Antecedents and Outcomes of Perceived Brand Authenticity: A Study of Sustainable Brands

by

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WHO ARE BELIEVERS & TO THOSE WHO SEEK ULTIMATE TRUTH

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that the research work presented in the thesis, entitled "**Antecedent and Outcomes of Perceived Brand Authenticity: A study of Sustainable Brands**" was conducted under the supervision of **Dr. M. Ishfaq Khan**. No part of this thesis has been submitted anywhere else for any other degree. This thesis is submitted to the **Department of Management Sciences, Capital University of Science and Technology** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy in the field of **Management Sciences.** The open defence of the thesis was conducted on **November 01, 2019.**

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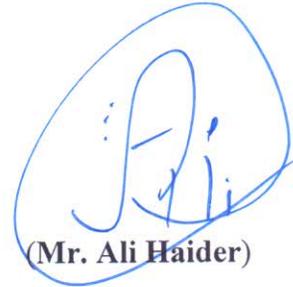
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List of Publications

It is certified that following publication(s) have been made out of the research work that has been carried out for this thesis:-

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Abstract

The concept of authenticity in brands is increasingly important both in products and services. Despite of the recent attempts towards conceptualization of perceived brand authenticity, less research has been directed to study the predecessors and impact of perceived brand authenticity on other variables and constructs in marketing research which include, co-creation engagement and customization. Future researches suggested further study on customization and co-creation engagement in relation with perceived brand authenticity. Researchers have also called for more thorough and rigorous examination of different outcomes of perceived brand authenticity. It was also noted by previous researches that problem with research in marketing is that new concepts keep on emerging without examination of the link between previously known concepts. This study has contributed in this area by examining the consequents of co-creation and customization. The study has been conducted through web based survey which is quite common in this stream of research. Consumers from fan pages of pages of brands involved in co-creation and customization have taken the survey from around the globe; they were asked if they have participated in any co-creation and customization activity.

The Structural Equational Modeling (SEM) was deployed by the study for regression. Results revealed positive impact of co-creation and customization on Perceived brand authenticity, Satisfaction with life, Self-esteem, Brand Loyalty and Brand Trust. Moderating effects of Need for uniqueness and Perceived Tool support were also observed. Study further supported effects of psychological outcomes on Word of Mouth. Brand could further emphasize its integrity by promoting its social involvement. Self-concept theory along with self-expansion theory acts as an overarching theory in this study, as it provides the basis to examine individuals ability and desire to know thy self and expand it by inclusion of others i:e people, objects etc. From a managerial perspective, it is essential for brands to be consistent with their image and values and to avoid promises they cannot keep consumers.

Key words: Co-Creation engagement, Customization, Perceived Brand Authenticity, Satisfaction with life, Self-esteem, Brand loyalty, Brand Trust, WOM, Self-concept, Self-expansion..

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Abbreviations

Name of variables or terms	Abbreviations
AGFI	Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index
AMOS	Analysis of a Moment Structures
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
AVE	Average Variance Expected
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CR	Composite Reliability
NfU	Need for Uniqueness
PBA	Perceived Brand Authenticity
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SWL	Satisfaction with Life
TLI	Trucker Lewis Index
TS	Perceived Tool Support
WOM	Word of Mouth

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Businesses have been gradually increasing their dependence on capabilities and resources outside the walls of their firm for idea generation and value generation (Van Dijk et al., 2014). To thrive in this increasingly outside-in trend and consumerized world where consumer demands are to be met, businesses will need to leverage the skills, knowledge, tools along with passion of their customers and employees. This will require a profound relationship among businesses and consumers generated by institutionalized culture of co-creation. In the recent era, consumers highly equipped with tools and gadgets along with connectivity are considered as 'co-creation' companions for their feedbacks, novelty and innovative practices. Consumers are now playing their role as companions in the process of creating value (Kwon et al., 2017). Consumers who engage in the co-creation process get accreditation, gain more influence and recognition and relish themselves. Such consumers are passionate about articulating their views about the offerings of the brands and they are the foremost influencers in shaping the brand discussions across the globe (Jouny-Rivier et al., 2017). However, the consumers who are not involved directly in the process of co-creation are influenced by it. However, It is still questionable whether the consumers' perception of a product, service or brand is influenced by co-creation in any way.

The research and development process of the companies are now influenced more by the consumers through co-creation by designing and managing an effective communication

channel with consumers, (Van Belleghem, 2012). Whereas consumers who were traditionally viewed as the exchangers of value are now seen as a companions or collaborators in the process of creating value and a source of competitive edge for the company. In the internet age, this process of co-creation has become the one of the most promising areas of research and development (Füller, 2010). Unlike the past, the consumers/customers and companies are now working as partners, co-designers and co-creators in the innovative practices of companies. Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004b) conceptualized this advancement as "co-creation: the procedure in which the both sides efficiently connect, learn, share data and incorporate assets to together to create value". This not only increases the performance and relevance of the research and development, but also product reduces cost of research and development, and opens up new consumer markets (Chesbrough and Schwartz, 2007; Thomke and Von Hippel, 2002; Hoyer et al., 2010; Weber, 2011; Fuchs and Schreier, 2011). Though the co-creation was apparently used for services production only (e.g. open software such as Linux), but now it is possible, it has become a part of the development of physical products (Vargo and Lusch, 2008), LEGO designed by consumers (Nishikawa et al., 2013) and e.g. user-designed T-shirts by Threadless.

Weiss and Gangadharan (2010) is of the view that co-creation is in line with the framework of creation of brand knowledge where brand can be linked with all the sources of knowledge, including causes, events, people, places, and other brands. Brand image, brand feelings, brand personality, brand awareness and brand attitudes are strongly influenced by brand knowledge which is transferred through co-creation process enhancing brand knowledge (Aaker, 1997). Eventually, buying goals of consumers and brand choices of purchasers is influenced by brand knowledge. Previous research has established a few impacts of co-creation activities on customers who contributed in co-creation. These reveal enhanced consumer's commitment towards the organization (Weiss and Gangadharan, 2010), have a more client or consumer association with the participating or collaborating Firm (Füller, 2010), bolster a popular brand picture and indicates large amount of trust (Füller, 2010) and disseminates positive and favorable electronic word-of-mouth (Bilgram et al., 2011; Piller, 2010). On the other hand, little is known about the impacts of co-creation on brand perceptions of customers who are not participating in the process. Fuchs and Schreier (2011) demonstrate that customers who are not participants of the process see co-inventive Firms as being more client oriented

and co-innovative items/products/services as being more attractive, authentic and trustworthy (Fuchs and Schreier, 2011). Fuchs and Schreier (2011) and Hoyer et al. (2010) underline the requirement for additional research to unfold the impacts of co-creation on consumer perceptions. A necessary prerequisite for purchase is recognition and mindfulness that a brand certainly was co-created, either from peers, gossips or from social media/media sources.

Functional variances among brands are turning out to be of little importance; consequently, the significance of 'soft' and emotional aspects like brand personality are being acknowledged by the marketers and researchers (Kaplan, 2010). Consumer behavior and brand loyalty are being shaped largely due to these perceptions (Keller, 1993; Haigood, 2001), since emotional and symbolic values are reflected through brands, and they also help consumers express themselves (Haigood, 2001). According to Keller (1993), level of awareness of a brand and the brand image quality are the main determinants of the associations with the brand. Consumers judge brands to have an authentic or inauthentic behavior based on their own evaluations (Holt, 2002). The concept of authenticity is difficult to measure since it is wholly dependent upon the perception of the individual and the brand context, hence making it tough to be measured (Beverland and Farrelly, 2009). Beverland and Farrelly (2009) examined the various conclusions and found consistent indications that 'authenticity encapsulates what is genuine, real and/or true' (p. 839). Now-a-days consumers do not want brands which are profit-oriented or materialistic rather they want brands that are sincere friends and a part of the society (Beverland, 2005b). To be authentic, Foster-Powell et al. (2002) states that "brands must be disinterested; they must be perceived as invented and disseminated by parties without an instrumental economic agenda, by people who are intrinsically motivated by their inherent value" (p. 83). As co-creation is directed at making and sustaining a genuine and open discussion, communication and integrating consumer needs, brand authenticity is likely to be influenced by this process. A stronger perception of brand authenticity is to be expected when the co-creation process is communicated to the target consumers.

No considerable evidence is available how the behavioral intentions of consumers towards brand are influenced due to the brand knowledge or awareness through co-creation process. Brodie et al. (2013) noted that if consumers were a part of the creation of the product the attitude of consumers toward a product is more positive. If the company has been shown to empower the consumers, non-participative consumers will also have positive intentions towards their product (Fuchs and Schreier, 2011). Kildal et al. (2012)

state that familiarity with the brand influences the attitudes and intention to purchase as well as the expectations of consumers. Lay's Patatje Joppie (Joppie Sauce Chips) and Pickwick's Dutch tea blend (co-created products) were sold much more in quantity than other similar products (Kostomoiri et al., 2013). Nevertheless, more evidence is required to clarify if this effect is due to co-creation aspect and to what extent.

In the light of above literature, the current study identified a knowledge gap regarding the effects of co-creation on the brand related perceptions i:e brand authenticity. Brands that engage in authentic collaboration such as co-creation are in turn valued higher by consumers (Dijk, 2014). Therefore, additional research should address co-creation with other actors and groups of peripheral actors in developing new products and services (Jouny-Rivier et al., 2017). The study by Dijk (2014) specially focused on capturing the concept of authenticity.

An ever increasing number of companies are offering consumers the possibility to customize their products, exactly as the customer wants. This trend has impacted every type of consumer good product from clothing to vehicles, to home accessories and even mobile phones. Enabling customers to personalize their goods at the moment of purchase builds feelings of ownership and product loyalty. With developments in technology, customization is no more restricted to predefined configurators (e.g., colors, materials), but has advanced into a more tools such as product visualization for example 3D modeling (Gandhi et al., 2014). In a highly competitive and segmented market customization is viewed as an important source of value creation (Valenzuela et al., 2009; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004b) , a number of companies have embedded customized services in their websites (e.g., Louis Vuitton's Mon Monogram, Nike's NikeID). Indeed, the embracing of customization strategy is initiated in a extensive range of activities including apparel for example Levi Strauss, computers (e.g., Dell), sport shoes e.g., Adidas), cars (e.g., Land Rover), cards (e.g., Hallmark), food (e.g., General Mills) etc. With the extensive use of customization in marketing practices, a research stream on factors affecting consumer responses to customization has established, such as system factors (e.g., user-design interface) (Randall et al., 2007; Dellaert and Dabholkar, 2009), individual factors (e.g., one's capability to direct preference) (Franke et al., 2009), customization process (Atakan et al., 2014), values of customization (Merle et al., 2010; Franke et al., 2010), and even interaction effect with brand (Miceli et al., 2013). However, regardless of the significance of customized product as a vehicle to drive in one's self-concept, research on aspects related to a consumer's motivation to characterize his/her individuality into

the customized product is scarce (Miceli and Miceli, 2013; Atakan et al., 2014).

