

Developing 'Online Consumer Engagement' Construct -A Contextual Approach

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1. INTRODUCTION

Managing customers has been constantly evolving over the years, and this is evident from the metrics used in the different phases of marketing focus. The focus was basically transactional being measured by the firm profitability owing to past customer value, share-of wallet, recency and frequency of purchase almost until the 1990s. Then came a time where the organizational goal was more of relational than transactional. It gave rise to the evolvement of relationship-marketing in the late 1990s ((Morgan and Hunt 1994; Berry 1995) and the early 2000s, where the core objective of firms was to establish positive relationships with customers by ensuring satisfaction and loyalty via better products and services. However, over the course of time, both the managers and academics realised that it is not enough to simply satisfy the customer to make him/her loyal and profitable, rather these have to be evolved to a superior level, a level of desired differentiation and to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. Therefore, the goal of organizations developed from relationship marketing to engaging customers in all possible ways. This led to the rise of the term Engagement among marketing academia and practitioners.

With the emergence of Web 2.0 is one of the most formidable developments in the history of commerce, *Social media*, became another buzzword that came along with, which not only encourages user-generated contents, but also extends the focus to the users by allowing them to exhibit contents to share among networks. The tools and approaches for communicating with customers have changed greatly with the emergence of social media. And almost all the organizations are vying with each other to engage consumers through their social networking sites giving rise to the concept of online consumer engagement.

Even though there seems to be consensus among marketers that online consumer engagement is crucial to the success of a company's social networking site (Evans & McKee, 2010; Roberts, 2005; Solis, 2010; Swedowsky, 2009; Wong, 2009), an agreed upon definition of what

engagement means is lacking in the trade literature. According to the Advertising Research Foundation, “engagement is turning on a prospect to a brand idea enhanced by the surrounding media context” (Meskauskas, 2006).

The EConsultancy (2008) consumer engagement survey defines engagement as “an outcome of repeated interactions that strengthen the emotional, psychological, or physical investment a customer has in a brand” (Mollen & Wilson, 2010). Still others view engagement as the simple act of participating in an online environment (Evans & McKee, 2010; Harden & Heyman, 2009; Solis, 2010). Although marketers have yet to agree upon a definition of engagement, the term is being recognized in the industry as a key factor with which to measure online marketing success.

The engagement construct has been studied in a variety of academic disciplines (e.g. advertising, education, narratives, psychology, and sociology), but it has yet to be well-established within the academic literature as a key marketing construct to study, specifically within an online context. Several scholars have attempted to define the construct, and individual themes regarding the construct are emerging; however, these definitions lack consistency. Scholars have defined engagement as one dimensional (i.e., cognitive, affective, or behavioral) (Douglas & Hargadon, 2000; Heath, 2007; Marci, 2006; Mathwick & Ridgion, 2004; Rappaport, 2007; Wang, 2006), whereas others have defined it as two dimensional (i.e., cognitive and affective) (Mollen & Wilson, 2010; O’Brien & Toms, 2008). Some have even defined it as a multidimensional construct that includes cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions (Hollebeek, 2011; Patterson, Yu, & de Ruter, 2006), but have considered engagement with the company as “physical contact” and dismiss the possibilities that engagement can be applicable in a mediated space. Additionally, scholars have yet to consider the antecedents and outcomes of engagement. Consequently, a need to explore the engagement construct is warranted to fill the gap between industry definitions and academic definitions of engagement, as well as a need to explore the antecedents and outcomes of online consumer engagement. By aligning the industry and academic definitions of engagement in addition to understanding the antecedents and outcomes of engagement, the aim is to progress engagement from an emergent theme in the literature to a more mature construct. Furthermore, confirming past researcher’s claims (although limited in number) that engagement consists of cognitive, affective, and participative dimensions will hopefully provide supporting evidence of its complexity.

Because engagement is a relatively new term within an online marketing context, there has yet to be an established benchmark of how online

consumer engagement leads to positive brand and marketing objectives. Marketers proclaim that online consumer engagement can build relationships between a company and its consumers and positively impact brand loyalty, brand evangelism, brand identification and affinity, brand learning, and sales (Evans & McKee, 2010; Li & Bernoff, 2008; Meskauskas, 2006; Rappaport, 2007; Solis, 2010). However, scant literature exists that tests the relationship between online consumer engagement and positive brand and marketing outcomes such as brand loyalty or (re)purchase intent, which suggests a need to understand the relationship between the two.

