Enhancing the Customer Brand Engagement through Brand Authenticity: The Mediating Role of Marketing Agility

submitted by

Eman Hassanien Elsayed Taha

Assistant Lecturer- Business

Administration Department,

Faculty of Commerce- University of Sadat City

E-mail: eman.taha@com.usc.edu.eg

Wael Kortam

Professor of Marketing, Business

Administration department, Faculty of

Commerce, Cairo University

E-mail: Wael.Kortam@bue.edu.eg

Mohamed Fawzy El-Bardan

Associate Professor of BusinessAdministration& Vice-dean for

postgraduate studies & research

Faculty of Commerce, University of Sadat City

Email:Mohammed.fawzy@com.usc.edu.eg

ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7098-778

Enhancing the Customer Brand Engagement through Brand Authenticity: The Mediating Role of Marketing Agility
submitted by

Eman Hassanien Elsayed Taha

Assistant Lecturer- Business Administration

Department,

Faculty of Commerce- University of Sadat City

E-mail: eman.taha@com.usc.edu.eg

Wael Kortam

Professor of Marketing, Business

Administration department, Faculty of

Commerce, Cairo University

E-mail: Wael.Kortam@bue.edu.eg

Mohamed Fawzy El-Bardan

Associate Professor of BusinessAdministration& Vice-dean for

postgraduate studies & research

Faculty of Commerce, University of Sadat City

Email:Mohammed.fawzy@com.usc.edu.eg

ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7098-778

ABSTRACT

- *Objective*

The study primary purpose is to determine the nature of the relationship between brand authenticity (BA) and customer brand engagement (CBE), Moreover, identifying the nature of the relationship between brand authenticity and marketing agility (MA),

in addition to, disclosing the relationship between marketing agility and customer brand engagement, and finally, identifying the mediator role of marketing agility in

the relationship between brand authenticity and customer brand engagement for Egyptian telecom companies.

- *Methods*

This research philosophy comes from a positivistic paradigm which shows that research problem arises from the literature itself. The research sample includes represented in all the Egyptian telecom companies' customers which are Vodafone, Etisalat and Orange. Structural equation modelling (SEM) will adopt a partial least square (PLS) to test the research questions.

- *Findings*

The research reached significant relationship between BA and CBE with a correlation coefficient (r) of (0.792) at a significant level less than (0.01), and significant relationship between BA and MA with a correlation coefficient (r) of (0.755) at a significant level less than (.01), and significant relationship between the MA and CBE with a correlation coefficient (r) of (0.743) at a significant level less than (0.01), and the significance of the path coefficients in the final proposed model can't be ascertained in order to verify the quality of the overall model according to the recorded values of ; Chi Square 0.001, goodness of fit index (GFI) of 0.999 (For the saturated model a perfect 1), and a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) 0.098.

- *Conclusion*

   The study results indicate the existence of a significant relationship between BA and the participation of customers of the brand in the Egyptian telecommunications companies are the subject of study, and the existence of an important role for MA

as a mediator variable in the relationship between the authenticity of the brand and CBE which gives an indication that ways to enhance CBE depend on BA and MA, where the high level of BA (continuity ,credibility ,integrity ,symbolism) and the high level of MA (proactive market sensing ,speed ,flexibility ,responsiveness) increases the level of CBE at the macro level and for each of its dimensions (cognitive processing, affection factor, activation factor) separately.

Keywords: Customer Brand Engagement (CBE), Brand Authenticity (BA), Marketing Agility (MA).

Introduction:

The increasing relevance between the concept of brand authenticity (BA) and the marketing discipline has gained research interest. This is best expressed in the statement that searching for authenticity by the customer, this is one of modern marketing keystones (Brown et al., 2003). Moreover, the customers' role in brand engagement has been examined, which has been considered crucial to a brand's success (Newman & Dhar, 2014). The definition of destination BA indicates the extent to which customers find that a destination brand is continuous (when it is true to itself), credible (devoted to the customer), honest (i.e., responsible), and symbolic (when it is valuable to help them be themselves). To exemplify, abundant destinations apply technologies, as virtual reality, to demonstrate authenticity and strengthen their connections with customers (Morhart et al., 2015).

Marketing agility (MA), therefore, arose as a new exemplar of meta-dynamic competence. It consists of distinctive capabilities. These include market perception,

flexibility, speed, and responsiveness. These four capabilities allow companies to recognize chances in a shifting environment and

respond quickly by reforming the marketing tactics (Zhou et al., 2019). However, MA has not received the attention it desrves (Poolton, 2006). Also, some scholars envisage agility to be a critical dynamic skill (Blome et al., 2013) because it, as a higher- order skill, helps companies to gain, amalgamate, reconfigure resources and make themselves actively competitive (Vickery et al., 2010).

The concept of customer engagement became noticeably effective in current marketing literature. As a new approach. It fosters brand relationships with customers (Gligor et al., 2019). Nevertheless, the BA role in predicting customer engagement with brands still needs to be studied. Therefore, it is now necessary for brand managers to understand how BA engages customers in a meaningful and integrated way, basically because of numerous benefits (customer loyalty) provided to companies by brand engagement. Conversely, this research raises the question whether BA can generate CBE which can eventually translate into positive customer responses to the brand (Kumar & Kaushik, 2022).

Most studies of use and satisfaction have essentially presumed that satisfaction is a persistent phenomenon which arises from preexistent needs (Sundar & Limperos, 2013). Yet, meeting the current needs of the customer could be inadequate to constantly attract and retain customers. In today's business environment, which is turbulent and competitive, engagement cannot be guaranteed even with high-quality content and interactive components. Rather, companies must be flexible in

adapting to unexpected changes in the market. Advances in information technology infrastructures) the Internet of Things [IoT] and big data analytics) have provided companies with the opportunity to collect and analyze customer data in order to foresee their future purchasing patterns. Therefore, companies are expected to not only meet the customers' stated needs, but also to proactively react to changes in their preferences in return for their personal data and privacy (Chuah et al., 2018). Failing to respond effectively can seriously affect the customer-company relationship and eventually lead to losing the company's market share to their competitors (Zhou et al., 2018). Though lacking proper consideration in the literature of the information systems (Chuang, 2019), agility was recognized in creating customer relationships, implying the potential application of agility in the explanation of the brand phenomenon (Chuah et al., 2020).

Therefore, this research aims to propose the conceptual model to represent the relationship between (BA), (MA) and (CBE). The conceptual model could be used for further research empirically. The result would explore the linkage between research variables. It should encourage companies to have authenticity and agility in a future position.

The National Telecommunication Regulatory Authority in Egypt is keen to improve the quality of telecommunications services provided to users, and through the report issued by the (National Telecommunication Regulatory Authority) in Egypt, 2021, the following:

• 44 regions out of a total of 81 regions suffer from poor service quality.

• For Vodafone: 21 out of 81 regions suffer from poor quality of voice and data services.

• For Orange: 31 out of 81 regions suffer from poor quality of voice and data services.

•For Etisalat: 37 out of 81 regions suffer from poor quality of voice and data services.

It was also noticed a decrease in the average data download speed for Vodafone and Etisalat, with the stability of Orange for the same period.

The National Telecommunications Regulatory Authority also issued the third report on the opinion of mobile phone users to measure their satisfaction with the services provided to them. This report issued in October 2021 clarified the following:

• None of the four companies exceeded 80% in customer satisfaction with the company's branches.

• As for the waiting time inside the branches, the percentage of satisfaction for all chakras did not exceed 75%, meaning that the percentage of anger exceeded 25%.
• In terms of the diversity of systems and offers, the highest company got 65% of customer satisfaction.

• As for the quality of the voice service, it did not reach 80% of the company in terms of the quality of the voice, and the highest company got 78%.

• Regarding the quality of the Internet service, none of the three companies reached 75%, and the highest company was 74% in the quality of the Internet service, and customer anger exceeded 25% of the four companies, i.e., almost more than a quarter of the customers of mobile companies in Egypt are angry at the four telecom companies.

• The percentage of customer service was similar to the quality of internet service: the highest company reached 76% and the lowest company reached 61%.

• With regard to solving complaints, the percentage of complaints received in the four companies did not exceed 70%, i.e., close to a third of Internet and mobile users in Egypt suffer from problems in resolving their complaints.

• As for billing and accounting accuracy, no company reached 70% and the highest company reached 68% in accounting accuracy, which means that more than a third of users suffer from inaccurate billing and accounts with the three mobile companies in Egypt.

Some previous studies have explained that service quality is associated with customer engagement (Lee et al., 2018). Customer engagement indicates emotional attachment to a brand or medium, causing more interaction with the object (Thakur, 2018). Roy et al. have highlighted how significant is the ease of service on customer engagement (Roy et al., 2018). Chang et al. opine that overall service

quality has a considerable impact on customer engagement behavior. Consequently, service quality is an important antecedent of customer engagement.

Moreover, this study seeks to examine the direct and indirect relationships between BA and CBE and study the mediating role effect of MA on this relationship in the context of Egyptian telecom companies. Hence, the research problem is determined in need to identify to what extent BA influence the CBE for Egyptian telecom companies; and examine the mediating role of MA on that relation. Thus, the research problem can be framed into specific questions, including the following:

(1) What relationship between BA and CBE for Egyptian telecom companies?

(2) What relationship between BA and MA for Egyptian telecom companies?

(3) What relationship between MA and CBE for Egyptian telecom companies?

(4) What role MA plays in the relationship between BA and CBE among Egyptian telecom companies?

Mainly, this research objective is to examine the direct and indirect relations between BA and CBE. In addition, it investigates the mediating role of MA on that relationship in the context of the Egyptian telecom companies. This main objective is divided into some sub-objectives as follows:

(1) Determining the nature of the relationship between BA and CBE for Egyptian telecom companies.