Consumers try to signal their sense of self through product consumption (Kleine III et al., 1993; Belk, 1988). Levy (1959) explored symbolic meanings in consumption in which consumers buy products not only for what they can do, but also for what they mean. In this framework, customization is regarded as a means incorporating significant aspects of the consumer psychological needs into the tangible products, much more than simply increasing preferences. Not unexpectedly then, a recent research has focused on identification "the degree to which one perceives a customized product as a representation of his/her identity as an important psychological mechanism underlying consumer responses to the customized product" (e.g., (Atakan et al., 2014; Miceli and Miceli, 2013).

Research on extended self (Belk, 1988) offers a theoretical understanding of how customization process modifies the nature of consumer-product relationship. As consumers put in their time, values, efforts, and goals into products, such products become their extended self (Belk, 1988), helping them maintain and strengthen the psychological needs (Dittmar, 1992; Gupta et al., 2006). Applying this rationality to the context of customization, this research considers customization as a process in which consumers create their extended self by actively and volitionally invest time, values, efforts and preferences into products. Ever since all these investments reflect characteristics of the self (Gupta et al., 2006), customized products most likely symbolize consumers' identity additionally their relationship to the outside world (Belk, 1988). Drawing on the notion of extended self , researchers recently have focused on a consumer's identification with the customized product (e.g., (Atakan et al., 2014; Miceli and Miceli, 2013).

Highly self-authentic consumers uphold their beliefs, and believe that they are better off being themselves rather than being popular, and value maintaining self-authenticity in their lives. Consumers who are more self-authentic emphasize on sustaining self-authenticity in their lives are prone to engaging in more genuine acts via consumption of customized products. Consumers who're high in self-authenticity ought to perceive significant compatibility among themselves and an authentic brand. Self-congruence (i.e., the extent to which a consumer perceives a brand to be similar to his or her own self-concept; in turn, has been shown to lead to positive consumer responses to a brand (Grohmann, 2009).

Sustainability is not only concerned with the environmental aspects but there is also a

need for Social and Economic sustainability to make it a complete. Economic development and Social equity are also part of the sustainability definition, what serves as an evidence to sustainability is that it has been lasting from long. The brand existing from long term with a heritage and previous customer affiliations and customer opinions, is a sustainable brand. This dimension of sustainability in brands has been ignored by the existing literature available relevant to Brands and Brand Management.

Not much research has been performed on the customer's pre-purchase experiences as a contributor to the sustainability of brand. However, this study will concentrate on the real thing and will contribute to the stages in the customer path which Kotler and Amstrong (2016) revealed. Brands may create touch points with customers across different dimensions as company-created,intrinsic,unexpected,andcustomer-created (Duncan, 2005). Brands, through its users community, can create substantial brand experiences such as sensory, affective, intellectual, behavioral, and relational experiences (Brakus et al., 2009; Nysveen et al., 2013). Brands i:e Nestle, ToyUs, Sunsilk Co-creation has collaborated with consumers to achieve digital innovation and established a digital co-creation platform. Other Brands such as Google, HP, Harley Davidson etc also participate in theses online communities and have executed co-creation and customization through their online brand communities. Here, community members have such opportunities to record their run activities, share them with other members, get advice from professional, and join a brand contest in their neighborhood, among other things. Through online brand communities, the members can be connected with not only their manufacture but also with a huge running community. Brands can collect customers data from the community and can interface and offer solutions, or can test new products or services in the market.

Value co-creation can be defined as a joint innovation of distinctive value and/or experiences through the participation of customers and other stakeholders (Hatch and Schultz, 2010; Ind and Coates, 2013; Payne et al., 2008; Thatcher et al., 2016). It requires continuous interactions between a firm and its consumers, where both parties combine and integrate (to some degree) resources to help move the business forward and to establish their reputation in the market as a Sustainable brand (Lebeau and Bennion, 2014). Consumers' participation in value creation can also influence other stakeholder perceptions of the company and thus enhance the perception of sustainability of brand (Ind and Coates, 2013).

Recent works demonstrate the importance of Service-Dominant logic in identifying the

role played by co-production and co-creation in the sustainability of brands (Shaw et al., 2011). Some studies try to understand how firms can design balanced two-way communication strategies on corporate sustainability that facilitate collaboration and co-creation with diverse stakeholders (Scandelius and Cohen, 2016). Studies suggest that collaboration should ideally take the form of co-creation with active participation of relevant stakeholders to reinforce relationships and guarantee that a societal impact is made with shared value for all stakeholders involved (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004a). There is, however, very limited knowledge on the role of social values within collective value co-creation processes and academic research recommends developing more sophisticated constructs for measuring the role of customer participation in enhancing sustainability of brand (FitzPatrick et al., 2013).

1.1.1   Research Gap

The novel contribution of this study is based on above literature which study draws a relation between customization and brand authenticity by using the mechanism of self-congruence. As suggested by literature (Kwon et al., 2017) this study further investigates the moderating role of need for uniqueness in the relationship between customization and brand authenticity. Preliminary evidence observed in Chernev et al. (2011) study suggests that a consumer brand relationship that enables self-expression may affect customization experiences offered by the brand.

Beginning of 21st century has promised this world about an entirely new era: an era of huge technological advancements making things possible which were once considered as un-do-able. Advancements in internet made e-commerce possible which resulted in shift of markets from physical to electronic. This whole scenario has changed the view of shopping and thus marketing tactics used by companies. Consumers are now more convenient in online shopping. Even on conventional side, the rise in popularity of mass media especially electronic media and advertising has caused an increase in consumer awareness. Yet at the same time, consumers have to confront with the *wrong-side* of marketing i.e. deceptive marketing. Presence of thousands of brands and hyper competition in industry sometimes cause brands to claim what they actually don't are. Consumers have to face "fake" and meaningless market offerings. Consumers now thus call for brands which are original, relevant, meaningful, and genuine (not fake). Researchers have termed this need for originality and relevance by consumers as "authenticity" (Beverland, 2005b;

Morhart et al., 2015).

Researchers have also noted and highlighted this phenomenon of authenticity for branding and consumer behavior (Beverland, 2005b; Newman and Dhar, 2014). This need for relevance, originality and indeed authenticity has led to perceived brand authenticity that directs Brand competition has elevated to extreme. To respond to this situation, communication efforts of the companies have sky rocketed (Kotler and Keller, 2011). However, the ability of the consumer to process this all this information is limited, thus the extraordinarily enhanced marketing communications lead consumers towards reactance (Holt, 2002). Consumers now demand more honest, truthful and trustworthy relationships (Burnett and Hutton, 2007). Currently there is a conflict between this trend and the level of trust in society which is decreasing (Gilmore and Pine, 2007). Driven by recent occasions, for example, the Financial emergencies of 2008 and 2011, the omnipresent European emergency or the atomic mishap in Japan, people in general progressively question reality and dependability of official data. Moreover, an investigation of 12 nations found that an expansive extent of individuals presume substantial organizations to be insincere with an end goal to advance a positive brand picture. People view brand authenticity as a probable support to create trust and credibility for a brand (Beverland, 2005b; Pine and Gilmore, 2008; Gilmore and Pine, 2007; Brierley et al., 2008; Eggers et al., 2013): Coca-Cola claims to be "the real thing", Adidas states to be "once innovative, now classic, always authentic" while Nike promises "authentic athletic performance". Despite the fact that there are numerous examples of it which are highly successful in practice, there still remains the need to examine this concept of brand authenticity in academic marketing research.

Initial attempt towards conceptualization and operationalization of brand authenticity was made by Napoli et al. (2014). Napoli et al. (2014) defined brand authenticity as "a subjective evaluation of genuineness ascribed to a brand by consumers" (p.2). Napoli et al. (2014) further argued that the concept of brand authenticity is multi-dimensional which include perception of heritage, nostalgia, symbolism, sincerity, craftsmanship, quality commitment and design consistency. Morhart et al. (2015) presented another view of authenticity. According to them, there are three perspectives to look at brand authenticity which are objectivist, constructivist and externalist. Morhart et al. (2015) presented continuity, credibility, integrity and symbolism as dimensions of brand authenticity. These attempts by researchers are primarily devoted to conceptualization of the construct. There are serious questions regarding the drivers and consequences

of brand authenticity (Morhart et al., 2015). Brand authenticity thus is relatively new yet under-researched area with little focus on examination of antecedents and consequences of brand authenticity. Above literature review reveals knowledge gap thus this research will study perceived brand authenticity assuming co-creation engagement and customization as antecedents of perceived brand authenticity.

Authenticity is gradually accepted as a desirable brand characteristic— regardless of the fact that it involves significant investments in the development of brand behavior over time and consistent brand values Morhart et al. (2015). Since authentic brands serve as symbolic resource (Beverland and Farrelly, 2009) emphasized that it helps consumers in finding meaning in their lives and define who they actually are (Leigh et al., 2006), they benefit from a reasonable advantage in relationship with the creation of strong consumer-brand connections, brand trust and growth (Beverland, 2006; Napoli et al., 2014). Building on the developing literature on consumers' connections with authentic brands and initial evidence concerning situational factors influencing consumer responses to authentic brands (Beverland et al., 2008), this research examines to what extent the effect of brand authenticity on psychological outcomes varies across individuals. Even though it is acknowledged that consumers self-authenticate (i.e., establish their identity) through authentic brands and therefore develop stronger ties with brans e.g., Morhart et al. (2015), this research investigates moderators of such authenticating acts (Price et al., 2000). The central research question emphasizes individual difference variables that increase consumers' need to self-authenticate through brands and therefore strengthens the brand authenticity. More specifically, this research focuses on the moderating role of Need for Uniqueness (individual difference variables) in understanding authentic brands. In examining these relations, this research contributes to the literature on brand authenticity in several ways: Going beyond an examination of positive outcomes of brand authenticity (Morhart et al., 2015; Ilicic and Webster, 2014; Napoli et al., 2014), this research seeks to shed light on for whom (i.e., NfU) brand authenticity entails particularly favorable consumer responses.