To explore online consumer engagement, an understanding of the antecedents that lead to online consumer engagement is necessary, specifically looking at the constructs of perceived information quality, perceived enjoyment, and perceived interactivity because these constructs are frequently cited within the website design literature as imperative characteristics to include when designing an effective company website (Cao, Zhang, Seydel, 2005; Koufaris, 2002; Ou & Sia, 2010; Zhang & von Dran, 2000). Website design literature supports that perceived information quality, perceived enjoyment, and perceived interactivity are appropriate constructs to consider as influences on online consumer engagement. Additionally, an understanding of the outcomes of online consumer engagement is important to study as an attempt to fully explore the online consumer engagement concept. As discussed above, several brand and marketing objectives have been identified as outcomes of online consumer engagement including, and of specific interest to this study, loyalty and (re)purchase intent (Meskauskas, 2006; Rappaport, 2007).

2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this conceptual study is to explore the concept of online consumer engagement. The first aim of the study is to refine the definition of engagement as an attempt to align the industry and academic definitions of the construct. By putting forth that online consumer engagement is a multidimensional construct with cognitive, affective, and participative components and its effect on consumer behavior. The second aim of the study is to explore measures and dimensions of online consumer engagement that incorporate the three dimensions.

3. LITERATURE SURVEY

This part of the thesis provides relevant literature related to the study, which **first** includes a general discussion on social networking sites and presents relevant academic literature. **Next**, the engagement construct is explored and defined from both industry and academic perspectives with relevant

research presented. **The study** then describes the online consumer engagement construct with regard to consumer behaviour.

3.1. Social Networking Sites

Interacting in social networking sites has become a popular online activity for many consumers (Hampton et al., 2011; Lipsman, 2011). According to Nielsen Wire (2009), accessing social networking sites have now surpassed email as the most popular online activity. A report by Pew Internet & American Life Project found that “more than 70% of online users between 18 and 29 years old use social networking sites, with Facebook (73%) being the most popular social networking website, followed by MySpace (48%) and LinkedIn (14%)” (Chu & Kim, 2011, p. 49). Social networking sites can focus on different topics. For example, Facebook, MySpace, QQ, and Orkut focus primarily on socialization, whereas LinkedIn, Visible Path, and Xing have more of a professional networking focus (Singh & Cullinane, 2010). Social networking sites can even have a “passion-centric” focus, such as Catster (cats), AlwaysOn (technology), and LastFM (music) (Singh & Cullinane, 2010). Based on their popularity, educators, researchers, and practitioners have taken note and have started examining social networking sites (Boyd & Ellison 2008; ChuKim; Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007; Thelwall 2008, 2009; Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009).

In a study examining why adolescents use social networking sites, Reich, Subramanyam, and Espinoza (2012) found that out of the 250 adolescents studied, staying connected with others is the main reason why teens use social networking sites, in particular MySpace and Facebook. They also found that teens stay connected with people they knew from an offline context more than those they meet online. Based on this, the researchers concluded that social networking sites are used among teens to strengthen offline relationships. The conclusions made by Reich et al. (2012) support findings by Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, and Zickuhr (2010) and Lenhart and Madden (2007), which found that youth used social networking sites to connect with friends, support and cultivate emotional ties, and sometimes create new relationships (Lenhart et al.; Lenhart & Madden).

In a study examining 106 StudiVZ (social networking site in Germany for college students) user profiles and survey data, Haferkamp, Eimler, Papadakis, and Kruck (2012) considered why men and women used social networking sites and the particular elements used for self-presentation. The researchers found that women used social networking sites to search for information and to compare themselves to others whereas men used social networking sites to build relationships with friends. Given that Facebook is considered the most popular social networking site, this study

specifically examines online consumer engagement solely within Facebook. The following section provides the general background of Facebook and relevant industry and academic literature.