(2) Identifying the nature of the relationship between BA and MA for Egyptian telecom companies.

(3) Disclosing of the relationship between MA and CBE for the Egyptian telecom companies.

(4) Identifying the mediator role of MA in the relationship that exists between BA and CBE for Egyptian telecom companies.

Literature Review & Hypotheses Development:

(1) Brand Authenticity:

The concept of BA was associated, according to earlier conceptualizations, with one specific, well-defined meaning (Safeer et al.,2023). However, there is a consensus that BA has a wide range of meanings. Authenticity is a well-established concept in various disciplines. This includes philosophy, anthropology, and sociology. Conceptual definitions of authenticity are not the same in these disciplines. However, authenticity is consistently related to being historically based and established in both tradition and heritage.

BA gained attention in marketing literature as the early as 2000 onward. When authenticity is translated into the context of branding, a brand is considered authentic when it is identified as accurate and genuine (Gilmore & Pine, 2007) while inspired by sincere passion (Beverland et al., 2008). Academic studies on BA evolved side by side with a current concentration on authenticity through

corporate brand management. Firms have recognised (BA) as a possible attribute for differentiation. Some scholars even presume that such development is a significant alteration in the marketing history, noting that it is not quality which differentiates anymore but authenticity (Gilmore & Pine, 2007).

Customers' desire for authenticity is well established centuries ago (Grayson & Martinec, 2004). However, commercializing, regulated mass production and products homogenization have revived the current specific value of BA (Rose & Wood, 2005). In the global and hyper-competitive market of present day, customers are increasingly using products to reconnect with places, history, culture, and each other (Napoli et al., 2014). This revived sense of authenticity can also be recognized as a reflection to times when customers look for something reliable which is privileged with continuity (Moulard et al., 2016)

In the era of growing commercialization, customers are inundated with pointless offers of the market (Morhart et al., 2015). Consequently, whilst this chaos, aware companies consider market offerings that approach clients closer to authenticity (Audrezet et al., 2020). In addition, marketers are progressively using authenticity to place their business and obtain strategies of product attraction (Lu et al., 2015).

Applying the authenticity concept to contemporary customer research has critically pushed the discussion and the application of authenticity in marketing literature (Rose & Wood, 2005). Afterwards, authenticity in customer research was discussed on a larger scale (Joo et al., 2019; Napoli et al., 2014). Also, the application of authenticity was slightly expanded to brand context (Dwivedi & McDonald, 2018)

to explore its prominent antecedents and consequences. Admittedly, a sense of continuity is provided by authenticity among changes and doubts (Fritz et al., 2017). It also provides a distinctive position for brands (Lu et al., 2015), enhances receptiveness of messages (Audrezet et al., 2020), gives credibility towards brands (Becker et al., 2019), helps realize customer satisfaction (Bruhn et al., 2012) and may also help explain customer brand attitudes (Napoli et al., 2014).

Applying and realizing the potential of authenticity necessitates that the marketers must understand the nature of authenticity (Schallehn et al., 2014). In this respect, authenticity was explained several times. For example, Beverland & Farrelly (2010) delineated that authenticity encapsulates 'authenticity', 'genuineness' and 'truth'. According to Schallehn et al. (2014) authenticity indicates 'original' and it is contrasted with 'copy'. In their works, Bruhn et al. (2012) trustworthiness describes authenticity. Likewise, authenticity has been approached from several frameworks including objectivist, constructivist, existentialist (Chhabra, 2010; Wang, 2007), postmodernist, and realistic (Reisinger & Steiner, 2006). Three perspectives, namely objectivist, constructivist, and existentialist encompass all the current conceptualizations authenticity.

In the Objectivist perspective, authenticity is regarded as an objectively measurable quality of an entity that experts can assess (Moulard et al., 2016). From the viewpoint of the constructivist perspective, authenticity projects from one's beliefs, potentials, and prospects onto an entity (Wang, 1999). Finally, the existentialist perspective defines authenticity as being associated with self rather than an

external entity and includes the concept that authenticity indicates being true to oneself (Golomb, 1995).

Promoted by the conceptual support of psychological property theory, authenticity helped advance research in various settings. It has especially obtained popularity in customer research due to its more comprehensive utilization in brands, representing the enduring relationship of brands with customers (Thürridl et al., 2020). A study by (Vikas & Vikrant, 2021) has found the significance of authentic brands in creating a psychological feeling of brand ownership.

Numerous sources of BA were examined according to indexical and iconic authenticity. Regarding brand index cues, pertinent studies indicate that brand permanence, actual age, and behavior (e.g., keeping promises, weak commercial intentions, social responsibility, and not overly pursuing market trends) are essential drivers of BA (Carsana & Jolibert, 2018). keeping promises, ineffective commercial intentions, social responsibility, and not overly tracking market trends) are important drivers of BA (Carsana & Jolibert, 2018). By means of comparison, the claimed history, tradition, heritage, and association with culture are significant iconic cues that outline BA (Fritz & Schoenmueller, 2017).

BA heritage is remarkably important in authentic brand communication that associates brands with brands' longevity, historical traditions, or places of production and craftsmanship. For example, in brand communication, the short sentence "since [years]" which expresses brand's longevity indicates the extent to which customers distinguish the brand as a long-standing brand. In addition, a

brand's longevity can indicate brand management's sincerity and passion, which customers view as expressive of a genuine concern in the product or service. Empirical research also assists this hypothesis by showing that heritage cues successfully induce customer approaches of BA (Safeer et al., 2023).

The desire of the customers for authentic commodities and brands thus arises in the current market context characterized by standardization and homogenisation (Guèvremont & Grohmann, 2018). Conceptual literature posits that customers value (BA) as a that shows continuity between the past and the present. Concerning positive outcomes of perceived BA, substantial evidence is provided by empirical literature for positive customer responses to a range of relevant psychological and behavioral variables. First, through sorting these findings hierarchically based on effects, brand authenticity positively impacts on brand attitude. Second, perceived BA increases quality anticipations. Third, perceived BA raises purchase intentions, in the same manner as choice and positive word of mouth. Finally, BA increases customer WTP's price premium (Fritz et al., 2017). Moreover, the positive relationship between BA and customer brand trust is further proven by numerous studies (Portal et al., 2019).

(2)   Marketing Agility:

Several definitions have been generated by a multitude of agility studies originating from various business disciplines. These include manufacturing, management, and marketing (Eckstein et al., 2015). However, standard features arise from these definitions. First, agility is an organizational ability. Companies with solid agility

show a better adaptation to market changes than competitors do. Second, the definitions indicate that agility's key features are proactivity, responsiveness, speed, and flexibility. Third, agility involves feeling and reaction (Eckstein et al., 2015). Third, agility is envisaged as both proactive and reactive. It includes both proactively creating change and quickly identifying and responding to opportunities and. Fourth, agility can be defined as domain specific. Companies can be agile in one or more areas as, for example, processes which are customer-based or development of products (Roberts & Grover, 2012).

The agility concept emerging from research has been integrated into strategies and operations of the business. Then, it has expanded to other areas such as manufacturing, supply chains and marketing (Russell & Swanson, 2019). However, the MA conceptualization, a relatively new phenomenon, is still in its beginnings (Hagen et al., 2019). Also, definitions from two separate perspectives were provided by literature. Using the theoretical lens of dynamic capabilities, the first perspective deals with MA as meta-capabilities which help companies promptly adapt their tactics to changing requirements of the market (Zhou et al., 2019). The other perspective posits that MA encompasses different strategic procedures and concentrates on how reforming strategies can enhance the firm's response to change (Gomes et al., 2019).

Discussions about MA are in the early stages. MA is defined according to (Accardi-Petersen. 2011) as being able to outperform a company's competition in the market by being agile enough to readjust resources as required. Nevertheless, this

definition does not greatly help develop frameworks necessary to measure this concept, which is important in the early phases of these discussions. MA is suggested to allow companies to change their marketing efforts to respond promptly to the changing needs of the customers, market circumstances and strategic growth requirements. Companies which have high MA prepare for change. In these companies, departments of marketing collaborate with other departments to satisfy the needs of the customers and businesses simultaneously (Zhou et al.,2019).

MA implies proactiveness that's why Companies expect customer demand, acquire and retain customers. Also, MA suggests dynamic research to recognize current and possible needs. Poolton (2006) suggests that MA is an element of the strategic framework of agility. Manufacturing flexibility and MA are significant for companies to compete successfully.

Customer flexibility means that companies can detect and react to customer-based opportunities (Roberts & Grover, 2012). MA is definable as the companies' ability to both expect, sense and react quickly to market opportunities. Agile companies are therefore, not limited to merely observing customer-related opportunities and gathering information from competitors, merchants, and service providers.

The marketing excellence includes actions that can be classified into three categories which are content based. Namely these are the priority of the marketing ecosystem, the priority of the end-user, and the priority of MA. This result is associated with the character of marketing excellence as a sort of strategy. These

activity categories are labelled as marketing excellence priorities to reflect the strategic means companies must achieve organic growth. In addition, MA stimulates the modularizing tasks and processes that make organizations able to act flexibly and faster than within traditional structures such as departmental areas (Homburg et al., 2020)

MA addresses possibilities at a tactical level by enabling companies to respond swiftly to new circumstances (Osei et al., 2019). For example, when a company enters an overseas market, it must determine whether to adopt or replicate its national marketing program. MA can help the company recognize and understand those needs. Further, companies can adjust their marketing program to suit the host country (Gomes et al., 2019). In this respect, MA is crucial for emerging markets which operate in AE markets. Guillén et al., (2009) opine that emerging companies which operate in AE markets should increase their knowledge of key abilities and competition in these markets so that they can improve their performance. Also, emerging markets encounter difficulties when they integrate into a new market with different market circumstances including shifting customer demands, negative perceptions about product quality etc. These circumstances result in persistent changes in the competitive environment of emerging companies in AE markets (Williamson et al., 2013).