It is important to acknowledge that the degree of self-authentication varies across situations and individuals. (Gilmore and Pine, 2007), for example, posit that the extent of the search for authenticity is dependent upon consumer's life stage. The significance of authenticity surges in "transformation stages" (p. 20) in which individuals look at their identity and seek to uncover their true selves. Findings concerning the differential impact of authenticity cues embedded in brand advertisements also support that consumer

responses to brands are context dependent. Beverland et al. (2017) proposed that literal authenticity "was critical to consumers seeking to make quick in situ judgments about the genuineness of a product" and that it "helped consumers gain control over their decisions" (p. 9). The level of self-authentication through brands may also depend on consumer individual difference variables. Recent findings suggest that brand choice likelihood for authentic brands increased for consumers with high levels of self-authenticity. The search and expression of one's authentic self is a central human motivation (Snyder and Lopez, 2001; Lorincová et al., 2016). Authentic brands are instrumental in helping consumers express their authentic self, due to their symbolic nature and their potential for identity construction (Beverland and Farrelly, 2009; Morhart et al., 2015). Through the consumption of authentic brands, consumers define their own (and authentic) identity (Firat and Venkatesh, 1995), express their morals and principles (Beverland and Farrelly, 2009), and find ways to be true to themselves (Price et al., 2000). Consumers' need to express their true self should be heightened when they experience situations that evoke feelings of inauthenticity.

Consumers' requirement for uniqueness is grounded in Snyder and Fromkin (1977) uniqueness hypothesis, which shows itself in the person's quest for material merchandise to separate themselves from others (Tian et al., 2001). Customers' requirement for uniqueness is exhibited in three sorts of buyer conduct: innovative decision counter-congruity; disliked decision counter-similarity; and evasion of comparability. In the main kind of conduct, imaginative decision counter-similarity, shoppers buy merchandise that express their uniqueness and furthermore are adequate to others. Different buyers readily risk social dissatisfaction to set up their uniqueness by choosing items that veer off from group standards however disagreeable decision counter similarity shopper conduct (Tian et al., 2001). To avoid comparability with others, purchasers may build up an assortment of procedures. For example, they may buy suspended styles, shop in vintage stores, or join clothing in surprising ways. Consumers ability to successfully accomplish an activity during virtual new product development to a large extend depends on their understanding of the new product and their ability to come up with unique but useful ideas (Amabile, 1996; Von Hippel and Katz, 2002). Following Füller (2010), we introduce tool support the extent to which the virtual environment and tools provided enable the user to accomplish the associated co-creation activity.

Before consumers can make competent contributions, they need a sound understanding

of the innovation. Then, consumers have to be given the means to share their creative ideas and knowledge which are often hard to articulate and difficult to transfer (Von Hippel, 2005). Interactive and vivid product environments support perceived as well as actual product understanding and enhance consumers' knowledge of products (Jiang and Benbasat, 2007; Li et al., 2005a). Given the high degree of interrelationship between getting a realistic product understanding and articulating ones ideas, we assume that tool support underlies these two facets as a common second-order factor (Kim and Stoel, 2004; Füller, 2010).

It is critical for the consumers to have knowledge and understanding of the new product, in which they are going to develop or share novel and meaningful ideas related to it. Füller (2010) explained the concept of tool support that has been follow-up by Hutter & Faullant (2011). Tool support is the ability of the consumer to complete the co-creation task virtually, via the consumption of the online tools provided. Notably, consumers must have a sound understanding about the co-creation phenomenon. They should be well-aware of the competent contributions they are expected to make. They should know about product innovation. Once the consumers are clear in their concepts, then only they can contribute in a better manner. The biggest challenge is in articulating and transferring knowledge amongst consumers.

Therefore, this study will address the gap by studying individual level variable (i:e Need for uniqueness, perceived tool support) as a moderating variable in relationship between antecedents and perceived brand authenticity (Morhart et al., 2015; Kwon et al., 2017). This research thus will contribute to the authenticity literature by providing a better understanding of self-authentication strategies discussed in previous research (Ilicic and Webster, 2014; Napoli et al., 2014). Relatedly, the finding that specific consumer segments value differently the potential of authentic brands in particular situations supports the constructivist view on authenticity (Grayson and Martinec, 2004; Wang, 1999)—which argues that authenticity is individually constructed. Guèvremont and Grohmann (2016) identified moderators of the brand authenticity effect (i.e., situational and individual differences variables) and empirically supports that consumers' need to self-authenticate through authentic brands is stronger in specific situations and for particular consumers (Beverland et al., 2008; Gilmore and Pine, 2007).

Keeping in mind the end goal to take part in important branding endeavors, it is basic for advertisers to comprehend the idea of realness of their branded items and services, and in addition its drivers and outcomes. Both academics and specialists in this manner

concede to the significance of realness for customer conduct and branding (Beverland and Farrelly, 2009; Gilmore and Pine, 2007; Holt, 2002; Leigh et al., 2006; Newman and Dhar, 2014; Rose and Wood, 2005). This research aims to advance the theoretical understanding of perceived brand authenticity and highlight its relevance for consumers 'brand-related behaviors. Brand loyalty, life satisfaction, self-esteem and brand trust as consequences of perceived brand authenticity.

Manthiou et al. (2018) also mentioned that the maximum vital and maximum studied place within the discipline of consumer psychology for identifying the prospects if brands can provide higher satisfaction with life. According to the study conducted by Helm et al. (2016), the subjective well-being is a multidimensional concept and consists of various sides. Satisfaction with lifestyles is therefore regarded as the cognitive and personal assessment of the existence of one's being which can also be the idea that satisfaction with life is also an evaluative judgment of a person concerning his lifestyles.

According to the study conducted by Sierra et al. (2016) considering perceived brand authenticity from an externalist perspective which evaluates the authenticity of brand primarily based on the capability of the brand to be a source of identity for customer. It has been further explained that perceived brand authenticity generates the feeling of authenticity and that means in brand to make the brand an identity for customers making them highly satisfied with their lives. According to the study carried out by Manthiou et al. (2018) customers sense brand as part of them and themselves as a part of the brand and hence inflicting that the brand will grow to be a part of individual's self-concept. This facilitates individuals to be more inspired in lifestyles as this issue leads people closer to self-actualization and these feelings of self-actualization imply more satisfaction with life and positivity toward lifestyles.

Stiehler and Tinson (2015) professed that one of the most crucial wishes of individuals is self-esteem. Further explained that people are commonly decided to feel good about them rather than feeling terrible and the ones who are excessive on self-esteem see themselves as effective (i.e. they have advantageous self-idea) and find methods to affirm their previously held views approximately their 'self'. The study carried out by (Cheah et al., 2016) explained that such people consequently experience closer to the brands that offer to mean in their existence with the aid of reflecting those people' actual 'self'. The research carried out by Saju et al. (2018) professed that from the same factor of view, fake and inappropriate brands would purpose in negative self-reviews and people could see themselves as terrible i.e. they may shape terrible self-conceptions which

might result in lower self-esteem. Within psychology, perceived partner authenticity significantly affects relationship quality evaluations (Wickham, 2013). Thus, transferred to the branding context, it can be assumed that authentic brands are better qualified for the role of being an intimate and long-term partner.

The study of Burmann et al. (2017) has further explained that this permits a link between genuine brand and customer character as this link will pressure the individual to purchase the same brand again and again because of the relatedness that costumer has associated with the brand and because of the authentic nature of it. Therefore, because of this, manufacturers being authentic in nature may have more responding customers i.e. authenticity of brands has prompted costumers to be loyal. Previous studies have tested the effect of self-congruency directly and circuitously carry for brand loyalty and these studies verify the connection between the two.

Hence knowledge gap indicates lesser number of researches on consequences of perceived brand authenticity. In order to fill this research gap, this study includes satisfaction with life, self-esteem, brand trust, brand loyalty and word of mouth as central outcome variable in our model (Morhart et al., 2015; Fritz et al., 2017).

One prevailing source of happiness is the meaning of life and its association. It has been argued that the authentic brands serve as an essential source of happiness, and add meaning and value to the life of the person, consuming the brand (Batey, 2015). The satisfaction level of the person increases as a sequence. It has been argued, that the person psychological states are disrupted, at the stance they develop the feelings of fakeness and un-authenticity (Gabay, 2015). The quality of life is further reduced and the personal satisfaction with life decreases gradually. Nevertheless, if the psychological desires of the individuals get fulfilled and the individual receives the feeling of authenticity, relevance and genuineness in the life, the satisfaction towards the life substantially increases.

Faccio (2012) notified that the self-image is representative of the feelings, which the individual has for herself or himself. Self-image is revealed as a significant facet of self-esteem and prevails how an individual develops a perception and feeling for herself. Prior researchers have shown that the consumers are inclined to represent themselves through their self-image, but the story does not end here, the consumer presents their "actual self" by means of this self-image (Kim and Hall, 2014). Halloran (2014) argues that the strong elements of the brands are potent enough to create positive perceptions in the minds of the consumers. These perceptions are deemed to further create the

realization of actual self, within the consumers using those brand attributes. Williams (2014) notified that the authentic brands are the brands, that are inclusive of strong facets, which are realistic, credible, and high in integrity and serves to be an insignia for the consumers. The authentic brand thus creates the feeling of actual self within the consumers and increases the levels of self-assurance within them.

Self-efficacy and self-competence are the two terms that are often overlapped. The term self-competence is representative of; the overall negative or positive attitude that a person develops towards himself as an efficacy or power source (Mruk, 2013b). On the contrary, the term self-liking means; the sense of worth that an individual has, in the context of social significance. In this stance, the social significance is basically the values acclaimed by the individual towards himself and not the perception of the values that are being developed. In the view that the authentic brands serve as a symbol for the consumers, providing them with the self-identity and recognition, possibly means that the brand has the potential to boost up the levels of individual's self-esteem. Moreover, Wang and Mattila (2015) discovered that perceived authenticity that is simulated using service scape factors significantly influences customers' purchase intentions. The moderated mediation analysis further demonstrates that authentic menu offering influences satisfaction through the activation of two distinct psychological motivations, depending on the ethnic composition of other customers (Luo et al., 2012).

Further, perception of individual regarding anything or any particular phenomenon translates certain attitudes of individuals into actions. This means that perceptions actually provide a path between certain variables. In the same sense, perceptions of authenticity of brands can lead certain phenomenon's like engaging in designing brand into formation of different concepts regarding brand and self. Hence Research Gap pertains to the study of the mediating role of PBA between the above mentioned antecedents and consequences will also provide insight to how PBA provides such a path (Jiang et al., 2017b).