3.2. Online Consumer Engagement

In this section, the engagement construct is presented. Engagement is explored from an industry perspective as well as an academic perspective. The section concludes with a proposed definition of engagement that reconciles the practitioner and scholarly definitions of the construct and is meant to serve as the benchmark definition of this emerging term. The construct “engagement” can have several meanings. Perhaps the most common understanding of the construct is the period of engagement between proposal and marriage wherein a couple promises to marry each other (Free Dictionary, 2016).

Engagement can also be described as an arrangement or a promise to be somewhere (Free Dictionary, 2011b). Another meaning of engagement is the act of participating and sharing (Free Dictionary, 2011b). Finally, engagement can mean “having one’s attention, mind or energy” (Free Dictionary, 2011b). The definitions capture the versatility and vastness of the meaning of the term engagement. Practitioners and academics have begun to use the engagement construct when discussing online consumer behavior, but practitioners and academics have different meanings of the term when applying engagement to the online environment.

Practitioners have focused on the “the act of sharing” (Gillin, 2007; Swedowsky, 2009; Wong, 2009) while academics focus on “having one’s attention, mind or energy” (Douglas & Hargadon, 2001; Guthrie et al., 2004; Mollen & Wilson, 2010; O’Brien & Toms, 2008, 2010; O’Brien, 2010). This section presents both the industry and academic perspectives of the term engagement and attempts to bridge the gap between the two perspectives by presenting a redefined definition of the engagement construct.

3.2.1. Industry Perspective

Social media, specifically platforms like Facebook, have changed the way practitioners market to consumers and how consumers respond to marketing efforts. Marketing no longer uses a one-way, monologue approach where companies have control over the message. To be successful in the new media landscape, marketers have to embrace a two-way dialogue approach where power and control are shared with consumers. Social media marketing is about companies engaging consumers through connections and conversations. Evans and McKee (2010) state that the number one objective for practitioners marketing in the social web should be engaging

customers. In fact, in his book titled "Engage: The Complete Guide for Brands and Businesses to Build, Cultivate, and Measure Success in the New Web," Solis (2010) states that practitioners either "engage or die" when marketing in the social web.

Engagement means giving consumers a voice (Wang, 2011). Practitioners believe the best way to let consumers be heard is to provide them with opportunities to participate (Evans & McKee, 2010; Harden & Heyman, 2009; Wang; Solis, 2010). Evans and McKee state that engagement means customers become participants rather than passive viewers and take the time to talk to and about companies. Furthermore, they state that engagement is defined as active participation within the social web, moving consumers beyond consumption to collaborators integral to the success of the company (Evans & McKee). Similarly, Atherley (2011) defines engagement as active participation. Atherley states that engaged consumers respond and create conversations, discussions, and discourse. Elwood (2011) considers engagement to be a consumer's purposeful decision to interact with other consumers and companies. This is achieved by creating content as well as commenting and responding to other consumers' and companies' news and updates (Elwood).

Online consumer engagement can take on many participatory forms. Consumers can download, read, watch, or listen to content provided by a company (Evans & McKee, 2010). Consumers can also sort, filter, rate, or review a company's content (Evans & McKee). Additionally, consumers can comment, respond, provide feedback, and give opinions to companies' posts and other consumers' posts. In addition to the opportunities of online consumer engagement listed above, Facebook provides unique engagement opportunities for consumers including the ability to "accept" an event invite, the option to partake in contests, games, and third-party applications (i.e., accepting gifts and voting), and the chance to participate in surveys, polls, and questionnaires (Levy, 2010).

Consumers do embrace the participatory functions available in the social web. A recent study found over 40% of males and nearly 40% of females in the United States consider themselves to be content creators in the social media environment (Forrester, 2017). Over 50% participate in consumer specific functions including company discussions, reading, and posting ratings and reviews and providing feedback and opinions on a social media site dedicated to companies (Forrester). Consumers also are embracing the consumer participation opportunities on Facebook. Of all of the posts generated by companies on Facebook, on average more than two-thirds will receive feedback from consumers (Askanase, 2011). Specifically, company posts will generate over 50 likes and nearly 10 posts from consumers.