AE markets offer opportunities for EM companies to grow. However, to act effectively in AE markets, these companies need unique capabilities. Hence, through proactive detection, agility, and responsiveness, marketing agility can help

EM companies cope with shifting demands and risks which arise from the high complexity of AE markets (Osei et al., 2019).

Considering these concepts, this study deals with agility from a marketing viewpoint. Thus, MA is definable as the company ability to expect, spot marketing opportunities proactively, respond quickly, flexibly to those opportunities to meet the market's needs and better meet customer needs (Zhou et al., 2019).

Agility does not necessarily rely on information processing. However, market orientation is embedded in information processing. Therefore, information is acted on in accordance with after it has been collected and distributed across departments. It is noteworthy that companies can act without the information being spread across departments. When information is spread across departments, responses might be delayed, and flexibility could be reduced. Agility induces quickly and creatively reconfiguring existing options that benefit unforeseeable business changes (Nemkova, 2017). On the contrary, market orientation does not necessitate neither being speed nor flexible.

(3)   Customer Brand Engagement:

CBE underlines the relationship between the customer and the brand (Brodie et al., 2011). Recently, CBE has gained attention in branding and as critical to successful branding and customer loyalty (France et al., 2016). Service quality and perceived value are recognized as main drivers of brand loyalty. Therefore, brand engagement can have a more considerable impact (So et al., 2016). Moreover, the significance of

understanding CBE is highlighted in previous studies (Algharabat et al., 2021). Also, recent studies have investigated the concept growth of customer engagement between brands in a diversity of environments (Kumar & Kaushik, 2020).

The engagement concept has been approached in different disciplines, such as political science, sociology (Morton et al,.2012), or psychology and organizational behavior. However, it is not until 2005 when the terms customer engagement and CBE emerged within the marketing and service literature (Brodie et al., 2011).

From the viewpoint of Dolan et al., (2019) customer engagement was regarded as a psychological condition that surpasses involvement since it includes interactive and co-creative experiences with a focus object. Dwivedi (2015) suggests that customer loyalty is a customer state of mind, which is described as positive, fulfilling, characterized by drive, devotion and absorption.

A broader definition of customer engagement was provided by Pansari & Kumar., (2017) from their viewpoint, it encompasses all customers' activities which are to a company. They also define customer engagement as the procedures a customer builds value for a company that contributes either directly through acquisitions or indirectly through non-purchase responses (Pansari & Kumar., 2017).

Gupta et al., (2018) broadened the framework of customer engagement to a worldwide context when they considered the cultural and economic factors of different countries. Kumar thinks that companies should engage with their customers in a beneficial way. Four metrics were identified by Kumar et al., (2010)

Namely, these are customer longevity (CLV), customer recommendation, customer influencer and customer knowledge. With these metrics, companies can measure customer loyalty score. Out of these four metrics, only CLV is precisely associated with a company's profit, while the other three metrics are related to the profit in an indirect way.

Practices of customer engagement were classified in accordance with different phases of the company-customer relationship. Consequently, how companies deal with prospects/new customers differs greatly from how they handle existing/loyal customers and those who consider switching. Customer engagement is admittedly liable to different conceptualizations, there is an increasing agreement among scholars that customer engagement is a construct which is described as 'context-specific' (Hollebeek et al., 2019).

CBE can be defined as a positively assessed brand-related activity which can be described as cognitive, emotional, and behavioral. This activity of the customer happens either during or related to focal customer/brand with different thoughts (Hollebeek et al. 2014; Harrigan et al., 2017). Therefore, the study of Hollebeek et al. (2014) envisages the conceptualization of brand engagement by customers.

Attitudes associated with customer engagement are further than buying (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Customer engagement happens when customers show readiness to interact with either brands or companies such as stakeholders (Kumar, 2018). Also, customer engagement is envisaged as multidimensional concept which puts together emotional, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions (Rosado-Pinto et al.,

2020). Besides these dimensions, some scholars add a social dimension of customer engagement (Vivek et al., 2012).

Various perspectives indicate the behavioral characteristics of the customer-business association and initiate CEBs: customer engagement behaviors (Van Doorn et al., 2010). These behaviors include word-of-mouth, endorsements, blogging, writing from reviews or assisting other customers. It was proposed that brands use online and social media strategically to generate customer engagement and, consequently, increase enjoyment (Rietveld et al., 2020). We, however, opine that such a strategy may not be workable for all brands. Also, the success of this strategy depends on to what extent entertainment initiatives are identified as authentic to the brand (Eigenraam et al., 2021).

The study follows this methodology. We use a scale which was developed specifically for measuring customer brand engagement for the social media context (Hollebeek et al., 2014). This approach spans three dimensions. The first is the "Cognitive Processing." By cognitive processing it is meant the degree of both brand thought processing and embellishment of a customer in a specific customer-brand interaction. The second dimension is "Affection" which reflects the extent of positive brand-related affect a customer has in a specific interaction and activation between customer and brand. The third, and final, dimension is "Activation" which indicates the amount of time, effort, and energy invested in a brand in a specific customer-brand interaction (Chen et al., 2020).

(4)   The relationship between BA and CBE:

Authentic brands are connected to customers' positive behavioral and psychological reactions. Many previous studies assessed the positive psychological impacts of BA on brand attitude (Spiggle et al., 2012), psychological brand ownership (Kumar & Kaushal, 2021), customer- brand relationships (Oh et al., 2019), product quality (Moulard et al., 2016), and brand credibility (Napoli et al., 2014). Based on the behavioral outcome perspective of BA, purchase intent, brand loyalty and recommendation readiness were examined under different conditions. To wrap up, previous studies focusing on the implications of brand authenticity highlighted how significant is the customer insight into BA to determine customer psychological and behavioral reactions. Nevertheless, further in-depth studies are still needed to examine the association between BA and CBE, which is an essential goal of marketing.

Perceptions of an authentic brand are likely to connect customers in various ways since authentic brands increase customers' interactive and co-creative practices (Morhart et al., 2015), that is essential for customer brand engagement (Hollebeek et al., 2014). Also, BA emphasizes a customer's identity (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010). When a consumer strongly associates with a brand, he is more likely to connect with it and to exhibit identification such brand through performing additional role behaviors such as product feedback, proactive communication, word- of-mouth, etc. Customers look for authenticity for consuming brand. Hence, they basically react to perceived authentic brands (Rose & Wood, 2005).

Further dimensions of perceived BA are credibility, integrity, and continuity. These dimensions invoke attitudes of loyalty and truth in customers towards that brand. This can eventually be expressed in insights regarding the brand's commitment to its customers (Morhart et al., 2015). To exemplify, credibility shares some similarities with trust, reliability, honesty and sincerity. Credibility may appeal to customers with perceived authentic brands as an incentive for accomplishing their expectations. Continuity reflects the topicality and historicity of a brand. Continuity shares similarities with heritage and origin. Consequently, continuity generates a sense of involvement, since customers may express a desired behavior towards authentic brands (Kumar & Kaushik, 2022).

Similarly, integrity is similar to virtue and commercial disinterest. It potentially engages customers because when a brand performs appropriately and morally it develops a sense of authenticity, and integrity stands for ethical purity and staying faithful to their morals. Lastly, there are similarities between symbolism and connection benefits on one hand, and brand self- connection on the other. It echoes a possible source for identity construction. Symbolism can promote engagement as customers advocate brands that tone with their identity. For example, customers are inclined to engage with brands that encompass factors of credibility, continuity, integrity, and symbolism (Kumar & Kaushik, 2022). Consequently, bridging the gap in the association between different dimensions of perceived BA and customer BA, this study assumes the following:

H1: BA has a positive impact on CBE for Egyptian telecom companies.

(5) The relationship between BA and MA:

Bashman (2019) study shows that a sufficing strategic approach to serve a concurrent marketing brand strategy does not exist. Managers should constantly look for unconventional ways to create revenues. However, the management executive level does not underpin agility and is more devoted in the bottom line rather than serving customer needs. New technologies should also be adopted by the managers. Besides, managers have to enhance the budget to grow sources to adapt a digitized perspective to the market.

BA supports purpose. It is also fundamental in communicating brands to efficiently deploy customer attitudes on social media to create profound brand relationships. Meaningful content also reinforces purpose to improve the insight into a brand's value, it is where you can exhibit the concept of leadership to the viewers, creating trust and finally brand loyalty. The content should be honest. Otherwise, by no means will it be able to communicate since consumers see pushing tactics through fake product. This also necessitates that when mistakes happen, business has to be fully accountable for the brand to maintain its continuity. It frequently consults agility since prompt response times to customer enquiries and disputes should be dealt with urgently. Altogether, these indicate that a positive BA will enhance customers' MA. This study thereby hypothesizes:

H2. BA has a positive impact on MA for Egyptian telecom companies.

(6) The relationship between MA and CBE:

Interactive marketing research considers customer engagement a prerequisite for achieving superior brand performance (Chahal & Rani, 2017). Literature proposed several definitions of customer engagement. A sample of examples will suffice. Bowden (2009) describes customer engagement as "a psychological process that develops the principal procedures through which loyalty can be preserved for consumers who habitually purchase a service brand". For Blasco- Arcas et al. (2016) customer engagement is definable as "a concept that interactively draws the attention of individuals to a brand, as well as the empowerment which results from the interaction with the brand".