1.1.2 Problem Statement

The nature of interactions in society are changing rapidly, driving transformations in how we create value in society, economy, business and marketing (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004b). Organisations are increasingly offering more customer-centric experiences (Durugbo and Pawar, 2012), which entails navigating how best to facilitate value co-creation

to create better outcomes for both the consumer and service organisation (Di Tollo et al., 2012; Durugbo and Pawar, 2014; Payne et al., 2008; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004b). Co-creation broadly describes collaboration between multiple actors in which value is jointly created (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004b).

As mentioned above, little work has been done on examination of antecedents and consequences of PBA. Researchers have called for future research on the antecedents and consequences of perceived brand authenticity (e.g. see Oishi et al. (2009), Fritz et al. (2017), Morhart et al. (2015), Napoli et al. (2016), Morhart et al. (2015) proposed that future researchers may study customization and co-creation engagement in relation with perceived brand authenticity.

In the light of above cited literature there is identified need to investigate the combined effect of co-creation, customization on psychological outcomes with mediating role of PBA and moderating role of need for uniqueness and perceive tool support. This study will also explain the impact of psychological outcomes on word of mouth.

1.2 Research Questions

This research will try to answer these questions:

- RQ1: Does co-creation engagement and Customization enhances brand authenticity, brand loyalty, life satisfaction, self-esteem and brand trust?

- RQ2: Does need for uniqueness and Perceived Tool Support acts as a moderator in relationship of co-creation engagement engagement, customization and perceived brand authenticity?

- RQ3: Does perceived brand authenticity plays mediating role between co-creation engagement, customization, brand loyalty, satisfaction with life, self-esteem, brand trust and word of mouth.

1.3 Research Objectives

A commercial organization, by definition, exists and functions to maximize profit and achieve further growth. Both profitability and growth are largely dependent on the

brand sales. Brands sale in contemporary world are highly dependent on perceptions of authenticity. Aiming to enhance body of knowledge by exploring antecedents and consequences of brand authenticity, study will also examine for moderation of need for uniqueness and technological orientation in relationship of antecedents of brand authenticity and itself. Specific objective of the study are:

- To predict the impact of co-creation and customization on perceived brand authenticity

- To examine the mediating effect of brand authenticity between co-creation engagement, customization and brand loyalty, satisfaction with life, self-esteem and brand trust.

- To examine the impact of perceived brand authenticity on brand loyalty, satisfaction with life, self esteem and brand trust.

- To examine the impact of brand loyalty, satisfaction with life, self esteem and brand trust on word of mouth.

- To what extent need for uniqueness and perceive tool support moderate the relationship of co-creation engagement, customization and perceived brand authenticity

1.4   Significance of the Study

Like any worthwhile research, this study is also aimed at making meaningful contribution at the theoretical as well as practical levels. The contribution of the study in both of these spheres is described below.

1.4.1   Theoretical Significance

The present study thereby provides an important contribution and augments our understanding on brand co-creation engagement and customization. First, it provides a fresh perspective on consumer brand co-creation engagement and customization by proposing a model that illustrates the effect of consumer–brand authenticity. The process of the brand co-creation engagement experience to create brand co-creation engagement, which

further affects consequent brand responses. This study amplifies the understanding of the brand co-creation engagement process and complements prior research that has emphasized mostly on specific facets of the process. Second, past studies have mainly focused on the economic gains of consumer–brand co-creation and few studies have examined the influence of brand co-creation engagement on consumer–brand relationships. This study extends the literature by revealing the crucial psychological causes of brand co-creation engagement. Third, this study advances the understanding of the co-creation effects on psychological outcomes.

In addition to the above contribution this study will provide insight in to the phenomenon of Perceived brand authenticity. Perceived brand authenticity is a new concept in marketing and consumer behavior research. Previous researchers have mainly focused on the conceptualization and operationalization of the concept of perceived brand authenticity with very little attention being paid towards the examination of the relationship between perceived brand authenticity and other concepts in marketing. This study thus aims to enrich and enhance body of knowledge in several different ways in context of perceived brand authenticity.

The study will examine co-creation engagement and customization as the antecedents of perceived brand authenticity. Previous researchers have never examined these variables as antecedents of perceived brand authenticity. In fact, Morhart et al. (2015) proposed for future researchers to examine both of these as antecedents of perceived brand authenticity.

Secondly, researchers in past have not shown keen interest in examining the effects of perceived brand authenticity on other consumer behaviors with exception of a few (Fritz et al., 2017). This study also addresses this gap and extends the body of knowledge by examining the relationship between perceived brand authenticity and other consumer behaviors which are brand trust, brand loyalty, self-esteem, and life satisfaction.

Lastly, study's other unique contribution towards the body of knowledge is that study proposes the moderating mechanism between the relationship of co-creation engagement, customization and perceived brand authenticity by examining costumer's need for uniqueness as moderator between these relationships and opens up the venue for future researchers to examine different other moderating mechanisms on antecedents-perceived brand authenticity relationship and perceived brand authenticity and its effects.

1.4.2 Practical Significance

This study also carries significance towards practice. Knowing the results of this study, brand managers would be in a better position to make strategies regarding their brands in relevant product/services. Managers can make better costumer engagement programs like involving them in making the product look like they want it to be, giving them options to change specifications of the products/services as they like and etc. By doing this, managers can make costumers feel the product/service more relevant to them and more original in its making as they themselves were involved in the production design of the product. These feelings of costumer will eventually translate into different positive consumer behaviours and positive attitudes of person in life like emotional attachment to the brand, high self-esteem, high loyalty to the brand and likewise. This positivity of costumer will change into purchase of the very same product. This means that if these strategies are properly made and executed by the brand managers, brands will become highly profitable and organization's success in the long term will be ensured.

1.4.3 Underpinning Theory

Self-concept theory (Super et al., 1963) along with self-expansion theory acts as an overarching theory in this study, as it provides the basis to examine individuals' ability and desire to "know thy self" and expand it by inclusion of others i:e people, objects etc. Developing positive self-concept is proposed as central to a sense of self, integral to healthy psychological development (Harter 1986, 1988), and associated with greater achievement of positive outcomes: psychologically, physically, socially and academically (Marsh and Hau, 2003). As a result of changing experiences and continuous assimilation of new perspectives and interpretations of perceptions, self-concept is therefore considered neither a stable concept (Markus and Wurf, 1987; Onorato and Turner, 2004; Shostrom, 1964), nor one that develops in sequential manner, but is instead a fluid and dynamic construct.

The primary all-encompassing rule of the self-extension display is that individuals look to grow the self as in they try to improve their potential viability by expanding the physical and social assets, viewpoints, and personalities that encourage accomplishment of any objective that may emerge (Aron et al., 1998). The accentuation here isn't on an inspiration for the genuine accomplishment of objectives, however on an inspiration to

attain the assets to have the capacity to accomplish objectives. Presumably for people the most essential asset for accomplishing objectives is information. Different sorts of assets are likewise significant, for example, societal position and group, belongings and riches, and physical strength and wellbeing. In this context, Taylor et al. (1995) proposed a self-related motive that they labeled "self-improvement," that is roughly comparable to self-expansion. Taylor et al. led a progression of studies in which members announced utilizing very unique wellsprings of data while fulfilling self- improvement thought processes than while fulfilling other self-intentions, for example, self- verification (the want to have affirmed what you trust you are) or self-improvement (the want to see yourself in the best light).

The self-concept comprises a cognitive and an affective understanding of who and what we are. Among the forms that it can take are the 'actual self' and the 'ideal self'. The actual self represents our perceived reality of ourselves (that is, who and what I think I am now). In contrast, the ideal self represents our construction of what we would like to be or to become. Consumers achieve self-congruence by consuming a brand with traits that we consider to represent either the actual or ideal self. Actual self-congruence reflects the consumer's perception of the fit between the actual self and the brand traits, whereas ideal self-congruence is the perceived fit of the brand traits with the consumer's ideal self. An actually self-congruent brand reflects who the consumer actually is whereas an ideally self-congruent brand reflects who the consumer would like to be. Malär et al. (2011) argue the self-concept can influence brand attachment. Self-congruence (i.e., the extent to which a consumer perceives a brand to be similar to his or her own self-concept; Malär et al. (2011), in turn, has been shown to lead to positive consumer responses to a brand (Grohmann, 2009; Malär et al., 2011). Consumers should perceive a greater congruence between themselves and an authentic brand.

In the field of marketing, Belk (1988) has proposed a notion of ownership in which "we regard our possessions as part of ourselves" (p. 139), an idea that has been the subject of considerable theoretical discussion and several studies. For example, Sivadas and Machleit (1994) found that items measuring an object's "incorporation into self" (items such as "helps me achieve my identity" and "is part of who I am") form a separate factor from items assessing the object's importance or relevance to the self. Ahuvia (1993) has endeavored to incorporate Belk's self-augmentation approach with the self-extension

display and has recommended that procedures estimated in the space of individual connections additionally apply to relations to physical objects and experiences. In a meeting study, Ahuvia demonstrated that individuals now and then depict their "love" of things similarly as they portray their affection for relationship accomplices, that they frequently consider this "real" love, and that they regard these affection protests as particularly a piece of their personality. In the meantime, as with human connections, there is frequently a feeling of self-sufficient incentive to the protest, even a feeling of being controlled by or helpless before it. These thoughts regarding incorporating the claimed protest in the self are likewise identified with the idea of relationship, as each "having" the other (e.g., Reik (1944)).

Self-expansion theory places that individuals have an inalienable inspiration to fuse others (in our specific situation, brands) into their self-idea. In any case, such a fuse of a brand into the self may rely upon the apparent level of a brand's authenticity. This provides justification for the fact that people are inherently motivated and may use co-creation and customization as a mechanism or a tool to incorporate authentic brand into their self-concept. In turn this self-congruence may lead to enhanced consumer brand relationships. Authentic brands go about as a self-checking vehicle for purchasers high in self-credibility. Given that legitimacy is considered as a positive characteristic in the present society, one can guess whether purchasers could utilize the show of authenticity brands as a self-improving impression management vehicle (Morhart et al., 2015).

Despite this level of spending, declining brand revenue trends and brand deaths occur (e.g., Oldsmobile, Plymouth, and Woolworth stores). What causes a brand to start losing market share, which could eventually lead to it being phased out of the market? Do they lose touch with the consumers' wants and needs? Are management teams unable to influence the consumer's reason to buy innovative products? Yet, some brands (e.g., John Deere) remain relevant to generations of consumers over time. What is the secret formula to sustainable brand growth?

