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Customer engagement and social media research

Kendis Anwar^{*)}, Abror Abror, Hani Maisyarah Batubara, Kristiana Astuti, Nadhila Sari
Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

One of the key challenges for food and beverage marketers is how to effectively garner engagement with their content (e.g., liking, commenting, and sharing) in an effort to increase audience exposure on the platform and improve business performance. The purpose of this research is to find out the dominant methods, issues, and problems of social media. It can be said that the method used is quantitative, and the social media used is Facebook. Based on the results of the research, it is found that the problem or issue that occurs is that consumer engagement can improve relationships with consumers, which is realised in the form of consumer participation, which is the driving force behind online sales and brand success. This is the source of most of the problems that arise. This also means that companies using social media to promote their brands need to have a more intimate relationship with the people they want to reach, which is based on trust, social relationships, image, and identity on social media. Fulfilling a company's commitment to its customers is another important responsibility. This will build trust and confidence in customers, which in turn encourages them to participate more actively in a brand's social media activities.



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Corresponding Author:

Kendis Anwar,
Universitas Negeri Padang
Email: 11kendisanwar@gmail.com

Introduction

Every year, millions of food and drink images are posted on social media (Guidry et al., 2015). According to Cision Navigator (2013), Instagram is an efficient platform for building brands and increasing customer loyalty. The food industry, in particular, is seen to profit from visual social media messages, such as Instagram postings. Humans are known to eat with their eyes, which means humans eat because they enjoy the beauty of the food itself and with social media offering a very visual social platform, it is not surprising that the trend of Instagrammable food and drinks has exploded in the last few years. Restaurants have widely embraced the value of social media, as most customers use social media (e.g., checking reviews, viewing photos) before visiting a restaurant (Lepkowska-White, 2017). The use of social media can positively influence business valuation, increase sales and market share (Kwon et al., 2021). As a result, the increased use of social media by restaurants has resulted in a more crowded and competitive environment.

Based on the results of the We Are Social publication, the number of active social media users is 191 million people in Indonesia out of a total population of 278 million as of January 2022. This number is stated to have increased by 12.35% compared to the previous year's active social media users of 170 million people. This is important considering that the average social media user spends 147 minutes per day across platforms (Statistics, 2022), viewing hundreds of posts each day (Stewart, 2015). Consequently, one of the main challenges for food and beverage marketers is how to effectively garner engagement with their content (e.g.

likes, comments, shares) in an effort to increase audience exposure on the platform and improve business performance (Philp et al., 2022).

In a service marketing environment that is changing very quickly, the relationship between brands and consumers is very important. To achieve brand performance, the relationship between the brand and consumers must be stable and long-term, and based on a very deep understanding of consumers (Blackston & Lebar, 2015). Because consumer experience is an important variable in modern marketing, including consumer engagement which is very interesting. Consumer engagement describes the interaction between consumers and brands. This consumer engagement can also help in improving business performance and customer loyalty, leading to sales growth and increased profitability (Kwon et al., 2021). Interactive experiences are part of consumer engagement and are also cited as the driving force behind trust and loyalty; thus, it is very important in the restaurant sector (Kwon et al., 2021).

Hollebeek et al. (2021) stated that the value of consumer engagement can be measured by brand performance which influences consumers' desire to buy the company's products and thus also influences their direct contributions in the future. The initial brand performance interactions received by consumers are very important in shaping consumers' long-term engagement intentions. Despite several conflicting research results and seeing the high involvement of promotions and social media on consumer engagement, researchers continue to use consumer engagement in this research.

Social media channels can be considered media controlled by consumers as a form of marketing communication, which is different from advertising and promotions, which are media controlled by companies (Bacile et al., 2014). Consumer engagement has become increasingly important due to the rapid development of social media platforms. Therefore, researchers and practitioners must now discuss content based on social media platforms, and companies must examine new and different marketing communication channels. In the restaurant sector, interest in consumer engagement is increasing due to the emergence and use of the internet and social media, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and blogs. Meanwhile, social media or social networking services (Social Networking Sites) have a stronger impact on consumers compared to the traditional promotional mix (J. Kwon & Kim, 2021).

