



**Escola Superior
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Politécnico de Coimbra



**Escola Superior
de Tecnologia
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Politécnico de Coimbra

Customer Engagement in Social Media Brand Community .A Study of Fast-Food Facebook Brand Pages in Syria

Departamento de Comunicação e Ciências Empresariais [ESEC]

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2021, Wajdy Omran



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I dedicate this work to:

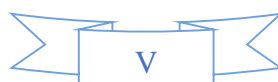
My country Syria, I am sure it will come back stronger and more united than before

My parents who dedicate their lives to give me a chance to get educated,

To my professors and colleagues in the master program

For the support and the knowledge, they gave me

Wajdy Omran



Customer Engagement in Social Media Brand Community

Abstract

The term “consumer engagement” has grown in importance in recent years to describe consumers’ interactive experiences with brands. The popularity of that term was boosted by the rapid penetration of social networking sites which facilitated the engagement of consumers through online brand communities. Moreover, Facebook brand pages are widely popular among young consumers due to its rapid adoption in marketing on social media networks.

In light of the Syrian conflict, and after the return of stability and safety to most of the Syrian regions, local Fast food Syrian chains found an opportunity to recover and powerfully expand in the Syrian market, especially after the closure of global fast-food chains due to international sanctions. On the other hand, Social media marketing practices are considered to be in the infancy stage in Syria, with many companies starting to recognize the power of social media in communication with customers. The objective of this thesis was to investigate the antecedents of young customers engagement between ages 18-29 years in Fast food Facebook brand pages in Syria. The study examined two structures (brand trust and brand love) as antecedents related to consumers’ relationships with Local Fast-food brands and brand loyalty as an outcome of customer engagement.

In the quantitative phase, an online survey was used to collect data for the current study, where was posted on Facebook brand pages of the fast-food chains in Syria. The data collection was conducted by drawing a sample from young consumers whose ages are between 18 and 29, and who are active members of official fast-food brand pages on Facebook in Syria, Also Structure Equation Model (SEM) was conducted to study these relations between variables. The most significant findings of this study reveal that brand trust and brand love factors can influence the level of customer brand engagement, which in turn will affect loyalty. Moreover, this study offers useful managerial insights for Fast food brand managers to better assess the motives and outcome of customer brand engagement with these Facebook brand pages, to establish better emotional and effective relations with them, therefore the ability to stand in the competitive business environment.

Keywords: Customer engagement, Brand Trust, Brand loyalty, Brand love, Fast food

Executive Summary

O termo “envolvimento do consumidor” tem crescido em importância nos últimos anos para descrever as experiências interativas dos consumidores com as marcas. A popularidade deste termo foi alavancada pela rápida penetração de websites de redes sociais que facilitou o envolvimento dos consumidores através de comunidades online dedicadas a marcas. Além disso, páginas de Facebook comerciais são largamente populares entre os consumidores devido à sua rápida adoção no Marketing em redes sociais.

Tem em conta o conflito Sírio, e depois do retorno da estabilidade e segurança à maior parte das regiões Sírias, cadeias de fast food locais encontraram uma oportunidade para recuperar e expandir os seus negócios no mercado sírio, especialmente após o fecho de estabelecimentos de fast food globais devido a sanções internacionais. Por outro lado, práticas de Marketing em redes sociais encontram-se ainda numa fase embrionária na Síria, com várias empresas a começar a reconhecer o poder das redes sociais na comunicação com os consumidores. O objetivo desta tese passa por investigar os antecedentes do envolvimento dos consumidores com idade entre 18-29 anos em páginas de Facebook comerciais na Síria. Este estudo examina duas estruturas (confiança na marca e amor à marca) como antecedentes relacionados aos relacionamentos dos consumidores com cadeias de fast food locais e a lealdade para com a marca como resultado do envolvimento dos consumidores.

Na fase quantitativa, um questionário online foi utilizado para recolher dados para o presente estudo, tendo sido publicado em páginas de comerciais de cadeias de fast food sírias. A coleção de dados foi conduzida tendo em conta uma amostra de jovens consumidores, com idades entre os 18 e os 29 anos que fossem membros ativos de páginas comerciais oficiais de cadeias de fast food sírias. Além disso, foi utilizado um Modelo de Equações Estruturais (SEM) para estudar as relações entre as variáveis. As descobertas mais significantes deste estudo sugerem que a confiança e o amor às marcas influenciam o envolvimento com as mesmas, o que por sua vez influencia o nível de lealdade. Em acréscimo, este estudo oferece intuições de gestão úteis para gestores de cadeias de fast food locais para melhor determinar os motivos e resultados do envolvimento dos consumidores com a marca através das páginas

comerciais do Facebook, para estabelecer melhores conexões emocionais e relações mais eficazes com os mesmo, reforçando assim a sua capacidade de prosperar no ambiente empresarial competitivo.

Palavras-chave: Envolvimento do consumidor, Confiança na Marca, lealdade à marca, amor à marca, fast food

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Explanation
AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structures
BL	Brand Loyalty
BT	Brand Trust
BV	Brand Love
CE	Customer Engagement
SNS	Social Network Sites
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
WOM	Word of Mouth

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction of The Thesis

1.1 Introduction

This research examines the extent to which the engagement of young Syrian consumers whose aged between 18-29 years on social media-brand communities particularly (Facebook brand pages) strengthens their relationships with local Fast food brands. For doing that, it explores the drivers of their engagement in social media brand communities through identifying the factors that enhance their engagement in these communities, as well as the impact of this engagement on the development of brand loyalty as an outcome. Besides, this thesis delivers some strategies for Fast Food chains in Syria to follow when implementing social media for marketing purposes.

Since 2011 Syrian conflict broke out and it was described as the most destructive and intractable conflict in recent decades, as it radically changed the Syrian economy which caused a deterioration in growth rates, besides collapse the of most productive sectors such as foreign trade, tourism, and shipping services, due to sanctions which were imposed by the international community on the pillars of the Syrian state, among economic activities have been affected, fast food industry (Naser, 2016), this led to withdrawing and cancellation the licenses of global fast-food restaurants.

With the beginning of 2019, that stability and safety have returned to most of the Syrian governorates, local fast-food restaurants have found a favorable opportunity to revitalization and recovering, and they began to expand in the Syrian market gradually, and expected that sector will be growing at an annual rate 10 – 20 %, according to a recent report about fast food in Syria published by Syrian Investment Agency ([SIA], 2018). With fierce competition in the fast-food industry, where consumer switching costs are relatively low(Sahagun & Vasquez, 2014). Besides, Finance Online Review for business (2015) reported that” just less than 13% of consumers are loyal to their preferred fast-food restaurants”. Therefore, to maintain and attract new customers, the application of effective marketing and customer relationship management programs is decisive for the success of fast-food businesses (Hidayat et al., 2016). This requires pursuing for innovative means for reaching and interacting with their target market. The truth that the majority of social media users are young people and the fact that the fast-food chains primarily target that age group has made the social networking sites

such as Facebook an appropriate place for marketing for these chains (Gaber, 2014). On the other hand, consumers are also becoming more efficient as they can compare products and prices, as they are now more active in giving their opinions through their profiles, so local fast-food chains marketers continue to make more efforts to create effective marketing strategies to gain loyal customers which ultimately leads to staying in the competitive business world and gaining more market share (Sahagun & Vasquez, 2014).

This chapter aims to present the research background, and the researcher's aims and importance for carrying out this study. This chapter is structured into five main sections. Section 1.1 provides an introduction of the research. Then, section 1.2 presents the research background, following section 1.3 demonstrates to a research problem, next section 1.4 highlight the research objectives, finally, section 1.5 outlines the research context, where it provides an overview of Syria and the fast-food industry in it, which is the main focus of this study, also why the researcher chose Facebook Fast food pages as an example for social media brand community.

1.2 Research Background

In the last few years, there has been a constant evolution in social media penetration worldwide(Moon et al., 2015). Social networking sites (SNS) are principally changing the old-style ways people communicate and socialize (Reinartz, 2018). Figures display that the continuous expansion in social media usage shows no signs of stopping, such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn & Instagram have fascinated hundreds of millions of users (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). See **Table 1** for the global social media statistics summary in 2020 (Clement, 2020).

Table 1: Global social media statistics numbers in 2020

Social Network	Number of Monthly Active Users
Facebook	2.45 billion
YouTube	2 billion
Instagram	1 billion
Twitter	329.5 million

Source: Reprinted from official websites of these companies. *Access data (April 26):2020*

The birth of social media has inspired consumers and adjusted the dynamics of traditional marketing by supplying customers with platforms efficient of reaching large

audiences and empowering active engagement between organizations and their customers through online two-way communication (Sun & Bunchapattanasakda, 2019). The interactive nature of social media permitted consumers to convey their own consumption experiences into their profiles on several social networks (V. Kumar & Reinartz, 2018). Due to technological developments, more marketers are shifting their marketing and advertising budgets from traditional advertising media to these new media (K. Sharma & Kumar, 2018).

With its interactive and viral nature, social media was able to transform the traditional one-way marketing communication into two-way communication between companies and consumers (Reinartz, 2018), as it encourages active participation and engagement and helps in brand community building (Gökerik et al, 2018). This has driven to the creation of a new communication paradigm that improved the power of marketing associated conversations between consumers and organizations regardless of any time or location boundaries (Sharma & Kumar, 2018; Tuten & Solomon, 2015). These conversations bring big opportunities for Fast Food chains to generate favorable images of their brands (De Vries et al., 2012). In brief, social media is becoming prevalent as a marketing platform to the extent that Tuten and Solomon (2015) considered it a fifth P together with the conventional 4Ps of the marketing mix.

Specifically, Facebook is acquiring the attention of marketers, subsequently, it is the most popular social networking site worldwide with 1.69 billion monthly active users (Clement J. , 2020). General Motor's spend \$30 million annual investment on simply producing content for their online community on Facebook (Islam & Rahman, 2016). Brand pages (fan pages) on Facebook are considered the most popular form of social media marketing (Chiu et al., 2015), where more than 50 million organizations have pages on this social network (Forbes, 2015). These pages are online communities that contain the fans of a particular brand in one platform, in which consumers can interact with each other and with the company (Khobzi & Teimourpour, 2015). When consumers click on the 'like' button of the brand page, they can follow the brand and become a part of its Facebook community. After becoming a member of this online community (brand page), consumers can view content that is published by the managers of the page and interact with both consumers and the brand (Carlson, 2018; Carlson et al., 2017). As an outcome of the wide using of these online brand

communities for marketing purposes, there has been a rising interest of marketers to boost consumer engagement in these new online communities due to its role in enhancing the customer-brand relations (Baldus et al.,2015; Hollebeek et al.,2016).

1.3 Research Objectives

The research questions are replied to by attaining certain research objectives that cover the major steps of the phenomena investigation. The objectives of the current study are presented as follows:

- 1) To explore that (brand trust and brand love) as antecedents of consumers to engage in social media brand communities, specifically in the fast-food brand pages on Facebook.
- 2) To determine the effect of engagement on brand pages on Facebook on the development of brand loyalty as an outcome of these brand communities.
- 3) Provides some recommendations to Syrian fast-food restaurant managers for improved and better decision-making related to the usage of social media marketing tools and motivate customers to better engage with brands.

1.4 Research Context

1.4.1 The Context of Syria

Syria is one of the Mediterranean Arab countries of the Middle East. This country lies in the Asia continent with an area that exceeds 183.630 Km². It is bordered by Turkey to the north, Jordan to the east, and Lebanon and Israel from the west, and the Mediterranean Sea to the west(Ziad, 2012). As shown in **Figure 1: Map of Syria**

Figure 1: Map of Syria



Note: Syria Map. Reprinted from Google Images, 2019.

According to Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS, 2020), Syria has a population of over 17,769,487 million. Administratively, Syria is divided into 14 governorates which contain both urban centers and rural villages. The biggest two cities in Syria are Damascus (the political capital) and Aleppo (the economical capital)(Crilley, 2017). This country is characterized by a young population (United Nations Children’s Fund [UNICEF], 2018), also according to Central Bureau of Statistics in Syria (CBS, 2019) youth are citizens whose ages range between 18 and 29 years, this age group is considered the biggest age group with more than 11 million Syrians, which represents 57.6% of the entire population.

During the modern history of Syria, several economic systems and ideologies have been applied, for instance, in the 60s and 70s, the Syrian economy was highly centralized according to the principles of socialism (Ianchovichina & Ivanic, 2016). Since 2007, the economy was gradually directed towards the free market system, as well as expanding the role of the private sector and encouraging economic, social, and political participation. This has led to an improvement in the economic conditions after a long period of stagnation (Burns, 2016). This improvement was driven by several reforms that intended to diversify the Syrian economy to become more dependent on industry, agriculture, services, and construction (Ferdinand, 2016).

The current crisis has shifted the center of state attention from the economy to military and political operations interior (Yazgan et al., 2015). The economy fell back and turned into a loser due to the imbalance in economic relations and the slowdown in growth (Khayati, 2019). Moreover, since the spring of 2012, the new package of economic sanctions have been imposed by four international parties: the United States of America, the European Union, the Arab Countries, and Turkey such as: stopping all American exports to Syria and stopping all private investments and American activities in Syria, and preventing Syrian Airlines from landing at airports in the United States of America and all of these procedures led to that foreign companies left the Syrian market (Orakhelashvili, 2015).

After Syria’s uprising, Syria witnessed huge growth on the internet and the penetration of the mobile phone in recent years (KEMP, 2020). According to the ministry of communications and information technology (Department of Statistical Studies,2020),

there are 7.6 Internet users in March 2020, with an annual growth rate of 7.99%. Also, there were 11.9 million mobile subscribers with a 43.5% penetration rate (15.89 % is the proportion of mobile internet users of total mobile subscriptions).

Along with other countries, Syria faced a dramatic increase in social media penetration. That the total number of active social media users 6 million, which represents 35 % compared to the total population. The researcher conducted this study in Syria, where Facebook played an important role in the history of Syrians in the call for revolution in 2011 (Fuchs, 2014). That motivated some authors to call it the ‘revolution of Facebook’ (Jaber, 2012). According to *Statcounter.com* (Anonymous, 2020), there are 9.2 million Facebook users, 70 % of Facebook users in Syria access it on daily basis, with 26% staying active on this website between two and six hours daily.

1.4.2 The Fast-Food Industry in Syria

The fast-food sector is one of the economic sectors that grown in the past twenty years in Syria. It remains one of the best performing categories in consumer food-service (Musaiger & Kalam, 2016).

Since the Syrian crisis broke out in 2011, Syria suffered from unstable security, political and economic conditions (Shehabat, 2016). This had a dramatic negative effect on all sectors of the economy, particularly the industrial sectors and tourism (Jamal, 2015). Specifically, the reluctance of foreign investors to invest in Syria has directed to economic contraction. Among the companies that left or closed are global fast-food restaurants, also withdraw licenses from these restaurants as a result of economic sanctions, such as, (KFC and Burger King etc.). This put local fast-food restaurants in front of a serious challenge in terms of covering the Syrian market Fast food, besides, providing services with the best quality, and dominance in the Syrian market.

Moreover, the fast-food meals have occupied the attention of a lot of young Syrians for the ease of its preparation and the simplicity of its purchasing, on the other hand, the demand for this industry is inelastic even though the economy deteriorated (Yasser, 2016). These chains generated various social transformations to behavioral patterns of young Syrian, for instance, they deliver a joyful atmosphere that charms the young generation to use it as a meeting place for family and friends. Also, by bringing the

idea of home delivery to the Syrian market, these chains were able to offer convenience to their customers and have changed their eating habits which traditionally depended on cooked food at home (Khaled, 2018). The long-term trends in the fast-food market look positive and it is expected that this sector will be increasing at an annual average of 10-20% over the upcoming years based on a report published by the Syrian Investment Agency (2016).

The main target market of fast-food chains is the young and teenage consumers who have a strong desire to be a part of the markets and modern life (Akag, 2017; Fraser et al.,2014).

This needs the pursuit of innovative methods for interacting and reaching their target market. The fact that mainly social media users are young people and the fact that fast-food chains primarily target that age group have made the social. networking sites such as Facebook a suitable tool for marketing for this industry (Saad & Badran, 2017). This will be discussed in the following section.