Research has shown that when brands are able to be consumer oriented, they have a higher likelihood to produce innovative product offerings that drive the value proposition with consumers. Recent Research has indicated that brands who created consumer-oriented environment through emotional intelligence, hope, and social identity to drive brand engagement with consumers (e.g., new innovative products) in turn helped their brands for sustainable growth (Gifford and Newmeyer, 2017).

1.5 Operational Definition of Study Variables

1.5.1 Perceived Brand Authenticity

Study will use the conceptualization of PBA as proposed by Morhart et al. (2015). According to Morhart et al. (2015) brand authenticity is defined according to three perspectives i.e. externalist, objectivist and constructivist perspective and is composed of continuity, credibility, integrity and symbolism."

1.5.2 Customization

Customization is the change of "design and production from "made-to-stock" to "made-to-order"" (Tseng and Hu, 2014). Customization allows individuals to experience what they want to have i.e. be unique and tap up their individual need (Lee and Moon, 2015).

1.5.3 Co-Creation

Co-creation is defined as "the joint creation of value by the company and the customer; allowing the customer to co-construct the service experience to suit her context" (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004b). Co-creation can be referred to as "the dynamic interaction and involvement of customers with their suppliers in every phase of the value-creation process" (Vargo and Lusch, 2014).

1.5.4 Satisfaction with Life

Satisfaction with life has been defined in literature and operationalized by this research as '. . . cognitive evaluation of one's life' (Diener, 1984).

1.5.5 Self-Esteem

Self-esteem refers to the degree of confidence one has in his self and encompassesself-competence and self-liking (Tafarodi and Swann Jr, 1995).

1.5.6 Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty can be defined as: "A strong commitment to repurchase a product permanently in future despite the environmental impact of various marketing efforts to create potential shift towards other brands" (Oliver, 1999).

1.5.7 Brand Trust

Brand trust is defined as: "Feeling of security held by the consumer in his/her interaction with the brand, that it is based on the perceptions that the brand is reliable and responsible for the interests and welfare of the consumer" (Delgado-Ballester et al., 2003).

1.5.8 Word of Mouth

Word-of-mouth is usually defined as an exchange, flow of information, communication, or conversation between two individuals (Goyette et al., 2010).

1.5.9 Consumers' Need for Uniqueness

Consumers' need for uniqueness can be defined as: "the trait of pursuing differentness relative to others through the acquisition, utilization, and disposition of consumer goods for the purpose of developing and enhancing one's self-image and social image" (Tian et al., 2001).

1.5.10 Provided Tool Support

Perceived tool support consisted of two sub dimensions: product understanding and creative articulation. The two items of product understanding resemble Kempf and Smith (1998) website diagnosticity scale. The two items to measure creative articulation were derived from interview by Füller and Bilgram (2017).

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Brand Co-Creation

In the contemporary marketing scenario, the marketers and research scholars are focused at understanding the concept of value co-creation as a reinforce to accomplish the long-term association with the consumers and creating the positive brand experience (Frow et al., 2016). Increasing globalisation has diverted the attention of the marketers to recognise the needs of the consumers across different industries. Understanding the needs of the consumers provides an opportunity to create high value for the consumers. However, the co-creation is still considered an abstract concept, with limited research work. According to Payne et al. (2008), the co-creation concept can be conceptualised as a set of resources, practices and processes that the consumers are integrating to administer their activities. The accomplishment of value co-creation demands a "structural fit" amongst the seller and consumer activities (Heinonen et al., 2010).

The brand co-creation theory emerged due to the fact, that the consumers used to interact passively in the traditional marketing world, but now the consumers demonstrate a profound and active purchase behaviour, with respect to the brand (Hatch and Schultz, 2010; Vargo and Lusch, 2014). In the success of the brand, the consumers play a critically significant role. Limited literature is visible on the conceptualisation of the brand co-creation and engagement theory. Brand co-creation is affected by a set of encounters that may have cues from the organisation or from the consumers. The brand is co-created by the consumers and the consumer's perception persuades the brand. Healy and McDonagh (2013), explained that the brand is co-created through an exchange

among the organisation and its valuable customer brand experience. Therefore, there exists an important association between the consumers and the brand co-creation.

The customer engagement is essential to develop a successful brand. The initial study on the customer engagement has been conducted by (Kahn, 1990). After that, the concept has been studied by a massive number of research scholars from diverse disciplines. In the discipline of marketing, the term customer engagement is explained at the cognitive, emotional and psychological levels. The customer may engage with the organisation or with the brand. According to Bowden (2009), the customer engagement is referred to as a mental process, in which the new customers interact with the brand and develop loyalty, and the existing consumers develop a long-term relationship with the specific brand. On the other hand, Van Doorn et al. (2010) notify that the customer engagement can be referred to as a non-transactional behaviour shown by the consumers, during the time, they admire a specific brand. If the consumers get involved in the non-transactional behaviour, there is the likelihood, that the consumers get engaged, in the word of mouth practices, suggest the brand to their friends and acquaintances, post comments or get involved in writing blog posts. Nevertheless, the study by Hollebeek (2011) revealed that the customer engagement for a brand is reflective of a psychological state, in which the consumers start to interact with the brand of their choice. This type of interaction is interesting and motivation driven, the customers get engaged at the psychological, cognitive and behavioural levels, based on the environment.

Malthouse and Calder (2011) revealed that consumer engagement is regarded as a psychological state, when the consumers are interacting with the brand and initiate a co-created brand experience, along with the different stakeholders, existing in the service relationship. The process of customer brand co-creation is revealed as a diverse and cyclic process that creates high-value co-creation. Research conducted by Malthouse and Calder (2011) signifies that the value co-creation can take place through a number of values; hedonic and functional. The study conducted by Hajli et al. (2014) explained the role of the hedonic and functional behaviours of the brands, with respect to the social media interaction of the consumers and purchase of the service. By the functional value, the authors mean the functional and the instrumental facet of the social media that help the consumers to search the brand of their interest and keep themselves updated. However, the consumers seek and evaluate the information that is available to them. The consumers look for the accessibility and the meaningfulness of the information.

Grönroos and Voima (2013) have shown work on the concept of co-creation. The authors

have shown that the value co-creation is an experiential process, which the consumers pass through in distinct environments. Co-creation may be considered as an innovative, active and social phenomenon, that relies on the association between the consumers and the enterprises, and creates high value for the stakeholders involved (Grönroos and Voima, 2013). France et al. (2016), examined the role of the customer in co-creation. The study showed, that in the contemporary market scenario, the consumers are influenced by the advertising campaigns launched by the brands, specifically in the fast moving consumer goods. The consumer-generated advertising campaigns are significant enough in creating positive perceptions related to the brands. On the other hand, the crowd sourcing and the co-production research studies, explain that the consumers help the brands to improve and innovate themselves. The consumer's interests and needs are recognised, when the consumers are engaged in the brands.

Lim and Chung (2014) argue that the consumers have the potential to change the perception of other consumers through the word-of-mouth marketing communication. This further helps in creating positive perceptions of a brand, by the loyal customers, in front of the new customers. Literature has shown the impact of the co-creation with respect to the knowledge of the brand; however, the work is still limited in context (Gyrd-Jones and Kornum, 2013). However, with the emergence of technology and globalisation, the phenomenon of co-creation is becoming a centre of attention. The consumer brand knowledge and the co-creation have application in contemporary marketing discipline and is enabling the brands to become successful in their target market. The consumers play a critical role in the service industry nowadays, they get involved in two types of co-creation; consumer generated co-creation and firm-sponsored co-creation. In the consumer based co-creation, the consumers are involved in the knowledge-based blogs, participate in them and thus create positive perceptions about the brand. However, in the firm sponsored co-creation, the consumers are engaged in the different activities, by the organisation (Reith and Payne, 2009; Vargo and Lusch, 2014).The consumer-based needs are recognised and the firm then focuses on the cues provided by consumers, and in turn innovate and improve the brand (Reith and Payne, 2009; Vargo and Lusch, 2014). ? argued that collaboration and interaction with the consumer have become decisively significant in the contemporary marketing scenario. Consumers are increasingly involved in the networks of value chains, transforming previously adopted marketing approaches into emerging ones (post-consumer and prosumers). On the other hand, consumers are evidenced to be unsatisfied with their conventional role as buyer, consumer or received

from the organisational value chain terminals, nevertheless, they are getting proactively engaged in the creation of customized and new products, as per their demands and interests (Cova et al., 2015; Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014). Cova et al. (2015) explained that the consumers are getting engaged in different value chain activities, specifically in the service industries. Out of these brand communities based co-creation, innovating services and products, co-designing are the prevailing participatory roles of the consumers. Furthermore, Füller (2010) revealed that the customer engagement with the brands during the process of co-creation displays a myriad of benefits. Consumers seemingly gain social incentives for instance, reputation amongst brand communities, fortify ties among their peers, foster community engagement, etc. Consumers have the intention to engage in the co-creation activities in order to institute social relationships with their peers, collaborate and share experiences amid their like-minded souls and have a sense of social recognition. OHern and Rindfleisch (2010) and Wirtz et al. (2013) affirmed that consumers engage in the process of co-creation so that they can increase their knowledge and information related to the products/brands. Consumers are visualised having communication with other members in order to seek assistance with the product/brand. Wirtz et al. (2013) argued that the consumers enjoy the brand based anecdotes and learn more in a vicarious manner. Consumers exchange ideas and recommendations with others related to the experience of the brand. The exchange of information enables the consumers to know each other. Additionally, Cova et al. (2015) and Jaakkola and Alexander (2014) mentioned that presumably consumers involved in co-creation are engrossed by monetary rewards or accolades via intellectual property or visibility. Nevertheless, there are many consumers who freely share their thoughts and ideas and assist the brand in the co-creation process.

The process of co-creation takes place in different ways and helps the brands that intend to foster loyal customers (Gyrd-Jones and Kornum, 2013). The process of co-creation is significant for the organisations, else, the customers will marginally alienate. The phenomenon of co-creation enables the brand to cope with the market competition and increase value for the customers through the creation of innovative products. Brands unveil new springs of competitive advantage through engagement of the customers in the co-creation innovative experiences (Kohler et al., 2011) Prior literature has shown the managerial perspectives of co-creation. The holistic view as presented by Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004b) claimed that managers have changed the customer's role from "passive audience" to "vigilant and active players". This is deemed significant to the

process of value-co creation. Both customer and company design a product after mutual consent. Previously, organisations used to solely develop the products/services based on their perceptions about customer's desires (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004b). The customers were not acknowledged to participate in the brand creation process. Nevertheless, the contemporary marketing scenario has changed the manner in which products were developed previously (Gyrd-Jones and Kornum, 2013). Customers are now engaged in brand activities and new products are developed through the process of brand co-creation (Tu et al., 2018).