Several researchers, such as Frandsen et al. (2016) and Odun & Utulu (2016), argue that social media content is effective in creating awareness and replacing traditional advertising and/or promotions in integrated marketing communications programs. However, de Vries et al. (2017) states that the most effective way to achieve consumer awareness is through traditional media. Social media is effective, but not more effective than traditional media. The findings of this research are supported by the research findings of Kumar et al. (2016). Based on these gaps in findings, this research is present. The novelty of this research is that it analyses the dominant problems on social media, uses a different analysis method, namely bibliometric analysis, and uses more extensive and up-to-date analytical data, namely data from 2019–2023. The aim of this research is to find out the dominant methods, issues, and problems on social media.

Method

Research Framework

This study is an attempt to assess the existing literature on Consumer Engagement and for this purpose a bibliometric analysis mechanism is used. Bibliometric analysis is an organized investigative practice that tries to find authors, countries, institutions that have contributed quality works in the domain along with cluster analysis to find the relationship of different works to each other. Bibliometric analysis interprets changes in a particular research field quantitatively to determine the outline of publications on a particular theme and also to determine publication trends (Lee et al., 2017). Bibliometric analysis provides practical, valuable, and chronological statistics that can then be used by those concerned with the systematic assessment of developments in the field (Oliva et al., 2006). Many indicative options are available in this analysis that facilitate the evaluation of existing research positions such as highly cited publications, contributions from academics, documents by source, contribution by institutions, and number of documents by country. Previously, this analysis has also been widely used for literature reviews to see at a glance how Consumer Engagement in Social Media has various impact implications in Table 1.

Therefore, this research was conducted by considering bibliometric analysis as a superlative technique to determine the information base that applies to increasing Consumer Engagement in social media. This article is an attempt to review and discuss ongoing research to gain new insights into its adoption and implementation. Note: In some bibliometric studies, ongoing year statistics are not reported because they may introduce bias and erroneous deviations. However, this research covers the year 2023 which has not yet been completed.

Table 1. Research GAP

Issue	Researcher	Results (+ and -)
Promotion on Brand Performance	(Hallikainen et al., 2022) (Nigam et al., 2022)	Promotion has a positive and significant effect on Brand Performance. Promotion has a negative and significant effect on Brand Performance.
Social Media on Brand Performance	(Samarah et al., 2022) (J. Kwon & Kim, 2021)	Social Media has a positive and significant effect on Brand Performance. Social Media has a negative and significant influence on Brand Performance.
Brand Performance on Consumer Engagement	(Hollebeek et al., 2021) (Mishra, 2021)	Brand performance has a positive and significant effect on consumer engagement. Brand Performance has a negative and significant influence on Consumer Engagement.
Promotion of Consumer Engagement	(Chen & Zhu, 2022) (Spotts et al., 2022)	Promotion has a positive and significant effect on consumer engagement. Promotions have a negative and significant effect on consumer engagement.

Search Process and Research Subjects

This research uses the Google Scholar website <https://sciendirect.com/> as secondary data search. The reason for using Google Scholar is because it makes it easier to search and map the articles you need. The research subject increases Consumer Engagement in social media.

Limitation and Entry Criteria

Carrying out this stage is useful for ensuring that the data or information obtained is suitable for use in research (SLR) or not. The study standards that meet the requirements are as follows: (1) Data used is from the 2019-2023 publication year. (2) Evidence is obtained by searching <https://sciendirect.com/>. (3) The data or evidence used is only journal papers related to increasing Consumer Engagement in Social Media.

Data collection

The evidence used in this research is secondary data. Secondary data in this research was obtained through several stages, namely: (1) Literature, carried out by reviewing data in journals using the SLR method obtained from <https://sciendirect.com/>. (2) Articles that cannot be opened in Google Scholar will be tried using sci-hub <https://sci-hub.hkvisa.net/> and (3) Articles are documented based on data that has been collected which will be stored in Mendeley.