1.4.3 Choice of the Fast-food Industry

The researcher utilized the official Facebook brand pages of the local fast-food chains in Syria as a context for carrying his study. Several reasons led the researcher when choosing the fast-food industry. Firstly, the reason is that the fast-food industry is considered one of the many of industries in Syria that utilize Facebook for marketing goals on a wide scale. See Appendix A. for a screenshot of one of the fast-food pages on Facebook. These chains discovered that social media, such as Facebook, with its millions of daily users, can be a powerful medium for targeting young consumers who have been fully resistant to advertising in traditional mass media, e.g. (television, radio, and print,etc.). Consequently, most fast-food restaurants in Syria built brand pages on Facebook to communicate with their current and prospective customers. These companies publish a diversity of branded content on their pages where members of these pages can communicate with that content as well as with each other. The content can combine information about meals and sandwiches. Also, the managers of these pages can reply to any questions that are posted by the customers (Brian, 2017). These pages have millions of customers that follow it after, they have converted members of these online communities. This addresses the brand pages of the fast-food industry

one of the most proper online environments for examining consumer engagement, which is the main goal of this research. See **Table 2** that demonstrates the number of fans of some fast food brand pages on Facebook in Syria and Another reason for the choice of the fast-food industry as a context for this study is the fierce competition that fast-food chains face. With the enormous number of Fast Food chains that are expanding in the Syrian market, these chains have many problems with differentiating themselves and building their brand images (Ameen, 2018). An ultimate reason for that choice is the absence of academic researches that inspects the influence of social media marketing that is broadly practiced by fast-food chains on Syrian consumers. Thus, through examining the antecedents and outcome of consumer engagement on Facebook brand pages, this thesis will be beneficial to many Fast food restaurants to fully understand the possibilities of using social media in marketing. To conclude, Syria, with its prospective big market and young population, represents a big opportunity for fast food chains to increase by adopting innovative methods of marketing like social media marketing.

Table 2 : Some Syrian Fast food brand pages on Facebook and their number of fans

Fast food brand page on Facebook	Number of Fans
Quikly Food	6,569,410
Food Sobki	5,37,856
Turtles	3,115, 843
Prince Fast Food	1,599,017
Big Bite	6,598,000
Chicken Abu Ali Restaurant	764,235

Source: official fast-food brand pages. Access Date: April (2020)

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Social media is one of the technological developments that were able to change the modes of communication between people and organizations (Keegan & Rowley, 2017). Given the novelty of social media. This chapter is organized into three sections as follows: firstly, section 2.2 provides an overview of the rise of social media in Syria. Following section 2.3 where it discusses the role of social media in marketing. Then, section 2.4 introduces an overview of the social networking site, Facebook by outlining its rapid penetration in the past few years. Next, section 2.4.1 presents the using Facebook brand pages in marketing.

2.2 Consumer Engagement in social media brand communities

2.2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher reviews the existing scholarly work around the concept of consumer engagement. Firstly, section 3.2 provides an overview of the concept of engagement. Then section 3.3 discusses customer engagement in the context of social media.

2.2.2 The concept of Customer Engagement

Initially, the term 'engagement' was broadly used through different academic disciplines containing sociology 'civic engagement' (Ekman & Amnå, 2012), psychology 'social engagement' (Barak et al., 2016), and management 'employee engagement' (Kumar and Pansari 2014).

The concept of customer engagement has become a very important topic in the marketing literature, and it is a sub-concept under the umbrella term "engagement" (Hollebeek et al., 2019; Pansari, 2016; Pansari & Kumar, 2017; Viswanathan Kumar & Pansari, 2016). In the study of consumer-brand relations, consumer engagement is considered a hot topic (Gambetti et al., 2017; Leckie et al., 2018). Given the importance of this topic, the Journal of Service Research called for a better academic understanding of this new concept by issuing a special title "Customer engagement". In addition to that, Kotler & Armstrong (2016) added a special section in the sixteenth edition, for customer engagement in their book "Marketing Principles" that they defined customer engagement marketing as "*making the brand a meaningful part of*

consumers' conversations and lives by fostering direct and continuous customer involvement in shaping brand conversations, experiences and community” (Kotler & Armstrong, 2016, p. 42).

The interest of researchers to investigate consumer engagement has grown after it was associated with some important marketing concepts (Bijmolt et al., 2017). For instance, high stages of consumer engagement have been connected with customer loyalty (Leckie et al., 2018), brand love (Wallace et al., 2014) customer feedback, and referrals (Nambisan & Baron, 2017) satisfaction (Challagalla et al., 2017) and the willingness of consumers to produce positive word of mouth (Oh et al., 2017). Moreover, the significance of studying consumer engagement has risen because of the inadequacy of other constructs in forecasting consumer behavior. For example, consumer engagement is a diverse conception than more created concepts that are often applied to describe consumer-brand relationships, containing brand commitment, brand involvement, and brand relationship quality (L. Hollebeek, 2018).

Regarding to this recent academic interest, it is assumed that consumer engagement research will supply an important improvement in relationship marketing and branding (Carlson, 2018; De Vries & Carlson, 2016; He & Negahban, 2017; Hollebeek et al., 2017). Despite its recent history in the marketing literature, the literature provides several definitions for the term ‘engagement’ in the marketing field. See

Table 3

Table 3: Various definitions of consumer engagement in the marketing literature

Authors	Definition
Kumar et al. (2010)	The engagement of customers involves the active experiences they have with companies as well as with other customers.
Hollebeek (2011)	Consumers are engaged when they are emotionally, cognitively, and behaviorally involved with brands.
Vivek et al. (2012)	Customer engagement refers to the degree of customers’ participation and connection with different organizational offerings.
So, King, & Sparks (2014)	Customer engagement is a customer’s connection to a brand as reflected in cognitive, affective, and behavioral actions outside of the Purchase situation.

Dwivedi (2015)	Consumers' level of vigor, dedication, and absorption towards brands.
Vivek et al (2012)	The intensity of an individual's participation in and connection with a firm's offerings and/or activities sponsored by the firm
Harrigan et al (2017)	Customer engagement is the result of customers' involvement with brands, which is expected to enhance their loyalty towards these brands.
Hollebeek et al (2019)	"A customer's motivationally driven, volitional investment of resources (including cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and social knowledge/skills) and operand resources (e.g. equipment) into brand interactions" (p. 166)

Source : (Liu et al., 2018)

It is obvious that most of these definitions emphasize the active role of consumers in their relationship with brands (Verleye et al., 2016), where it highlights consumers' interactive and co-creative experiences with companies and brands (Brodie et al., 2013).

2.2.3 Customer Engagement in of Social Media based brand community

With the increased adoption of social media brand communities, the term 'consumer engagement' has been gradually applied to describe the nature of consumers' interactive activities inside these online communities (Baldus et al., 2015; Kaur et al., 2018). Consequently, this has guided the consumer engagement research in the recent few years, e.g. (Chan et al., 2018; L. D. Hollebeek et al., 2016). Social media platforms have been adopted to engage consumers after the enthusiasm of marketers with two-way communication capabilities provided by social media platforms. (De Vries & Carlson, 2014; Hauser et al., 2017) and strengthen by rapid growth in brand pages on Facebook for engaging consumers (Brogi, 2015). These pages ease engagement, where consumers can join their preferred brand pages, consumption experiences, and share brand stories within the online communications among consumers about brands, other consumers, and suppliers (De Vries et al., 2017). This has enabled consumers to turn out to be co-creators and transporter of brand messages, which provides companies an immense opportunity to benefit from free word of mouth

(Munzel et al., 2017). So, the literature about online brand communities provides various definitions for consumer engagement in the online context see **Table 4**.

Table 4: Various definitions of consumer engagement in the social media context

Author (s)	Definition
Jahn & Kunz (2012)	Fan page engagement is the consumers' interactive and integrative participation in the fan page community.
Brodie et al. (2013)	Consumer engagement in a virtual brand community involves specific interactive experiences between consumers and the brand, and/or other members of the community.
Chan et al. (2014)	Consumer engagement in online brand communities is defined as the level of a person's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral presence in brand interactions with an online community.
Kuzgun (2015)	Consumer engagement in virtual brand communities involves deep immersion and concentration on the virtual brand community page. Also, it involves positive emotions that are aroused after a certain period of experiencing the brand community page. Finally, it involves favorable physical activities towards the brand and its community.
Zhang et al. (2016)	Engagement is the repeated interactions between consumers and brands on social media. These interactions strengthen the emotional, psychological, and physical investment consumers have in those brands.
Harrigan et al. (2017)	Customer engagement with companies and brands on social media involves repeated interactions between a customer and organizations that strengthen the emotional, psychological, or physical investment a customer has in the brand and the organization.

2.3 Customer Engagement Antecedents and Outcome

2.3.1 Customer Engagement Antecedents

2.3.1.1 Brand trust

Generally, Trust is considered a significant component for the creation of successful relationships (Habibi et al., 2014). In the marketing area, consumers' trust for companies and brands has been reviewed in a wide variety of academic publications, e.g. (Ahmed et al., 2014; Lassoued & Hobbs, 2015; Welter, 2012). It is broadly agreed that one of the vital roles of marketing is to generate a sense of attachment between consumers and brands, in which brand trust characterizes the base of this bond (Lee et al., 2015). Thus, brand trust plays an influential role in boosting or terminating the relationships between consumers and brands (Kotler, 2019).

The marketing literature has presented various definitions of the concept of brand trust, such as, trust which can be clarified as the extent to which a consumer believes that a particular brand satisfies customer desire (Chinomona, 2016). Jin et al (2015) viewed brand trust as the customer's willingness to depend on the capability of a brand to perform its function as expected. Additionally, it can be interpreted that brand trust is created and developed by direct experiences of consumers via brands (Alan & Kabadayı, 2014). From the definitions of brand trust, it can be said that when customers have trust in the brand, it will lead to creating repeat purchase behavior, which guides to the commitment to the brand, and the relationship can be established between brand and customers.

Brand trust includes both emotional and cognitive components (Habibi et al., 2014). The cognitive element is associated with consumers' belief that the brand can meet their prospects (Ahmed et al., 2014). Furthermore, it results from their insight into the fair, accountable, and responsible behavior of brands towards their audience (Ballester, 2014). This cognitive component arises from an accumulated knowledge that permits consumers to make forecasts with some level of confidence concerning future dealings (Johnson & Grayson, 2015). Besides, the emotional element is connected to consumers' perception of the altruism and honesty of brands (Johnson & Grayson, 2015). It is closely regarding to the perception that a partner's activities are intrinsically

enthused and consequences from feelings of perceived strength security and security of the relationship (Johnson & Grayson, 2015).

Therefore, it is obvious that when consumers recognize superior levels of hedonic utilitarianism and utilitarian benefits from their interactions with brands, their trust in these brands would grow (Laroche et al., 2012). The marketing literature provides several outcomes of brand trust. For instance, it was found that the role of brand trust is vital in situations of uncertainty, information asymmetry. In addition, it has a critical role in making consumers comfortable with brands (Chiu et al., 2010). Also, it is considered a vital ingredient in the development of brand attachment (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2016), brand loyalty, and purchase intentions (Lassoued & Hobbs, 2015).

The marketing literature gives several outcomes of brand trust. For instance, it was found that the role of brand trust is vital in situations of uncertainty, information asymmetry. In addition, it has a critical role in making consumers comfortable with brands (Chiu et al., 2010). Also, it is considered a vital ingredient in the development of brand attachment (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006), brand loyalty, and purchase intentions (Lassoued & Hobbs, 2015).

In online environments, it was found that trust plays a key role in decreasing consumers' perception of uncertainty since they know that they can depend on the trusted brand (Lassoued & Hobbs, 2015). Additionally, trust is important for consumers since it affects several dimensions related to online transactions, such as security and privacy (Carminati et al., 2014).

This study debates that brand trust can be one of the antecedents of consumers' engagement with brands on social media. When consumers improve trust towards a particular brand company or company brand, they habitually develop positive feelings and beliefs about it (Islam & Rahman, 2016). Consequently, their prior involvements with these trusted brands play a fundamental role in affecting their behavior in the future (Coelho et al., 2018).

The social media brand communities (brand pages), as representatives of brands, can be an appropriate place for consumers who have high stages of trust from previous offline dealings to foster their relationships with these brands by becoming part of these online communities.

2.3.1.2 Brand Love

With the growth of severe competition and the large number of brands that emerge every day, which provide an opportunity for marketers to distinguish their products and services, establishing a strong bond between consumers and brands has become one of the principal aims of marketing communications (Harmeling et al., 2017; Pansari & Kumar, 2017).

In the past few years, marketing literature showed an immense interest in studying the emotional relationships between consumers and brands (Langner et al., 2016; Sarkar, 2014). Brand love is one of the most important marketing concepts that attracted the attention of researchers and academics on a wide scale (Palusuk et al., 2019; Schlobohm et al., 2016). This interest stemmed from the belief of positive feelings among consumers and brands enhance loyalty to these brands (Bıçakcıoğlu et al., 2018; Kudeshia et al., 2016).

Research has revealed that consumers can build strong emotional connections towards brands (Dwivedi et al., 2019). Consumers can experience love feeling towards brands in the same way that they experience it in their relationships (Ignacio & Orso, 2016). The concept of brand love has driven many marketing specialists to study customers. Mirani & Abro (2019, p 343) defined it as “*consumer perspective or assumption regarding customers love towards a brand that considers an important factor in the success of a company*”

According to Batra et al. (2017) stated that brand love contains the following components self-identity, superior quality, brands’ symbolic meanings, passionate desire, emotional connection, and expected heartbreak, a sense of natural fit, willingness to invest, frequency of usage, intrinsic rewards, as well as long relationship history with the brand. Also, Kang (2015) defined it as the level of emotional attachment that your customers content on a product brand. Academically, it is described as the to what extent of delight, emotive attachment consumers are satisfied with the services or products that have the name of a specific brand. Moreover, brand love is described as a powerful relationship between the customer and the product which is consumed as personal love (Ignacio & Orso, 2016). Brand love is generally expressed in a method that is turned towards themselves, where consumers are

interested in what can brand perform to them, not what they able to perform for the brand (Meirani & Abror, 2019).

In the era of social media, consumers can express their interest and emotional connection in particular brands by following them on several social media platforms (Zaglia, 2013).

2.4 Customer Engagement Outcome

2.4.1 Brand loyalty

The concept of brand loyalty has been recognized as a significant construct in the marketing literature for at least four decades (Keller, 2016), and most researchers agree that brand loyalty is one of the most valuable assets in successful companies (Mao, 2010), it supplies many benefits, it produces and achieve the competitive advantage of the organization, increase great market share, captivate new customers, and decreasing marketing costs (Akinici et al., 2015), increasing brand strength against competitors' risks (Russell & Parkinson, 2015), brand loyalty is considered essential for any company that intends to achieve long term satisfactory market and economic performance (Molinillo et al., 2017). These benefits noticeably show the positive effect of brand loyalty can endure on the company. According to Khan and Mahmood (2012, p. 33) proposed a definition that effectually revealed these profits, by asserting that *“brand loyalty can be defined as the customer’s unconditional commitment and a strong relationship with the brand, which is not likely to be affected under normal circumstances”*. Nam et al., (2014) explains that brand loyalty consider an vital part of the communication and customer-relationship building process, a well-organized communication that a brand has with the consumers is the stepping stone towards creating a strong customer relationship, Besides Kotler (2010) illustrated it as a multidimensional paradigm, and exposes customers repeat purchase and advocacy for the product/service even after price rise. Also, Grott (2019, p 22) defined it *“The consumer’s level of commitment to the repurchase of a preferred brand”*.

Customer engagement has been perceived as a concept anticipated to produce improved predictive and clarifying power of consumer behavior outcomes, involving loyalty towards the brand (e.g., Hollebeek et al., 2012; Van Doorn et al., 2010; Vivek 2018; van doorm, 2018), also Bowden (2015, p.57) has defined CE as *“a psychological process”* that stimulates customer loyalty. More than that a connection pattern that

consumers perform with other consumers, companies, and particular brands that is valuable to enhance brand loyalty (Brodie et al., 2011). Customer engagement is regarded as a possible antecedent to repetitive purchases (behavioral loyalty) motivated by a fervent internal disposition over a certain period (Bowden, 2015).

There has been broad literature on customer repeat purchases in the marketing topic as an outcome of satisfaction, involvement, and positive customer experience, in customer engagement literature also, researchers have discovered a positive influence of engagement on repeat purchase (Calder et al., 2013; Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014, pt. Managerial Implications; Van Doorn et al., 2010, p. 254), moreover, it was mentioned that engagement not only play an imperative impact on loyalty intentions but also manifest significantly more variation in loyalty as comparing with traditional patterns involving value, quality, and satisfaction (Dwivedi, 2015, p. 102).