It is clear that many marketers view engagement in the social web as a distinct “participation-centric place” (Evans & McKee, 2010, p. 21). However, others are starting to give depth to the meaning of engagement by applying cognitive and affective concepts to the term. The Advertising Research Foundation includes an affect component in its definition of engagement by stating that engagement is “turning on a prospect to a brand” (Meskauskas, 2006, p. 1). Similarly, EConsultancy (2008) considers engagement to be “an outcome of repeated interactions that strengthen the emotional, psychological, or physical investment a customer has in a brand” (Mollen & Wilson, 2010, p. 919). Dave Smith, founder of Mediasmith, regards engagement as a cognitive function, stating that engagement is “an unconscious tick of the mind that causes a consumer to think differently about and notice a brand differently in the future” (Harden & Heyman, 2009, p. 211).

Even though industry literature is considering cognition and affect within the engagement experience, most still feel that engagement is the act of participating in the social web. Academics, on the other hand, regard engagement as an affective and/or cognitive driven construct. However, recent academic research is beginning to include the behavior side of the term by including participation. The next section discusses the academic perspective of engagement and online consumer engagement.

3.2.2. Academic Perspective

The engagement construct has been investigated in a variety of academic disciplines including, education (student engagement), psychology (social engagement), sociology (civic engagement), political science (political engagement), organizational behavior (employee engagement), advertising (engagement with the ad), computer systems (systems engagement), literacy (narrative engagement), and most recently consumer behavior (consumer engagement both on and offline). Definitions of engagement are vast and vary within the academic literature. They range from a unidimensional perspective of engagement (that being either cognition, affect, or behavior) to a multidimensional perspective of engagement that encompasses cognitive, affective, and/or behavioral. However, defining engagement as a unidimensional behavioral construct dominates the literature in non-marketing areas (Brodie, Hollebeek, Juric, & Illic, 2011), which severely limits the potential richness and complexity of the construct.

Some excerpts from the studies undergone in different disciplines of academics can be sketched out as below (Figure-1) to have some idea in defining Engagement construct.

Engagement - Academic perspective

<i>Field of Knowledge</i>	<i>Dimension(s)</i>	<i>Context/ Focus</i>	<i>Meaning / Outcomes</i>	<i>Study</i>
Education	Multi	Class room study/ Student Engagement	collaborative learning, participation, involvement, feeling legitimized analyzing and synthesizing information critiquing and reasoning through various opinions and arguments and ultimately making decisions "pertains to the efforts of the student to study a subject, practice, obtain feedback, analyze and solve problems"	Coates (2007)
	Cognitive			Zhu (2006)
	Behavioural			Kuh (2003) and Robinson and Hullinger (2008)
Psychology	Multi Cognitive Behavioural	Social engagement	participating in social activities; response to a social stimulus that results in a high sense of initiation and involvement;	Huo, Binning, & Ludwin, 2009). Achterberg et al. (2003)
Sociology	Multi Cognitive Behavioural	Civic engagement	civic engagement is concerned with voluntarily involving oneself in organizations to perform volunteer work; participating in community or public affairs	Jennings & Stroker (2004); Achterberg et al. (2003); Hogan, Andrews, Andrews and Williams (2008)
Political Science	Multi	Political Engagement (Voting/ Campaigning)	an iterative process focused on generating political behavior such as voting; mind-set change (cognitive), mechanism for change (emotional), and possible staff change (behavioral).	Resnick, 2001; Kane, 2008
Organizational	Multi	Cognitive Behavioural Employee Engagement	additional effort employees are willing to exhibit such as extra time or brainpower/	Frank, Richard, and Taylor (2004); Luthans and Peterson (2002)

