prefer questionnaire survey to obtain responses from the respondents (e.g. Goldsmith and Goldsmith, 2012; Wong and Merrilees, 2014; Islam et al., 2018). This method is popular as the respondent gets familiar with the issue under investigation easily; response bias is less; researcher can personally promise the respondent about keeping his/her response anonymous; increased authenticity of the responses, and a coverage of wide range of respondents (Churchill, 1979; Malhotra and Dash, 2016). In the face of all these advantages, this study has adopted a survey questionnaire to collect data from brand community members participating in brand community events.

3.1.2 Context

Determining the context of the study is important as customer engagement has been reiterated as a context specific variable (Heath, 2007; Hollebeek, 2011a) and the contextualization has been repeatedly followed in the previous studies as well (e.g. Dwivedi, 2015; Thakur, 2016, 2018). In this research, the brand communities have been selected as the study context to study the proposed brand engagement model. The practice of exploring brand engagement in brand communities' context can be seen in the past studies (e.g. Hollebeek et al., 2014; Brodie et al., 2013; Dessart et al., 2016; Carvalho and Fernandes, 2018). The increasing popularity of this context can be attributed to the increasing usage of brand communities by the firms to engage customers with the brands around which the communities are created (Balducci et al., 2015). Moreover, brand communities have emerged as an essential part of firms' business strategy (Fournier and Lee, 2009).

This study has covered different brand communities created around 'Royal Enfield', a motorcycle brand in India. Royal Enfield is a leading motorcycle brand in India which is widely known for its large brand community networks with more than three lakh members in India itself (Kumar and Nayak, 2018; Kumar and Nayak, 2019a). The rationale behind the consideration of this brand type is that the automobile brands succeed in creating links and eliciting higher emotions among their users as evident in prior literature (e.g. Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2006; Morandin et al., 2013; Kumar and Nayak, 2018).

3.2 Data Collection Method

The data was collected by administering surveys in brand community events. The rationale behind employing brand community events is that the objective of the study is to explore that how customer engage with the brands, for which it is desired that the customers being surveyed actually have a connection with the brand; real time presence of the members in the community events could be observed. Moreover, brand community events act as a platform for rich interactions in space and time (McAlexander et al., 2002) and participating members can be observed with their brands (motorcycles in this study). This approach helps in reducing the probability of self-selection of customers while asked to think of a brand and respond to the questions pertaining to their relationship with a brand, thereby reducing self-selection bias. In this way, the quality of the survey conducted among these members would be high in comparison to the solely self-reported membership of individuals in a more general population or in online brand communities where anonymity is high and it is hard to ascertain that the sample element is the actual brand community member or a mere visitor.

3.2.1 Scaling and measurement technique

A non-comparative 7-point Likert scale has been employed to collect data because its construction and administration is easier for the researcher and comprehensible for the respondent in the light of a stimulus object being scaled independently of others. Moreover, Likert scales have been widely used in quantitative studies dealing with 'customer brand engagement' (Wong and Merrilees, 2015; Leckie et al., 2016; Kumar and Nayak, 2018). All the measurements in the study were recorded on a seven-point Likert scale that ranges from '1 = strongly disagree' to '7 = strongly agree'. Seven point scales have been considered optimal for this study as the subjects of the study (brand community members) are believed to be knowledgeable enough to answer the questions related to their associations with the brand; appropriate number of scale response categories should lie between five and nine, and preferred due to the employment of sophisticated data analysis techniques (SEM in this study) (see Malhotra and Dash, 2016).

3.2.2 Measures

All the variables in the study were measured with pre-existing scales in the literature. Four items from Pierce et al. (2001) were adapted to measure brand psychological ownership (see Appendix I). Originally developed in the context of organizations, this scale was later used by Guo et al. (2016) to capture psychological ownership towards social media brands. The same set of items has been employed to capture brand psychological ownership in this study. Three

items from Lee and Jeong's (2014) value-congruity scale were adapted to measure perceived value-congruity with the brand, viz., "I really support the intent of the core values of this brand", "I have a clear understanding of the core values of this brand", "I have a great deal of agreement about what this brand's core values represent". To measure customer brand engagement and brand attachment, we adapted scales from Hollebeek et al. (2014) and Park et al. (2010) respectively. Five items measuring the behavioural brand loyalty were adopted from Johnson et al. (2006).

3.2.3 Questionnaire design

While designing the questionnaire, the research followed a structured approach that specifies the response alternatives and response format (Malhotra and Dash, 2016). The wordings of the questions were kept simplistic and ambiguous words were avoided. The questionnaire was pretested using a small scale pilot-test to ensure the face validity of the questionnaire such as the item wordings, item placement, and comprehensibility.

The complete questionnaire was split into two parts and different sections. First part contained the questions pertaining to the latent variables in the study to obtain basic information related to the research problem. The questions in the second part were posted to obtain the classification information related to the sample demographics. Final research questionnaire has been reported as Appendix I.

3.3 Sampling Design

Sampling design is an important step in executing the research design procedures. It helps in identifying the right source of the information necessary for addressing the marketing research problem. Sampling design answers the questions related to the target population, sampling frame, sampling technique, and sample size (Malhotra and Dash, 2016).

Target population in this study is the brand community members who are the final source of the required information. In the absence of a dedicated and final list of the brand community members (all members not existing on record); because of the participation of members is on voluntary basis, and because the participating members constitute a mere fraction of registered community members, the sampling frame could not be finalized (see Marzocchi et al., 2013). A non-probability purposive sampling technique has been employed in this study to select respondents during the community events due to the time and cost constraints involved in carrying out this research project (Malhotra and Dash, 2016).

3.3.1 Extent

The sample for this study was collected in Delhi and National Capital Region (NCR) in India. Being the national capital, New Delhi is home for the brand community events initiated by the firms and the customers and more specifically for the brand communities created around 'Royal Enfield' brand. The firm and the members organize community events on the weekends, holidays, observation of days of national importance like Independence Day, Republic Day, and on the occasion of other festivals, etc in New Delhi in a frequent manner. This brand has a popular customer base in the selected region and the frequency of events is quite high; hence targeted for data collection purpose. The targeted sites hosting brand community events include Faridabad, Connaught Place, Gurugram, Delhi Haat, and other central and peripheral places in New Delhi and National capital region.

3.3.2 Sample size

In this study, 384 respondents were targeted as the sample size. The confidence interval technique was applied to calculate the targeted sample size and the number of respondents to be approached to collect the estimated sample (Burns and Bush, 1995; Malhotra and Dash, 2016). This study assumed 95% confidence interval, 50% population variability, 5% acceptable level of error and 50% response rate, and accordingly 768 respondents (brand community members) were approached to gather a targeted sample size of 384 (see Appendix II). A similar approach has been adopted in previous studies in marketing literature to determine the sample size (e.g. Chi and Qu, 2008; Sharma and Nayak, 2018; Kumar and Nayak, 2018).