Customer Engagement has been proposed to be a superior predictor of customer loyalty related to traditional relational constructs in interactive environments, where (Thakur, 2016) study considered that traditional models such as satisfaction, comfort, and usability are indicators of customer loyalty but include only the cognitive side in making a customer's purchase decisions, while customer engagement is considered the influencing factor in the consumer decision-making and thus provides additional predictive power to the customer's loyalty.

CHAPTER 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the methodology that adopts in this research study. Hence, the chapter provides a bridge between the proposed conceptual model and the findings of this study. This chapter is organized around six main sections, At the beginning section 5.2 present the overview of the quantitative method, then section 5.3 displays justification for using the online survey as well as the survey constructs with measurements of the variables, after that section 5.4 presents sample and target population, following section 5.5 presents Structure model and Hypotheses, then section 5.6 Data analyze methods.

3.2 Quantitative Method

The quantitative approach indicates to the methods that are related to the collection, analysis, interpretation, and presentation of results (Erik Mooi, 2018, p. 32). That quantitative researchers are interested in determining research purposes through empirical scales that contain numerical measurement and statistical analysis (Erik Mooi, 2018, p. 34). Quantitative research is applied to find relationships between variables in conceptual models (Brannen, 2017). The quantitative part of the current study was performed in two phases: pilot test and main studies. Both phases were carried out by adopting online surveys. The pilot test aimed to evaluate the reliability of the measurement scales of the study's constructs. Furthermore, the objective of the main quantitative study was to investigate the research hypotheses of the proposed conceptual framework, Moreover, quantitative approaches have been applied in several studies in the framework of Facebook brand communities, e.g. (Wallace et al., 2014; Munnukka et al. 2015).

3.3 Adopting an Online Survey

Surveys are utilized to gather information on diverse things, containing individual facts, ideas, feelings, and behaviors, online surveys are increasing in popularity as an outcome of the usage of modern communications methods to the research practice, the surveys are considered faster and cheaper rather to other survey approaches (Erik Mooi, 2018). In this study, the target audience of the online survey was young Syrian

consumers who are members of fast-food brand pages on Facebook. The survey was originally formed in English, and then it was translated into Arabic. After that, a back-translation was performed by translating the Arabic statements into English.

3.3.1 Survey Structure

The survey was collected by using measurement items extract from the literature. The conducted survey was included in three sections. The first section about “Demographic data” (Age, Gender, Location, Education, occupation, Monthly income, Marital status), the second section asked respondents to demonstrate their favorite fast food brand page from a list of Syrian fast food for instance (Quickly Food, Food Sobki, Turtles, Prince Fast Food, Big Bite, Chicken Abu Ali Restaurant.....etc.) and some questions about engagement towards Facebook brand pages. In section 3, the respondents were asked some questions to indicate their responses by assessing the level of customer engagement, brand trust, brand love, and brand loyalty see Appendix G.

3.3.1.1 Research Survey Constructs

In the following part, the researcher displays the items that were utilized in assessing the research variables. All the items that were adopted for measuring the study construct used a 5-point Likert scale, starting from (1) ‘strongly disagree’ to (5) ‘Strongly Agree’.

3.3.1.1.1 Customer Engagement items

In the current study, customer engagement was measured using twenty-five items borrowed from (So et al., 2016). The respondents were presented with seven statements that measured the level of their engagement to fast food brands as shown in **Table 5**.

Table 5: Items of Customer Engagement

1) I am passionate about this brand page.
2) I like to learn more about this brand page.
3) I concentrate a lot on this brand page.
4) I like learning more about this brand page.
5) In general, I like to get involved in this brand page discussions.
6) I am someone who likes actively participating in this brand page discussions.

7) In general, I enjoy exchanging ideas with other people on this brand page.

Source: (So et al., 2016, p. 71)

3.3.1.2 Brand Trust items

In the current study, brand trust was measured using four items borrowed from Sahagun et al (2014). The respondents were presented with four statements that evaluated the level of their trust to fast food brands as shown in **Table 6**.

Table 6: Items of Brand Trust

1) I feel quite confident that my fast-food brand will always try to treat me fairly
2) My fast-food brand has been franked in dealing with me
3) My fast-food brand would never try to gain an advantage by deceiving its clients
4) My fast-food brand is trustworthy

Source: Adapted from (Sahagun & Vasquez, 2014, Table 1)

3.3.1.3 Brand Loyalty items

The researcher borrowed four items from (So et al., 2016, p. 68) to measure the brand loyalty of consumers towards fast food brands that are marketed through Facebook brand pages. Respondents were presented with four statements that assessed the level of their loyalty as shown in **Table 7**.

Table 7: Items of Brand Loyalty

1) This is the only brand of fast food that I will buy.
2) I intend to keep staying with this brand
3) I am committed to this brand.
4) I would be willing to pay a higher price for this brand over other brands.

Source: Adapted from (So et al., 2016, p. 68)

3.3.1.4 Brand Love items

In the current study, the researcher used seven items borrowed from Vernuccio et al. (2015). Respondents were presented with four statements that assessed the level of their brand love as shown in **Table 8**.

Table 8: Items of Brand love

1) This fast-food brand makes me very happy.
2) This fast-food brand is pure delight.
3) I am passionate about this fast-food brand.
4) This fast-food brand is totally awesome.

Source: (Vernuccio et al., 2015, p. 217)

3.4 Sample

3.4.1 Target Population

Determining the population of the study and sampling procedures are fundamental topics before data collection (Erik Mooi, 2018, Chapter 3.8). In any research, the population is the “collective of all the elements, sharing some mutual set of features that compromise the universe for the aim of the marketing research problem” (Malhotra et al., 2012, p. 494). Within the current study, the population of interest consisted of all young Syrian consumers between ages 18 and 29 who are members of official fast-food brand pages of Facebook in Syria. According to *DataReportal.com* (KEMP, 2020), the number of Facebook users in Syria reached approximately 7.9 million Facebook users in Syria as of December 2020, with 73% of them between the ages of 18 and 29 years.

3.5 Pilot-Test

Before dissemination of the questionnaire to collect data and to validate the selected method, a pilot test was made. The objective of this pilot test was to improve the survey so that respondents would not have difficulties in responding to the questions and there will be no defect with data (Erik Mooi, 2018). The pilot test allows this research to get an evaluation of the questions’ reliability of the data that will be collected via the internet questionnaire and certify that the data collected will allow this research questions to be replied. The pilot study was carried out using Google drive forms, the data collection takes 3 weeks. The target sample from the pilot study was Syrian young Facebook users between ages 18 and 29 years and who are active members of fast-food brand pages on Facebook. The linked survey was sent via emails, what’s up to groups, and Facebook Messenger with clarification about the topic and the purpose of

the research, the link directed participation to the online survey on the Google drive survey, also the questionnaire was uploaded in Arabic.

3.5.1 Improvements in Items Scale

An extra purpose for the pilot study survey was to assess the previously validated measures that are borrowed in the current study. The results indicated that participants were able to respond to most questions suggesting the nonappearance of difficult or ununderstood questions. However, the pilot study enabled the researcher to make some adjustments to some of the questionnaire statements. For instance, the researcher deleted a question associated with respondents' number of logging times to their favorite fast-food brands pages, since most respondents were not able to remember the exact number of their visits to these online communities. Additionally, the results of the pilot study showed that the majority of the scales have good reliability of the Alpha Cronbach (above 0.7) as mentioned in **Table 10**, and the Cronbach's alpha for all the study's constructs are shown in **Table 11**. Despite that, statements (CE2, CE3, CE4, CE6, CE7, CE10, CE11, CE12, CE16, CE17, CE18, CE19, CE20, CE21, CE22, CE23, CE24, CE25) of the customer engagement scale were eliminated from the questionnaire to improve the reliability, and these statements were "When someone criticizes this brand, it feels like a personal insult", "When I talk about this brand, I usually say we rather than they", "This brand page successes are my successes", " When someone praises this brand, it feels like a personal compliment ", " When someone praises this brand, it feels like a personal compliment", "I am heavily into this brand", "Time flies when I am interacting with the brand, When I am interacting with brand, I get carried away", and "I am someone who enjoys interacting with like-minded others in the brand community", "I am enthusiastic about this brand page", "I feel excited about this brand page", " I love this brand page", " I pay a lot of attention to anything about this brand page", " I often participate in activities of this brand page", " When interacting with this brand page", "it is difficult to detach myself, In my interaction with this brand page I am immersed", besides the statement (BV1,BV2,BV7) in the brand love were dropped out to enhance the reliability, also these statements were "I am very attached to this brand", "This is a wonderful fast food brand", " This fast food brand makes me feel good", This sector demonstrates an overview of the pilot study

that was performed through an online survey to purify the items of the new scale and to examine the reliability of other measures in the study.

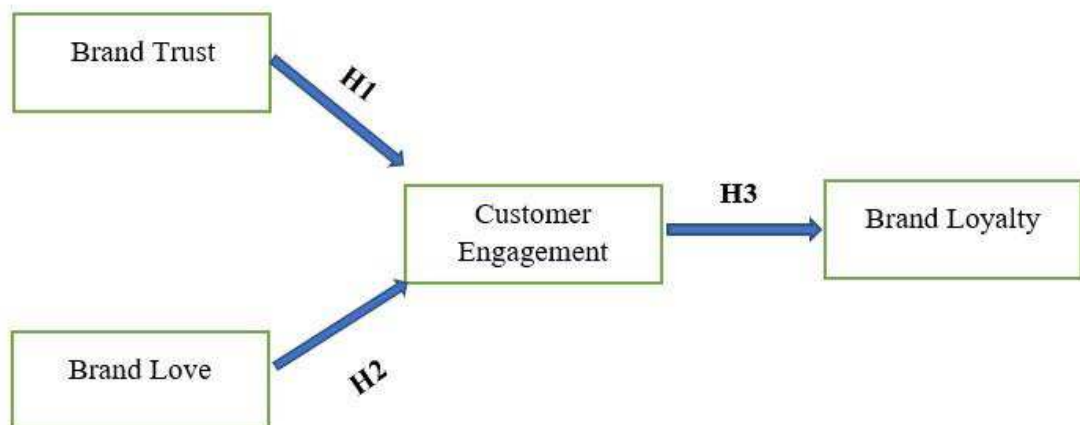
3.6 Structure Model

This section presents the research hypotheses developed for this study. Taking into consideration the aim of this study, we try to give a richer insight into the following questions:

- Are Brand Trust and Brand Love antecedents for Customer Brand Engagement?
- What impact does Customer Engagement have on outcome related to a Brand Loyalty?

So the proposed research model of this study represents the antecedents (brand trust, brand loyalty) and brand loyalty as an outcome of customer engagement as shown in **Figure 2**.

Figure 2: Structure model



Source: Adopted by the researcher

3.6.1 Hypotheses

3.6.1.1 Brand Trust and Consumer Engagement

Establishing brand trust is one of the essential factors that permit organizations to realize success by building long-term relationships with customers (Molinillo et al., 2017).

Consumers' trust in firms and brands is produced as an outcome of transactions that are characterized by high levels of integrity, honesty, and reliability (Pappas, 2016). Hence, consumers rely on the trusted brands to reduce uncertainty, which can guide to brand loyalty (Abdullah, 2015) and brand passion and commitment (Afzal et al., 2010). The concept of brand trust is reflected very important in the context of social media and virtual brand communities (Habibi et al., 2014), as consumers recognize higher risk while interacting with organizations in an online context (Mendis et al., 2016).

Since consumers depend heavily on social networks in their searching for information and in making buying (Felix et al., 2017), it is very significant for them to feel the trustworthiness of updates and information which find on these networks. Because of the importance of brand trust, some studies assessed its role in directing consumer behavior in the online context. Such as Park & Kim (2014) and Lee et al., (2013) perceived that there is a positive relationship between consumers' trust in brands in the offline context and their perceived trust in online interactions with these brands. These findings underline the vital role offline brand trust plays in leading consumer behavior in online environments.

Similarly, Kosiba et al. (2018) showed that customer engagement within the banking sector is influenced by trust in the service provider and economy-based trust. Following this line of argument, we argue that brand trust will positively affect consumers to engage their favorite brands cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally on Facebook. For example, consumers who trust a brand will entirely support the brand by defending it and showing a positive attitude on its Facebook fan page.

The current research claims that the consumers' trust in specific fast-food brands that have developed as a result of their previous interactions with these brands will impact their eagerness to continue their relationships with these brands on social media:

H1: Brand trust has a positive effect on consumers' engagement in Facebook brand pages.

3.6.1.2 Brand Love and Customer Engagement

Brand love can reinforce the existent bonds between consumers and brands, fortifies the belief in the brand, encourages the relationship, improves trust, and will eventually increase consumer's retention (Kaufmann et al., 2016).

Consumers in love with a brand are more eager to repeat purchase and to endorse the brand to other consumers (Bıçakcıoğlu et al., 2018). They will regularly pick the brand over any other and even forgive and minimize a problem if it has happened (Loureiro et al., 2012). Carroll & Ahuvia (2014) highlighted that brand love contains a need to assert love (as if the brand were a person) and guides to the integration of the brand into the consumer's identity (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2014). Bergkvist & Bech (2014) also included active engagement as an outcome of brand love. They used the definition of Keller (2015, p.19) of active engagement where “*customers are willing to invest time, energy, money, or other resources in the brand beyond those expended during purchase or consumption of the brand*”.

Active engagement contains WOM, visiting brand websites, and purchasing brand products (Bergkvist & Bech-Larsen, 2014). Brand love has a positive influence on active engagement which proposes that brand love leads not only to WOM, as found by Carroll & Ahuvia (2014), but also to other brand-related activities (Bergkvist & Bech, 2015). According to this viewpoint, we also suppose that brand love will positively affect consumer engagement with a brand through Facebook. As active engagement is the outcome of brand love, we can thus reckon that brand love will also influence on consumer engagement.

H2: Brand love has a positive effect on consumers' engagement in Facebook brand pages.

3.6.1.3 Customer engagement and brand loyalty

Customer engagement has been perceived as a concept anticipated to produce improved predictive and clarifying power of consumer behavior outcomes, involving loyalty towards the brand (e.g., Hollebeek et al., 2012; Van Doorn et al., 2010; Vivek 2018; van doorm, 2018), also Bowden (2015, p.57) has defined CE as “a

psychological process” that stimulates customer loyalty. More than that a connection pattern that consumers perform with other consumers, companies, and particular brands that is valuable to enhance brand loyalty (Brodie et al., 2011). Customer engagement is regarded as a possible antecedent to repetitive purchases (behavioral loyalty) motivated by a fervent internal disposition over a certain period (Bowden, 2015).

There has been broad literature on customer repeat purchases in the marketing topic as an outcome of satisfaction, involvement, and positive customer experience, in customer engagement literature also, researchers have discovered a positive influence of engagement on repeat purchase (Calder et al., 2013; Hollebeek et al., 2014, pt. Managerial Implications; Van Doorn et al., 2010;), moreover, it was mentioned that engagement not only play an imperative impact on loyalty intentions but also manifest significantly more variation in loyalty as comparing with traditional patterns involving value, quality, and satisfaction (Dwivedi, 2015, p. 102).

Customer Engagement has been proposed to be a superior predictor of customer loyalty related to traditional relational constructs in interactive environments, where (Thakur, 2016) study considered that traditional models such as satisfaction, comfort, and usability are indicators of customer loyalty but include only the cognitive side in making a customer’s purchase decisions, while customer engagement is considered the influencing factor in the consumer decision-making and thus provides additional predictive power to the customer’s loyalty.

H3: consumers' engagement has a positive effect on Brand loyalty in Facebook brand pages.

3.7 Data Analysis Methods

After collecting the required number of survey responses, data has been downloaded into the Microsoft Excel file. After that, the researcher has to prepare the data, by transforming the responses into the Likert scale, from text format to numerical format. Then, the researcher used SPSS (v26) and AMOS (v24) software to analyze the data and getting the results. Several statistical techniques were employed to analyze the data that was collected in the quantitative phase. These techniques included descriptive statistics to characterize the sample, in the second phase Factor analysis (EFA) for each

of the factors, namely, brand trust, customer engagement, brand loyalty, and brand love furthermore, some statistical techniques were used to assess the reliability and validity of the measurement scales, by conducting confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), also Structure Equation Model (SEM) to assess the relations between variables by using AMOS software.