Nysveen and Pedersen (2014) examined customer co-creation influence on the brand experience, brand loyalty and brand satisfaction. Through the application of service logic methodology, the authors' has shown the influence of co-creation in creating value for the prospective customers, in the context of branding. The authors claimed that co-creation leads to an increase on customer brand engagement, which consequently increase the levels of customer loyalty and branding.

Nysveen and Pedersen (2014) argued that the process of co-creation leads to an arousal of cognitive, behavioural, sensory, and affective, facets of brand experience. However, same study authors are convinced that brand experiences impacts on brand loyalty and satisfaction are deemed intricate in context. The study has shown that brand experience is a partial mediator amongst the impacts of brand loyalty and satisfaction on co-creation participation.

Brand co-creation has many implications for the organisations looking forward to increase their competitive advantage. Organisations need to be vigilant while stimulating brand experience by way of co-creation as this process has the potential to create both: positive and/or negative impacts on customer loyalty and satisfaction (Nysveen and Pedersen, 2014). According to Banyte and Dovaliene (2014), the contemporary market world has created stiff competition and it has becoming challenging for the brands to survive. Given the market conditions, creation of value and engagement of customers is sign of relief for the business organisation. Banyte and Dovaliene (2014) assessed the association between engagements of customer in the value creation process and customer loyalty. The study through the review of literature developed a model in the surge of determining the association between aforementioned variables. The study via an integrated analysis revealed the associations of customer engagement into the process of value creation and consequently leading to an increase in the level of brand loyalty. The study showed both; indirect and direct associations between these constructs.

2.2   Customization

According to the study conducted by He et al. (2016) customisation is defined as the change in production and design from the traditional ones to the more customer-oriented designs. The study has further explained that customisation has also allowed the customers to have a better brand experience by purchasing more unique products that could satisfy their needs and demands. It has been opined by Altarteer et al. (2016) that customisation has been able to encompass more functions and activities as compared to mass customerisation. It has been due to the fact that, as the study justified, customisation is about using and incorporating more flexible organizational structure and processes so that the products can be varied from one another. Many researches such as Tang and Liu (2015), Ramanathan et al. (2017) & Ma (2017) have conducted empirical analysis on the importance of customisation for brand building and creating a brand name. The amalgamated findings of the research undertaken by Smith et al. (2017) professed that those companies that offer customised products and services to the customers are often also concerned about the price of standardised production. It might be because customisation requires a robust amount of planning about how the company can be able to cater to the demand of larger customer base.

The meta-analysis conducted by Smith et al. (2017) stated that with customisation, the company can configure to various different frames and can provide colour variations in its products. In the research of GS et al. (2017) it has been identified that many famous brands around the world have introduced various combinations and dimensions in terms of shape and colour so that the products can be customised by the consumers. However, it has been argued by Jiménez et al. (2017) that even the companies have been incorporating customisation, the question can be raised about how these companies have been able to translate these abilities in their production process, to produce and convert the products options into customised purchasing, consumption and shopping experiences for customers. The study has also suggested that for the success of customised products in the market, there has also been a dire need of customised marketing (Jiménez et al., 2017). This might imply that mass customisation has been connected to mass marketing in which the brands target customers from customised ads, customised prices and customised promotion.

According to the research of Keller and Richey (2006) mass customisation is one type of customerisation through which brands not only bring variations in brand attributes

but also cater to other elements of market as per consumer demand. However, it has been argued by Calefato (2017) that it is highly crucial for the brands to recognize the consumer demands and the core competencies of the company. The study has further opined that for customisation of products the company must have appropriate manufacturing and production capabilities. According to customisation can be considered as the concept where the company belonging to a particular industry transform itself from the traditional products to more customer-oriented products. It has been further defined that with customisation the company might also face number of challenges; for instance there might also be a need of a robust system of transportation or communication between a brand and the customers. It might imply that customisation in today's world might be challenging but with required planning the brand can create its place amongst other market giants.

The research conducted by Schembri and Latimer (2016) emphasised on the notion of value chain for the brands, which have been engaged in offering customised products to consumers. The study has stated that customised brands can be succeeded in the market by making their way up in value chain. It has been because, as the study suggested, the customers can start looking for customised products on the basis of how easily it has been available in the market therefore value chain can allow the firm to offer customised products in a timely manner. Another study conducted by Chang and Chung (2016) professed that customisation can allow the brands to consider product availability and provide large number of options to the customers; this might also contain some defined and unique product attributes which can help the customers to make purchase decisions. The research has further explained that it might be done by providing options to customers related to their choice and demand. It might imply that the customers become highly inclined towards those products which can cater to their demand and desire and provide satisfaction which can be achieved through customised products. A large number of studies are available which have identified the importance of customisation and its impact on consumer behaviour. One major factor of customisation has been introduced by Scully (2016): *customers' sense of belonging.* The study has explained that customisation can create a sense of belonging amongst customers. Supported by Sajtos et al. (2015) who professed that customisation can influence the customers upon thinking that a certain product is solely made for them which further create a strong connection of the customer with the brand. It has been further opined in the study that customisation can provide some unique product attributes which can

only be belonged to a certain customers; with respect to this, customers would likely to feel more connected with the brand which can further influence them to make purchase decisions. Therefore, it might imply that customisation has been essential for creating sense of belonging as well as strong bond between the brand and the customer.

According to the study undertaken by Beverland (2018) customisation is the major source of creating customer value; the customers might feel highly valued if the brand attributes would differ from other products. It has been researched in depth by researcher which revealed that the major responsibility of the brands is to create customer value due to the fact that buyers are the major source of revenue generation whereas brands have to be more inclined towards altering consumer behaviour. The study has further stated that customisation can provide the brands a mechanism through which it would be able to make customers feel highly valued and incline them to make purchase decisions. Another study conducted by Shams (2015) also supported the same notion by professing that customisation can provide customer value by connecting to the touch-points of the customers through either colour, shape or any other likeable product attribute. It might also imply that customers can be highly valued if the customised products are offered in the market.

In the words of Ebrahim et al. (2016) the brands which have been inclined towards customisation often design their distribution system in a manner which can help the customers to make purchase decisions. The research has further explained that the brands under customisation strategy coordinate with supply chain for better delivery of their products to the market or directly to customers. According to Paul et al. (2016) customisation has included those processes which can create unique purchasing and shopping experiences to the customers which is why it is more important for the brands to keep the quality of the products intact and become more buyer-centric. It might imply that how the brands reach to the customers through their customised products plays an important role in brand success where business strategy as well as marketing technique for customised products might also need to be customer-oriented.

Customisation has been defined as the offering of the individual product to the individual customer. Högström et al. (2015) stated that customisation is not just a trend but has become an inevitable evidence for the brands for meeting market and consumer demands. However, Hsu and Liou (2017) argued that customisation is the development which has raised many questions and challenged the industries in terms of offering highly

varied and diversified product portfolio, which has also been implying flexible technologies of manufacturing. Nevertheless, Högström et al. (2015) suggested that in order to cater to the challenges posited by customisation, the brands must be customer-centric and should also develop paradigm such as personalisation, co-creation between suppliers and customers and mass customisation. Besides the increasing demand for customised products, Mourtzis (2016) stated, it has been noticeable that the products might also become obsolete prior to reaching their life expectancy which can be resulted in shorter time for product usage as well as short lifecycle of the product on the part of the company. This might also be associated with the quality of each customised products which requires being high for each customer segment.

2.2.1 Impact of Co-Creation and Customization on Perceived Brand Authenticity

Empirically, brand managers co-create brands through the involvement of their prospective consumers. Consumers are engaged in a set of innovative practices, based on the notion of creating a product with desirable features. Laroche et al. (2012) examined the impact of the co-creative brands on the perception brand authenticity and its association to the behavioural intentions and compared the results with the brands that were non-co-creative. The results of the study showed that the brands co-creation potentially impacts the consumer's perceptions related to the brand. The perceptions showed a direct association with the brand co-creation, nevertheless, the behavioural intentions bare an indirect association. The study concluded that the co-creation of the brand through the online involvement, create positive brand perceptions as well as behavioural intentions. Consumers in the current era are becoming aware due to the advancement in the technology. They are having access to a myriad of brands available across the online platforms (Laroche et al., 2012). An engagement of the consumers during the progression of brand development leads to the co-creation of the brand that is deemed more precious in the view of the consumers. The consumers after the launch of the co-created brand preferably reveal purchase intentions for the specific brand. Underlying this motivation, the perceptions of the authentic brand play a significant role. Consumers rendering the brand as genuine, true or real will demonstrate loyalty towards the brands. They themselves evaluate the brand as authentic or non-authentic, by a set of attitudes and behaviours. Recent investigations, exhibit the consumers choosing the

brands that are visualized as community part or being sincere friends, and neglecting the ones that are not commercializing.

The process of co-creation engages the consumers based on the notion of self-connection with the brand. The consumers deem themselves as the part of the brand and get the feelings of delight and enchantment, at the time the brand is being developed. Theory of self-determination displays an argument that the individual satisfaction needs serve to be a motivation for the consumers. The theory of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, further illustrates that the self-actualization and self-esteem, are the top representatives of the individual needs. The process of co-creation enhances the consumer's levels of self-esteem. The process of co-creation nourishes the perceptions of the consumers positively. They presume the brand as authentic and genuine. The brand deemed out to be a metaphor for the consumers, which they use as a marker of self-identity and self-recognition. The study by Khanagha et al. (2017) affirms that the process of co-creation creates the positive impact on perceived brand authenticity.

Recent studies have suggested that the consumers need customized products and services. They are willing to buy the brands based on their demands. The conceptualization of customization is herewith the similar demonstration of consumers designing of the product features or attributes. The process of customization, enable the customer to develop the brand in a manner she/he desire. Under this conceptualization, the product will become part of customized self-concepts and the customer will have a feeling, that he is the part of the brand community and brand family. Consumers recognizing the feelings of brand connectedness will infuse brand perception as a metaphor. The perceptions of symbolism will further conceive the brand as being authentic in nature. Hence, the customization process impacts positively on the perceived brand authenticity. Tseng and Hu (2014) argued that the personalization or customization includes the proactive participation at the end of the consumers. The more the product demonstrates relevance to the consumers, the more is the provoking personalization.