Out of 768 subjects, 337 respondents undertook the survey making the response rate approximately 44%. The response rate of this scale is permissible if the appropriate statistical technique is employed to analyze the data as seen in prior studies (Wong and Merrilees, 2015; Kumar and Nayak, 2018). After treating the data for missing values and unengaged responses, final usable responses added to 312 and used for further analysis. The responses with missing values in the data were not more than five percent. The final sample size of this number meets the criterion suggested by Hair et al. (2010), where the variables to responses ratio should be 1:10 as a basis for the adequacy of the sample size (total number of variables being 26 in this study). Moreover, structural equation modelling (SEM) is the primary data analysis technique applied in this study; this technique requires a minimum sample size of 300 for its satisfactory performance (Hair et al., 2010), hence the sample size meets the desired specifications.

3.4 Pilot Study

Although the study instrument contained existing scales in the literature, due to the relatively new context of the study, i.e., brand communities, the reliability of the instrument was checked by pretesting it on a sample of 52 brand community members participating in brand community events. The pretesting results revealed that the instrument is comprehensible by the brand community members in terms of language as well as format. The average time taken by the respondents to complete the questionnaire was 5.7 minutes. Following the supportive results of pilot testing, the items of the instrument were retained and the same instrument was used for the main study.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

The data was collected by administering surveys among participating members in the brand community events. The information regarding the upcoming events was gathered through the official community websites and respective social media pages. The events included small weekend/holiday rides, long rides to Himalayan region, celebration gatherings (birthdays, days of National importance, festivals), and workshops (repair and driving lessons related). The members participating in the events with their brands (focal brand of the community) were targeted for data collection. The incident rate was quite high due to the specific settings of the events. The members who did not own the brand (present and past) and participating in the community were not surveyed to avoid the potential bias their responses could have caused.

Prior permission from the community administrators and/or organizers was sought to participate in the community event and conduct the survey; their help was also availed in conducting the surveys. Before conducting the survey, the members were given a brief about the purpose of the study. The queries of the members were also addressed to avoid any misunderstanding or misinterpretations prior hand. The respondents were asked a few screening questions: “Are you a regular user of this brand?”, “Do you associate yourself to the brand at the centre of this brand community?”. These questions helped in filtering the respondents who bear no connection with the ‘brand’ as it is related to the key objectives of the study. The information obtained from non-representative respondents could have compromised the whole process, hence averted.

3.6 Data Purification

Initially, the data was screened for missing values, unengaged responses, and potential outliers in the data. First of all the missing values per variable were found below five percent, hence no

corrective action was required (Hair et al., 2010). Furthermore, MCAR test was conducted for identifying the significance of missing values in the sample. However, the test was found to be insignificant, indicating the occurrence of missing values was due to random cause (Hair et al., 2010). The unengaged responses were checked for action using standard deviation method.

Potential outliers were identified using box plot technique; those outliers were removed from the data considering their small proportion ($< 0.67\%$). The normality of the data was assessed with the help of Shapiro-Wilk test which indicated an insignificant p-value ($p > 0.05$), indicating that the distribution of the sample data is normal. Moreover, the value of Skewness and Kurtosis were also analyzed to assess the normality of the data and the values were recorded within the recommended threshold of establishing normality (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), thereby establishing the distribution of the data as normal.

3.7 Data Analysis

The data analysis was carried out by using SPSS 21 and AMOS 21 statistical packages. The data analysis was done in a stepwise manner. Since the scales were borrowed from the existing literature their theoretical properties and variable association with respective constructs is already grounded, the exploration of the underlying factor structure is not required which is why EFA (Exploratory Factor Analysis) was not required. However, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to confirm/verify the measurement theory, i.e., the theoretical properties of the measurement model which contains the correlation based relationships between variables and their respective constructs, covariance based relationships between all the latent constructs in the study, and linkages between variables and error terms. The reliability and validity of the measures was checked. Finally, the fitness of the measurement model was checked to ascertain the theoretical validity of the measurement model.

In the next phase, the final CFA model was converted into a structural model and the proposed structural paths were tested for their theoretical validity using SEM. The overall model fit of the structural model was also checked and reported. The results pertaining to the assessment of the measurement model and the structural model have been elaborated upon in Chapter 4.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter provided a detailed account of the method of the study describing how the required information was collected and via what means. A complete process of the data collection method and sampling design was exhibited. A pilot study was conducted to pre-test

the instrument and data collected thereafter was arranged and purified. Next chapter consists of the details about data analysis through appropriate tools and techniques and the final results of the analysis.



CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In this chapter, the data collected from the respondents is analyzed through appropriate statistical techniques. The data collected through the survey questionnaire as explained in the previous chapter was first captured in SPSS, purified, and later subjected to the testing of proposed theory. Starting with reporting the sample demographics and descriptive statistics, the measurement theory of the proposed structural model is tested. Once the validity and reliability of the measures was verified, the measurement model was transformed into the structural model and the structural theory was tested. While testing the structural theory, individual paths were tested along with the assessment of parameters related to the overall model fit.

4.1 Sample Demographics

The demographical characteristics of the sample are shown in Table 4.1. The sample statistics data is grouped in the form of class intervals, frequencies, and percentages for instant visual assessment of the sample. Out of a sample of 312 respondents, 73 percent of the members were males and remaining 27 percent were females. Regarding age, 8 percent of the respondents were below 18 years; 33 percent were in the range of 18-30 years; 40 percent in the range of 31-43 years; 12 percent in the range 44-56 years, and 7 percent were above 57 years. 64 percent of the members were married and remaining 36 percent were unmarried. In view of the education qualification, 34 percent of the respondents were undergraduate, 45 percent were graduate, and 21 percent were post-graduate and above. Regarding occupation, 15 percent of the members were students; 20 percent had part-time employment; 45 percent had full-time employment; 8 percent were self employed professionals; 7 percent were self employed non professionals, and 5 percent were others (not working). As far as the earning is concerned, 20 percent of the members were earning less than 50,000 rupee; 43 percent were earning in the range of 50,000-1,00,000 rupee; 24 percent in the range of 1,00,001-2,00,000 rupee; 10 percent in the range of 2,00,001-3,00,000 rupee, and only 3 percent were earning more than 3,00,000 rupee per month.