3.7.1 Descriptive Statistics

The researcher used descriptive statistical methods to describe the demographic characteristics of the sample members such as (age, gender, location, current occupation, education, Monthly Income, marital status) (Erik Mooi, 2018). Moreover, the descriptive statistics techniques were useful in understanding the habits of using Facebook and attitudes towards social media marketing, where these statistics display the frequencies and percentages, and the results of descriptive statistics were obtained by using SPSS that help to display some tables and graphics.

3.7.2 Factor Analysis

According to Watkins (2018) before performing an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), data requirements to be tested to verify that is applicable to be conducted. Consequently, the right sample requires to be determined; commonalities need to show results greater than 0.3 and conduct a Bartlett test and a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin KMO.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) has been performed, to set the items in factors, within the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) method (Samuels, 2016). According to Hadia (2016), PCA is a multivariate exploratory analysis method that converts a couple of correlated variables into a smaller group of independent variables, and it is employed to determines the values. Using the Varimax method, that (Josse & Husson, 2016) describes as “The most popular orthogonal factor rotation methods focusing on simplifying the columns in a factor matrix.”.

Factor analysis was performed to the brand trust, customer engagement, brand love, brand loyalty variables. To determine the feasibility of carrying out the factor analysis, a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and a Bartlett test were conducted. Several approaches can be operated to assess the quality of data. Though, the KMO is measured to be the best general one. “KMO is a evaluate of homogeneity of the variables, that it compares the simple correlations with the partial correlations seen among the

variables.”(Watkins, 2018). KMO values ranged between 0 and 1. A value close to 1 designates that patterns of correlation are fairly compact, indicating that the factor analysis is adopted to be conducted.

This research performed four different factor analysis. The factor analysis covered the variables that are involved in this study, namely, brand trust, brand love, customer engagement, brand trust, and brand loyalty. Though, before carrying out the factor analysis, it was needed to analyses the homogeneity of variables by KMO and Bartlett’s test. To the brand trust, customer engagement, brand love, and brand loyalty variables giving to its KMO value of (0.741, 0.776, 0.712, 0.882) respectfully, its approval on factor analysis is acceptable. The adequacy of conducting the factor analysis is also confirmed by the performance of Bartlett’s test. All the variables presented a p-value = 0 (<0.001), which means that the null hypotheses must be rejected and permits to consider that the variables are significantly correlated - *see Appendix C* the results of Explanatory Factor Analysis (EFA). Also, **Table 9** shows the loading of each item and the percentage of each factor.

Table 9: Measurement scales and loading

Measurements	Loading	Cumulative %
Brand trust		72.20%
I feel quite confident that my fast-food brand will always try to treat me fairly (<i>BT1</i>)	0.881	
My fast-food brand has been franked in dealing with me (<i>BT2</i>)	0.799	
My fast-food brand would never try to gain an advantage by deceiving its clients (<i>BT3</i>)	0.881	
My fast-food brand is trustworthy (<i>BT4</i>)	0.830	
Customer engagement		75.65%
In general, I like to get involved in this brand page discussions (<i>CE1</i>).	0.786	
I often participate in activities of this brand page (<i>CE5</i>).	0.708	
When I am interacting with this brand page, I get carried away (<i>CE8</i>).	0.926	

When interacting with this brand page, it is difficult to detach myself (<i>CE9</i>).	0.933	
I pay a lot of attention to anything about this brand page (<i>CE13</i>).	0.892	
Anything related to this brand page grabs my attention (<i>CE14</i>).	0.870	
I concentrate a lot on this brand page (<i>CE15</i>).	0.947	
Brand loyalty		92.10%
This is the only brand of fast food that I will buy (<i>BL1</i>).	0.963	
I intend to keep staying with this brand (<i>BL2</i>).	0.976	
I am committed to this brand (<i>BL3</i>).	0.93	
I would be willing to pay a higher price for this brand over other brands (<i>BL4</i>).	0.968	
Brand love		70.43%
This fast-food brand is totally awesome (<i>BV3</i>).	.963	
This fast-food brand makes me very happy (<i>BV4</i>).	.976	
This fast-food brand is a pure delight (<i>BV5</i>).	.930	
I am passionate about this fast-food brand (<i>BV6</i>).	.968	

Source: SPSS adopted by the researcher

3.7.3 Assessing the Reliability and Validity

The researcher performed the reliability and validity tests on the research variables before applying statistical analysis methods. Reliability analysis is needed to make sure that the measurement scales of each variable are able to yield consistent results when the measurements are performed at other times (Pallant, 2013). The tests contained tests of internal consistency (reliability) and tests of Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and discriminate validity by performing (CFA). These tests are important before assessing any research model (Hair, 2010).

3.7.3.1 Reliability

According to Eric (2018), the reliability points to the degree to which a measurement scale gives consistent outcomes if repeated measurements are performed. Therefore, it is said that the scale is reliable if the measurements are repeatable when diverse

researchers do this measurement on different occasions and in different contexts (Erik Mooi, 2018, p. 54), There are several statistical methods for measuring reliability, which is as follows:

3.7.3.1.1 Cronbach Alpha

In this study, the internal consistency approach of reliability was applied to ensure the reliability of the scales, in doing so the Cronbach's alpha (α) was employed to test this, where the values of the Alpha Cronbach coefficient must be positive ranging from 0 to 1 and the evaluation of these values is carried out according to the **Table 10**.

Table 10: Alpha Cronbach values

Alpha Value	Internal Consistency
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent
$0.9 > \alpha \geq 0.8$	Good
$0.8 > \alpha \geq 0.7$	Acceptable
$0.7 > \alpha \geq 0.6$	Questionable
$0.6 > \alpha \geq 0.5$	Poor
$\alpha > 0.5$	Unacceptable

Source: Adapted from (Hair et al., 2010)

According to **Table 11** that shows that all the values of Cronbach's Alpha are ranged between (0.805, 0.970), Therefore, each scale will result in consistent answers if the measurements are conducted repeatedly. *See Appendix C*.

3.7.3.2 Composite Reliability- CR

This indicator is extracted from the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and refers to the possibility of applying the study scale into an analysis model with an acceptable reliability degree, also a value greater than 0.7 cut-off point (Hair, 2014). According to **Table 11**, all the CR values are greater than 0.7, which is a good indicator of the scales' reliability.

3.7.3.3 Validity

3.7.3.3.1 Convergent Validity

It measures the positive correlation of each item of the variable with other items that measure the same variable (Hair, 2013), and it is attained by achieving three conditions, as follows:

❖ Factor Loading

The loading for each item of variables when performing confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) -see Appendix D the results of (CFA)- should be greater than 0.5 as well as significant (Hair et al., 2010). As shown from **Table 11** all the items loading higher than 0.5, so this condition was achieved.

❖ Average Variance Extracted-AVE

It is extracted from confirmatory factor analysis, where its value ranges between (0) and (1), besides a value equal to or greater than 0.5 shows that the scale is good, and if its value is less than 0.5 that lead to the existence of errors in the scale (Joseph F Hair et al., 2010) as shown from **Table 11** all the AVE values greater than 0.5. which AVE of brand trust is 69.5 %, which is greater than 50% that was suggested by Hair (2010). This means that 69.5 % of the total information available in the four items could be extracted by using one factor to express brand trust instead of using these four items. Accordingly, by decreasing the number of items to one factor, 69.5 % of the total information will be maintained. Furthermore, the AVE of brand love is 67.8%, which is greater than 50%. This means that 69.7% of the total information available in the four items can be extracted by using one factor to indicate brand love instead of using the four items. Accordingly, by decreasing the number of items to be one factor, 67.8% of the total information will be kept. The AVE for brand loyalty is 74.8 %, which is greater than 50%. This indicates that 74.8 % of the total information available in the four items could be extracted by using one factor to express brand loyalty instead of using four items. Therefore, by reducing the number of items to be one factor, 74.8 % of the total information will be maintained. On the other hand, the AVE of customer engagement is 63.3 %, which is greater than 50%. This means that 63.3 %, of the total information available in the seven items, can be extracted

by using one factor to express customer engagement instead of using seven items. Therefore, by reducing the number of items to be one factor, 63.3 % of the total information will be maintained.

- ❖ According to (Hair et al., 2010), the values of CR should be higher than the values of AVE, also **Table 11** shows that all the values of CR are higher than AVE values.

3.7.3.4 Discrimination Validity

To inspect the discriminant validity of the research variables, the researcher compared the square root of AVE of each construct with its correlation with other variables (Hair, 2010). **Table 13** demonstrates the correlations between each variable and other variables of the current study. The results show that all are lower than the MSV of each variable indicating the discriminant validity of the study constructs. In other words, the respondents can discriminate between all research variables.

Table 11: The results from the measurement model (Cronbach's α , CR value, and AVE)

Variable	Items	Loading	Cronbach's alpha (α)	Composite Reliability (CR)	AVE
Brand Trust	BT1	0.799	0.805	0.901	0.695
	BT2	0.888			
	BT3	0.846			
	BT4	0.799			
Brand Love	BO6	0.827	0.848	0.894	0.678
	BO5	0.831			
	BO4	0.733			
	BO3	0.895			

Customer Engagement	CE15	0.814	0.945	0.923	0.633
	CE14	0.835			
	CE13	0.837			
	CE9	0.842			
	CE8	0.851			
	CE5	0.666			
	CE1	0.70			
Brand Loyalty	BL4	.742	0.970	0.922	0.748
	BL3	.886			
	BL2	.924			
	BL1	.896			

Source: CFA Adopted by the researcher

Table 12: Measurements, Reliabilities, and Correlations

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	ENGAGEMENT	TRUST	LOVE	LOYALTY
ENGAGEMENT	0.923	0.632	0.091	0.931	0.795			
TRUST	0.901	0.695	0.208	0.907	0.302	0.834		
LOVE	0.893	0.678	0.028	0.906	0.167	0.163	0.824	
LOYALTY	0.922	0.748	0.208	0.937	0.224	0.456	0.154	0.865

Source: CFA Adopted by the researcher

3.7.4 Structural Equation Modeling for Hypotheses Testing

The researcher used structural equation modeling techniques to investigate the relationships between the variables of the proposed model. The researcher assesses the relationships between the constructs by adapting AMOS V.24 software, that using of path analysis to examine causal structures among continuous variables(S. K. Sharma et al.2017). Neil J. Salkind (2010) indicated that there are some benefits to path analysis that account for its continuing popularity: (a) It offers a graphical

representation of a group of algebraic relationships between variables that visually and concisely summarizes those relationships; (b) it permits researchers to not only inspect the direct influence of a predictor on a dependent variable but also show other kinds of relationships, including indirect and spurious relationships.

After performing path analysis, where a set of criteria will be used to judge on the fit of the model, and it includes a set of indicators, namely:

Chi-Square Ratio $X^2 / (df)$

The value of this indicator is affected by the size of the sample if its value is less than 5 indicating acceptance, and some researchers believe that if its value is less than 3 and greater than 1, we can also accept the model (S. K. Sharma et al., 2017).

Indicators of absolute fitness

- **The goodness of Fit Index (GFI):** Its value ranges between 0 and 1 as the closer its value to 1 indicates a better match for the model with ample data, where a value greater than 0.90 indicates a good fit of the model (Fan et al., 2016).
- **Adjust Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI):** Its value ranges between 0 and 1 as the closer its value to 1 indicates a better match for the model with sample data, where a value greater than 0.90 indicates a good fit of the model (Fan et al., 2016).
- **Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA):** This indicator is considered one of the most important indicators of absolute fitness if its value is equal to or less than 0.05 This indicates that the model fits perfectly the data. A value between 0.05 and 0.08 indicates that the model matches well with the sample data If its value exceeds 0.08, then the model is rejected (Fan et al., 2016).

Incremental Fit Indexes

- **Normed Fit Index (NFI):** Its value is between 0 and 1, with a value greater than 0.90 indicating a good fit of the model (Fan et al., 2016).
- **Comparative Fit Index (CFI):** Its value is between 0 and 1, with a value greater than 0.90 indicating a good fit of the model, Also, some

studies indicated that it is better if the value is greater than 0.95(Fan et al., 2016).

- **Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI):** Its value is between 0 and 1, with a value greater than 0.90 indicating a good fit of the model, Also, some studies indicated that it is better if the value is greater than 0.95(Fan et al., 2016).

On the other hand, the skewness and kurtosis values are examined to determine whether the variables in the data set are normally distributed. In this case values between -2 and +2 are considered normal (Civelek, 2018).

CHAPTER 4: Quantitative Data Analysis and Results

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of the main quantitative study. It is divided into two main parts. The first part presents some descriptive statistics of the demographic characteristics of the sample, following, the second part of this chapter presents the results of the hypotheses testing.

This chapter is further divided into four main sections. Firstly, sections 6.2, 6.3 provides an overview of demographic characteristics and descriptive analysis of the study variables of the sample. then, section 6.3 highlights the respondents' perceptions regarding Facebook and advertising on it. Then, section 6.5 presents the findings of the hypotheses testing by using the path analysis method.

The first part demonstrates the descriptive statistics of the demographic characteristics of the study's sample as well as some descriptive statistics related to consumers' perceptions regarding Facebook and advertising on it.

PART ONE

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

A total of 400 members of fast-food brand pages on Facebook were surveyed online for a quantitative study. Of these 400 participants, (230) were males which form (57.5%) of the total sample, and (170) females, which form (42.5%) of the total sample.

Consumers' age in the sample fluctuated from eighteen to twenty-nine years old. 108 customers aged 18 to less than 22 characterize (27%) of the total sample. (170) customers aged 23 to less than 25 represent the greatest percentage (42.5 %) of the total sample. Following, (96) customers aged 26 to less than 30 represent (24 %), the last range represents the smallest portion (6.5 %) of the total sample.

Respondents' marital status contained 352 single consumers that represent (88%) and 84 married that represent (12%) of the sample.

Also, the sample consisted of respondents who lived in different Syrian cities. The largest proportion of customers were 148, which represents about (37 %) of the total sample live on the Coast (which is considered the most stable and safe place). Then, 122 respondents, which represent (30.5 %) of the sample were from Damascus. Following 50 respondents, which represent (12.5%) who live in Aleppo. Next, 42 of the respondents who live in the Middle, and represents (10.5 %) Finally, 38 respondents, which represent (9.5 %), live in other cities.

Respondents' occupations are diverse from student, employee, worker-student, self-employed, and unemployed. The largest portion included 180 students, which represent about (45 %) of the total sample. Also, 148 worker-student were surveyed, which represents (37%) of the total sample. Also, there were 32 employed respondents which represent (8%) of the total sample, then the self-employees were 30 that represents (10 %) Furthermore, there were 8unemployed which represents (2.5%) of the sample.

Respondents' monthly income level varied from less than 30000 Syrian pounds (S.P), from 30001 to less than 40000 S.P., from 40001 S.P. to 50000 S.P and finally above 50000 SP. The largest proportion were consumers who earned from 30000 to 40000 S.P (200 respondents, which represent (50 %) of the sample). Then, 105 consumers earned less than 30000 S.P. which represents (26 %) of the total sample. Then, 75 customers who earned between 40001-50000 SP. which represent (19 %) of the sample. However, the smallest segment was 20 respondents who earned more than 50000 S.P., which represent (5 %) of the total sample. In **Table 14**, the researcher summarizes the descriptive statistics of the demographics of the main study's sample.

Table 13: Frequency Distributions (Demographics) of the Sample

Demographic Variable	Criteria	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18-22	108	42.5%
	23-25	107	27%
	26-29	96	24%
	Other	26	6.5%
Gender	Male	230	57.5%
	Female	170	42.5%
City of Residence	Coast	148	37%
	Damascus	122	30.5%
	Aleppo	50	12.5%
	Middle	42	10.5%
	Other cities	38	9.5%
Current Occupation	Student	90	45%
	Worker-Student	74	37%
	Employee	16	8%
	Unemployed	15	5%
	Self-employ	5	7.5%

Monthly Income	Less than 30000 SP.	105	26%
	30000-40000 SP.	200	50%
	40001-50000 SP.	75	19%
	Above 50000 SP.	20	5%
Marital Status	Single	352	88%
	Married	48	12%

Source: SPSS Adopted by the researcher

4.3 Descriptive Analysis

4.3.1 Brand Trust

The scale questions parameters, mean and standard deviation underlying the survey questions related to the Brand trust are present in **Table 14**. Data is displayed in descending order according to the mean.