Perceived agility includes being able to quickly recognize and address customer needs. Therefore, we argue that perceived agility reinforces customer engagement. Agility was proved to boost the brand's ability to engage with its customers and was associated with greater customer satisfaction (Gligor, 2014). Perceived brand interactivity (Gligor et al., 2019) and brand satisfaction (Van Doorn et al., 2010) have positive impact on customer engagement. Therefore, keeping in mind the theoretical reasons, we argue that perceived agility of brand social media can influence customer loyalty. When customers view a brand as flexible, they highly likely show a noticeable degree of customer engagement (Gligor & Bozkurt, 2021). Thereby we suppose the following hypothesis:

H3: Marketing agility has a positive impact on customer brand engagement for Egyptian telecom companies.

These arguments in the literature review indicate that MA has a positive and significant impact on CBE and BA. The researcher will study MA as a mediating variable between CBE and BA. Based on this explanation, the hypothesis formulated is shown as follows:

H4: MA has a mediating role between CBE and BA for Egyptian telecom companies.

METHODOLOGY:

It is regarded the research design is crucial for realizing the research's reliability and validity. Yin (2003) announced that it is an outline used to make the research. Kothari (2004) confirmed that a research design is the conditions' explanation for the goal of collecting and analyzing data which are needed for resolving the research problem or realizing the research purpose. The Purpose of the Research

The present research falls into one of these categories. It is causal in nature which identifies the relationships between BA and CBE.

Research strategies have been adopted for identifying sources of collecting data and imitations of the research. For benefiting the researcher, those strategies assist in providing data that can answer the research questions or accomplish the research objectives. Neergaard & Ulhøi (2007) and Saunders et al. (2009) mentioned that several types of research strategies exist such as survey, experiment, case study, grounded theory, and action research. The researcher focused only on survey strategy to mention.

Saunders et al. (2012) announced that survey is frequently adopted to answer the questions of who, what, how much and how many. Gray (2013) stated that this strategy used in explanatory (Causal) research and associated with the deduction approach. Ordinarily, questionnaires and interviews that are structured in nature are used for collecting data that are quantitative. The affiliations among the research variables are described by the data. Saunders et al. (2009) added that this strategy employs statistical analysis to accomplish the results of the research.

The present study aims to explore the association between brand authenticity and customer brand engagement. Survey is generally adopted in this research in order to answer the what, how much, and how many questions. Furthermore, this strategy associates with the deduction approach and collects data in a quantitative way. Moreover, a probable clarification for the association between the variables of the research can be proposed by using the data which were collected from the survey strategy. Thus, the survey is the best strategy adopted in this research because of its strong correlation with the philosophy of the research, deduction approach and quantitative method.

(1)   Data Collection:

There are two common methods for collecting data, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data are collected to handle a certain topic. These data could be quantitative in nature such as questionnaires and structured interviews, or qualitative in nature such as interviews which are semi-structured or unstructured, observations, focus groups, and case studies. Moreover, to any researcher, data that

are secondary are accessible in order to obtain only what is needed. So, they are not collected for specific topics. Primary data were collected by the researcher using a questionnaire directed to the study's population and in-depth interviews with a random sample of customers of telecommunication companies in Egypt, where the data was then analyzed and used to test the hypotheses in order to reach the results. Furthermore, secondary data were collected from the National Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (NTRA) in order to know the firms' names, numbers, and locations.

Two techniques are used for data collection: Questionnaires and interviews. Only questionnaires are adopted in this study. Saunders et al. (2009) acknowledged that questionnaire usually can be used for explanatory research. Gray (2013) confirmed that the questionnaire survey is a very useful method for gathering data and has the subsequent advantages:

•   The questionnaire can be completed quickly by the respondents.

•   The analysis of data for closed questions is simple.

•   The data inflow is fast and from many people.

•   It costs less in terms of both time and money, in case of being compared to the cost of an interview.

•   Questionnaires permit greater anonymity. Subsequently, it is appropriate when the survey handles sensitive issues.

(2) The study variables and their measures:

The current research explored the role of BA (Independent variable) in CBE (Dependent variable). AM the mediator variable. Measurement items were approved from different scales from previous studies. The scale items had to be reshaped to suit the Egyptian language and make the questionnaire understandable. For measuring the variables, a five-point Likert scale was used ranging from strongly disagree

(1) to strongly agree (5).

(A)   The independent variable: Brand Authenticity:

We adopted a scale using different brands and customer samples into a 15-item four- factor correlated model (continuity, credibility, integrity, symbolism) (Morhart et al.,2015). The independent variable is shown in table (1).

Table (1)

Independent variable's measurement items

	Brand Authenticity scale	
No	**Item**	**Reference (s)**
1	A brand with a history	
2	A timeless brand	
3	A brand that survives times	
4	A brand that survives trends	
5	A brand that will not betray you	
6	A brand that accomplishes its value promise	
7	An honest brand	Morhart et
8	A brand that gives back to its consumers	al.,2015
9	A brand with moral principles	
10	A brand true to a set of moral values	
11	A brand that cares about its consumers	
12	A brand that adds meaning to people's lives	
13	A brand that reflects important values people care about	
14	A brand that connects people with what is really selves	
15	A brand that connects people with what is really important	

(B) The dependent variable: CBE:

Items for measuring CBE were adopted from (Hollebeek et al.,2014). The scale consists of 10 items. The dependent variable is shown in table (2).

Table (2)

Dependent variable's measurement items

Customer Brand Engagement		
No	Item	Reference (s)
1	Brand (Vodafone, Orange, Etisalat) captures my attention.	
2	I think about the brand (Vodafone, Orange, Etisalat) a lot when I'm using it.	
3	Using brand (Vodafone, Orange, Etisalat) stimulates my interest to learn more about it.	
4	I feel strong positive emotions when I use brand (Vodafone, Orange, Etisalat).	Hollebeek et al.,2014
5	Using brand (Vodafone, Orange, Etisalat) makes me happy.	
6	I feel good when I use brand (Vodafone, Orange, Etisalat).	
7	I'm proud to use brand (Vodafone, Orange, Etisalat).	
8	I spend a lot of time using brand (Vodafone, Orange, Etisalat), compared with other destination brands.	
9	Whenever I'm in the market for a destination brand, I usually think about brand (Vodafone, Orange, Etisalat).	
10	Brand (Vodafone, Orange, Etisalat) is one of the brands I usually use when I use a destination brand	

(C) The mediator variable: Marketing Agility:

Items for measuring MA were adopted (Khan, 2020; Zhou et al., 2019). The brand image scale consists of 18 items. The mediator variable is shown in table (3).

Table (3)

Mediating variable's measurement items

No.	Item	Reference (s)
	Marketing Agility scale	
1	We continuously scan and sense emerging market trends and events in our export market.	
2	We are quite alert to changing market condition in export market.	
3	Everyone in our company is sensitized to listen to latent problems and opportunities in the export market.	
4	We anticipate our export market trends and events accurately before they are fully apparent.	Khan, H.,2020
5	We effectively listen to, understand, and rapidly respond to relevant export marketplace conversations.	Zhou et al.2019
6	We can meet customer's changing needs faster than our competitors.	
7	We compress time from product concept to marketing to respond quickly to the changes in customer needs.	
8	We can quickly change our product mix in response to changing market opportunities.	
9	We are fast at changing activities that do not lead to the desired effects.	
10	We are flexible when dealing with the changes in market requirements.	
11	We make adjustment in dealing with the requirements to cope with changing circumstance.	
12	When some unexpected situation arises, we would rather work out with creation/adjustment rather than keeping the original offering.	
13	We quickly decide how to respond to competitor price changes	

(1) Research Population and Sample Size:

As mentioned before in the research context, this research will focus on the Egyptian telecommunication companies which are: Vodafone Egypt, Orange Egypt and Etisalat Egypt. So, the population under the investigation in this research will be all the Egyptian customers of the telecommunication companies (Vodafone Egypt, Orange Egypt and Etisalat Egypt). The sample unit in this research will be the customers of the telecommunication companies in Egypt.

According to the large size of population (88, 000,000) of this study, so to obtain a representative sample for the study, the researcher used the following formula to calculate convenient sample size. This calculation takes a sampling error of (+/- 5%), 95% confidence level and a maximum variation in the population (i.e. 50%). The results from the mentioned computation have resulted a sample size of 384.

The following table (4) Number of customers of the telecommunication companies:

Table (4)

Number of customers of the telecommunication companies

Company name	N
Orange Egypt	28,700,000
Vodafone Egypt	39,400,0000
Etisalat Egypt	19,900,000

Source: Developed by the Researcher according to The National Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, May2021.

As mentioned before, this study uses the quantitative research approach, in particular online survey method to receive data from participants. Online surveys are low in costs and it is possible to reach high number of people.

The present study created an online survey using Google Forms. Google Forms is a common tool for creating surveys and forwarding them. Google Form is easy to use and has many useful features to create an appealing online survey. The link for the study is generated by Google Forms and can be easily distributed afterwards.

To check whether there are any technical issues with the online survey or if any questions are hard to understand a pilot test is done before the official distribution of the questionnaire. A pilot test is basically a pretesting of the questionnaire, before collecting the data. After a pilot test with 15 participants from the generation Y, the online survey is contributed to family, friends and co-workers (all within generation Y) using personal emails in a first step.

Furthermore, the online survey is distributed to respondents by using the social media platform Facebook. Due to the social media relation of this PhD thesis, a good way to find respondents and gather data from them is to use social media.

The primary data collection procedure took from February,2023 to May,2023. All answers are automatically collected by Google Forms and ultimately, the data can be exported into an Excel sheet for further data cleaning purposes.

(2)   Data Analysis:

According to Hague (2006) and Kolkailah (2010), selecting the relevant statistical technique depends on the nature or characteristics of data, and the relevance of the technique to the research question (Gupta, 2002).

Therefore, several methods of analysis were employed:

(6/1) Sample distribution according to the demographic variables (gender, age, education, status, income) regarding the frequency and the percentage.