Results and Discussions

Figures 1, 2 and 3 below show the interest in testing the influence of social media and promotions on consumer engagement and brand performance as intervening variables in various countries and the restaurant sector.

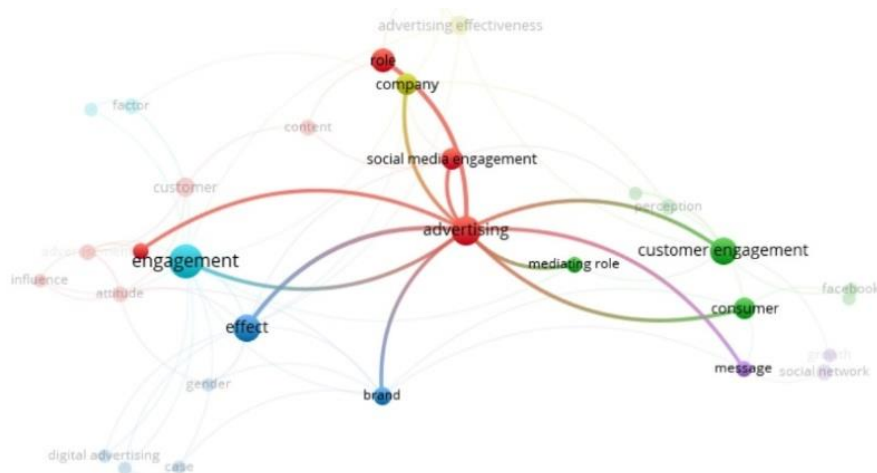


Figure 1. Promotional Testing Interest Trends on Consumer Engagement

Source: Scopus indexed journal and Web of Sciences

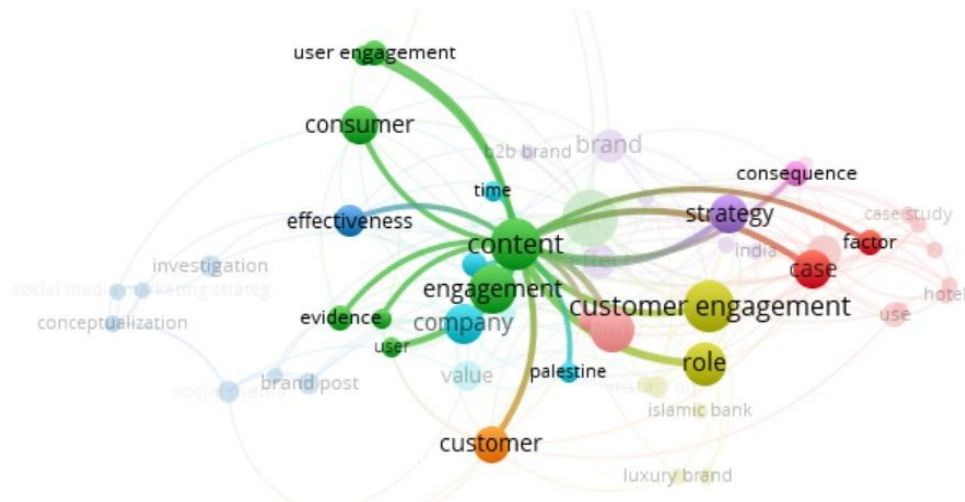


Figure 2. Trends in Interest in Social Media Testing on Consumer Engagement
Source: Scopus indexed journal and Web of Sciences