Table 4.1
Sample demographics

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	227	73%
Female	85	27%
<i>Age (years)</i>		
<18	26	8%
18-30	103	33%
31-43	124	40%
44-56	38	12%
57 and above	21	7%
<i>Marital status</i>		
Married	199	64%
Unmarried	113	36%
<i>Education</i>		
Undergraduate	106	34%
Graduate	142	45%
Post Graduate and above	64	21%
<i>Occupation</i>		
Student	46	15%
Part time employment (professional)	62	20%
Full time employment (professional)	141	45%
Self employed professional	27	8%
Self employed non professional	21	7%
others	15	5%
<i>Monthly income (INR*)</i>		
< 50,000	64	20%
50,000 - 1,00,000	133	43%
1,00,001 - 2,00,000	75	24%
2,00,001 - 3,00,000	31	10%
> 3,00,000	9	3%

Notes: *INR stands for Indian National Rupee (currency of India)

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

In the second step, we captured the descriptive statistics of the sample. The descriptive measure of a sample is the statistic which is reported in Table 4.2. The descriptive measures of the sample (descriptive statistics) are captured in the form of means and standard deviations giving a fair idea about the sample by summarizing it in terms of variability (Black, 2009; Saunders et al., 2012). The employment of these measures is to see through the problems with the item ratings and the measures related to the distribution of the data.

Table 4.2
Descriptive statistics

Construct	Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	S.D
Brand psychological ownership	BPO1	312	1	7	4.48	1.60
	BPO2	312	1	7	5.15	1.48
	BPO3	312	1	7	5.02	1.52
	BPO4	312	1	7	4.97	1.09
Brand value-congruity	VC1	312	1	7	4.86	0.92
	VC2	312	1	7	5.53	1.18
	VC3	312	1	7	5.80	1.36
Customer brand engagement	CBE1	312	1	7	5.10	0.88
	CBE2	312	1	7	4.75	1.11
	CBE3	312	1	7	5.18	1.03
	CBE4	312	1	7	4.66	1.34
	CBE5	312	1	7	5.11	1.46
	CBE6	312	1	7	4.71	1.25
	CBE7	312	1	7	5.33	1.50
	CBE8	312	1	7	5.04	1.57
	CBE9	312	1	7	5.23	0.95
	CBE10	312	1	7	4.76	1.08
Brand attachment	BA1	312	1	7	4.92	1.61
	BA2	312	1	7	5.61	1.59
	BA3	312	1	7	5.20	1.05
	BA4	312	1	7	5.43	1.22
Behavioural brand loyalty	BL1	312	1	7	5.14	1.32
	BL2	312	1	7	5.18	1.02
	BL3	312	1	7	5.17	1.33
	BL4	312	1	7	4.83	1.05
	BL5	312	1	7	4.97	1.44

Notes: S.D = Standard Deviation; N = Sample size

4.3 Non-Response Bias

Non-response bias was checked through Armstrong and Overton's (1977) extrapolation method by comparing the early respondents and late respondents. The two groups of 45 respondents each were created; the first group contained the respondents who voluntarily responded to the survey questionnaire and the other group contained those who initially refused but later agreed on the behest of the surveyor. The two groups were compared for the variability in their responses. No significant difference was found between the means scores for the variables among the two groups that rules out the possibility of response bias in the study.

4.4 Common Method Bias

Collecting responses through multi-item scales using the same technique for predictor and criterion variables from the same source and when the source of bias is hard to identify, the

assessment of common method bias becomes important (Podsakoff et al., 2003). To avoid the problem of common method bias (CMB), we followed the precautionary measures as suggested by Malhotra et al. (2006) which includes the assurance given to the respondents about keeping their responses anonymous, reducing the number of vague and ambiguous questions in the survey instrument, and randomising questions.

As a diagnostic measure suggested by Podsakoff et al. (2003), we ran Harman's single-factor test (Harman, 1976) as the exploratory approach which resulted in a single factor accounting for only 37.22 % variance for all variables, which is less than 50 % variance explanation set as the cut-off value for the presence of common method bias (see Table 4.3). It shows that a single factor is not sufficient to explain the complete variance which discards the presence of significant CMB in the study (Malhotra et al., 2006). We also used the common latent factor (CLF) as a confirmatory approach in AMOS where the introduction of CLF caused a negligible difference among path coefficients of the two models (with and without CLF). Following this procedure, we confirmed that CMB is not a problem in this study. We also checked for CMB by comparing the correlations among latent variables in Table 4.5 following Zhou et al. (2013) and the correlation falling below 0.50 supports the absence of common method bias (Bagozzi et al., 1991).

Table 4.3
Harman's single factor test

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	9.678	37.224	37.224	9.678	37.224	37.224
2	3.576	13.755	50.979			
3	3.074	11.825	62.804			
4	1.110	4.268	67.072			
5	.901	3.465	70.537			
6	.813	3.125	73.663			
7	.678	2.606	76.269			
8	.624	2.402	78.670			
9	.581	2.235	80.905			
10	.511	1.966	82.871			
11	.487	1.874	84.746			
12	.430	1.652	86.398			
13	.389	1.496	87.894			
14	.368	1.414	89.308			
15	.349	1.344	90.652			
16	.320	1.229	91.881			
17	.299	1.149	93.030			
18	.257	.989	94.019			
19	.246	.947	94.966			
20	.231	.890	95.856			
21	.215	.827	96.683			
22	.204	.786	97.469			
23	.196	.755	98.224			
24	.179	.687	98.911			
25	.147	.565	99.476			
26	.136	.524	100.000			

Notes: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

4.5 Measurement Model

Confirmatory factor analysis or CFA is a multivariate analysis technique used to test the theoretical structure of the unobservable latent constructs, i.e., the relationship between the unobservable latent construct and its observed indicators/variables is explored through this technique (Hair et al., 2010). CFA also tells the researcher whether the variables hold the requisite validity and reliability as the prerequisites of the confirmation of the measurement adequacy and accuracy. This technique is used to test the existing theoretical measurement structure of the latent constructs or measurement theory, to see whether the theoretical structure is reproduced by the data or not. The measurement model includes the relationships between the variables and the latent constructs, variables and the error terms, and covariance based

relationships between latent constructs. A step by step guide is followed to test the measurement theory using CFA (Hair et al., 2010).