The significance and impact of the value chain in the perspective brand customization have been remarkably explained by Schembri and Latimer (2016). The authors have claimed that the success of the customized brand becomes a reality if they pay attention to their value chains. The study has notified that the consumers are looking for the customized products and they are convinced if they find the product of their interest available in the market. It is this timely availability of the brand, which is subjective to the value chain of the brand. The brands need to manage their products availability

by upgrading their value chain. Chang and Chung (2016) explained that the brand developers may provide consumers with the multitude of brand options based on the availability of the products. Higher the number of product customisation options, higher is the probability that consumers' demonstrate purchase intentions. The study has professed that the consumers must be provided customised options based on their interest and desires. Presumably, consumers may take a decision to buy those products that matched their self-interests, desires and demands. The customised products are deemed as satisfaction drivers for the brand consumers.

Beverland (2018) has argued that process of customisation is the foundation for generating high value for the consumers'. They feel delighted if they came to know that the characteristic features of the brand, they consume are unique and distinct than other brands available in the market. Brand plays a critical role in the generation of customer value. Researcher argued that brand has the responsibility to alter the behaviour of the customers, due to the fact, that the consumers are the critical revenue generation resource, and value creation is the ultimate objective of the brand developers. The authors have made a claim related to a customized feature of the brand. The phenomenon of customization is deemed to influence the decision-making process of consumers. Brands need to focus on this feature of their products if they want to influence the behaviour of the consumers. Another research by Shams (2015) has professed similar findings by explaining that brands can increase the value for the customers through connecting concept of customization with touch points of the consumers. These touch points are inclusive of shape, colour, or amiable feature of the product, that could be customized on demand. Consumers feel highly valued when they notice, that the brand customized product is available for them in the market, and presumably get satisfied.

Empirically, consumers are now part of the brand as the innovation partners. Dean et al. (2016) explored the co-creation process and defined it as a process in which consumers and brand developers interacts systematically, exchange knowledge, learn from the experiences, assimilate resources and develop something new encompassing higher value. Hatch and Schultz (2010) argues that co-creation is an opportunity and when this opportunity is exploited, advances performance and relevance of the product, reduces the associated costs and boost up the chances to reveal new markets. Previously, the phenomenon of co-creation was practical to the development of services, but recently, this process is inherent to develop the physical features of the products. Progressively, the management and generation of an active exchange of ideas with consumers increase the

participation of the consumers. During the co-creation process, new directions are set to innovate the new product (Ernst et al., 2017). Consumers have conventionally known as the extractors and exchanges of value, but, now they are recognised as the value creators and markers of firm's competitive edge. Additionally, consumers are deemed as a promising and reliable source of product innovation and development, specifically enchanting the brand developers in the virtual computer-mediated environments (Ind and Iglesias, 2016). Model of brand knowledge development supports co-creation. In the model, the causes, places, events, other brands and peoples are connected to the brand. Perceptions related to the brand and brand knowledge can be reinforced through a transition of knowledge regarding co-creation to brand image, brand feelings, brand personality brand attitudes and brand awareness. Ultimately, brand knowledge plays a potent role in influencing the consumers to purchase the products by making relevant decisions.

Van Dijk et al. (2014) argued that soft and emotional facets of the brand personality appeal the consumers in the contemporary marketing scenario. The perceptions of the brand have a significant role in the creation of a brand image, brand loyalty and influence the behaviour of the consumers. Notably, the metaphoric and emotional value that a brand delivers to its customers facilitates self-expression of the consumers. On the other hand, an association of the brand is recognised through the eminence of brand image and extent to which the consumer is aware of the brand. It has been argued Moulard et al. (2016) that consumers generate his/her own perceptions and judgements and categorise the brand as authentic or unauthentic. The elements of brand sincerity and authenticity can be seen together as a characteristic of brand personality. A conceptualisation of brand authenticity takes place from both the terminals i.e., brand and consumers (Van Dijk et al., 2014). In a nutshell, authenticity is referred to as something genuine, true or real. Consumer trends are changing and they are displaying interest in the brands that provide them recognition in the community of their interests and are perceived as sincere. The consumers are not convinced by the brands aimed at commercialising. The phenomenon of co-creation is inclusive of interaction, maintenance and creation of an authentic brand by the initiation of an open dialogue with the prospective consumers. On the provided storyline, the consumers are engaged and thus sincere perceptions are created in the minds of the consumers. Understanding the "sincere brand personality" model by Aaker (1997), with the analysis of core five dimensions of brand personality namely; competence, excitement, ruggedness, sophistication and sincerity, one can easily identify the authenticity and sincerity of the brand. Additionally,

brand co-creation processes enables the brand to create innovative and novel products. Van Dijk et al. (2014) explained the brand co-creation impacts on the perceived brand authenticity. Quantitative analysis of the study affirmed co-creation and brands impacts the perceptions of the brand and influence them to purchase the products. The study notified that co-creation is a strategic method, which positively influences the perceptions about the brand. Also, co-creation phenomenon influences the process of brand associations. The brand inferences are made by the consumers, based on the notion of brand behaviours. Product based brand intentions are affected indirectly by the process of co-creation. This is because consumers are willing to see the tangible changes in the product, in comparison to the existing product they were consuming.

Napoli et al. (2014) notified that the consumers utilize the brand for the creation of authentic self and have its connection with the time, place and culture. Evaluating the authenticity of the brand is complex, as the consumers demonstrate a variety of cues while attributing authenticity to branded elements. From the perspective of the consumer, the authors have developed a robust tool, which enabled them in measuring the perspective of brand authenticity. The quantitative analysis revealed the higher-order constructs of brand authenticity as sincerity, heritage and commitment. The study explained that how the authentic brand may be delivered to its consumers by incorporation of effective and efficient strategic decision-making process.

Smith et al. (2017) notified that customization of the product helps the brand to change the perceptions of the customers. The customization process enables the company to configure the interest of the consumers and bring innovations in the product colour, packaging, and other attributes of the products. Review of prior literature has insights, that the brands through a mix of colours and shapes provide an option to customize the product. The consumers can make customization based on their desires. Nevertheless, the process of customisation is deemed complex in nature (Jiménez et al., 2017). The customization options are available to the customers, but a question is raised related to the capacity of the brands to produce the products as demanded during the customization process. It is challenging for the brand to convert the brand options into customised shopping experiences, customised consumption and customised purchasing. The study has recommended that the marketers need to focus on the customized marketing. The customization process is thus expected to be part of the mass marketing, in which the targeted customers are targeted through customized purchasing, promotion

and pricing. However, He et al. (2016) explained that customers after getting the product customized demonstrate an association to the brand. The consumers develop an emotional feeling that the brand has listened to their desires and the brand is deemed as genuine and authentic. The process of customization leads to the perception that the brand is authentic and impacts the brand image positively. This further clarifies that the customization process creates positive perceptions related to the authenticity of a brand and its products.

2.3   Perceived Brand Authenticity

According to Alexander (2009) a brand perceived as real, honest and credible, is considered an authentic brand. Napoli et al. (2014) argued that the authentic brand has a potential to distinguish itself from others, by way of its quality commitment, genuineness and the association to the heritage. The authentic brands, connect with the hearts of the consumers through their symbolic quality and commitment, they have the ability to initiate an emotional connection with the consumers (Morhart et al., 2015). The analysis of the literature reveals that the authentic brand glorifies its consumers, through the creation of positive perceptions. The authentic brand cares for valuable customers, enable them to develop and recognise their uniqueness, is reliable and reflects perseverance for the coming years, as it has shown in the past (Morhart et al., 2015).

In the contemporary business scenario, the brand authenticity is an emerging concept. It has utmost significance for the marketers', as it has the potential to create unique brand recognition, and empower the brand equity and status (Gilmore and Pine, 2007). A number of studies have been conducted to determine the association between the brand authenticity and different variables. Ilicic and Webster (2014) showed that the brand authenticity has a position associated with the brand attitude and purchase intention. Likewise, Morhart et al. (2015) notified that the emotional attachment with the brand, word of mouth communication and brand choice likelihood are positively associated with brand authenticity. Beverland et al. (2010) explained that the consumers when to create and reveal their true self, they reflect the self-authentication behaviours, in the context of authentic brands. This is because, the authentic brands have their own recognition and serve as a meaningful resource, the consumers, in turn, utilise the brands as an instrumental resource and develops self-authentication behaviours.

Gilmore and Pine (2007) argued that the nature and extent of the self-authentication

behaviours differ with respect to different individuals and situations. For instance, the individuals search for the authentic brands with respect to their life stage. Gilmore and Pine (2007) revealed that in the transformation stage of the individuals, they are more concerned to recognise their own identity and at that time they search for the authenticity. Beverland et al. (2008) argued that the consumers can make quick decisions related to a product, which has its origin from the authentic brand. In this stance, the brand advertisement also plays a critical role, in increasing the brand purchase. Morhart et al. (2015) argued that the brand authentication behaviours adopted by the individuals differ with respect to the brand choices the consumer makes. The consumers having the higher levels of the self-authenticity are more inclined to make a choice of authentic brand. The brand authenticity thus has a connection to the self-authentication behaviours adopted by the consumers; however, the situation factors also have an impact on these variables (Napoli et al., 2014).

Burmann et al. (2017) conducted a research on brand authenticity as a follow up to Kelley's attribution theory. The authors notified that the perception of the brand authenticity is dependent on its antecedents namely; consistency, uniqueness and perseverance. The brand behaviour needs to be reflective of the persistent, unique and continuous brand attributes. When the brand shows such attributes, in this situation, the consumer develops a positive perception of the brand and considers it as authentic.

Marketing and academic literature has acknowledged two distinct views of authenticity; objectivist and constructivist perspective. Grayson and Martinec (2004) explained that the authenticity is basically a quality enclosed in an object and is examined by the experts. The authors termed the quality based authenticity as "indexical". Indexical means to differentiate a real object from its duplicates. In the objectivist view, the brand should deliver what is expected of it. For instance, the consumers acquire the authentic brand, and through a number of behavioural or physical facts, develop a perception, that they have received exactly, that was supposed to be delivered. This is referred to as indexicality by the authors. Beverland et al. (2008) argued that the consumers used to acquire the knowledge from the objective sources and develop justifications related to the product authenticity. However, the objectivist perspective of branding explains, that the perceptions of brand authenticity are developed through the evaluation of the substantiation reality. The reality can be examined through the information available for the brand; logo, age, labels of origin and performance, these facets help in verifying the brand.