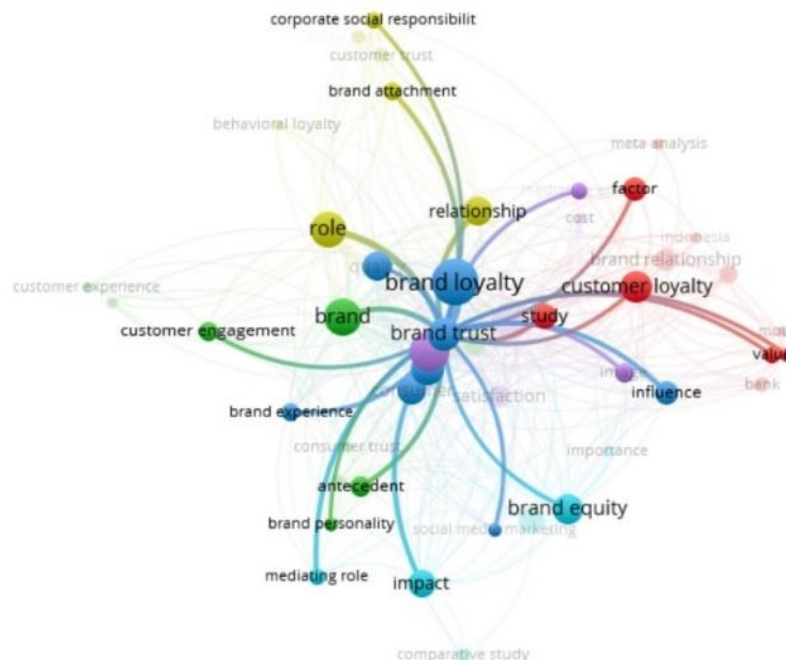


Figure 3. Trends in Interest in Brand Performance Testing as an Intervening Variable
Source: Scopus indexed journal and Web of Sciences

Based on Figure 1, it shows that the trend of research interest in the world in testing the influence of Promotion on Consumer Engagement is increasing in the period 1985 - 2021. This indicates that testing Promotion on Consumer Engagement still needs to be carried out every year in various industrial sectors in various countries. Figure 2 shows the interest in testing social media on Consumer Engagement in various countries, which shows that the number of studies is large but not saturated, providing evidence that research in Indonesia is still minimally carried out by researchers. The top 3 countries that always provide evidence of their influence are China, the United States (United States), and the United Kingdom (United Kingdom). Figure 3 shows the interest in Brand Performance testing as an intervening variable which shows that it is still limited.

Search Process Results and Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The results of the search process and inclusion and exclusion criteria were that only 20 journal papers were taken which met the criteria for journal papers published in the 2019-2023 time period and had discussions related to improving brand performance. As seen in table 1 below:

Table 2. Results of Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Description	Findings
Main search with the keyword "Brand Performance"	16.108
Range 2019-2023	8.757
Types of Articles: Research Articles	7.321
Subject Areas: Business, Management and Accounting	4.124
Open Access Articles	721
Studies that met the quality assessment	20
Total Studies used	

Source: Processed data, 2023

Results from RQ1: Method used

Based on the method used for research regarding the use of social media in consumer engagement, the results obtained were in the paper category based on the method used, 14 articles used quantitative, the remaining 6 used qualitative. Table 3 shows that most use quantitative methods. This shows that most researchers today are more interested in research using quantitative methods than other methods.

Table 3. Methods used

Researcher	Journal Name	Method
(Jessen et al., 2020)	Journal of Business Research	Quantitative
(Osei-Frimpong et al., 2022)	Journal of Business Research	Quantitative
(Roy et al., 2023)	Journal of Business Research	Quantitative
(Zheng et al., 2022)	Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	Quantitative
(Gkikas et al., 2022)	International Journal of Information Management Data Insights	Quantitative
(Lim & Rasul, 2022)	Journal of Business Research	Kualitatif
(Arief & Sugiarti, 2022)	Journal of Business Research	Quantitative
(Naumann et al., 2020)	European Journal of Marketing	Quantitative
(Nevado-Catalán et al., 2023)	Computers & Security	Kualitatif
(Huang et al., 2022)	Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	Quantitative
(Calzada et al., 2023)	Information Economics and Policy	Kualitatif
(Lim et al., 2022)	Journal of Business Research	Kualitatif
(Mora Cortez et al., 2023)	Journal of Business Research	Quantitative
(Eslami et al., 2022)	Decision Support Systems	Quantitative
(Gkikas et al., 2022)	Procedia Computer Science	Kualitatif
(Beckers et al., 2018)	Crossmark	Quantitative
(J.-H. Kwon et al., 2021)	Journal of Brand Management	Quantitative
(Katoch, 2022)	Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	Kualitatif
(Chou et al., 2023)	Journal of Business Research	Quantitative
(Jessen et al., 2020)	Journal of Business Research	Quantitative