The measurement model in this study includes five latent constructs naming brand psychological ownership, brand value-congruity, customer brand engagement, brand attachment, and behavioural brand loyalty. The complete measurement model includes 26 items. The measurement model was checked for the reliability, validity, and overall model fit. The measurement model testing results are presented in Table 4.4. To check reliability, we calculated the reliability coefficients. First, Cronbach's α (alpha) values recorded above 0.70 for all latent constructs confirmed high internal consistency of the measures (Nunnally, 1978; Song et al., 2017; Jaiswal, 2008; Jaiswal et al., 2018). Secondly, the latent constructs were also tested for their composite reliability (CR) which was found satisfactory under the established criteria, i.e., $CR > 0.70$ (Hair et al., 2010).

Convergent validity was checked through standardized factor loadings (SFL or λ) and AVE scores. First of all, we found that the standardized factor loadings of the measures to their respective constructs were above 0.70 and statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) (Hair et al., 2010). Secondly, the average variance extracted (AVE) for the latent constructs was found above 0.50 ($AVE > 0.50$). The scores obtained for λ and AVE support the convergent validity of the measurement model (Hair et al., 2010).

Table 4.4
Measurement model testing results

Construct	Items	λ	Cronbach's alpha (α)	CR	AVE
Brand psychological ownership (Source: Pierce et al., 2001)	BPO1	0.71**	0.91	0.90	0.70
	BPO2	0.88**			
	BPO3	0.83**			
	BPO4	0.91**			
Brand value-congruity (Source: Lee and Jeong, 2014)	VC1	0.85**	0.89	0.89	0.73
	VC2	0.90**			
	VC3	0.81**			
Customer brand engagement (CBE) (Source: Hollebeek et al., 2014)	CBE1	0.82**	0.90	0.96	0.71
	CBE2	0.80**			
	CBE3	0.91**			
	CBE4	0.79**			
	CBE5	0.84**			
	CBE6	0.92**			
	CBE7	0.83**			
	CBE8	0.82**			
	CBE9	0.83**			
	CBE10	0.88**			
Brand attachment (Source: Park et al., 2010)	BA1	0.76**	0.84	0.88	0.65
	BA2	0.81**			
	BA3	0.80**			
	BA4	0.85**			
Behavioural brand loyalty (Source: Johnson et al., 2006)	BL1	0.90**	0.89	0.95	0.78
	BL2	0.91**			
	BL3	0.88**			
	BL4	0.87**			
	BL5	0.87**			

Notes: ** $p < 0.01$; λ = Standardized factor loadings; CR = Composite Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted

Discriminant validity is the degree to which the indicators of different latent constructs differ with each other (Bagozzi, 1994). We followed Fornell and Larcker's (1981) criterion suggesting the comparison of the square root of AVE scores of the latent constructs with inter-construct correlations and the former was found higher that supported the discriminant validity of the constructs (see Table 4.5). This is evident of the discriminant validity because it shows that the variance explained by the latent constructs in its measures/variables is higher than the variance shared with other constructs in the study (Hair et al., 2010).

Table 4.5

Mean, standard deviation, and inter-construct correlations

Construct	Mean	S.D	BPO	VC	CBE	BA	BL
Brand psychological ownership (BPO)	4.905	1.423	0.83	-	-	-	-
Brand value-congruity (VC)	5.397	1.153	0.35*	0.85	-	-	-
Customer brand engagement (CBE)	4.987	1.217	0.44**	0.39*	0.84	-	-
Brand attachment (BA)	5.290	1.368	0.47*	0.37**	0.46**	0.81	-
Behavioural brand loyalty (BL)	5.058	1.232	0.38*	0.40*	0.44*	0.32*	0.88

Notes: *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; boldface diagonal values represent square root value of AVE scores of latent constructs; S.D = Standard Deviation

After establishing the reliability and validity, the measurement model was tested for overall validity with the help of different fit indices. The fit indices in Table 4.6 support that the model exhibited a good fit under the established criterion (Hair et al., 2010).

Table 4.6

Fit indices for measurement model

Fit index	Model fit result
χ^2/df (Chi-square/degrees of freedom)	2.078
GFI (Goodness-of-Fit Index)	0.910
CFI (Comparative Fit Index)	0.948
NFI (Normed Fit Index)	0.902
TLI (Tucker-Lewis Index)	0.935
RMSEA (Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation)	0.047

4.6 Structural Model

After the confirmation of the measurement theory, the structural theory or the structural model was tested and dependence relationships were assessed. Structural equation modeling popularly known as SEM was employed as a multivariate analysis technique to assess the structural relationships using AMOS 21 software. The structural relationships between the variables in the model were estimated in the form of magnitude and significance of structural path coefficients, and R-square values. The overall model was also assessed using model fit indices. Standard regression coefficients (structural path coefficients or β -values) investigate the strength (magnitude) of association between predictor and outcome variable. The level of significance (p-value) assesses whether the relationships between predictor and outcome variable is significant or not. R-square (R^2) value measures the predictive power of the independent variable/s on the dependent variable in the structural model.

The results indicate a direct positive effect of brand psychological ownership on customer brand engagement (SPC = 0.56; t = 6.12), thereby supporting H1. Similarly, brand

value-congruity exert a direct positive effect on customer brand engagement (SPC = 0.39; t = 4.87), supporting H2. The positive impact of customer brand engagement on brand attachment and behavioural brand loyalty is also identified, thereby supporting hypotheses H3 and H4 respectively (H3: SPC = 0.41, t = 4.93; H4: SPC = 0.43, t = 7.05).