(6/2) Cronbach's Alpha to test the reliability of questionnaires. Cronbach's alpha" for testing internal consistency reliability of used multi-item measurement scale, as Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill (2009) stated that Cronbach's alpha is the most regularly utilized method to "measure internal consistency."

(6/3) Confirmatory factor analysis" ("CFA") for testing the construct validity of used measurement scales, as well as "Multiple regression analysis" for hypotheses testing, because the "multiple regression analysis" aims to anticipate the changes that may occur in the "dependent variable" depending on its "covariance with the independent variables"(Kothari, 2004).

(6/4) Calculating descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) for all main variables and their dimensions. These techniques are used to identify the rate of the presence of each variable in the research sample and the rate of its dispersion .

(6/5) To identify the strength, direction, effect and significance of relationships among variables, correlations, regression analysis and structural equation modeling (SEM) were used.

Hypothesis Testing:

The researcher relied on a number of different sources when formulating the hypotheses of the study, especially the previous studies that are directly and indirectly related to the current study Problem, and based on the problem of the study and the questions related to it, the hypotheses of the study were formulated in the form of proof, which will be tested in order to reach the results of the study.

A Correlation matrix was conducted to investigate the relationship between the research variables; Customer Brand Engagement, Brand Authenticity, and Marketing Agility. Pearson correlation was used to measure the direction and the strength of the relationship between independent and dependent, Mediator variables, if the level of significant is less than (0.05) it indicates that the presence of a significant relationship and if the significance level is greater than (0.05) this indicates that there is no statistically significant relationship.

Table (5)

Pearson Correlation between Research Variables

Dimensions		Brand Authenticity	Customer Brand Engagement	Marketing Agility
Brand Authenticity	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.00		
	N	343		
Customer Brand Engagement	Pearson Correlation	0.792**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	
	N	343	343	
Marketing Agility	Pearson Correlation	0.755**	0.743**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	343	343	343

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results of the statistical analysis (SPSS).

** Significant level 0.01

The previous table (5) shows the following results:

➢ **The coefficient of correlations is equal (0.755), which means that there is a positive relationship between independent variable (Brand Authenticity) and mediating variable (Marketing Agility).**

➢ **The coefficient of correlations is equal (0.792), which means that there is a**

positive relationship between independent variable (Brand Authenticity) and dependent variable (Customer Brand Engagement).

➢ **The coefficient of correlations is equal (0.743), which means that there is a positive relationship between dependent variable (Brand Authenticity) and mediating variable (Marketing Agility).**

Table (6) shows a significant positive relationship between the research variables with a Pearson correlation coefficient is ranging between (0.743) and (0.792) at p-value (level of significant less) than 0.01.

Table (6)

Pearson correlation between Brand Authenticity and Customer Brand Engagement

Relationship	r	Sig.
Brand Authenticity and Customer Brand Engagement	0.792	.01**

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results of the statistical analysis (SPSS).

** Significant level 0.01

A statistically significant relationship is indicated by table (6) between the Brand Authenticity and Customer Brand Engagement with a recorded correlation coefficient (r) of (0.792) at a significant level less than (.01). Thus, H1 is accepted were a significant positive impact of Brand Authenticity on Customer Brand Engagement was proved. Moreover, the researcher resorted to the following regression analysis, as shown in the following table (7) and figures (6/9) and (6/10), in an effort to conclude the extent to which Brand Authenticity impacts Customer Brand Engagement.

Table (7)

The Effect of the "Brand Authenticity" on "Customer Brand Engagement" using Liner Regression

Relationship	r	Sig.
Brand Authenticity and Customer Brand Engagement	0.792	.01**

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results of the statistical analysis (SPSS).

** Significant level 0.01

As demonstrated in the above table (7) at a level of significance of less than 0.01, the recorded coefficient of determination R^2 concludes that Brand Authenticity explains 62.7% of the total change in Customer Brand Engagement while the recorded t-test value of 23.963 and F-test value of 574.207 confirm a statistically significant impact of all Brand Authenticity's dimensions on Customer Brand Engagement. Subsequently, the following equation (1) was formulated to express the concluded results:

Customer Brand Engagement = 0.437 + 0.792 Brand Authenticity

Figure (1)   **Figure (2)**
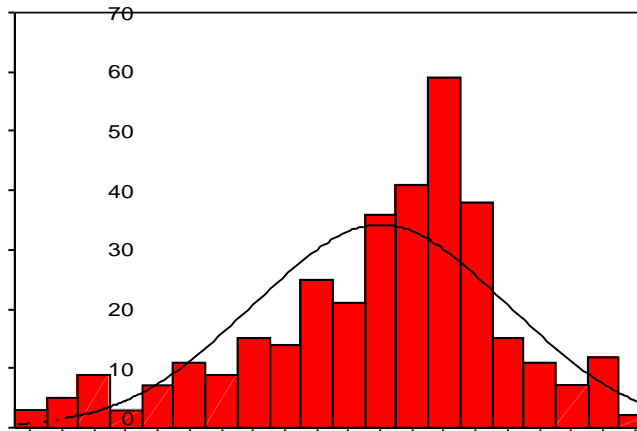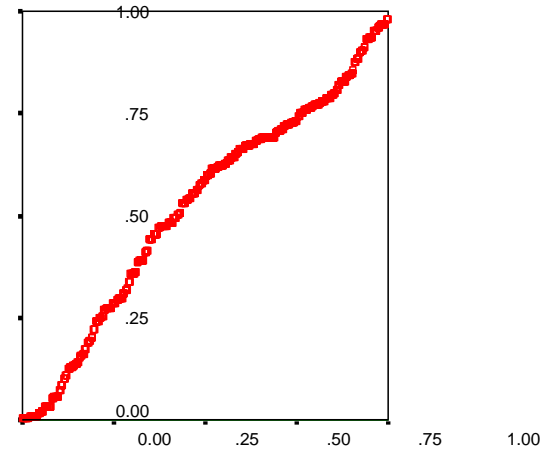
Histogram

Dependent Variable: Customer Brand Engagement

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residua

Dependent Variable: Customer Brand Engagement

Regression Standardized Residual

Observed Cum Prob

Table (8)

Pearson Correlation between Brand Authenticity and Marketing Agility

Relationship	r	Sig.
Brand Authenticity and Marketing Agility	0.755	.01**

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results of the statistical analysis (SPSS).

** Significant level 0.01

A statistically significant relationship is indicated by table (8) between the BA and MA with a recorded correlation coefficient (r) of (0.755) at a significant level less than (.01). Thus, H2 is accepted were a significant positive impact of BA on MA was proved. Moreover, the researcher resorted to the following regression analysis.
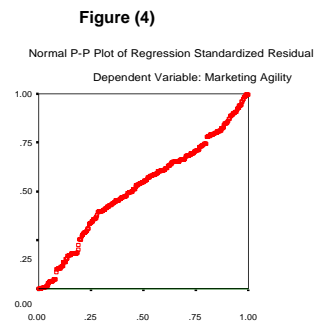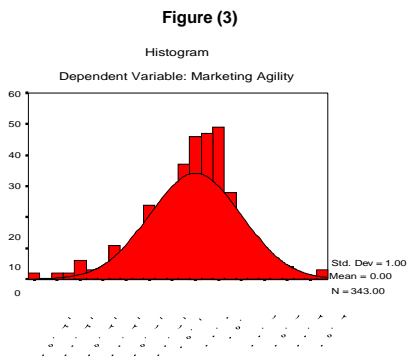
Table (9)

Effect of the Brand Authenticity" on "Marketing Agility" using Liner Regression

R^2	F. test		t. test		β	Independent variables
	Sig.	Value	Sig.	Value		
57%	0.01**	452.866	0.08	1.710	0.265	constant
			0.01**	21.281	0.755	Brand Authenticity

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results of the statistical analysis (SPSS).

**Significance level 0.01

As demonstrated in the above table (9) at a level of significance of less than 0.01, the recorded coefficient of determination R^2 concludes that Brand Authenticity explains 57% of the total change in MA while the recorded values of t-test (21.281) and F-test (452.866) confirm a statistically significant impact of all BA's dimensions on MA. Subsequently, the following equation (2) was formulated to express the concluded results: BA = 0.265 + 0.755 BA x

Figure (3)

Histogram

Dependent Variable: Marketing Agility

Std. Dev = 1.00
Mean = 0.00
N = 343.00

Figure (4)

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

Dependent Variable: Marketing Agility

Source:

Prepared by the researcher based on the results of the statistical analysis (SPSS).

** Significant level 0.01

As demonstrated in the above table (11) at a level of significance of less than 0.01, the recorded coefficient of determination R2 concludes that Marketing Agility explains 55.3% of the total change in CBE while the values of t-test (20.525) and F-test (421.281) confirm a statistically significant impact of all MA dimensions on CBE. Subsequently, the following equation (3) was formulated to express the concluded results:

CBE = 0.454 + 0.743 MA

Figure (5)

Histogram

Dependent Variable: Customer Brand Engagement

Std. Dev = 1.00
Mean = 0.00
N = 343.00

Regression Standardized Residual

Figure (6)

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

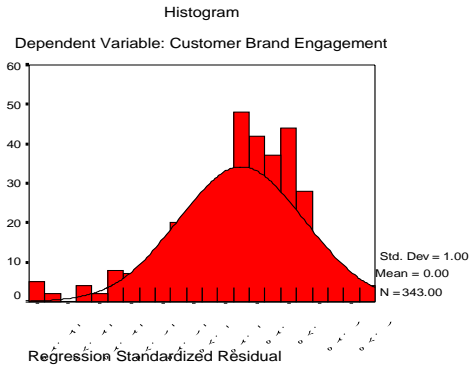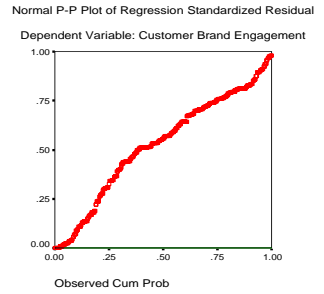Dependent Variable: Customer Brand Engagement

Observed Cum Prob

H4: The indirect effect of BA on CBE through the MA.

a- Observed Endogenous Variables: include dependent variable CBE, and MA.