Field of Knowledge	Dimension(s)	Context/ Focus	Meaning / Outcomes	Study
			energy; be the meaningful connections employees make with others and the degree of awareness an employee has for his/her mission and role in the work place.	
Computer Science	Cognitive Behavioural			
	Multi	systems engagement/ computer-mediated interaction	moving beyond usability to more involved; beyond simply system functionality and action to system engagement; quality of user experience characterized by attributes of challenge, positive affect, endurability, aesthetic and sensory appeal, attention, feedback, variety/novelty, interactivity, and perceived user control	Hassenzahl & Tractinsky (2006); Jacques, Preece, & Carey, 1995; Laurel, 1993; O'Brien and Toms (2008)
Advertising	Cognitive	interactive narratives and video games	"patina of cognitive activity."	Douglas and Hargadon (2001)
	Behavioural	Engagement with the ad	the combination of audience synchrony (attention, cognition) plus intensity (emotional impact, affect); development of an emotional connection between consumers and brands	Marci (2006); Rappaport (2007)
Literacy	Cognitive Behavioural		"the amount of 'feeling' going on when an advertisement is being processed"	Heath (2007)
	Multi	narrative engagement	To be "immersed in the story" or "lost in a book" to influence beliefs; attitudes; behavioral intentions; 'Presence' leading to accepting the story's credence; therefore, negative responses	De Graaf, Hoeken, Sanders, & Beentjes, 2009; Appel & Richter, 2007; Strange & Leung, 1999; Dieckman, McDonald, & Gardner, 2000; Lee & Leets, 2002; Massi-

<i>Field of Knowledge</i>	<i>Dimension(s)</i>	<i>Context/ Focus</i>	<i>Meaning / Outcomes</i>	<i>Study</i>
			and counter thoughts/ ideas about the study are reduced.	Lindsey & Ah Yu, 2005; Slater, Rouner, & Long, 2006; Green & Brock, 2000; Slater & Rouner, 2002
Marketing	Cognitive Behavioural Multi	Consumer Engagement both on & off line	involved, occupied, fully-absorbed, engrossed towards something that generates a level of attraction or repulsion for the engagement object (i.e., brand); loyalty; absorption, concentration on a brand, dedication, sense of belonging to a brand; vigor, level of energy and mental resilience in interacting with the brand (cognitive and affective); and interaction, two-way communication between a consumer and brand; direct, physical contact with the brand	Higgins and Scholer (2009); Bowden (2009); Patterson et al. (2006); Hollebeek (2011)
	Cognitive		pattern of action or withdrawal with respect to a target object (i.e., brand)"	Pham and Avnet (2009)
	Behavioural		consumer behaviors manifested toward a brand; participate in organizational offerings and activities	Van Doorn et al. (2010); Vivek, Beatty, and Morgan (2011)

Figure 1: The Engagement Construct– As studied in various academic disciplines

3.2.3 Developing Online consumer engagement as a Construct

Considering engagement within an online consumer context, Mollen and Wilson (2010) attempted to reconcile the engagement construct and propose a working definition that describes the online consumer experience. Using the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model to better understand the consumer online experience, Mollen and Wilson situate engagement in the "internal state" portion of the model. The researchers describe the internal state portion of the model as "a dynamic, tiered perceptual spectrum". They believe consumers respond to a company's website or other computer-

mediated entity through interaction and then undergo an experiential construct of telepresence (considered presence in this study), which is defined as cognitive immersion in the medium and website, before consumers feel engaged. Given that Mollen and Wilson place engagement after interaction with the website and telepresence and before attitudes and behavior, the researchers define online engagement as follows:

Online engagement is a cognitive and affective commitment to an active relationship with the brand as personified by the website or other computer-mediated entities designed to communicate brand value. It is characterized by the dimensions of dynamic and sustained cognitive processing and the satisfying instrumental value (utility and relevance) and experiential value (emotional congruence with the narrative schema encountered in computer-mediated entities)

To further explain the experiential value portion of the online engagement definition proposed, Mollen and Wilson (2010) state that brands strive to “generate a dynamic and pleasurable state in consumers” which comes from “cognitive access to a wide range of scripts and schemas both inherent in the brand communication and derived from the consumers’ own cognitive and affective framework” (Douglas & Hargadon, 2001). Furthermore, Mollen and Wilson argue that within this state tension exists between the internal and external scripts and schemas, which “generates cognitive and affective dissonance and in its drive to find utility and emotional congruence with the brand, disrupts the immersive, mechanical experience” and encourages engagement.

Mollen and Wilson (2010) ascertain that engagement is a distinct construct given its active relationship with a brand and the fact that it focuses on satisfying both instrumental (cognitive) and experiential (affective). They go on to state that engagement should be considered different from other constructs, specifically involvement, which is the same position adopted for this dissertation.