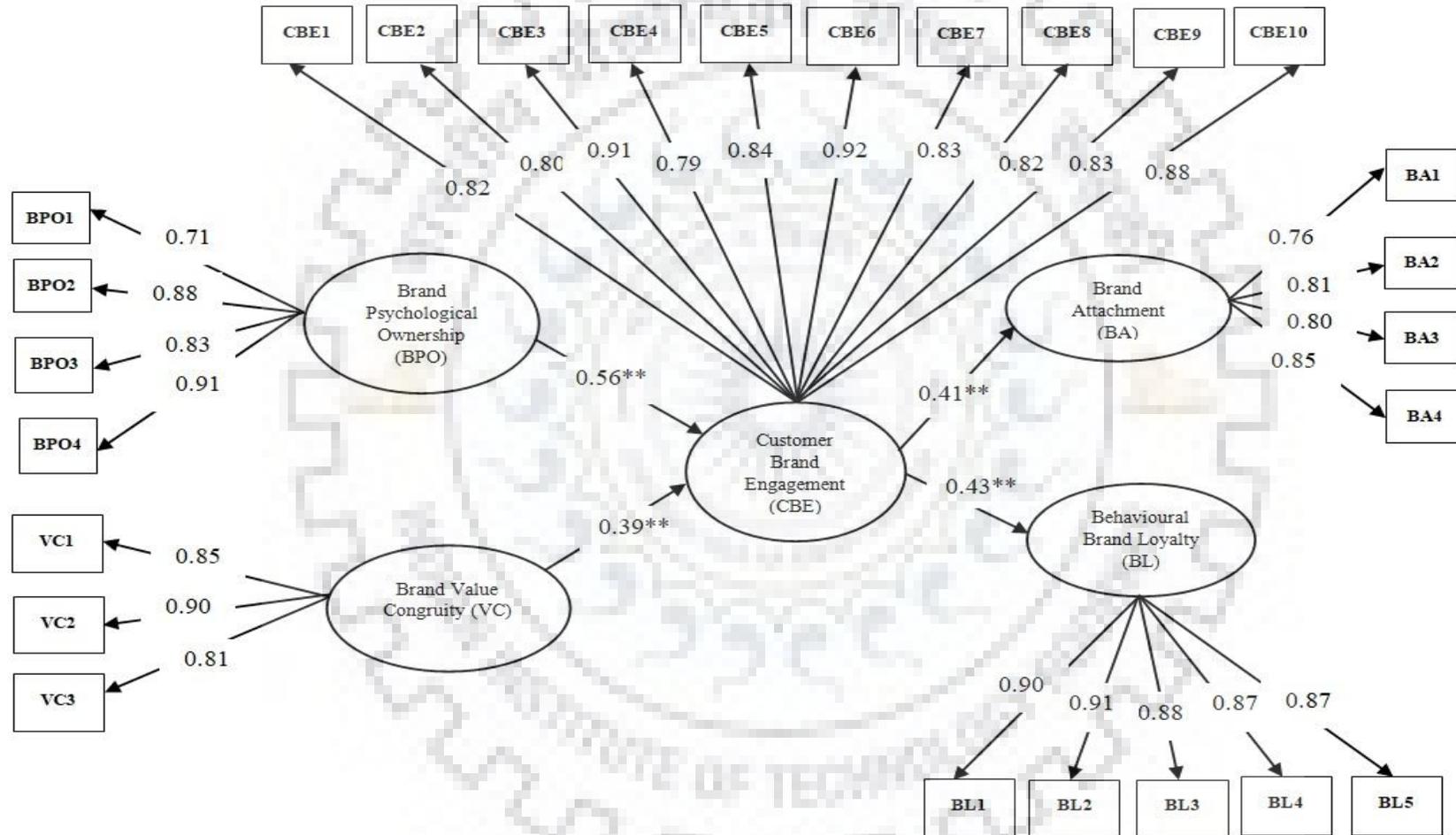
Brand psychological ownership and brand value-congruity together explained 70.32% variance in customer brand engagement ($R^2 = 0.70$), which indicates that both drivers have substantial explaining power on customer brand engagement. Customer brand engagement explained 41.86% variance in brand attachment ($R^2 = 0.42$) and 55.01% variance in behavioural brand loyalty ($R^2 = 0.55$); both R-square values were found above the recommended threshold of 10% (Falk and Miller, 1992) and moderate. Ideally, $R^2 = 0.19$ is considered weak, $R^2 = 0.33$ is moderate, and $R^2 = 0.67$ is substantial (Chin et al., 2008).

The estimated model containing path coefficients is presented in Figure 4.1. The overall model fit indices ($\chi^2/df = 3.712$, GFI = 0.915, CFI = 0.926, NFI = 0.914, TLI = 0.915, and RMSEA = 0.051) for the structural model indicate optimal fit under the established criteria (Hu and Bentler, 1999) and appears in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7
Structural model testing results

Hypothesis	Path coefficients (β)	t-value	p-value	Results
H1: Brand psychological ownership → Customer brand engagement	0.56**	6.12	<0.01	Accepted
H2: Brand value congruity → Customer brand engagement	0.39**	4.87	<0.01	Accepted
H3: Customer brand engagement → Brand attachment	0.41**	4.93	<0.01	Accepted
H4: Customer brand engagement → Behavioural brand loyalty	0.43**	7.05	<0.01	Accepted
<i>Fit indices for structural model/SEM model</i>				
Model fit index	Test results			
χ^2/df (Chi-square/Degrees of freedom)	3.712			
GFI (Goodness-of-Fit Index)	0.915			
CFI (Comparative Fit Index)	0.926			
NFI (Normed Fit Index)	0.914			
TLI (Tucker-Lewis Index)	0.915			
RMSEA (Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation)	0.051			

Figure 4.1 Estimated model



4.7 Competing Model Analysis

The structural model fit indicates the confirmation of the proposed theory. However, cross-sectional survey data for causal modeling raises the concerns of alternative/rival models fitting the data (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988). The proposed model entails a nomological network of variables based on an elaborate theory. To check model robustness, one alternative model with undefined configurations was created. The alternative model portrayed CBE as exogenous variable predicting brand psychological ownership and brand value-congruity, and reversed the existing causal relationship between CBE on BA and BL. Now to see, if the theory holds true for the data, the model was tested. Two models were compared through the criterion as employed in existing literature (see Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012). Overall fit of competing model [$\chi^2/df = 10.083$, GFI = 0.775, CFI = 0.743, NFI = 0.812, and RMSEA = 0.094] was found inferior to the main structural model supporting the robustness of the main model. Hence the proposed theory holds significance and robust enough.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter contained a detailed record of the results of the empirical analysis and the techniques employed to analyze the data. The measurement theory and structural theory was tested and the overall model was estimated with the data. The results were compiled and the corresponding hypotheses were tested. Finally the competing model strategy was adopted to confirm the robustness of the model. The next chapter contains the discussion of the results and the implications of the study for theory and practice.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This study was conducted as an attempt to fill the voids in existing understanding of customer brand engagement. The objective of this study was to examine the role of brand psychological ownership and brand value-congruity in predicting customer brand engagement, and further test the influence exerted by customer brand engagement on brand attachment and brand loyalty. Brand communities were employed as the context for exploring brand engagement in this study. To achieve these objectives, data was collected from 312 brand community members who were participating in different community events organized in and around New Delhi in India.

The measurement theory of the proposed model was tested using confirmatory factor analysis and it was found that all measures have high and significant loadings ($p < 0.05$) on to their respective constructs. All constructs met the criterion for convergent and discriminant validity. Measurement model exhibited an acceptable fit, supporting the validity of the measurement theory. After the validation of measurement theory, the structural model was tested through structural equation modeling (SEM). SEM results indicated that brand psychological ownership and brand value-congruity can act as the predictors of customer brand engagement. Results also revealed that brand attachment and brand loyalty are the outcomes of customer brand engagement.