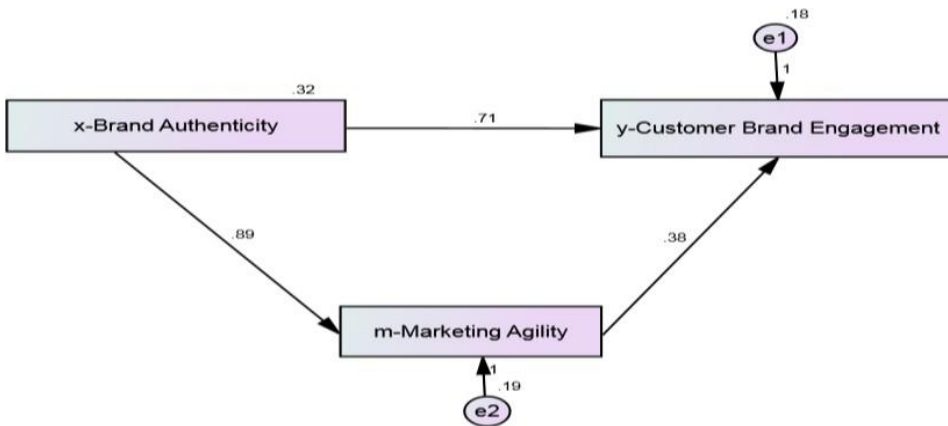## b- Observed Exogenous Variables: Include independent variable BA.

Figure (7)

Table (12)

Estimates of the coefficients of the structural model "Enhancing the CBE through BA: The

Mediating Role of MA"

Path			Estimate	S.E	Direct Effects	Indirect Effects	Total Effects	C.R.	P- Value	Sig.
MA	⬅	BA	0.755	0.042	0.891	0.00	0.891	21.312	0.001**	Sig.
CBE	⬅	MA	0.537	0.062	0.377	0.00	0.377	11.440	0.001**	Sig.
	⬅	BA	0.338	0.052	0.706	0.236	0.942	7.201	0.001**	Sig.

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results of the

statistical analysis (AMOS).

**Significant level at the 0.05

As shown in the above table (12) at a level of significance of less than 0.05, estimates of the coefficients of the structural equation modeling (SEM) concludes the following:

- BA has a positive significant effect on MA recording a critical path (C.R.) value of 21.312.

- MA has a positive significant effect on CBE of a C.R. value of 11.440.

- BA, has a positive significant effect on CBE with a C.R. value of 7.201.

- The value of Direct Effects (0.706), the value of Indirect Effects (0.236), and the value of Total Effects (0.942).

Table (13) demonstrates the path coefficients significance in the final proposed model can't be ascertained in order to verify the quality of the overall model according to the recorded values of; Chi Square 0.001, goodness of fit index (GFI) of 0.999 (For the saturated model a perfect 1), and a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) 0.098.

Table (13)

Quality Assessment Criteria of the Structural Model

Ser.	Indicators	value
1	Chi square	0.001
2	The goodness of fit index GFI	0.999
3	The root mean square error of approximation RMSEA	0.098

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results of the statistical analysis (AMOS).

Testing statistical significance level of indirect effect by using Sobel test, to measure the significance of internal MA which mediates the relationship between BA and CBE. The previous results are not significant until after the Sobel test is performed.

The Sobel test depends on the tabular value (Z-value = 1.96), where the value of the Sobel test if it is greater than the tabular value (Z-value = 1.96) we conclude that the model (BA → MA

→CBE) is a model of a mediator variable, which mean that the indirect effect is real and the converse is true, if the value is less than the table value (Z-value = 1.96). To calculate the value of the Sobel Test, the researcher used the following Sobel test equation:

$$Z\,value = \frac{ab}{\sqrt{b^2 S_a^2 + a^2 S_b^2}},$$

were, a is the regression coefficient of the independent variable on the mediator variable, b is the regression coefficient of the mediator variable on the dependent variable, Sa is standard error of the relationship between the independent variable and the mediator variable and Sb is standard error of the relationship between the mediator variable and the dependent variable

FINDINGS

the researchers tested seven main hypotheses, the research results can be presented and discussed through the following:

- The research sample was generally inclined towards the agreement on BA statements with a mean of 3.66 and a standard deviation of 0.56 with a relative importance of 73.26%. The mostly agreed upon statements were; (A brand that survives times), (A brand with a history), (A timeless brand), (A brand that survives trends), , with relative importance (85.60%), (85.20%), (83%), respectively. While the least agreed upon statements were, (An honest brand), (A brand that reflects important values people care about), (A brand that gives back to its consumers), with Relative importance (67.60%), (67.40%), (66.40%), respectively.

- The research sample was generally inclined towards the agreement on the CBE statements with a mean of 3.37 and a standard deviation of 0.75 with a relative importance of 67.59%. The mostly agreed upon statements were; (Brand (Vodafone, Orange, Etisalat) captures my attention), (Brand (Vodafone, Orange, Etisalat) is one of the brands I usually use when I use a destination brand), with relative importance

of (72.20%), (71.20%), and (66.80%) respectively. While the least agreed upon statements were; (I feel strong positive emotions when I use brand (Vodafone, Orange, Etisalat)), (I'm proud to use brand (Vodafone, Orange, and Etisalat)), (I think about the brand (Vodafone, Orange, Etisalat) a lot when I'm using it), with relative importance (65.20%), (64.60%), and (64.20%) respectively.

- The research sample that was generally inclined towards the agreement on the MA statements with a mean of 3.52 and a standard deviation of 0.67 with a relative importance of 70.55%, The mostly agreed upon statements were; with relative importance of (70.55%), (71.20%), (70.60%), (69.20%), and (66.80%) respectively. While the least agreed upon statements were; (We periodically review our product/service development efforts to ensure that they are in line with what customers want), (When we came up with a great marketing plan, we are able to implement it in a timely manner), (We respond to our customers' product/service needs), (We make adjustment in dealing with the requirements to cope with changing circumstance), (If a major competitor were to launch an intensive campaign targeted at our customers, we would implement an immediate response), with relative importance (73.60%), (73.40%), (73.20%), (73%), and (72.80%) respectively. While the least agreed upon statements were; (Everyone in our company is sensitized to listen to latent problems and opportunities in the export market), (We anticipate our export market trends and events accurately before they are fully apparent), (When some unexpected situation arises, we would rather work out with creation/adjustment rather than keeping the original offering), with relative importance (68.40%), (67.00%), and (66.60%) respectively.

- the general inclination of the research sample is on the agreement on the dimensions of the CBE, BA and MA) with mean value of (3.59), a standard deviation of (0.61), and with a relative importance of (71.86%). The most important dimension was BA followed by MA and CBE, whose relative importance were (73.26%), (70.55%), and (67.59%) respectively.

- The coefficient of correlations is equal (0.755), which means that there is a positive relationship between independent variable (BA) and mediating variable (MA).

- The coefficient of correlations is equal (0.792), which means that there is a positive relationship between independent variable (BA) and dependent variable (CBE).

- The coefficient of correlations is equal (0.743), which means that there is a positive relationship between dependent variable (BA) and mediating variable (MA).

- A statistically significant relationship between the BA and CBE with a recorded correlation coefficient (r) of (0.792) at a significant level less than (.01). Thus, H1 is accepted were a significant positive impact of BA on CBE was proved.

- at a level of significance of less than 0.01, the recorded coefficient of determination R^2 concludes that BA explains 62.7% of the total change in CBE while the recorded t-test value of 23.963 and F-test value of 574.207 confirm a statistically significant impact of all BA's dimensions on CBE.

- A statistically significant relationship between the BA and MA with a recorded correlation coefficient (r) of (0.755) at a significant level less than (.01). Thus, H2 is accepted were a significant positive impact of BA on MA was proved.

- at a level of significance of less than 0.01, the recorded coefficient of determination R^2 concludes that BA explains 57% of the total change in MA while the recorded values of t-test (21.281) and F-test (452.866) confirm a statistically significant impact of all BA's dimensions on MA.

- A statistically significant relationship between the MA and CBE with a recorded correlation coefficient (r) of (0.743) at a significant level less than (.01). Thus, H3 is accepted were a significant positive impact of MA on CBE was proved.

- at a level of significance of less than 0.01, the recorded coefficient of determination R^2 concludes that MA explains 55.3% of the total change in CBE while the recorded values of t-test (20.525) and F-test (421.281) confirm a

statistically significant impact of all MA's dimensions on CBE.

at a level of significance of less than 0.05, estimates of the coefficients of the structural equation modeling (SEM) concludes the following:

- ✓ BA has a positive significant effect on MA recording a critical path (C.R.) value of 21.312.

- ✓ MA has a positive significant effect on CBE of a C.R. value of 11.440.

- ✓ BA has a positive significant effect on CBE with a C.R. value of 7.201.

- ✓ The value of Direct Effects (0.706), the value of Indirect Effects (0.236), and the value of Total Effects (0.942).

- ✓ The demonstrates that the significance of the path coefficients in the final proposed model can't be ascertained in order to verify the quality of the overall model according to the recorded values of; Chi Square 0.001,

goodness of fit index (GFI) of 0.999 (For the saturated model a perfect 1),

and a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) 0.098.