Mollen and Wilson (2010) point out that engagement goes beyond involvement. Drawing upon Thomson, MacInnis & Park’s (2005) definition of involvement as “a state of mental readiness that typically influences the allocation of cognitive resources to consume an object, decision, or action”; Mollen and Wilson state that engagement trumps involvement. They state that engagement trumps involvement because an engaged consumer is actively committing to the brand both cognitively and affectively via its website, whereas an involved consumer is mentally ready to consume the information cognitively but is not necessarily actively making the commitment. Based on this, engagement is more dynamic whereas involvement is more passive (Mollen & Wilson). Additionally, Mollen and Wilson state that although sometimes involvement can contain affective

components (Zaichkowsky, 1985), most of the time the construct is considered purely cognitive (Thomson et al., 2005). However, engagement, from Mollen and Wilson's perspective, as well as in this study, is defined both cognitively and affectively. Lastly, for this study, engagement includes the dimension of participation, which is not included in definitions of involvement.

Furthermore, Mollen and Wilson (2010) recognize that there is limited research on online consumer engagement; specifically, research is lacking showing support of a relationship between engagement and optimal consumer behaviors (e.g., word of mouth, purchase intent). However, they state that a relationship is "both plausible and consistent with the available data" (Mollen & Wilson, p. 924). They urge researchers to investigate the relationship thus further validating the need for this study.

Lastly, Burns (2010) considered engagement to be an online behavior similar to the industry's definition of engagement. In one study, Burns measured engagement behaviors (e.g., read wall postings by brand, read fan comments, posted comments on the brand's wall, and played games or other activities) by comparing Facebook users who had "fanned" brands and those who had not. Burns found users who "fanned" a brand and exhibited more engagement behaviors scored significantly higher on inner self-expression and self-disclosure indices and were more willing to tell a friend about the brand's profile, continue the Facebook relationship with the brand, and friend the brand again. Based on this, Burns concluded that the more a consumer is engaged on Facebook with a brand, the more positive outcomes occur for a brand.

Although no agreed upon definition of engagement exists, several consistent themes seem to emerge from the literature to describe the construct. First, engagement is a complex cognitive process that requires focus, sustained attention, absorption, and thoughtfulness (Douglas & Hargadon, 2001; Guthrie et al., 2004; Herrington, Oliver, & Reeves, 2003; Jones, 1998; Kearsley & Schneiderman, 1998; Marci, 2006; Mathwick & Ridgdon, 2004; Mollen & Wilson, 2010; O'Brien & Toms, 2008, 2010; O'Brien, 2010; Shih, 1998). Second, engagement encompasses an affective component that involves connection and bonding with the brand (Heath, 2007; Marci; O'Brien & Toms, 2008, 2010; O'Brien, 2010; Rappaport, 2007; Wang 2006), emotional congruence (Douglas & Hargadon, 2000, 2001; Mollen & Wilson), and pleasure and satisfaction (Fiore, Ji Hyun, & Hyun-Hwa, 2005; Mathwick & Ridgdon). Lastly, engagement is participating, interacting, and co-creating experiences (Burns, 2010; Evans & McKee, 2010; Harden & Heyman, 2009; Lusch & Vargo, 2010; Wang, 2011; Solis, 2010). Figure-2 tries to put light on the studies done to build online consumer engagement as a construct influencing consumer behaviour.