The first objective of this study was to get a conceptual understanding of the brand engagement concept and develop a model portraying antecedents and consequences of customer brand engagement. This objective has been achieved by conceptualizing a customer brand engagement model portraying predictors and outcomes of brand engagement. The second and third objectives of the study related to the empirical analysis of the effect of brand psychological ownership and brand value-congruity on brand engagement; and the effect of customer brand engagement on brand attachment and behavioural brand loyalty have also been achieved. The finding of this study has important implications for the existing theory as well as practice because researchers are continuously attempting to address the problem of engagement of customers with the brands in brand community context. Similarly, practitioners are also trying to find ways and means to tackle customers in the marketplace and engagement serves the means to manage customers. The specific implications for the theory and practice are discussed in the sections below.

5.1 Theoretical Implications

The concept of brand engagement has gained special academic attention due to its far-reaching impact and there is a growing demand to explore brand engagement in the light of different theories and its relationship with different marketing constructs (Bolton, 2011; Islam and Rahman, 2016; Veloutsou and Guzmán, 2017). This work is a response to the call of Hollebeek et al. (2014) for more empirical studies by developing a brand engagement model signifying the antecedents and consequences of brand engagement in a brand community context.

This study adds to the theory that brand psychological ownership and value-congruity act as stimulators of customer brand engagement, whereas brand attachment and behavioural brand loyalty act as the consequences of customer brand engagement. The first theoretical contribution of this research is in conceptualizing the role of brand psychological ownership in facilitating customer engagement with the brands. The role of a sense of psychological ownership in driving engagement in a social community was presented in the landmark work of Jaakkola and Alexander (2014); Vivek et al. (2012) specifically mentioned that ownership is not essential for engaging with objects (brands). Hence it was more than the legal brand ownership and a sense of psychological ownership that was implied in the literature but attention was not paid to this relationship until now. This is the unique contribution of this study in terms of the influence of brand psychological ownership on brand engagement in the context of brand communities. Through this research, we endorse the application of psychological ownership theory in marketing domain where the theory remains in its infancy and almost absent in consumer behaviour analysis (Jussila et al., 2015; Hulland et al., 2015; Peck and Luangrath, 2018). This study contributes in terms of the role of brand psychological ownership in driving customer brand engagement, both conceptually and empirically. The empirical results show that a sense of psychological ownership towards the brands positively influences CBE. This finding can be supported by the literature where the sense of psychological ownership towards the object (social network brands) results in customer engagement behaviours (Guo et al., 2016). The explored relationship is an extrapolation of the assertions made by Jaakkola and Alexander (2014) that a sense of ownership can facilitate engagement behaviours towards the focal objects that had not been systematically analyzed in the context of consumer brands in a brand community context, hitherto. In this way, this work has provided statistical validation to the under-researched pieces of evidence related to the role of ownership and possessiveness in stimulating customer brand engagement inside brand communities.

Second, the role of ‘brand value-congruity’ in influencing customer brand engagement is in line with France et al. (2016) but this study takes a diversion in terms of the specific focus on subjective congruity in terms of ‘values’. Additionally, the role of value-congruity with reference to the brand has been tested in the context of brand communities. This is relatively new because the perceived similarity in the values attributed to the brand in an independent environment is different than that of in a brand community where different brand admirers are present and they may differ in terms of their value attributes attached to the brand. Being a part of the brand community, customers interact with other members and their shared values and principles may get influenced and restructured accordingly. Hence, this study offers a different perspective to value-congruity with reference to the brand in a brand community context.

The third theoretical contribution made by this study is the role of customer brand engagement in enhancing brand attachment; adding to the literature by demystifying the blurred boundaries between brand engagement and brand attachment (Smaoui and Behi, 2011a) and validating the theoretical claims of brand attachment as an outcome of customer brand engagement (Brodie et al., 2011, 2013). Attachment conceptualization in this study follows Park et al. (2010) who define attachment as the strength of the bond that is embedded in self-brand connection and automatic thoughts about the brand. We establish through this study that the engagement with the brand results in increased strength of the bond between self and the brand as supported by previous studies where brand engagement is described as a self-concept based phenomenon (Spratt et al., 2009). The role of brand engagement in creating brand loyal customers finds support in previous literature (Dwivedi, 2015; Solem and Pedersen, 2016; Pongpaew et al., 2017). Due to the practical difficulties in recording actual behavioural purchases, measures capturing ‘behavioural intentions’ are employed to measure ‘actual behaviours’; both experience a strong relationship with each other (Venkatesh, 1999; Venkatesh and Davis, 2000). The relationship between brand engagement and brand loyalty has not been fully explored in the context of brand communities and this research contributes in that direction by asserting that brand loyalty can be created through brand engagement in brand communities.

To summarize, this study extends theories from psychology and organization behaviour disciplines to explore consumer behaviour in marketing domain and offers new routes to achieve customer brand engagement, thereby adding to the existing theory on customer engagement with the brands in the context of brand communities.

5.2 Managerial Implications

The portrayal of intellectual psychological motivations to customer brand engagement provides important implications for brand managers in brand management. Understanding the role of brand psychological ownership and brand value-congruity can help management in motivating customers to engage with the brands. In order to stimulate these motivations in the subconscious minds of the customers, managers need to develop corresponding strategies.

Self-concept is an integral part of consumer psychology (Rosenberg, 1979) and understanding the patterns of self-brand dynamics would surely be helpful for the managers in engaging customers. Since brand communities are becoming a common marketing practice in the current business scenario to engage customers (Fournier and Lee, 2009; Balducci et al., 2015), understanding brand engagement in brand communities could be helpful for the brand managers in creating stronger brands. Brand managers need to find ways and means by which the customers develop a sense of brand psychological ownership. This could be achieved by instilling in customers a feeling of control over the target (brand) and self-efficacy in brand-related activities and interactions (Pierce et al., 2004). Managers can do so by ceding control in brand-related activities and interactions inside brand communities. This control over the brand and the resulting efficacy experienced within can result in a sense of brand psychological ownership among customers (Bandura, 1997). For example, in brand communities, the participatory nature of the brand-related activities and space for volunteer initiatives can offer a sense of brand psychological ownership because it warrants a voluntary behaviour towards the brand which is beyond the constrained exchange behaviour. The self-identity with reference to the focal brand (maintenance or enhancement of identity) can also stimulate a sense of ownership towards the brand (Pierce et al., 2003) and the brand should be promoted as an object of identity in the brand community. Therefore, the managers should work on the enhancement of the elements of ownership associated with the brands by devoting requisite resources, for instance, by making customers endogenous to internal processes (that increases perceived brand control), providing sufficient interaction platforms, offering ubiquitous access to the brands (online or offline), and by introducing identity based cues during brand interactions. Customer centred approach of marketing is itself suggested by Kotler (Rai, 2007); moreover sustainable marketing practices need to be adopted in emerging economies like India (Pandey et al., 2012) and customer engagement can contribute in building sustainable brands since it is not merely contingent on the economic aspect of branding but covers the social benefits sideways by offering social capital to the customers/members.