CONCLUSIONS

The discussion of the results of the current study resulted in the existence of some indications at the level of theory and practice, which are evident as follows:

(1) At theory level: The current study confirmed the important role of BA in enhancing CBE, and this study added MA as a mediator variable in the relationship between BA and CBE in the Egyptian telecommunications companies under study, and then the current study adds to the relatively few literature available in this field study Where the researchers did not monitor any precedent in this regard in the Egyptian marketing environment - from the research, including working to expand the research base in this aspect of marketing studies, and the agreement of the results of this study with regard to the level of Brand Authenticity, the level of customer brand engagement, and the level of marketing agility with the results of many studies conducted in Arab and foreign countries, indicates the existence of general practices in marketing with different cultures.

(2) At application level: The results of the current study and what it confirmed of the existence of a statistically significant relationship between BA and the participation of customers of the brand in the Egyptian telecommunications companies are the subject of study, and the existence of an important role for MA as a mediator variable in the relationship between the BA and CBE in the Egyptian telecommunications companies under study It gives an indication that ways to enhance CBE depend on BA and MA, where the high level of BA (continuity,

credibility, integrity, symbolism) and the high level of marketing agility (proactive market sensing, speed, flexibility, responsiveness) increases the level of CBE at the macro level and for each of its dimensions (cognitive processing, affection factor, activation factor) separately.

Research limitations:

Despite the contribution of this research in highlighting the importance and opportunities to enhance CBE through BA and MA, there are some determinants that surround the research and must be referred to, which are the determinants associated with the subject of the research and its scope, the measurement process, as well as the time determinants associated with the design of the research and the procedures for its implementation, where the most important of these determinants are as follows:

(1) academic question about the phenomenon or philosophy of BA, MA and CBE as much as it specifically addresses the role of MA as a mediator variable in the relationship between BA and CBE, and in this area the researcher indicates that this range of research limits is the cornerstone in identifying the type and nature of the relationship between BA and CBE, also, BA and MA, in addition MA and CBE, which is also the basic rule that Egyptian telecommunications companies should start with when studying and trying to identify this role and other roles.

(2) In relation to the previous scope of the research limits, this research is not directed to evaluate the performance of the Egyptian telecommunications companies under study, and then does not aim to evaluate the areas of

work of the Egyptian telecommunications companies as much as it seeks to identify the role of MA as a mediator variable in the relationship between brand authenticity and CBE, so the researcher relied on the analysis of the perceptions of customers of the Egyptian telecommunications companies under study About the values of the variables of this research and the extent to which these companies are willing to accept the concepts and principles of MA, BA and CBE, while evaluating the performance of telecommunications companies requires many methodological elements to complete the evaluation process such as setting comprehensive evaluation standards, various methods of evaluation (methodological guide, interviews, observations and field observations on the ground, recorded data sources and actual documents), community Integrated research (leaders, customers, workers).

(3) The reliance on the use of perceptual measures is the most important limits of this research, where cognitive measures suffer from bias and errors in estimation, and future studies must be interested in using objective measures based on the transformation of applied reality into elements with weighted values that actually reflect this reality and reduce the chances of bias and error.

(4) Despite the importance of the participation of all parties operating in the Egyptian telecommunications companies under study in evaluating the role of marketing agility as an intermediate variable in the relationship between brand authenticity and customer brand engagement, this

research was limited to analysing customer perceptions only, which means that the data was obtained from a single source, and therefore the consequences may be affected by the so-called common bias.

(5) Place limitations: This research will be conducted on Egyptian telecom companies' customers. This study will be limited on users of three mobile companies in Egypt, Vodafone, Orange and Etisalat due to the authenticity of their brand.

(6) Topic limitations: This research will tackle the brand authenticity with its four factors (correlated model (continuity, credibility, integrity, symbolism) (Morhart et al.,2015), and marketing agility with its modified scale of four variables (proactive market sensing, speed, flexibility and responsiveness) (Khan,2020)., as well as customer brand engagement in terms of (cognitive processing, affection and activation), (Hollebeek et al.,2014).

Further research

The theoretical and practical aspects of the current study can be strengthened by focusing in the future on the following aspects:

(1) The current study focused on Egyptian telecommunications companies as an applied field, but due to the novelty of the concept of brand authenticity, marketing agility and customer participation of the brand, the current study suggests that future studies address other applied sectors, whether service or production, public or private, in order to expand the circle of external credibility of the study model.

(2) The current study focused on the entrance of the determinants to study, understand and analyze the concept of brand authenticity, marketing agility and

customer participation of the brand, but good understanding and analysis will not be complete without addressing the range of possible outputs of these concepts, so the current study proposes to study the role of marketing agility in achieving a number of outputs such as new product development, financial performance, innovation, marketing excellence, purchase intentions, customer satisfaction and loyalty, improving the mental image, and the marketing status of the brand.

(3) There are some other variables worth studying that can be tested in the context of the proposed study model, such as brand fidelity, brand sacredness, and brand activism, which may provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between the variables under study, and other variables such as brand psychological ownership and brand resonance can be centered.

(4) Future studies can focus on examining the role of some other modified variables in that framework, such as the customer's desire for uniqueness of the relationship between brand authenticity and customer engagement of the brand.

(5) The role of brand authenticity can be examined on some other dependent variables such as the competitiveness and value of the brand.

REFERENCES

-Accardi-Petersen, M. (2011). Agile marketing. Berkeley, CA: Apress. how firms renew their resource base. British Journal of Management, 20, s9–s24

-Algharabat, R., Rana, N. P., Alalwan, A. A., Baabdullah, A., & Gupta, A. (2020). Investigating the antecedents of customer brand engagement and consumer-based brand equity in social media. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 53, 101767.

-Audrezet, A., de Kerviler, G., & Moulard, J. G. (2020). Authenticity under threat: When social media influencers need to go beyond self-presentation. Journal of business research, 117, 557-569.

-Beverland, M. B., & Farrelly, F. J. (2010). The quest for authenticity in consumption: Customers' purposive choice of authentic cues to shape experienced outcomes. Journal of Customer Research, 36(5), 838–850.

-Blome, C., Schoenherr, T., & Rexhausen, D. (2013). Antecedents and enablers of supply chain agility and its effect on performance: A dynamic capabilities perspective.International Journal of Production Research, 51(4), 1295–1318

-Brodie, R. J., Hollebeek, L. D., Jurić, B., & Ilić, A. (2011). Customer engagement: Conceptual domain, fundamental propositions, and implications for research. Journal of service research, 14(3), 252-271.

-Brown, S., Kozinets, R. V., & Sherry, J. F. (2003). Teaching Old Brands New Tricks: Retro Branding and the Revival of Brand Meaning. Journal of Marketing, 67(3), 19–33.

-Bruhn, M., Schoenmüller, V., Schäfer, D., & Heinrich, D. (2012). Brand authenticity:

Towards a deeper understanding of its conceptualization and measurement. Advances in customer research, 40.

-Carsana, L., & Jolibert, A. (2018). Influence of iconic, indexical cues, and brand schematicity on perceived authenticity dimensions of private-label brands. Journal of Retailing and Customer Services, 40, 213-220.

-Chahal, H., & Rani, A. (2017). How trust moderates social media engagement and brand equity. Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing, 11(3), 312-335.

-Chen, R., Zhou, Z., Zhan, G., & Zhou, N. (2020). The impact of destination brand authenticity and destination brand self-congruence on tourist loyalty: The mediating role of destination brand engagement. Journal of Destination Marketing & Management, 15, 100402.

-Chhabra, D. (2010). Branding authenticity. Tourism Analysis, 15(6), 735-740.

-Dolan, R., Conduit, J., Fahy, J. and Goodman, S. 2016. Social media engagement behaviour: a uses and gratifications perspective. Journal of Strategic Marketing, 24(3-4), 261-277.

-Dolan, R., Conduit, J., Frethey-Bentham, C., Fahy, J. and Goodman, S. 2019. Social media engagement behavior: A framework for engaging customers through social media content. European journal of marketing, 53(10), 2213-2243.

-Dwivedi, A. (2015). A higher-order model of consumer brand engagement and its impact on loyalty intentions. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 24, 100-109.

-Dwivedi, A., Wilkie, D., Johnson, L.F. and Weerawardena, J. 2016. Establishing measures and drivers of consumer brand engagement behaviours. Journal of Brand

Management, 23(5), 41-69.

-Eckstein, D., Goellner, M., Blome, C., & Henke, M. (2015). The performance impact of supply chain agility and supply chain adaptability: the moderating effect of product complexity. International Journal of Production Research, 53(10), 30283046.

-Eigenraam, A. W., Eelen, J., & Verlegh, P. W. (2021). Let Me Entertain You? The Importance of Authenticity in Online Customer Engagement. Journal of Interactive Marketing, 54, 53-68.

-France, C., Merrilees, B., & Miller, D. (2016). An integrated model of customer-brand engagement: Drivers and consequences. Journal of Brand Management, 23(2), 119-136.

-Fritz, K., Schoenmueller, V., & Bruhn, M. (2017). Authenticity in branding - exploring antecedents and consequences of brand authenticity. European Journal of Marketing, 51(2), 324—348.

-Gilmore, J. H., & Pine, B. J. (2007). Authenticity: What customers really want.Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

-Gligor, D. M. (2014). A cross-disciplinary examination of firm orientations' performance outcomes: the role of supply chain flexibility. Journal of Business Logistics, 35(4), 281-298.

-Gligor, D. M., & Holcomb, M. C. (2012). Antecedents and consequences of supply chain agility: Establishing the link to firm performance. Journal of Business Logistics, 33(4), 295— 308.

-Gligor, D., Bozkurt, S., & Russo, I. (2019). Achieving customer engagement with

social media: A qualitative comparative analysis approach. Journal of Business Research, 101, 59- 69.

-Gligor, D., Bozkurt, S., Gölgeci, I., & Maloni, M. J. (2020). Does supply chain agility create customer value and satisfaction for loyal B2B business and B2C end-customers?. International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management, 50(7/8), 721-743.