The question, “My fast-food brand would never try to gain an advantage by deceiving its clients” is the one that presents a higher mean (Mean 4.22 and Standard Deviation 0.560), followed by the question “My fast-food brand has been franked in dealing with me” (Mean 4.01 and Standard Deviation 0.808), then the question “ I feel quite confident that my fast-food brand will always try to treat me fairly (Mean 3.95 and Standard Deviation 0.548), then the question “My fast-food brand is trustworthy” (Mean 3.91 and Standard Deviation 0.830)

Previous values show that customers have a significant level of trust with the brand, regardless of the trust in the brand, considering it safe and honest and rely on it.

Table 14: Brand Trust items analysis

Questions	Mean	Std. Deviation
My fast-food brand would never try to gain an advantage by deceiving its clients	4.22	.560
My fast-food brand has been franked in dealing with me	4.01	.808
I feel quite confident that my fast-food brand will always try to treat me fairly	3.95	.548
My fast-food brand is trustworthy	3.91	.830

Source: SPSS Adopted by the researcher

4.3.2 Brand Love

The scale questions parameters, mean and standard deviation underlying the survey questions related to the Brand love are present in **Table 15**. Data is displayed in descending order according to the mean.

Table 15: Brand Love items analysis

Questions	Mean	Std. Deviation
This fast-food brand makes me feel good	4.24	.905
This fast-food brand is pure delight	4.03	.679
This fast-food brand is awesome	4.00	.602
This is a wonderful fast food brand	3.97	.520

Source: SPSS Adopted by the researcher

The question, “This fast-food brand makes me feel good” is the one that presents a higher mean (Mean 4.24 and Standard Deviation .905), followed by the questions “This fast-food brand is a pure delight” (Mean 4.03 and Standard Deviation .679), the question “This fast-food brand is awesome” (Mean 4.00 and Standard Deviation .602), the question “This is a wonderful fast food brand” (Mean 3.97 and Standard Deviation 0.520). Previous values show a significant customer’s sense of integration and emotional with a brand.

4.3.3 Customer engagement

The scale questions parameters, mean and standard deviation underlying the survey questions related to the Customer engagement are present in **Table 16**. Data is displayed in descending order according to the mean.

Table 16: Customer engagement items analysis

Question	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am passionate about this brand page.	4.57	.780
I like to learn more about this brand page.	4.22	.875
I concentrate a lot on this brand page.	4.19	.847
I like learning more about this brand page.	4.19	.559
In general, I like to get involved in this brand page discussions.	4.18	.901

I am someone who likes actively participating in this brand page discussions.	4.14	.588
In general, I enjoy exchanging ideas with other people on this brand page.	4.13	.533

Source: SPSS Adopted by the researcher

The question, “I am passionate about this brand page.” is the one that presents a higher mean (Mean 4.57 and Standard Deviation .780), followed by the questions “I like to learn more about this brand page.” (Mean 4.22 and Standard Deviation .875), next to the question “I concentrate a lot on this brand page.” (Mean 4.19 and Standard Deviation 0.847), after that “I like learning more about this brand page.” (Mean 4.19 and Standard Deviation .559), following the statement “In general, I like to get involved in this brand page discussions.” (Mean 4.18 and Standard Deviation .901), the final statement who represent the low value “In general, I enjoy exchanging ideas with other people in this brand page.” (Mean 4.13 and Standard Deviation .533).

Previous values demonstrate that customers have a cognitive and behavioral interaction with the brand. besides, it is observable that consumers' degree of excitement and interest in the brand.

4.3.4 Brand loyalty

The scale questions parameters, mean and standard deviation underlying the survey questions related to the Brand Loyalty are present in **Table 17**. Data is displayed in descending order according to the mean.

Table 17: Brand loyalty items analysis

Question	Mean	Std. Deviation
I intend to keep staying with this brand	4.22	.875
This is the only brand of fast food that I will buy	4.00	.486
I would be willing to pay a higher price for this brand over other brands	3.94	.651
I am committed to this brand	3.81	.766

Source: SPSS Adopted by the researcher

The question, “I intend to keep staying with this brand” is the one that presents a higher mean (Mean 4.22 and Standard Deviation .875), followed by the questions “This is the

only brand of fast food that I will buy” (Mean 4.00 and Standard Deviation .486), the question “I would be willing to pay a higher price for this brand over other brands” (Mean 3.94 and Standard Deviation .905), the question “This fast-food brand is a pure delight” (Mean 4.03 and Standard Deviation 0.651) and the question “I am committed to this brand” (Mean 3.81 and Standard Deviation .766).

Previous values demonstrate a significant loyalty of consumers to the brand, especially regards their intention to continue to consume the brand.

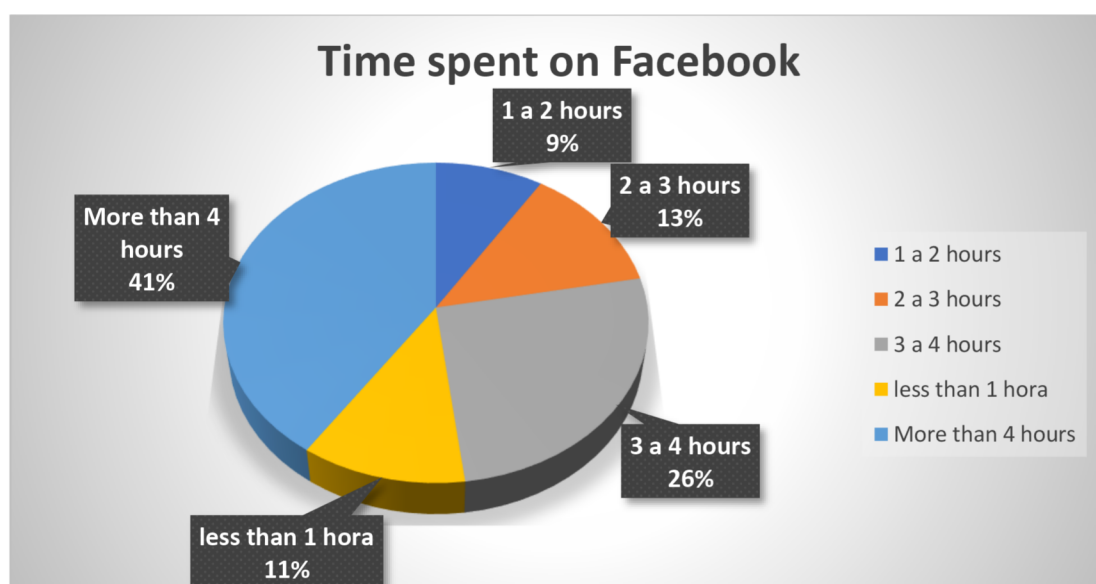
4.4 Respondents’ Relationships with Facebook Marketing

In this section, the researcher reviews the results related to consumer perceptions and behavior towards Facebook marketing, where these introductory questions were presented in the first section to engage and encourage participants to approach to this research and prepare them for answering the sections which related to the main objectives of the research.

4.4.1 Time Spent on Facebook

The results of the survey indicated that respondents spend different amount of times, as follows less than 1 hour (11%), 1-2 hours (9%), 2-3 hours (13%), 3-4 hours (26%), and more than 4 hours (41%). **Figure 3** shows the duration of participation spend on the social networking site Facebook.

Figure 3: Time Spent on Facebook

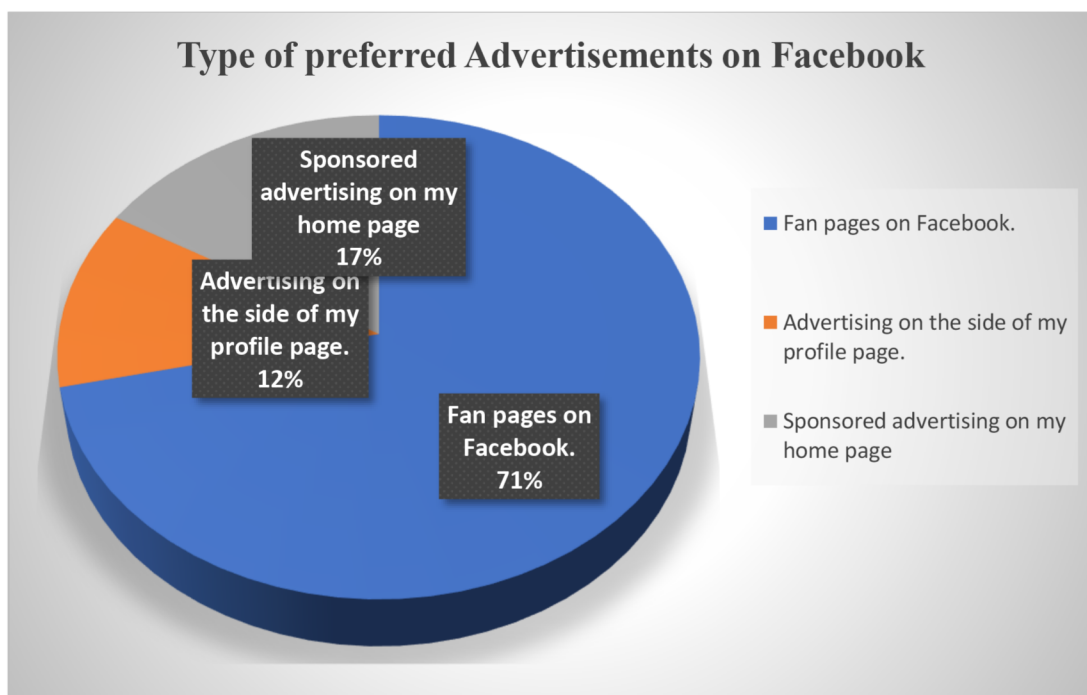


Source: SPSS Adopted by the researcher

4.4.2 Type of preferred Advertisements on Facebook

The results display that consumers prefer several forms of advertising on Facebook. Most participants (71.5%) confirmed that their favorite type is brand pages on Facebook. Moreover, (16.5 %) of respondents indicated that they prefer sponsored advertising on their Facebook home page. then, (12 %) of them said that they prefer advertising on the side of their profile page. **Figure 4** illustrates the various forms of advertising most preferred by consumers.

Figure 4: Type of preferred Advertisements on Facebook

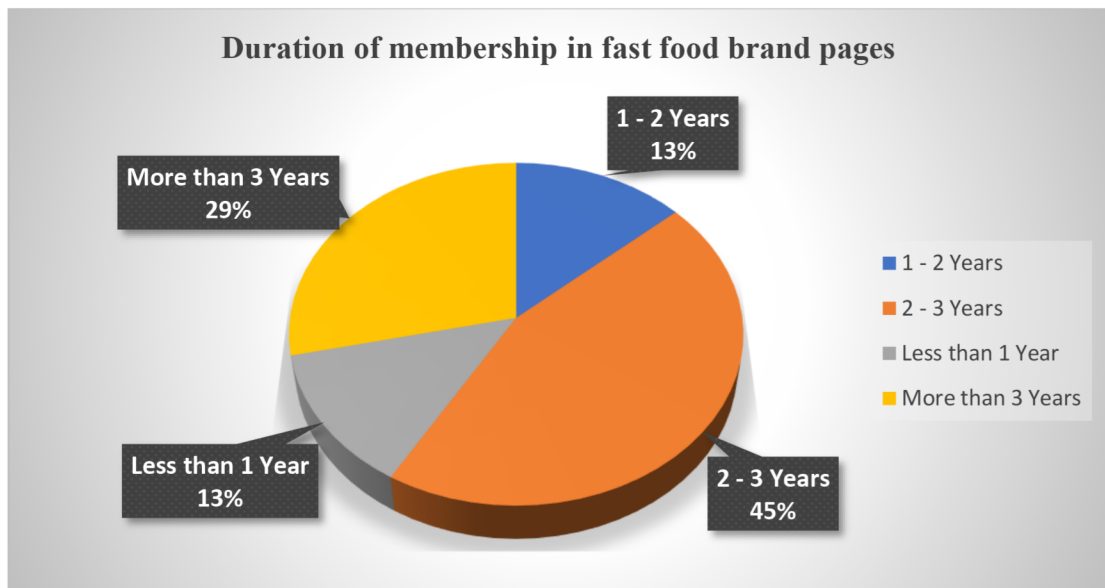


Source: SPSS by the researcher

4.4.3 Duration of Membership in Fast food Brand Pages

The analysis presented that (13%) of consumers who joined to fast food fan page between 1 and 2 years. Also, it looked that (45%) became a member to fan pages for a duration between 2 and 3 years. Further, (13%) of consumers who replayed that they have been members of the fan pages for less than a year. On the other hand, (7%) of respondents indicated that they have been members for more than 3 years. Finally, (15%) said that they are not sure about the duration of their membership. **Figure 5** shows the duration that participants were members of the fast-food brand pages.

Figure 5: Duration of membership in fast food brand pages

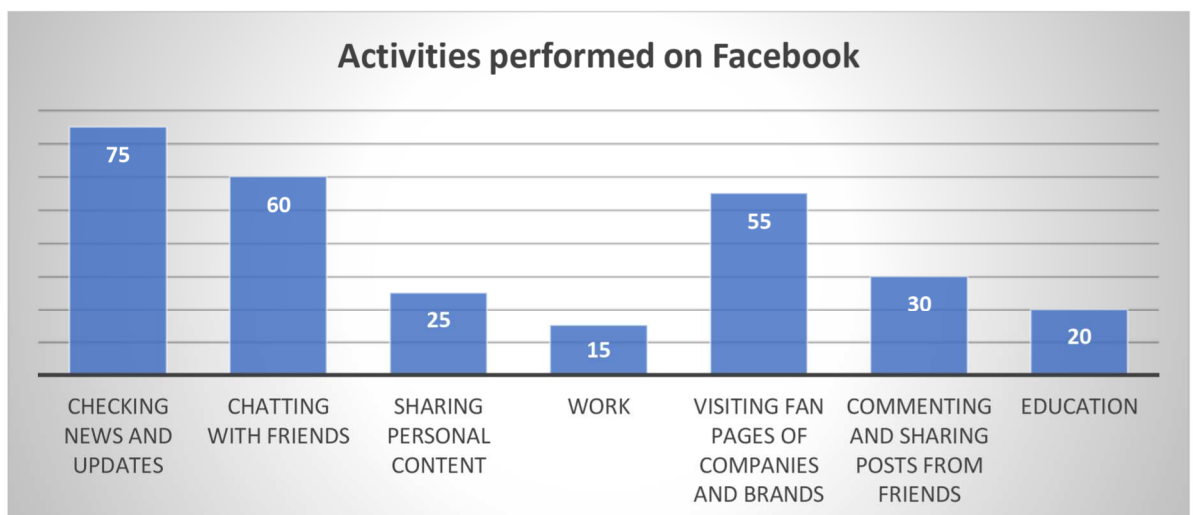


Source: SPSS by the researcher

4.4.4 Activities performed on Facebook

Data analysis revealed that consumers do several actions on Facebook. Most participants replied that (75%, 60 % in a row) use Facebook for checking news and updates and chatting with their friends. Besides the shows that (55%) they visit the brand pages, this indicated that Facebook helps them to stay attached with brands and companies through fan pages. Besides, they provided several other reasons for joining Facebook. **Figure 6** displays these activities on Facebook.

Figure 6: Activities performed on Facebook



Source: SPSS by the researcher

PART TWO

4.5 Hypotheses tests

4.5.1 Structural Equation Modeling for Hypotheses Testing

The researcher adopted structural equation modeling techniques (SEM) to test the relationships between the variables of the proposed conceptual framework. The researcher analyzed the relationships between the constructs using (AMOS) software, that Path Analysis Technic a statistical method that aims to investigate the relations between a set of observed variables.

4.5.1.1 Fit the model

Structural Equation modeling, however, relies on several statistical tests to determine the adequacy of model fit to the data, and the test of model fit as follows:

Table 18: The results of the testing model fit

Index	Test value	Acceptable value
$X^2 / (df)$	2.547	< 5.00
RMSEA	0.000	0.05 to 0.08
GFI	0.978	> 0.90
AGFI	0.951	> 0.80
CFI	1.000	> 0.95
NFI	0.991	> 0.95
IFI	1.007	> 0.95
RFI	0.973	> 0.95
TLI	1.023	> 0.95

Source: AMOS Adopted by the researcher

According to **Table 18**, all the values that indicate a good model fit, After that, the researcher performed the test of normality, according to **Table 19**, the test of normality was achieved.