Brand managers can also benefit by identifying the human value attributes of the target segment in addition to the functional attributes and incorporate these in the brand community by spreading a word about what values the brand stands for to keep customers engaged. For example, at a motorcycle community level, a sense of brand psychological ownership can be created by offering a badge, a specially designed jacket with a logo, and/or membership to a club. The symbolic affiliations like these may facilitate customers' desire to control the target brand which further increases their ability in exerting an influence, i.e., self-efficacy. From the brand value-congruity perspective, the badge, the jacket, the club so created, and the activities initiated by the community should contain an element of human values possessed by the customers such as adventurous, exciting, daring, patriotic, etc., depending upon the terminal and/or instrumental value attributes of the target customers. The perceived similarity in terms of values then facilitates customers' engagement with the brands as identified in this study.

For the managers, apart from focusing on CBE from the implicit brand meaning perspective, the marketing communications can also carry the underlying brand psychological ownership and brand value-congruity appeal. For example, UBER, a global car ride-hailing company, launched an advertisement campaign in India in 2017 titled "Ise apni hi gaadi samjho (Consider it your own car)". The advertisement reflects brand values in response to the human values sought by the customers at that point in time (e.g. UBER driver driving carefully while a pregnant woman inside portraying the human value as 'Care'; UBER driver cheering up a sad bandaged kid portraying the value as 'Happiness'). The advertisement also promotes the sense of brand psychological ownership towards UBER through the title of the commercial ("Consider it your own car"). Communications like this may help in engaging customers if the advertisements can stimulate the psychological ownership and value-congruity notions towards the brands as identified in this work. Required brand values can be embraced by the old members and the community administrators/leaders in the brand communities and they can also spread a message of brand psychological ownership, thereby engaging customers with the brands.

The managers can also benefit from this work by tackling the challenge of having emotionally connected and loyal customers with their brands. A loyal customer is the lifeline of any firm as he/she is purchasing the brand as well as recommending the brand to others, thereby creating brand equity. Manager should realize that engagement also creates brand attachment which means that the engagement may bolster the feeling of 'love' between the customer and the brand and strengthens the bond between them. Both brand attachment and brand loyalty are important for managers while planning to create stronger brands (Keller et al.,

2011). Therefore customer brand engagement requires due attention to benefit organizations with the desired brand performance outcomes.

In sum, brand engagement can increase customers' attachment to the brands and enhance their loyalty towards the brands; engaged customers will be ready to bear the price premium for the brand; will forgive the brand for the mishaps; purchase as well as recommend the brands to others. The marketers can dwell on these findings to make their brands stronger in the marketplace by targeting high level of customer brand engagement.

5.3 Limitations and Future Research Directions

Like every research project, this study also has few limitations. The first limitation is that the sample in this study is composed of participating members in brand community events. Brand communities are a composition of different member types and there might be others who are not participating and less passionate about the brand and have become a part of the community just to fulfil their personal goals related to brand information and brand community identification and not to interact with the brand and/or other members. Therefore caution is required while generalizing these findings to all brand community members.

The conceptual model in this study considers brand attachment and brand loyalty as the outcomes of brand engagement; other important variables like brand equity and brand love can be explored in future studies. Attitudinal brand loyalty can also be explored as an outcome of brand engagement in future works. Also, this study covers only the positively valenced engagement, however, negatively valenced engagement is recommended for exploration.

Although the sample was selected so that the customers having a connection with the brand could be surveyed, these findings cannot be fully applied to more general brand customers. Brand community members might have an overtly admiring and passionate relationship with the brand, which may limit the generalization of the study findings in the general consumer context. This is the limitation of the context of this study. Future studies can focus on individuals who hold membership of more than one community and no specific brand community in mind before taking up the survey.

The members of the brand communities can create relationships at brand community level as well. They tend to develop a sense of psychological ownership towards the brand community (Lee and Suh, 2015). Similarly the perceived similarity between the customers and the brand community also exists (see Zhou et al., 2012). These aspects can be considered in future to check their role in relation to the proposed model. Community-based variables like brand community engagement, community identification, and community participation can also

be considered by future researchers to explore brand engagement in a brand community context.

This study covered brand communities created around single product brand only; more brand communities created around different product brands in different industries can be covered in the future for further replication of the findings of this study. Brand communities are created around service brands as well; psychological ownership and value-congruity for service brands can be studied for its role in brand engagement and further influence on brand attachment and brand loyalty, and this model can be compared with the one for product brands in future through multiple group analysis using SEM.

The role of individual demographic and psychographic factors can also be considered while exploring CBE because these factors create a brand meaning for the customers (Keller, 2001). The role of big five personality dimensions; consumers' behavioural characteristics such as brand usage duration, brand usage frequency, community membership duration, and community visiting frequency is also recommended for future consideration.

This study undertakes a quantitative analysis to test the proposed theory, which remains a limitation; it would be more appropriate important to conduct a qualitative research first and then go for quantitative research for further validation. This study followed a cross-sectional research design. There is evidence of the development of customer brand engagement over time (Kumar et al., 2010). In this view, a longitudinal research design can be undertaken to capture engagement levels at different time intervals. The proposed model is grounded in psychological ownership theory and value-congruity theory. Other marketing theories can be tested for their application in the exploration of brand engagement concept. This study employed a purposive sampling; probability based sampling technique can be adopted in future to further validate the results of this study. The last but not the least, this study employed an Indian origin brand, India based brand communities, and the sample elements are all Indians which may limit the scope of the findings outside India. While thinking of replicating this study in other countries, researchers should carefully consider the geographic, economic, and cultural differences as suggested by Hollebeek et al. (2014).

5.4 Conclusion

The role of psychological ownership and value-congruity had been inferred as potential predictors of consumer behaviour in different disciplines but the concepts were missing a theoretical as well as empirical investigation in marketing literature. This study differs from previous brand engagement studies as it analyzes customer brand engagement from the intra-

individual perspective and proposes two psychological antecedents for engagement with the brands; and psychological as well as a behavioural consequence of brand engagement. Theoretical model is tested among 312 brand community members as brand communities have been set as the context of contemporary importance for the exploration of customer brand engagement in this study.