Online Customer Engagement vis-à-vis Consumer Behaviour				
Study	Cognitive	Affective	Definition/Elaboration	Remarks/Comments
Mollen and Wilson (2010)	Yes	Yes	It is a cognitive and affective commitment to an active relationship with the brand as personified by the website or other computer-mediated entities designed to communicate brand value.	characterized by the dimensions of dynamic and sustained cognitive processing and the satisfying instrumental value (utility and relevance) and experiential value (emotional congruence with the narrative schema encountered in computer-mediated entities)
Burns (2010)	Yes	Yes	The more a consumer is engaged on Facebook with a brand, the more positive outcomes occur for a brand.	He measured engagement behaviors (e.g., read wall postings by brand, read fan comments, posted comments on the brand's wall, and played games or other activities) by comparing Facebook users who had "fanned" brands and those who had not.
Douglas & Hargadon, 2001; Guthrie et al., 2004; Herrington, Oliver, & Reeves, 2003; Jones, 1998; Kearsley & Schneidman, 1998; Marci, 2006; Mathwick & Ridgdon, 2004; Mollen & Wilson, 2010; O'Brien & Toms, 2008, 2010; O'Brien, 2010; Shih, 1998	Yes	No	Engagement is a complex cognitive process that requires focus, sustained attention, absorption, and thoughtfulness	Douglas & Hargadon used schema theory to articulate the two varieties of aesthetic pleasures that users of interactive works enjoy: immersion and engagement
Heath, 2007; Marci; O'Brien & Toms, 2008, 2010; O'Brien, 2010; Rappaport, 2007; Wang 2006	No	Yes	Engagement encompasses an affective component that involves connection and bonding with the brand	Heath, 2007 presented evidence to show the two constructs (attention & engagement) operate independently of one another that the advertisements are likely to generate.
Mollen & Wilson; Douglas & Hargadon, 2001	No	Yes	Engagement encompasses an affective component that involves emotional congruence	Per Mollen & Wilson, The resultant tension between internal and external scripts and schemas generates a pleasurable cognitive and affective dissonance, which in its drive to find utility and emotional congruence with the "whole" of the educational message or narrative or brand, disrupts the immersive, mechanical, experience.
Fiore, Jihyun, & Hyun-Hwa, 2005; Mathwick & Rigdon, 2004	No	Yes	Engagement encompasses an affective component that involves connection and bonding with the brand along with emotional congruence, pleasure and satisfaction	Fiore, Jihyun, & Hyun-Hwa, 2005 studied empirically how image interactivity technology (IIT), telepresence, and value variables affect consumer responses toward an online retailer
Burns, 2010; Evans & McKee, 2010; Harden & Heyman, 2009; Lusch & Vargo, 2010; Wang, 2011; Solis, 2010)	Yes	Yes	engagement is participating, interacting, and co-creating experiences	Burns found users who "fanned" a brand and exhibited more engagement behaviors scored significantly higher on inner self-expression and self-disclosure indices and were more willing to tell a friend about the brand's profile, continue the Facebook relationship with the brand, and friend the brand again

Figure 2: Online Consumer Engagement as a construct affecting Consumer Behaviour

Deriving from the persistent themes that have emerged, the definitions of engagement provided by both industry practitioners and academics, and the frameworks proposed by academics, the following definition of online

consumer engagement reconciles the practitioner and scholarly views of the construct and puts forth that engagement is a multidimensional construct that encompasses cognition, affection, and behavior. It is different than previous definitions presented in the marketing literature of engagement as it includes cognitive and affective presence and participation. The definition is meant to serve as a benchmark to define online consumer engagement:

Online consumer engagement is the state of being present in a mediated branded space where the consumer is immersed in the brand's offerings meant to deliver purpose and value. Cognitive engagement requires intense levels of focus and concentration in seeking, interpreting, analyzing, and summarizing information to a point where consumers may lose themselves in the process and may lose a sense of time and space. Additionally, brand learning (e.g., mission, goals, product offerings, philanthropic efforts, and promotions) occurs while negative responses toward the brand are minimized. Furthermore, online consumer engagement requires affective feelings, which involves emotional bonding and connection with the brand, products, and other users that leads to overall satisfaction. Lastly, consumers must invest themselves within the online vehicle by participating through sharing, conversing, and co-creating with the brand and/or other users.

In sum, online consumer engagement could be described as the three H's – head, heart, and hands (K. Hallahan, 2011). The “head” represents the cognitive aspect of engagement that is thoughtful and process oriented. The “heart” represents the affective aspect of engagement that is and emotionally driven. And, the “hands” represent the participative aspect of online consumer engagement that is active and transactional. Figure -3 showcases the three H's of engagement.