Table 19: Normality Test for Variables Study

Variable	Skewness	Kurtosis
Brand love	0.259	-1.265
Brand Trust	0.08	-0.214
Customer Engagement	0.192	-0.768
Brand Loyalty	-0.213	-0.235

Source: AMOS Adopted by the researcher

As the researcher mentioned, in order to test the hypotheses, the structural equation model was used, by conducting path analysis using (AMOS) software, and **Table 20** shows the results of path analysis, as well as the Appendix F, as this method shows us the following:

- T-value that measures the possibility of an effect between the independent variable and the dependent variable related to the hypothesis, and it must be greater than its critical value (1.69).
- The P-value that related to T-value.

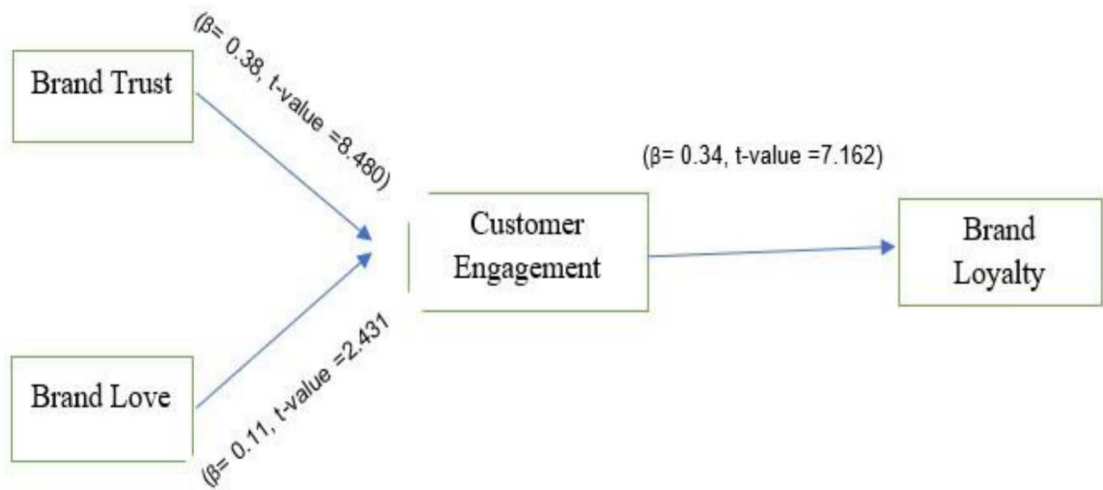
Table 20: Summary of results of hypotheses testing (Path coefficients β , t-value and Significance levels p)

	Hypothesized Path	Results	Path Coefficient β	T .test (C.R.)	Significance p
H1	Brand trust -----> Engagement	Supported	0.38***	8.460	0.000 (Significant)
H2	Brand Love -----> Engagement	Supported	0.11*	2.431	0.015(Significant)
H3	Engagement ----->Brand Loyalty	Supported	0.34***	7.162	0.000 (Significant)
Note: Significance levels * p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001					

Source: AMOS Adopted by the researcher

✚ Research Model After Hypotheses Testing

Figure 7: Path coefficients in the conceptual model



CHAPTER 5: Research Discussion

Social networking sites have deeply changed the methods of communication by firms and brands worldwide. Customers are not just passive message receivers. Facebook is one of the best common social media networking sites on which various brands have created their communities (brand pages or fan pages). Companies are generating their brand communities on Facebook with their own distinctive goals, but universally the brand communities are marketing investments of these companies to build a long-term relationship with their customers by simplifying communication between the company and its customers (Zaglia, 2013). However, many firms struggle with using social media for effective marketing communication functions, especially with keeping customers engaged (Sklar, 2013). Consequently, there is a significant need for empirical researches revealing the factors motivating consumers to interact with brands on social media so that effective social media communication strategies are framed by marketers (Tsai and Men 2014).

For making these investments benefit and increase returns, marketing managers need a better understanding of positive financial and business antecedents and outcomes (e.g., trust, loyalty, and brand love) of engaging customers on social media brand community.

5.1 Findings of the Proposed Relationships

5.1.1 Overall Results of Hypotheses Testing

Table 21: Research Hypotheses Validation

Research Question	Hypotheses	Validation
I. Are brand trust and brand love antecedents of customer engagement through Facebook brand pages in the fast-food industry in Syria?	H1, H2: Brand trust and brand love are positively related to Customer engagement in the fast-food industry in Syria through Facebook brand pages.	<i>confirmed</i>

II. Does brand loyalty an outcome of customer engagement through Facebook brand pages in the fast-food industry in Syria?	H3: Customer engagement is positively related to brand loyalty in the fast-food industry in Syria through Facebook brand pages.	<i>confirmed</i>
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Source: Adopted by the researcher

The results of the hypotheses testing in chapter 6 show that consumer engagement in Social media brand communities (Facebook brand page) are predicted by two factors related to consumers' relationships with fast food brands. These factors are brand trust and brand love, thus supporting H1 and H2. Besides, brand loyalty is predicted by customer engagement in the social media brand community (fan pages), thus supporting H3.

5.1.2 Antecedents of Customer Engagement

5.1.2.1 Relationship between Brand Trust and Customer Engagement

H1: Brand trust has a positive effect on consumers' engagement in online brand communities (Facebook brand pages). (Supported)

The testing of H1 indicates a positive and direct significant relationship between brand trust and customer engagement in Facebook brand pages ($t=8.480$, $\beta=0.38$, $p=0.000$).

The findings indicate a positive impact of consumers' perception of brand trust on their level of engagement in Facebook brand pages. Therefore, the results show that brand trust significantly impacts on consumer engagement in Facebook brand pages. In other meaning, consumers with high levels of trust in particular fast food brands have a positive influence on their behavioral and emotional engagement on their brand pages. The role of brand trust in prompting consumer behavior has been broadly cited in the marketing literature (Laroche et al., 2012). Brand trust states consumers' perceived reliability and security in brand interactions. It likewise refers to the belief that the brand functions in consumers' best interests. It contains consumers' willingness to depend on a brand (Ahmed et al., 2014). Trust has reflected an essential principle of interpersonal connections that are continuously created through frequent interactions (Coelho et al., 2018). It embraces cognitive beliefs about the brand (Delgado-Ballester

et al., 2014) besides emotional perceptions about it (Kwan et al. 2019). Without trust, consumers wouldn't continue their relationships beyond any transaction (Habibi et al., 2014). Hence, when consumers trust brands, they are enthusiastic to continue their relations with it by becoming members of their Facebook brand pages. In other words, if consumers trust a brand, they can count on its Facebook brand page (Islam & Rahman, 2016). That can be referred to as their belief in the utility of the information about the brand on the Facebook brand page. Besides, consumers can pursue assistance from other experienced consumers with the brand (Chow & Shi, 2015). In the social media context, former research displayed that trust positively influences consumers' formation of long-term relationships with online websites (Jung & Kim, 2016).

This research emphasizes the crucial role of brand trust in the context of social media. In marketing literature, numerous studies highlighted the role of consumers' brand trust in the online context. For example, Ha & Perks (2013) debated that brand trust is considered one of the most vital factors that inspire consumers to deal with brands and doing purchases online. Equally, a piece of research by Becerra & Korgaonkar (2012) presented that brand trust positively impacts consumers' online brand purchase intentions. An extra study by Hallier et al. (2014) underlined the role of source reliability in arising corporate image formation in online communities.

In consumer-brand relationships literature, trust has been discovered to be solid in the process of establishing high levels of commitment towards brands (Bowden, 2014). This can be described by the fact that consumers' trust usually inclines to reduce their hazard perception in the consumption process and usually lead to consumers' intentions (Ballester, 2014). Also, prior literature has highlighted the important role of brand trust. For instance, it was found that consumers' trust in offline brand names has a positive effect on their willingness to interact and purchase from brands online (Alan & Kabadayı, 2014). This can be explained by the fact that previous offline brand trust can encourage consumers to interact with trusted brands in online contexts.

The results of the current study are in line with prior research that underlined the importance of consumers' trust in the social media context (brand pages). For example, it was discovered that trust is an antecedent of consumer engagement in positive word of mouth on social networking sites (Chu et al., 2015). Another piece of research by Hollebeek (2011) showed the positive impact of consumers' brand trust on their

engagement with brands. Besides, Dessart et al. (2015) verified a positive effect of brand trust on consumers' engagement in online brand communities embedded on social media networks. Furthermore, it was found that brand trust guides consumers' willingness to continue their relationship with the brand through brand pages on Facebook (Kang et al., 2015).

Based on the findings of the current study, marketers should be aware of the importance of building brand trust in Facebook brand pages.

5.1.2.2 Relationship between Brand Love and Customer Engagement

H2: Brand love has a positive effect on consumers' engagement in online brand communities' Facebook brand pages. (Supported)

The testing of H2 shows that the relationship between brand love and customer engagement in Facebook brand pages is a direct and positive one (t -value=2.431, β =0.11, p =0.015).

The findings of H2 are in line with the researchers' expectations. The findings show a positive influence of brand love in social media brand communities (Facebook brand pages) on the enhancing of engagement with brands. Consumers who develop high levels of emotional connections towards these brands are emotionally, cognitively, and behaviorally engaged in fast food brand pages on Facebook.

For decades, researchers have deliberate consumers' "like-dislike" attitudes towards brands. Though, the past few years have observed an increased interest among both academics and practitioners for the study of consumers' love for brands (Batra et al., 2012; Bergkvist & Bech-Larsen, 2013; Langner et al., 2016; Sarkar, 2013). Brand love states to the degree of emotional attachment a fulfilled customer has for a particular brand name (Kang, 2015).

When consumers develop a sense of love with the brand, they can develop strong associations and interactions with brands, (Roy et al 2013). Batra et al. (2012) argue that consumers foster positive emotional associates with brands that provide them with symbolic, hedonic, and functional resources. When a brand provides consumers with hedonic, sensory, or aesthetic pleasure, it is observed by consumers to be self-connected and personally meaningful (Patwardhan & Balasubramanian, 2013).

Thus, marketers should be aware of the importance of the functional benefits of brands as well as its symbolic benefits (Kotler & Armstrong, 2016).

Consumers who develop high-level emotional bonds towards the brand, help them getting close to their favorite brands and becoming more engaged (Rauschnabel & Ahuvia, 2014).

The findings of the current study are in line with findings of some other studies, for example, Bergkvist & Bech-Larsen (2013) addressed that brand love effect in active engagement that including WOM, visiting brand websites, and buying brand merchandise. On the other hand, customers in a love relationship with a brand are predicted to positively engage, i.e., by buying its products, recommending it, and giving feedback. According to Islam and Rahman (2016) and Sarkar and Sreejesh (2014) customer engagement is an outcome of brand love. Inspecting customer engagement as a unidimensional construct, Kang (2015) and Junaid et al. (2019) also discovered that brand love leads to customer engagement. In their review paper, Palusuk et al. (2019) identified customer engagement as a vital outcome of brand love. The results of the study match with some research that both brand love and brand image have a significantly positive influence on customer engagement, which confirms the previous research such as (Bergkvist & Bech-Larsen, 2010; Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006; Doorn et al., 2010)

Based on the findings of the current study, companies should be aware of creating and strengthen emotional bonds with their customer by meet their expectation, to make them highly engaged with their brands.

5.1.3 The Outcome of Customer Engagement

5.1.3.1 Relationship between Customer Engagement and Brand Loyalty

H3: Customer Engagement on Facebook brand pages has a positive effect on Brand Loyalty. (Supported)

The Testing of H3 shows a positive relationship between Customer Engagement and brand loyalty in Facebook brand pages (t-value=7.162, β =0.34, p=0.000).

The results of H3 indicate the positive link between consumer engagement and brand loyalty. Brand loyalty is often produced from an emotional attachment towards brands. This is apparent in the definition of brand loyalty. It is defined as the extent of a

consumers' emotional attachment to a brand and involves six dimensions: willingness to repurchase, price premium, satisfaction rate, switching cost, preference over other brands, and brand commitment (Aaker & Biel, 2013). Consumers' attachments to brands are a relevant indicator of their loyalty to brands. For instance, recent research showed that even after the consumers stop buying the product for any reason, consumers might continue to show strong attachment towards their favorite brands (van Berlo et al., 2014)

This shows that the more consumers are emotionally and behaviorally engaged in the fast-food brands, the more loyal they are to these brands (So et al., 2016). Many companies are struggling to achieve brand loyalty as a target function that helps them to achieve competitively (Kwan et al. 2019). Customer engagement includes the process of sharing 'information and opinions by consumers to other people (Solomon, 2014). It is argued that customer engagement usually has a strong effect on consumer buying behavior (Kotler et al., 2016). Also, personal words and recommendations of trusted friends tend to be more credible than those coming from commercial sources (Kotler & Armstrong, 2016), Thus, recommendations from friends have the most prevailing influence on consumers (Kotler & Armstrong, 2016). Moreover, Albert & Merunka, (2013) argued that consumers' engagement with a certain brand can be a key determinant in their commitment to that brand.

The findings of H3 are consistent with empirical evidence in social media marketing literature. Brand communities play a considerable role in the construction of brand loyalty (Chang et al., 2013). For instance, Dessart et al. (2015) showed that consumers' engagement in social media brand communities has a positive effect on consumers' brand loyalty.

Moreover, the empirical models proposed by Hollebeek et al (2014) and Dwivedi (2015) emphasized that the most important outcomes of customer engagement related to behavioral intentions include: brand use intention and loyalty, besides theoretical models, also indicated that customer engagement is one of the most important components of customer behavior; It, in turn, supports the predictive and explanatory power of key customer behavior products, which include loyalty (eg, Van Doorn et al., 2010; Vivek et al., 2012; Hollebeek and Andreassen, 2018; France et al, 2015) through effect compound that supports the development of bonds or relationships among

clients on the one hand or between clients and companies or brands on the other hand (Thakur, 2016).

Recent research suggested that customer engagement on Facebook page engagement affects the brand loyalty components of these brands, which include word of mouth communications, the exchange of positive comments about these brands, and their purchase (Munzel et al., 2017). That customers who promote certain brands in others turn to other brands or engage in cross-buying behavior (Vivek et al., 2012).

Another piece of research by Jahn & Kunz (2014) argued that fan pages on social media are excellent tools for developing consumers' brand loyalty. Brand communities on social media improve the sense of community among members and contribute to creating value for both the company and members (Laroche et al., 2012). Field indications of several studies confirmed the importance of customer engagement in explaining brand loyalty (e.g. France et al., 2016; Hapsari et al., 2017; Naumann and Bowden., 2015;; Phoorithewet et al., 2016; Rather and Sharma, 2016; So et al., 2016; Thakur., 2016; Hapsari et al., 2017).

Building on the findings of the current study, marketers should be aware of the importance of engaging their customers in generating loyalty to brands and making their customers resistant to competing offers.

5.2 Conclusion

The researcher chose Facebook brand pages, due to their wide popularity among consumers and for their rapid adoption in marketing on social media networks. This study was conducted by drawing a sample from members of fast-food Facebook brand pages in Syria, whose aged between 18-29 years. The fast-food industry in Syria is one of the industries that have extensive use for Facebook brand pages in marketing. Driven by the high penetration of social media networks among their target market and due to the harsh unstable economic conditions after the Syrian Conflict, the fast-food chains started directing larger portions of their marketing budgets to social media aiming for a more effective and efficient impact on consumers. These chains have succeeded in attracting millions of consumers to become 'fans' on these pages.

The first objective of this thesis was to examine the antecedents of consumer engagement in these online communities (Facebook brand pages). The study examined

two factors of antecedents: that antecedents related to consumers' relationships with brands. By publishing an online questionnaire on fast food Facebook brand pages, the study was able to identify two antecedents related to consumers' relationships with brands, namely: brand trust and brand love.

The second objective of this study was to investigate the effect of consumer engagement on social media-based brand communities in building and enhancing brand loyalty with fast food brands and in. Accordingly, it was able to identify the positive effect of consumer engagement on the development of brand loyalty.

The researcher started his study by conducting an extensive literature review with the aim of developing a conceptual model for the drivers related to customer-brand relation and outcome of consumer engagement on social media-based brand communities (particularly Facebook brand pages).