The proposed CBE model contributes to different knowledge streams. Seminal psychology and marketing concepts are brought together through this study. This includes brand psychological ownership, brand value-congruity, customer brand engagement, brand attachment, and behavioural brand loyalty. The proposed model addresses a key issue in brand engagement and shifts the focus from relational motivations of brand engagement to psychological motivations. The study depicts brand psychological ownership and brand value-congruity as drivers of brand engagement and assesses the direct influence of these variables on brand engagement which is relatively new to the existing theory. This study pioneers in applying psychological ownership theory in branding and particularly in customer engagement domain. The results also suggest that customer brand engagement results in brand attachment and behavioural brand loyalty.

This research work invites other researchers from academia and practice to contribute to this research area and establish new premises in the better understanding of customer brand engagement in brand communities.

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LIST OF PUBLICATIONS AND CONFERENCES

PUBLICATIONS

1. **Kumar, J.** & Nayak, J. K. (2018), “Brand community relationships transitioning into brand relationships: Mediating and moderating mechanisms”, *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 45, pp.64-73(*Elsevier*) (**SSCI, ABDC –A, Impact Factor – 2.91**).
2. **Kumar, J.** & Nayak, J. K. (2019), “Brand engagement without brand ownership: a case of non-brand owner community members”, *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, Vol. 28 No. 2, pp. 216-230 (*Emerald*) (**SSCI, ABDC – B, Impact Factor – 2.75**).
3. **Kumar, J.** & Nayak, J. K. (2019), “Consumer psychological motivations to customer brand engagement: a case of brand community”, *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, Vol. 36 No. 1, pp. 168-177(*Emerald*) (**ESCI, ABDC – B**).
4. **Kumar, J.** & Nayak, J. K. (2019), “Exploring destination psychological ownership among tourists: antecedents and outcomes”, *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, Vol. 39, pp. 30-39 (*Elsevier*) (**SSCI, ABDC- B, Impact factor pending for June’19**).

CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

1. **Kumar, J.** & Nayak, J.K. (2017), “Conceptualization and Measurement of Customer Brand Engagement: A Review and Research Agenda”, in international conference on “*Strategies in Volatile and Uncertain Environment for Emerging Markets*” organized by **IIT Delhi** on 14th-15th July, 2017.
2. Attended a workshop on “Data Analytics for Advanced Research” organized by **IIM Sirmour** on 6th-8th July, 2018.

APPENDIX I

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Part 1

The below questions pertain to your relationship with “Royal Enfield” brand

Indicate your agreement with the following statements on a 7-point rating scale, which ranges from 1= strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree as below and accordingly

Answer 1 if you STRONGLY DISAGREE

Answer 2 if you DISAGREE

Answer 3 if you MORE OR LESS DISAGREE

Answer 4 if you NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE (UNDECIDED/NEUTRAL)

Answer 5 if you MORE OR LESS AGREE

Answer 6 if you AGREE

Answer 7 if you AGREE STRONGLY

Section I

Section I (A). How do you rate your sense of ownership with reference to the “Royal Enfield” brand?

Circle the number that best describes your agreement or disagreement with each statement

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	More or less disagree	Undecided/ Neutral	More or less agree	Agree	Strongly agree
This is MY brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I sense that this brand is OURS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel a very high degree of personal ownership for this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I sense that this is my brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section I (B). How do you see your values in comparison with “Royal Enfield” brand’?

Circle the number that best describes your agreement or disagreement with each statement

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	More or less disagree	Undecided/ Neutral	More or less agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I really support the intent of the core values of this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have a clear understanding of the core values of this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have a great deal of agreement about what this brand’s core values represent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section II

What is your level of engagement with "Royal Enfield"?

Circle the number that best describes your agreement or disagreement with each statement

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	More or less disagree	Undecided/ Neutral	More or less agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Using this brand gets me to think about it	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I think about this brand a lot when I’m using it	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Using this brand stimulates my interest to learn more about it	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel very positive when I use this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Using this brand makes me happy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel good when I use this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I’m proud to use this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

I spend a lot of time using this brand compared with other brands	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Whenever I'm using product [motorcycle], I usually use this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I use this brand the most	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section III

Section III (A). How would you describe your attachment with "Royal Enfield" brand?

Circle the number that best describes your agreement or disagreement with each statement

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	More or less disagree	Undecided/ Neutral	More or less agree	Agree	Strongly agree
This brand is a part of me to a great extent if compared to myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel personally connected to this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My thoughts and feelings toward this brand are automatic and coming	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My thoughts and feelings toward this brand comes naturally and instantly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section III (B). How would you describe your loyalty towards “Royal Enfield” brand?

Circle the number that best describes your agreement or disagreement with each statement

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	More or less disagree	Undecided/ Neutral	more or less agree	Agree	Strongly agree
The next time I buy a product [motorcycle], it will definitely be this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If I lose my product [motorcycle], I will definitely buy this brand again	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If I were entitled to a free product [motorcycle], I would choose this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I would recommend this brand to others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I would talk to other people about this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Part 2

About you (please tick the appropriate option below each question)

1. What is your gender?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

2. What is your marital status?
 - a. Married
 - b. Unmarried

3. How old are you?
 - a. Less than 18 years
 - b. 18-30
 - c. 31-43
 - d. 44-56
 - e. 57 and above

4. What is the highest educational level you attained?
 - a. Undergraduate
 - b. Graduate
 - c. Post-graduate and above

5. What is your current occupation?
 - a. Student
 - b. Part-time employment (professional)
 - c. Full-time employment (professional)
 - d. Self employed professional
 - e. Self employed non-professional
 - f. Others

6. What is your current monthly income (in Indian National Rupees)?
 - a. Less than 50,000
 - b. 50,000-1,00,000
 - c. 1,00,001-2,00,000
 - d. 2,00,001-3,00,000
 - e. More than 3,00,000

This is the end of this questionnaire!

Thank you very much for your patience, time and active co-operation

APPENDIX II

Sample size calculation

“The formula for estimating sample size considering 95% accuracy at a confidence level of 95% is”:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{“[n]”} &= \text{“[z}^2 \text{(p*q)/e}^2\text{]”} \\ &= \text{“[(1.96)}^2 \text{*}(0.5*0.5) \text{/ (0.05)}^2\text{]”} \\ &= \text{“[384]”} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{“[a]”} &= \text{“[n/r]”} \\ &= \text{“[(384) \text{/} (0.5)]”} \\ &= \text{“[768]”} \end{aligned}$$

Here,

n = sample size

z = standard normal variate

p = population variability

q = 1-p

e= acceptable level of error

r = response rate

a = respondents to be approached