-Golomb, J. (1995). In search of authenticity: From Kierkegaard to Camus.London: Routledge.

-Gomes, E., Sousa, C. M. P., & Vendrell-Herrero, F. (2020). International. marketing agility: Conceptualization and research agenda. International Marketing Review, 37(2), 261–272.

-Grayson, K., & Martinec, R. (2004). Customer perceptions of iconicity and indexicality and their influence on assessments of authentic market offerings. Journal of Customer Research, 31(2), 296–312.

-Gummerus, J., Liljander, V., Weman, E. and Pihlström, M. 2012. Customer engagement in a Facebook brand community. Management Research Review, 35(9), pp. 857-877.

-Gupta, S., Pansari, A., & Kumar, V. (2018). Global customer engagement. Journal of International Marketing, 26(1), 4-29.

-Hagen, B., Zucchella, A., & Ghauri, P. N. (2019). From fragile to agile: Marketing as a key driver of entrepreneurial internationalization. International Marketing Review, 36(2), 260– 288.

-Hollebeek, L. and Chen, T. (2014). Exploring positively-versus negatively-valenced

brand engagement: a conceptual model. Journal of Product and Brand Management, 23(1),-74.

-Hollebeek, L. D., & Macky, K. (2019). Digital content marketing's role in fostering consumer engagement, trust, and value: Framework, fundamental propositions, and implications. Journal of Interactive Marketing, 45, 27-41.

-Hollebeek, L. D., Glynn, M. S., & Brodie, R. J. (2014). Consumer brand engagement in social media: Conceptualization, scale development and validation. Journal of interactive marketing, 28(2), 149-165.

-Hollebeek, L. D., Srivastava, R. K., & Chen, T. (2019). SD logic—informed customer engagement: Integrative framework, revised fundamental propositions, and application to CRM. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 47(1), 161—185.

-Homburg, C., & Pflesser, C. (2020). A Multiple-Layer Model of Market-Oriented Organizational Culture: Measurement Issues and Performance Outcomes. Journal of Marketing Research, 37(4), 449- 462.

-Joo, S., Miller, E. G., & Fink, J. S. (2019). Customer evaluations of CSR authenticity: Development and validation of a multidimensional CSR authenticity scale. Journal of Business Research, 98, 236-249.

-Khan, H. (2020). Is marketing agility important for emerging market firms in. advanced markets? International Business Review, 29(5), 101733.

-Khan, I., Rahman, Z and Fatma, M. 2016. The role of customer brand engagement and brand experience in online banking. International Journal of Bank Marketing, 34(7), 1025- 1041.

-Kumar, J. and Kumar, V. 2020. Drivers of brand community engagement. Journal

of retailing and consumer services, 54, pp. 1-12.

-Kumar, J., & Nayak, J. K. (2019a). Brand engagement without brand ownership: A case of non-brand owner community members. The Journal of Product & Brand Management, 28(2), 216-230. doi:10.1108/jpbm-04-2018-1840

-Kumar, V., & Kaushik, A. K. (2022). Engaging customers through brand authenticity perceptions: The moderating role of self-congruence. Journal of Business Research, 138, 26-37.

-Kumar, V., Aksoy, L., Donkers, B., Venkatesan, R., Wiesel, T., & Tillmanns, S. (2010). Undervalued or overvalued customers: Capturing total customer engagement value. Journal of service research, 13(3), 297-310.

-Lemon, K. N., & Verhoef, P. C. (2016). Understanding customer experience throughout the customer journey. Journal of marketing, 80(6), 69-96.

-Lu, A. C. C., Gursoy, D., & Lu, C. Y. (2015). Authenticity perceptions, brand equity and brand choice intention: The case of ethnic restaurants. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 50, 36–45.

-Morhart, F., Malär, L., Guèvremont, A., Girardin, F., & Grohmann, B. (2015). Brand authenticity: An integrative framework and measurement scale. Journal of consumer psychology, 25(2), 200-218.

-Moulard, J. G., Raggio, R. D., & Folse, J. A. G. (2016). Brand authenticity: Testing the antecedents and outcomes of brand management's passion for its products. Psychology & Marketing, 33(6), 421-436.

-Napoli, J., Dickinson, S., & Beverland, M. (2014). The brand authenticity continuum: Strategic approaches for building value. Journal of Marketing

Management, 32, 13–14.

-Napoli, J., Dickinson-Delaporte, S., and Beverland, M. B. (2016). The brand authenticity continuum: strategic approaches for building value. Journal of Marketing Management, 32(13-14):1201–1229

-Nemkova, E. (2017). The impact of agility on the market performance of bornglobal firms: An exploratory study of the 'Tech City' innovation cluster. Journal of Business Research, 80, 257-265 .

-Newman, G. E., & Dhar, R. (2014). Authenticity is contagious: Brand essence and the original source of production. Journal of Marketing Research, 51(3), 371–386.

-Oh, H., Prado, P. H. M., Korelo, J. C., & Frizzo, F. (2019). The effect of brand authenticity on consumer–brand relationships. Journal of Product & Brand Management.

-Osei, C., Amankwah-Amoah, J., Khan, Z., Omar, M., & Gutu, M. (2019). Developing and deploying marketing agility in an emerging economy: The case of Blue Skies.International Marketing Review, 36(2), 190–212.

-Pansari, A., & Kumar, V. (2017). Customer engagement: the construct, antecedents, and consequences. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 45(3), 294-311.

-       Poolton J., Ismail H.S., Reid, I.R. & Arokiam, I.C. (2006). Agile marketing for the manufacturing-based SME. Marketing Intelligence & Planning, 24 (7) (2006), 681-693 .

-Portal, S., Abratt, R., & Bendixen, M. (2019). The role of brand authenticity in developing brand trust. Journal of Strategic Marketing, 27(8), 714-729.

-Reisinger, Y., & Steiner, C. J. (2006). Reconceptualizing object authenticity. Annals

of tourism research, 33(1), 65-86.

-Rietveld, R., van Dolen, W., Mazloom, M., & Worring, M. (2020). What you feel, is what you like influence of message appeals on customer engagement on Instagram. Journal of Interactive Marketing, 49, 20-53.

-Roberts, N., & Grover, V. (2012). Investigating firm's customer agility and firm perfor- mance: The importance of aligning sense and respond capabilities. Journal of Business Research, 65(5), 579–585.

-Rosado-Pinto, F., Loureiro, S. M. C., & Bilro, R. G. (2020). How brand authenticity and consumer brand engagement can be expressed in reviews: a text mining approach. Journal of Promotion Management, 26(4), 457-480.

-Rose, R. L., & Wood, S. L. (2005). Paradox and the consumption of authenticity through reality television. Journal of consumer research, 32(2), 284-296.

-Russell, D. M., & Swanson, D. (2019). Transforming information into supply chain agility: An agility adaptation typology. The International Journal of Logistics Management, 30(1), 329– 355.

-Safeer, A. A., He, Y., Lin, Y., Abrar, M., & Nawaz, Z. (2023). Impact of perceived brand authenticity on consumer behavior: evidence from generation Y in Asian perspective. International Journal of Emerging Markets, 18(3), 685-704.

-Schallehn, M., Burmann, C., & Riley, N. (2014). Brand authenticity: model development and empirical testing. Journal of Product & Brand Management, 23(3), 192-199.

-Schamari, J. and Schaefers, T. 2015. ScienceDirect Leaving the Home Turf: How Brands Can Use Webcare on Consumer-generated Platforms to Increase Positive

Consumer Engagement. Journal of Interactive Marketing. 30, 20-33.

-So, K. K. F., King, C., Sparks, B. A., & Wang, Y. (2016). The role of customer engagement in building consumer loyalty to tourism brands. Journal of Travel Research, 55(1), 64-78.

-Spiggle, S., Nguyen, H. T., & Caravella, M. (2012). More than fit: Brand extension authenticity. Journal of Marketing Research, 49(6), 967-983.

-Sundar, S. S., & Limperos, A. M. (2013). Uses and grats 2.0: New gratifications for new media. Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media, 57(4), 504-525.

-Takeuchi, H., & Nonaka, I. (1986). The new product development game. Harvard Business Review, 64(1), 137–146.

-Thürridl, C., Kamleitner, B., Ruzeviciute, R., Süssenbach, S., & Dickert, S. (2020). From happy consumption to possessive bonds: When positive affect increases psychological ownership for brands. Journal of Business Research, 107, 89-103.

-Van Doorn, J., Lemon, K. N., Mittal, V., Nass, S., Pick, D., Pirner, P., & Verhoef, P. C. (2010). Customer engagement behavior: Theoretical foundations and research directions. Journal of service research, 13(3), 253-266.

-Vickery, S. K., Droge, C., Setia, P., & Sambamurthy, V. (2010). Supply chain information technologies and organisational initiatives: Complementary versus independent - fects on agility and firm performance. International Journal of Production Research, 48(23), 7025– 7042.

-Vivek, S. D., Beatty, S. E., & Morgan, R. M. (2012). Customer engagement: Exploring customer relationships beyond purchase. Journal of marketing theory and practice, 20(2), 122-146.

-Wang, T. and Lee, F. 2020. Examining customer engagement and brand intimacy in social media context. Journal of retailing and consumer services, 54, pp. 1-10.

-Zhou, J., Mavondo, F. T., & Saunders, S. G. (2019). The relationship between marketing agility and financial performance under different levels of market turbulence. Industrial Marketing Management, 83, 31-41.

-Wang, N. (1999). Rethinking authenticity in tourism experience. Annals of Tourism Research, 26(2), 349–370.

-Harrigan, P., Evers, U., Miles, M., & Daly, T. (2017). Customer engagement with tourism social media brands. Tourism management, 59, 5