Chapter one provided an introduction to the research. Additionally, it was useful in outlining the research objectives. Chapter two presented the literature review including which included an overview of social media in Syria and social media marketing through the online brand communities in it in particular. Additionally, it outlined the adoption of Facebook brand pages for marketing of Fast food in Syria. Chapter three presented an elaborate discussion of consumer engagement. Following chapter four highlighted the antecedents and outcome the customer engagement. Chapter five provided an overview of the methodology that was adopted by the researcher to answer the research questions and achieve the study's objectives, it also detailed the data collection and analysis methods. Chapter six presented the results of the hypotheses testing which were based on the analysis of the data that were collected through an online questionnaire during phase (quantitative phase) of data collection. In addition, it presented the descriptive statistics of the respondents' demographic variables as well as the reliability and validity of the measurement constructs. Chapter seven presented a discussion of the nature of consumer engagement in online brand communities as well as its antecedents and outcomes. Furthermore, demonstrated the research conclusion and implication, as well as the study's limitations and directions for future research.

5.2.1 Managerial and Social Implications

The current study offers Syrian marketers and decision-makers valuable managerial implications as well. As mentioned earlier, in the past few years, marketers have been increasingly interested in engaging consumers on various social media platforms. Despite that interest, recent industry surveys have indicated that most marketers had problems in engaging consumers on various social networking sites; hence, they are continuously looking for better ways to facilitate that engagement, especially on Facebook (SME, 2020). Specifically, these marketers indicated that they have been unsure of the effectiveness of their Facebook marketing. Thus, by investigating the factors which stimulate consumers' engagement on Facebook brand pages and the contribution of this engagement, this study provides a pioneering contribution that sheds light on an important concept in the context of social media, which is 'engagement' and helps in closing this gap. In summary, this study provides useful insights to marketing managers, particularly in the Syrian fast-food sector:

- ❖ This study emphasizes the fundamental role of social media in engaging young consumers through Fast food Facebook brand pages. In recent years, consumers have been improving continuous resistance and avoidance about traditional advertising media such as the) television and the radio, due to advertising mess (De Vries et al., 2017). Thus, when traditional marketing strategies are not valuable in the current competitive environment, social media with its interactive nature, act as a brilliant opportunity for companies to market their services and products. Subsequently, by engaging their customers, companies aim to generate insightful relationships that go beyond buying brands (Park & Kim, 2014). Customer engagement marketing goes beyond just selling brands to consumers, where it pursues to make brands a meaningful element of consumers' conversations and lives (Kotler & Armstrong, 2016). Based on that, social media technologies can be approved to form long-lasting engagement in place of short-term returns (Schultz & Peltier, 2017). Recent industry surveys present a bright future for the adoption of social media marketing in the Fast-food industry in Syria. For instance, it was found that active Facebook fans spend 43% on buying the brands more than non-fans (Syncapse, 2014).

- ❖ Facebook brand pages can be an ultimate and place offer excellent opportunities for companies, to engage their consumers with fast food brands.
- ❖ The ability to manage the pages successfully in terms of the right content will lead to positive attitudes of the fans towards the posts and accordingly towards the brands.
- ❖ Engaged members feedback allows companies to gain access to important information about their brands' performance, which provides a basis for improved products and services.
- ❖ Social media brand community such as Facebook pages will help the marketers in building a good brand image at relatively low cost if compared to traditional forms.
- ❖ The findings offer managers some useful insights for creating emotional bonds by providing various functional, hedonic and monetary content or benefits on their brand pages these benefits act as motivators for consumers to revisit these brand pages.
- ❖ Fast food managers should focus on posting content quite often and on a regular basis to attract attention. To keep the postings interesting, different forms of posts incorporating elements like pictures, videos, live images, voting-tools.
- ❖ Fast food should develop content that provides accurate, relevant, and timely information to customers; makes them visit their brand communities enthusiastically; and encourages them to get engaged.
- ❖ Build trust among customers and may encourage them to be advocates of the company by spreading word of- mouth, thereby contributing significantly to the company's success.

5.2.2 Research Limitations

Despite that this study provides some important managerial contributions, it is not without limitations. A few important limitations are considered:

- 1) **Sample bias:** There is a deficiency in sample collection because it did not include all Syrian regions(geographic scope), especially those out of control so the sample may not express a real representation of population or maybe not reliable, as it applies only to areas that are considered to be safe, so our results might not be generalized.

- 2) **Selection bias:** The data of the study for the quantitative stage was collected through a sample from Syria, where the sample consisted of young Syrian consumers. Therefore, the results of the study may not be generalized, and other age groups of brand pages on Facebook. Accordingly, the generalizability of the sample may be limited to young Syrian brand page users. When generalizing the findings to other countries and contexts, the economic, geographic, and cultural features in Syria should be taken into consideration when the results are interpreted.
- 3) **Longitudinal effects:** Consumers' behaviors may differ towards brands and the factors that affect their engagement over time,
- 4) **Fluency in a language :** English language is considered as a second language of the researcher, as well as the marketing master was in Portuguese language, so the researcher had a difficulties in being able to read and interpret English language research studies on the topic.

5.2.3 Directions for Future Research

This research has thrown up many questions in need of further investigation:

First, the current study was performed only on Fast food Facebook brand pages in Syria, as the most popular form of social media platform. More research is required to better comprehend consumer engagement on other social networking sites in Syria.

Second, this study explored consumers only of one industry, which is the fast-food industry in Syria. It is recommended that the study should be simulated in other industries. This is because the factors that motivate engaging with social media brand communities may differ from one industry to another.

Third, in the current study, only Facebook brand pages that are formed and operated by companies were inspected. A recommendation for future studies is to investigate social media brand communities that are managed by consumers. Thus, it will be motivating to understand the differences in consumers' responses and interactions to both company-created and user-generated content on social media.

Fourth, Future research may adopt to collect longitudinal data ways to investigate the influence of brand trust and love in encouraging engagement to determine if

consumers' relations towards brands change with time or not. This will allow tracking customer behavior and its change over time or not, and on the other hand, assess the extent of the impact of the membership period term on engagement levels and positive attitudes towards the brand.

Fifth, the current study concentrated on Syrian Facebook users. Further research is needed in other cultural groups. Thus, a cross-cultural study would determine if other nationalities reflect their relationships with social media in the same way.

CHAPTER 6: References

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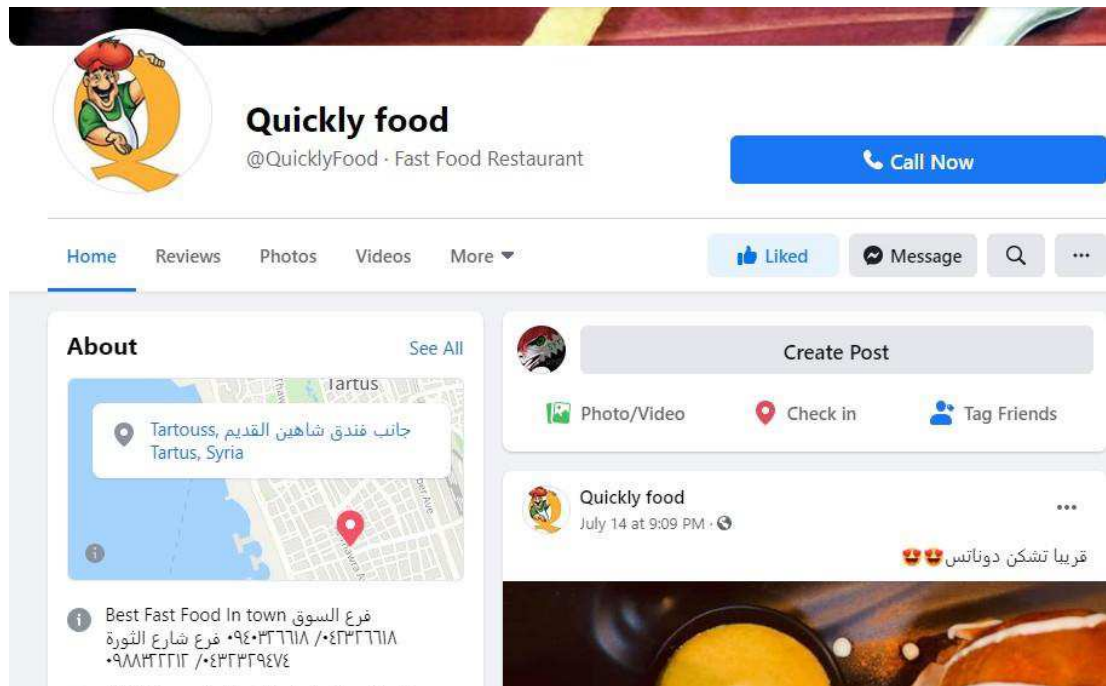
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Appendix A

Screenshots of some Fast food Pages on Facebook in Syria



Appendix B

Outputs OF Explanatory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Appendix 1– Output from SPSS - Factor Analysis– Brand trust

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.721
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	41.981
	df	6
	Sig.	.000

Total Variance Explained

Component	Total	Initial Eigenvalues		Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
		% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.533	63.317	63.317	2.533	63.317	63.317
2	.820	20.488	83.805			
3	.388	9.702	93.508			
4	.260	6.492	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Communalities			Reliability Statistics	
	Initial	Extraction	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
I feel quite confident that my fast-food brand will always try to treat me fairly	1.000	.777	.805	4
My fast-food brand has been franked in dealing with me	1.000	.639		
My fast-food brand would never try to gain an advantage by deceiving its clients	1.000	.776		
My fast-food brand is trustworthy	1.000	.689		

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Matrix^a

	Component 1
My fast-food brand has been franked in dealing with me	.890
My fast-food brand would never try to gain an advantage by deceiving its clients	.883
My fast-food brand is trustworthy	.702
In general, I like to get involved in this brand page discussions.	.684

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

Appendixes 2– Output from SPSS - Factor Analysis – Customer engagement

KMO and Bartlett's Test			Reliability Statistics	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.835	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	200.288	.945	7
	df	21		
	Sig.	.000		

Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
In general, I like to get involved in this brand page discussions.	1.000	.618
I often participate in activities of this brand page.	1.000	.502
When I am interacting with this brand page, I get carried away.	1.000	.857
When interacting with this brand page, it is difficult to detach myself.	1.000	.870
I pay a lot of attention to anything about this brand page.	1.000	.796
Anything related to this brand page grabs my attention.	1.000	.756
I concentrate a lot on this brand page.	1.000	.897

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Total	Initial Eigenvalues		Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
		% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.296	75.658	75.658	5.296	75.658	75.658
2	.766	10.943	86.601			
3	.286	4.090	90.691			
4	.264	3.768	94.459			
5	.220	3.138	97.597			
6	.110	1.577	99.174			
7	.058	.826	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Matrix^a		Rotated Component Matrix^a
	Component 1	
In general, I like to get involved in this brand page discussions.	.786	a. Only one component was extracted. The solution cannot be rotated.
I often participate in activities of this brand page.	.708	
When I am interacting with this brand page, I get carried away.	.926	
When interacting with this brand page, it is difficult to detach myself.	.933	
I pay a lot of attention to anything about this brand page.	.892	
Anything related to this brand page grabs my attention.	.870	
I concentrate a lot on this brand page.	.947	
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		
a. 1 components extracted.		

Appendix 3– Output from SPSS - Factor Analysis – Brand Loyalty

KMO and Bartlett's Test			Reliability Statistics	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.712	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	170.118		
	df	6	.970	4
	Sig.	.000		

Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
This is the only brand of fast food that I will buy	1.000	.928
I intend to keep staying with this brand	1.000	.954
I am committed to this brand	1.000	.866
I would be willing to pay a higher price for this brand over other brands	1.000	.937

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Total	Initial Eigenvalues		Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
		% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.684	92.105	92.105	3.684	92.105	92.105
2	.202	5.046	97.151			
3	.087	2.163	99.314			
4	.027	.686	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Matrix ^a		Rotated Component Matrix ^a
	Component 1	
This is the only brand of fast food that I will buy	.963	a. Only one component was extracted. The solution cannot be rotated.
I intend to keep staying with this brand	.976	
I am committed to this brand	.930	
I would be willing to pay a higher price for this brand over other brands	.968	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. a. 1 components extracted.	
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Appendix 4– Output from SPSS - Factor Analysis – Brand Love

KMO and Bartlett's Test			Reliability Statistics	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.746	Cronbach's	
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	409.865	Alpha	N of Items
	df	6		
	Sig.	.000	.848	4

Component	Total Variance Explained					
	Total	Initial Eigenvalues		Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
		% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.817	70.430	70.430	2.817	70.430	70.430
2	.888	22.210	92.640			
3	.294	5.321	97.961			
4	.213	2.039	100.000			

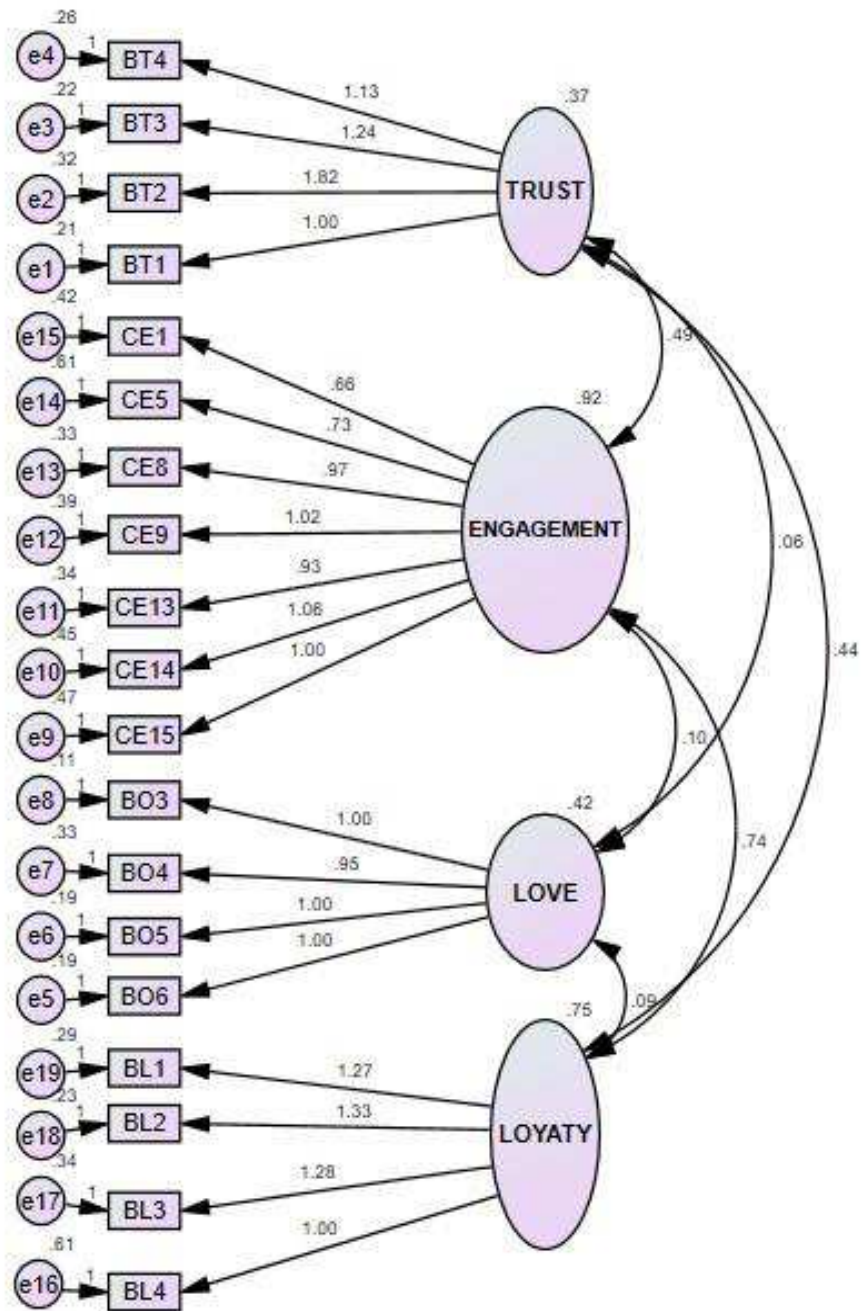
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