Source: Processed data (2023)

Results from RQ2: Research Problems or Issues

From the journal data used above, most of the problems that occur are that consumer involvement can increase consumer engagement in the form of consumer participation which is the key to online sales and brand performance. This also means that the use of social media to promote the brand must have a closer relationship with consumers whose targets are based on trust, social ties, image and identity on social media. Companies must also fulfill their promises to consumers, by instilling trust and confidence in consumers that will encourage them to engage more on the brand's social media.

Results of RQ3: Dominant Social Media

Based on the dominant social media used for research regarding the use of social media in increasing customer engagement, the results obtained are paper categories based on dominant social media. Table 4 shows that Facebook is the dominant social media. This shows that most researchers are currently more interested in researching using Facebook compared to other social media.

Table 4. Dominant Social Media Categories used in Research

Researcher	Number of Respondents	Social Media
(Jessen et al., 2020)	106	Augmented Reality
(Osei-Frimpong et al., 2022)	713	-
(Roy et al., 2023)	325	-
(Zheng et al., 2022)	311	Live Streaming
(Gkikas et al., 2022)	321	Facebook
(Lim & Rasul, 2022)	34	Facebook
(Arief and Y. Sugiarti, 2022)	-	Facebook
(Naumann et al., 2020)	625	Social networking sites
(Nevado-Catalán et al., 2023)	1.600	Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Linkeid.
(Huang et al., 2022)	297	-
(Calzada et al., 2023)	3.113	Spain's telecommunications market
(Lim et al., 2022)	861	-
(Mora Cortez et al., 2023)	-	LinkedIn
(Eslami et al., 2021)	3.324	Instagram
(Gołab-Andrzejak, 2022)	-	Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Linkeid.
(Beckers et al., 2017)	88	-
(J.-H. Kwon et al., 2021)	-	Facebook
(Katoch, 2022)	315	-
(Chou et al., 2023)	-	Facebook
(Jessen et al., 2020)	769	-

Conclusions

Based on the results of the research that has been carried out, it can be concluded that the results of the systematic literature review can analyze and provide comprehensive information for companies regarding the methods used, problems/issues found and the dominant social media. There were 20 journals obtained based on the results of the study search selection. The results of the research question (RQ:1) on the method used regarding the use of social media in increasing customer engagement, the results obtained are that almost all research uses quantitative methods. The next research question for (RQ:2) regarding the problem/issue that occurs is that consumer involvement can improve relationships with consumers, which is realized in the form of consumer participation, which is the driving force behind online sales and brand success. This is the source of most of the problems that arise. This also means that companies using social media to promote their brands need to have a more intimate relationship with the people they want to reach, based on trust, social relationships, image and identity on social media. Fulfilling the company's commitment to its customers is another important responsibility. This will build trust and confidence in customers, which in turn encourages them to participate more actively in a brand's social media activities. Results of the research question (RQ:3)

The results collected are in the form of article categories based on leading social media which are used to research the use of social media in increasing consumer interaction. This research was conducted using a social media platform with a dominating market share, namely Facebook. According to Table 4, Facebook is by far the most popular social media platform. This shows that most researchers are currently more interested in conducting research using Facebook compared to other social media platforms. Suggestions Based on the literature review that has been carried out, there are several suggestions regarding future research, including using a larger sample by expanding the keywords used and other databases that are easy to access. This can also be used as a comparison of the results of different analyzes regarding the Systematic Literature Review on the use of social media in increasing consumer engagement and is able to provide a more detailed explanation.

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