Online Consumer Engagement		
Head	Heart	Hands
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of “being there” • Loss of time & space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transported & immersed • Affective feeling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active & sustained • Sharing & interacting with information provided by the brand or other users
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intense level of focus & concentration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional bonding & connection with a brand or product 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posting comments, links & photos
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking, Interpreting, analysing and summering information • Brand & product learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing games and participating in contests

Figure 2: The Three H's of Online Consumer Engagement – Head, Heart, and Hands

4. CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher had classified contribution of the study into two types i.e. theoretical contribution and industry contribution

4.1. Theoretical Contributions

This exploratory study seeks to provide a definition of online consumer engagement that will serve as a benchmark definition. This study contributes to the literature in several ways. First, the operational definition of engagement is enhanced from previous scholarly attempts (Mollen & Wilson, 2010; O'Brien & Toms, 2008) through the inclusion of "presence" within the cognitive and affective dimensions and the inclusion of the participative dimension. Mollen and Wilson and O'Brien and Toms (2008) recognize the importance of including cognitive and affective components in their definitions of engagement but have not considered "presence" as part of these dimensions. Additionally, they have not included the participative dimension in their definition, which is considered a key component of engagement in the industry literature (Evans & McKee, 2010; Jaffe, 2005; McConnell & Huba, 2007; Solis, 2010). By including presence within the cognitive and affective dimensions and the participative dimension in the present definition of engagement, the first steps in bridging academic and industry perspectives is taken given that other academic disciplines have included presence as part of their definition of engagement and industry definitions of the term include participation.

4.2. Industry Contributions

In addition to the theoretical contributions, the study also contributes to the industry's understanding of online consumer engagement in several ways. First, the industry has defined engagement mainly from a behavioral standpoint through the notion of participation (Evans & McKee, 2010; Jaffe, 2005; McConnell & Huba, 2007; Solis, 2010) with a few definitions encompassing elements of affect, including the frequently cited Advertising Research Foundation definition of engagement as "turning on a prospect to a brand idea" (Meskauskas, 2006, p. 1). The definition of online consumer engagement put forth in this study includes participation and the sometimes recognized affect dimension identified in the industry literature, but it also includes cognition in its definition. By including cognition in the definition, practitioners can view engagement as a richer marketing metric. This in turn can lead to more engagement measures and a better understanding of return on investment within social media and specifically social networking efforts.

5. CONCLUSION

Given that many consumers utilize social media, especially the social networking site Facebook, many companies have followed suit in an attempt to engage with their customers in a new mediated space. Since marketers and academics alike have suggested very different ideas of what engaging consumers online in the social media environment really entails, this study was conducted to develop the online consumer engagement concept.

Several major theoretical implications emerge from this study. First, a proposed benchmark definition of online consumer engagement is put forth that is enhanced from previous attempts to include cognitive/affective presence, and participative dimensions:

Online consumer engagement is the state of being present in a mediated branded space where the consumer is immersed in the brand's offerings meant to deliver purpose and value. Cognitive engagement requires intense levels of focus and concentration in seeking, interpreting, analyzing, and summarizing information to a point where consumers may lose themselves in the process and may lose a sense of time and space. Additionally, brand learning (e.g., mission, goals, product offerings, philanthropic efforts, and promotions) occurs while negative responses toward the brand are minimized. Furthermore, online consumer engagement requires affective feelings, which involves emotional bonding and connection with the brand, products, and other users that leads to overall satisfaction. Lastly, consumers must invest themselves within the online vehicle by participating through sharing, conversing, and co-creating with the brand and/or other users.

This new definition attempts to synthesize the previous definitions of online consumer engagement in the marketing literature as well as other disciplines (e.g., education, psychology, and sociology). The definition draws upon the narrative engagement literature by including the notion of presence. Presence, which is defined as the state of "being there," enhances the definition of online consumer engagement because it considers how deeply consumers can be connected to a company's social networking page. This transportation can reduce negative thoughts and feelings, which suggests that consumers who are engaged on a company's SN page are less likely to challenge the company's message. Until this study, presence had yet to be considered a part of online consumer engagement in the marketing literature. Even though the results of this study were mixed regarding presence, this study has presented new ideas and has stimulated new opportunities for interdisciplinary research.

Additionally, this new definition of online consumer engagement builds a bridge between the academic literature and the industry literature by

including the participative dimension. The hope is that the gap between the two different definitions is eliminated so the two groups can work together to explore and understand this complex concept.

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