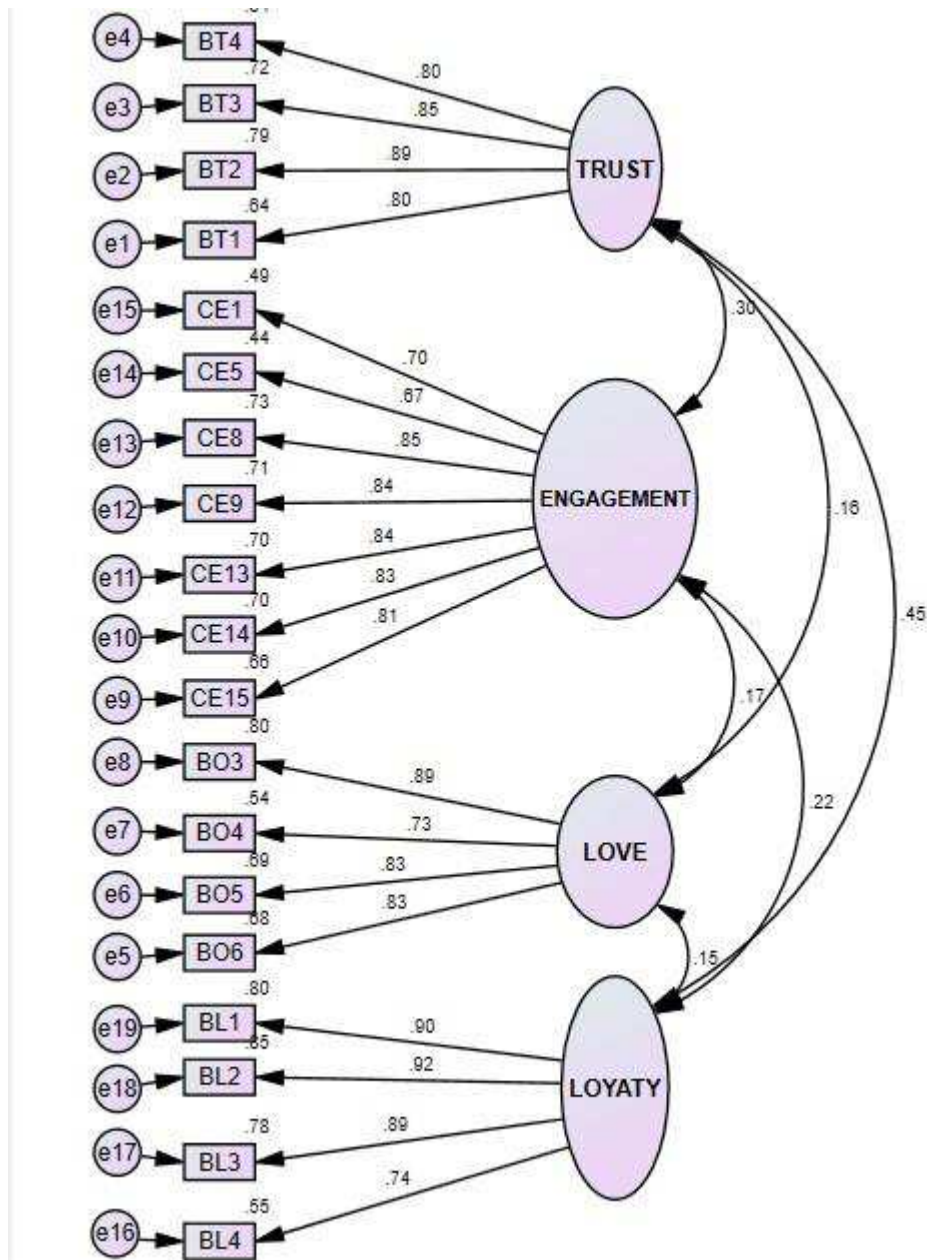
Rotated Component Matrix ^a	Component Matrix ^a
a. Only one component was extracted. The solution cannot be rotated.	Component 1
	BO3 .889
	BO4 .877
	BO5 .867
	BO6 .860

	Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. a. 1 components extracted.
--	---

Appendix C

Outputs of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)





Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
BT1 <--- TRUST	1.000				
BT2 <--- TRUST	1.817	.125	14.493	***	

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
BT3 <--- TRUST	1.236	.091	13.592	***	
BT4 <--- TRUST	1.126	.090	12.580	***	
BO6 <--- LOVE	1.000				
BO5 <--- LOVE	1.004	.074	13.557	***	
BO4 <--- LOVE	.951	.083	11.411	***	
BO3 <--- LOVE	1.004	.068	14.773	***	
CE15 <--- ENGAGEMENT	1.000				
CE14 <--- ENGAGEMENT	1.056	.075	13.995	***	
CE13 <--- ENGAGEMENT	.932	.066	14.037	***	
CE9 <--- ENGAGEMENT	1.015	.072	14.175	***	
CE8 <--- ENGAGEMENT	.970	.067	14.413	***	
CE5 <--- ENGAGEMENT	.730	.071	10.284	***	
CE1 <--- ENGAGEMENT	.664	.061	10.962	***	
BL4 <--- LOYALTY	1.000				
BL3 <--- LOYATY	1.277	.098	13.066	***	
BL2 <--- LOYATY	1.331	.097	13.692	***	
BL1 <--- LOYATY	1.266	.096	13.247	***	

Standardized Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Estimate
BT1 <--- TRUST	.799
BT2 <--- TRUST	.888
BT3 <--- TRUST	.846
BT4 <--- TRUST	.799
BO6 <--- LOVE	.827

	Estimate
BO5 <--- LOVE	.831
BO4 <--- LOVE	.733
BO3 <--- LOVE	.895
CE15 <--- ENGAGEMENT	.814
CE14 <--- ENGAGEMENT	.835
CE13 <--- ENGAGEMENT	.837
CE9 <--- ENGAGEMENT	.842
CE8 <--- ENGAGEMENT	.851
CE5 <--- ENGAGEMENT	.666
CE1 <--- ENGAGEMENT	.700
BL4 <--- LOYALTY	.742
BL3 <--- LOYALTY	.886
BL2 <--- LOYALTY	.924
BL1 <--- LOYALTY	.896

Correlations: (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Estimate
TRUST <--> LOVE	.163
TRUST <--> ENGAGEMENT	.302
TRUST <--> LOYALTY	.456
LOVE <--> ENGAGEMENT	.167
LOVE <--> LOYALTY	.154
ENGAGEMENT <--> LOYALTY	.224

Appendix D**Model Fit Summary****CMIN**

Model	NPAR	CMIN	DF	P	CMIN/DF
Default model	12	3.094	2	.579	1.547
Saturated model	14	.000	0		
Independence model	8	123.018	6	.000	20.503

RMR, GFI

Model	RMR	GFI	AGFI	PGFI
Default model	.14	.912	.891	.739
Saturated model	.000	1.000		
Independence model	.347	.109	.052	.103

Baseline Comparisons

Model	NFI Delta1	RFI rho1	IFI Delta2	TLI rho2	CFI
Default model	.991	.973	1.007	1.023	1.000
Saturated model	1.000		1.000		1.000
Independence model	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Parsimony-Adjusted Measures

Model	PRATIO	PNFI	PCFI
Default model	.333	.330	.333
Saturated model	.000	.000	.000
Independence model	1.000	.000	.000

NCP

Model	NCP	LO 90	HI 90
Default model	.000	.000	5.515
Saturated model	.000	.000	.000
Independence model	117.018	84.620	156.849

RMSEA

Model	RMSEA	LO 90	HI 90	PCLOSE
Default model	.000	.000	.082	.806
Independence model	.219	.186	.253	.000

AIC

Model	AIC	BCC	BIC	CAIC
Default model	25.094	25.392		
Saturated model	28.000	28.348		
Independence model	139.018	139.217		

Appendix E
Outputs of Path analysis

Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

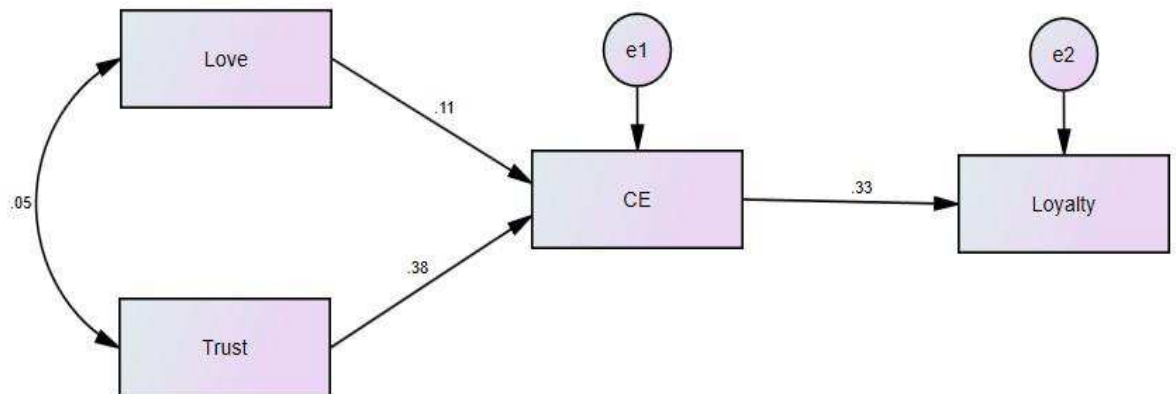
	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
CE <--- Trust	1.444	.171	8.460	***	
CE <--- Love	.428	.176	2.431	.015	
Loyalty <--- CE	.129	.018	7.162	***	

Standardized Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Estimate
CE <--- Trust	.384
CE <--- Love	.110
Loyalty <--- CE	.335

Intercepts: (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
CE	29.362	3.746	7.839	***	
Loyalty	14.880	1.055	14.100	***	



Appendix F

The output from SPSS - Descriptive statistics

Statistics

Gender

N	Valid	400
	Missing	0

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	170	42.5	42.5	42.5
	Male	230	57.5	57.5	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	100.0	

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-22	108	27.0	27.0	27.0
	23-25	170	42.5	42.5	69.5
	26-29	96	24.0	24.0	93.5
	Other	26	6.5	6.5	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	100.0	

Marital Status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Married	48	12.0	12.0	12.0
	Single	352	88.0	88.0	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	100.0	

Professional situation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Employee	32	8.0	8.0	8.0
	Self-employed	30	7.5	7.5	15.5
	Student	180	45.0	45.0	60.5
	Unemployed	8	2.0	2.0	63.0
	Worker-student	148	37.0	37.0	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	100.0	

Professional situation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Employee	32	8.0	8.0	8.0
	Self-employed	30	7.5	7.5	15.5
	Student	180	45.0	45.0	60.5
	Unemployed	10	2.5	2.5	63.0
	Worker-student	148	37.0	37.0	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	100.0	

Monthly Income

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 30000 SP	105	26.0	26.0	26.0
	30000-40000 SP	200	50.0	50.0	76.0
	40001-50000 SP	75	19.0	19.0	95.0
	More than 50000 SP	20	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	100.0	

City of residence

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Aleppo	50	12.5	12.5	12.5
	Coast	148	37.0	37.0	49.5
	Damascus	122	30.5	30.5	80.0
	Middel	42	10.5	10.5	90.5

Other	38	9.5	9.5	100.0
Total	400	100.0	100.0	

Descriptive Statistics(Brand Trust)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
My fast-food brand would never try to gain an advantage by deceiving its clients	400	3.85	.871
My fast-food brand has been franked in dealing with me	400	3.47	1.226
I feel quite confident that my fast-food brand will always try to treat me fairly	400	3.45	.925
My fast-food brand is trustworthy	400	3.36	1.251
Valid N (listwise)	400		

Descriptive Statistics(Customer Engagement)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am someone who likes actively participating in this brand page discussions.	400	4.37	1.166
I am passionate about this brand page.	400	4.03	.905
In general, I enjoy exchanging ideas with other people in this brand page.	400	3.86	.901
I concentrate a lot on this brand page.	400	3.56	1.300
In general, I like to get involved in this brand page discussions.	400	3.51	1.001
I like to learn more about this brand page.	400	3.48	1.309
I like learning more about this brand page.	400	3.34	1.269
Valid N (listwise)	400		

Descriptive Statistics (Brand Loyalty)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I intend to keep staying with this brand	400	3.89	1.298
This is the only brand of fast food that I will buy	400	3.54	.897
I would be willing to pay a higher price for this brand over other brands	400	3.49	1.083
I am committed to this brand	400	3.21	1.174
Valid N (listwise)	400		

Descriptive Statistics (Brand Love)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
This fast food brand makes me very happy.	400	4.05	1.279
I am passionate about this fast food brand.	400	3.92	1.035
This fast food brand is totally awesome.	400	3.54	.998
This fast food brand is pure delight.	400	3.51	.999
Valid N (listwise)	400		

Appendix G

Survey

Dear Respondent,

This survey aims to examine the responses and attitudes of young Syrian consumers towards fast food marketing on Facebook brand pages. This will help us in providing recommendations to local fast-food chains to enhance their marketing on social media platforms. The questionnaire takes about 3-5 minutes to complete. All replies are anonymous and private.

There are no risks in participating in this research. Please be certain that any information fed by you will be kept confidential. We thank you very much for your time and appreciate your participation in this survey.

If you have any questions, or complaints associating how the research is or has been performed, kindly contact me through e-mail at *wajdyomranina@gmail.com*.

Part I: Introductory questions:

Please select the most suitable answer:

Q1) How many hours do you spend on Facebook daily?

a) Less than 1 hour.
b) 1-2 hours.
c) 2-3 hours.
d) 3-4 hours.
e) More than 4 hours.

Q2) What are the activities that you regularly perform on Facebook?

- | |
|--|
| a) Checking news and updates. |
| b) Chatting with friends. |
| c) Sharing personal content. |
| d) Work. |
| e) Visiting fan pages of companies and brands. |
| f) Commenting and sharing posts from friends |
| g) Education. |

Q4) what is the most type of Facebook advertising that attracts your attention?

- | |
|--|
| a) Sponsored advertising on my home page. |
| b) Advertising on the side of my profile page. |
| c) Fan pages on Facebook. |

Q5) Are you a fan of one of the fast-food brand pages on Facebook?

- | |
|--|
| a) Please mention the name of the fast-food fan page that you are following or a member in.
a) Quickly Food
b) Food Sobki
c) Turtles
d) Prince Fast Food
e) Big Bite
f) Chicken Abu Ali Restaurant
g)
h) |
|--|

Q6) Duration of membership in the fast-food fan page on Facebook:

- a) Less than 1 year.
- b) 1- 2 years.
- c) 2-3 years.
- d) More than 3 years.

Part II: Antecedents of consumer engagement on Fast food Facebook brand pages

Q7) The following statements aim to assess your level of Trust with the fast-food brand that you follow on Facebook. Please indicate your level of agreement with it.

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I feel quite confident that my fast-food brand will always try to treat me fairly	1	2	3	4	5
2. My fast-food brand has been franked in dealing with me	1	2	3	4	5
3. My fast-food brand would never try to gain an advantage by deceiving its clients	1	2	3	4	5
4. My fast-food brand is trustworthy	1	2	3	4	5

Q8) The following statements aim to assess your level of Love with the fast-food brand that you follow on Facebook. Please indicate your level of agreement with it.

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. This fast food brand is totally awesome.	1	2	3	4	5
2. This fast food brand makes me very happy.	1	2	3	4	5
3. This fast food brand is pure delight.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am passionate about this fast food brand.	1	2	3	4	5

Q9) The following statements aims to assess your level of Engagement with the fast food brand that you follow in Facebook. Please indicate your level of agreement with it.

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I am passionate about this brand page.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I like to learn more about this brand page.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I concentrate a lot on this brand page.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I like learning more about this brand page.	1	2	3	4	5
5. In general, I like to get involved in this brand page discussions.	1	2	3	4	5
6. In general, I enjoy exchanging ideas with other people in this brand page.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I concentrate a lot on this brand page.	1	2	3	4	5

Part III: Outcome of consumer engagement on Fast food Facebook brand pages

Q10) The following statements aims to assess your level of Loyalty with the fast food brand that you follow in Facebook. Please indicate your level of agreement with it.

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. This is the only brand of fast food that I will buy.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I intend to keep staying with this brand	1	2	3	4	5
3. I am committed to this brand.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I would be willing to pay a higher price for this brand over other brands.	1	2	3	4	5

Part 4: Demographic data

Q11) Please indicate your gender

- a. Male
- b. Female

Q12) Please indicate your age

- a. 18-22
- b. 23-25
- c. 26-29
- d. Other

Q13) Marital status

- a. Single
- b. Married

Q14) Please indicate your city of residence

- a. Damascus
- b. Aleppo
- c. Middle
- d. Coast

Q15) Professional situation

- a. Student
- b. Worker-student
- c. Employee
- d. Self employed
- e. Unemployed Graduates

Q16) Monthly Income

- a) Less than 30000 SP.
- b) 30000-40000 SP.
- c) 40001-50000 SP.
- d) Above 50000 SP.

Thank you for your time and cooperation