On the other hand, the authenticity of the brand can be explained through a constructivist perspective. This perspective demonstrates that the authenticity of the brand can be created through a personal or socially constructed process (Grayson and Martinec, 2004). The constructivist view is not based on the quality intrinsic to an object; nevertheless, it is structured from distinct interpretations made about the real world. The constructs are based on the opinion of the consumers, beliefs, perspectives and expectations. This is the reason, due to which the consumers look forward to the brand authenticity is different settings. For instance, Disneyland appears as the commercially developed authenticity or iconic authenticity, as a fabricated touristic location. However, when observed in the branding context, the constructivist perspective explains, that the ability of the brand to develop an illustrative fit between the brand authenticity and expectations of the brand (Grayson and Martinec, 2004). The consumers thus develop positive perceptions regarding the brand, from its abstract impressions as developed from the marketing cues, being opposite to the objectivity of the brand.

Authenticity or being authentic means "genuine" in English literature which means that something is unique and original. Word authenticity has been used in managerial and consumer behavior research in different meanings (Beverland, 2005b; Napoli et al., 2014). It has been used to refer to sincerity, innocence and originality (see, Fine (2003)). Authenticity has also been used to refer to something as being natural, honest, and simple (Boyle, 2003). Authenticity for consumers is something they evaluate in products or sevices. Thus, this distinction between seeing something as authentic or non-authentic lies in the eye of the consumer which makes it completely subjective and this subjectivity revolves around social or personal realities constructed by and around individuals.

Individuals today are malcontented in presence of thousands of advertisements and thus need confidence in marketing, with nearly everything in their lives appearing to be artificial. In this regard, costumers are prepared to grasp substitute utilization practices. While this move is a development concentrated among few consumers, and the upheaval in utilization anticipated by Boyle (2003) might be some time away, the customers' journey for authenticity will drive marketers to reassess their techniques. Peñaloza (2000) noted that this search for authenticity is not a prevailing fashion, rather a genuine consumers' endeavor to change the social order encompassing consumption and marketing. Consumers feel they have been denied aexistence that is genuine or authentic and will request items that mirror the recharged covet for what is bona fide. Thus, it is vital that credibility claims catch the experiences, desires and cravings of the proposed target

and mirror their predominant qualities and convictions (Molleda, 2010).

Since the seminal work of Napoli et al. (2014) the area of perceived brand authenticity is gaining importance in consumer behavior research. Morhart et al. (2015) noted that a definition of perceived brand authenticity acceptable to all is still a question. PBA basically talks about brands which are authentic in nature. Previous researchers have noted that such brands which are perceived to be authentic are purposive. Beverland (2006) noted that such brands are assumed by consumers to be made by artists. Carroll and Swaminathan (2000) noted that such brands are natural and are composed of natural ingredients. Brown et al. (2003) noted that perceptions of authenticity of brand are deeply linked with the design of brand such that abrupt and continuous changes can lead to perceptions of distrust towards brands by consumers.

On conceptual side, different authors have operationalized the concept of PBA in different ways. Eggers et al. (2013) proposed that PBA as perceived by chief executive officers of Small and medium enterprises to be composed of three elements which are brand consistency, brand customer orientation, and brand congruency. Brand consistency here refers to making sure that all stakeholders experience brand at all contact points. Brand consistency means to align all promises made to stakeholders with the vision and values of company (Eggers et al., 2013). Brand customer orientation refers to satisfying the needs of customers and brand congruency refers to the alignment in values of individual employee and company.

Another possible operationalization of the variable has been done by Morhart et al. (2015). Morhart et al. (2015) have tried to develop a definition of PBA acceptable to all. They have conceptualized PBA from three perspectives: Objectivist perspective i.e. evaluation of authenticity of brand from "an evidence based reality that can be assessed using verifiable information about the brand, such as labels of origin" (p.7), constructivist perspective i.e. evaluation of authenticity of brand based on perceptions of consumers regarding abstract impressions and lastly externalist perspective which evaluates authenticity of brand based on brand's ability to be a source of identity for consumer.

Morhart et al. (2015) proposed continuity, credibility, integrity and symbolism as dimensions of PBA. Continuity means that the brand does not change quickly overtime. Credibility means that how much a brand is perceived to be fulfilling the promises it has made. Integrity represents the purity and responsibility of brand, symbolism means that authentic brands serve as a symbol toward costumers and reflects in the self identity of

the person.

Despite of the newness of the area, few different studies have examined the antecedents and consequences of PBA. Eggers et al. (2013) studied PBA in relation with brand trust. Using data from CEO's of 285 SME's from Germany, Eggers et al. (2013) found that brand authenticity significantly relates to brand trust and thus can be helpful in growth of the firm. At the same time, Eggers et al. (2013) noted that it is necessary for organization to build a culture which promotes authenticity within organization. Morhart et al. (2015) examined the impact of different cues: indexical, iconic and existential on PBA. They found support for the formulated hypothesis. Similarly, Morhart et al. (2015) studied PBA in relation with emotional brand attachment and word of mouth and found support for the proposed relations.This thus provides an opportunity to explore more antecedents and consequence of PBA.

2.4 Satisfaction with Life

The term "satisfaction with life" has been identified in literature as the cognitive evaluation of one's own life. However, there has been many definitions and explanations provided by many researchers which has made it challenging to understand what life satisfaction means. Gyuracz-Nemeth (2015) stated that satisfaction with life is an operational way of defining the successful aging. In simple words, it might be associated with person's ability to be satisfied in a manner that inclines him/her to move forward towards old age (Naseem, 2018). The large number of studies has also considered satisfaction with life as a notion of overall judgement about life achievements as per decided and planned by an individual. It has been supported by Mogaji (2015) who stated that satisfaction with life is a positive evaluation of life's conditions as well as a judgement about how life has been able to keep a balance between the expectations, standards and achieved goals.

According to the study conducted by Pavot (2014) life satisfaction is about symbolising the criteria as well as the ultimate outcome of life experience of the individual. In simple word, it is an assessment of life achievements of an individual throughout the times. As further explained by Samaha and Hawi (2016) satisfaction with life is regarded as an overall evaluation and assessment of attitudes and feelings about ones' life and score the assessment from negative to positive. The study has further opined that it has been regarded as one of the three major components through which an individual

evaluates about life: positive effect, negative effect and life satisfaction. According to the study conducted on the notion of life satisfaction by Matud et al. (2014) professed that satisfaction with life is characterised by the agreement made by an individual as a part of cognitive theory. It has been further explained that the cognitive judgement of the individual is about the comparisons which are based on the compatibility between individual's lives and own living conditions with the designated standards. Therefore, it is considered as the antecedent in different spheres of human life which can be helpful for evaluating the achieved and the desired.

Research of Taran et al. (2018) stated that satisfaction with life is associated with the family domain, work domain and personality traits. Summarised by Cheung and Lucas (2016), it has been identified that life satisfaction is the extent to which the person becomes able to evaluate the overall quality of life. The research of Bartels (2015) has on the other hand opined that the life satisfaction is the evaluation of person's past which can be justified by present achievements and lead towards future improvements while providing a positive outlook of life. The studies have all provided that satisfaction with life is the pointers towards life's quality which can be further become an indicator of persons' overall physical and mental health. The consumer research has seen life satisfaction as a part of those purchases which can provide satisfaction to the customers. As defined by Trepte et al. (2015) customers often feel satisfied with life when they use certain type of products which can satisfy their needs and demands; it is therefore a notion of the overall existing condition of the brand in the market with those certain attributes which can cater to consumers' demand. Therefore, life satisfaction has been an integral part of consumer research where numerous studies have explained why it is connected with customer satisfaction and purchase decision.

The empirical analysis of Sato et al. (2017) has opined that there has been a lesser incongruity between the achievements and desires of the individual which can be examined by the whole satisfaction an individual has with life. The study of Tsang et al. (2014) has included the Affective theory and explained that despite the feeling of satisfaction, the domain of life satisfaction provide an individual to be conscious about dominant emotions due to the conversion effect of negative emotions over the positive. One of the recent researches have been conducted by Diener et al. (2006) on satisfaction with life in which it has been identified that it has been the assessment of the degree of positive experiences which have purported positive emotions in human beings. Smith and Bryant (2015) called satisfaction with life a cognitive constituent of wellbeing that can also be

subjective. The study has further explained that high level satisfaction with life means that the quality of life is highly good whereas low level satisfaction with life portrays the serious shortcomings and mishaps in life.

It has been consistent in the study of Kong et al. (2014) who stated that life satisfaction has been reflecting both extents in which the needs are met and various goals have been achieved or viewed as attainable. From this perspective, it would seem reasonable to comprehend that life satisfaction where the goals have been achieved becomes higher amongst people. Consistent with the study of Extremera and Rey (2016) it has been believed that satisfaction with life has been associated with mental and physical health, fruitful outcomes and longevity which have all been considered as positive in nature. In addition to this, Chen and Berger (2016) professed that the improved level of satisfaction with life has been given rise to better future which is turn resulted in higher life satisfaction. Therefore, life satisfaction can be regarded as more of an indicator which has been apparent to the quality of life; the indicator might also let people to thrive and might also make them live a purposeful life.

The most elementary incorporation of satisfaction with life has been undertaken by Hawi and Samaha (2017) who stated that life satisfaction is actually a data that can be used to measure how quality life has been lived by a certain group or society. The study has further opined that it has been done in order to assess the degree to which a social issue or problem can be occurred which also lead towards recommendation for better policy interventions. With regard to market research conducted by Szabó et al. (2017) consumers often evaluate the quality of life with the product available to them as per their desire or need. It has further been opined that high availability of such products in the market make the consumers believe that the quality of life is higher. However, Whisman and Judd (2016) stated that the condition might not be considered as ideal as well as acceptable for all the customers because where some customers want product to be available in the market, others might want certain attributes and prices of the products. Therefore, it might also imply that high satisfaction can be highly associated with how the product is available in the market, what attributes have been offered and what prices have been devised by the companies.

It has been argued by Grzeskowiak et al. (2016) low satisfaction lead towards major shortcomings in a person's life such as depreciation from the certain things which might also cause a high level of dissatisfaction. It has been attributed by Doolittle et al. (2015) who stated that low level life satisfaction leads towards exclusion from various spheres of

life. Nevertheless, supported by Busseri (2018) satisfaction with life can be regarded as the way of fulfilling ones' own needs; consistent with the brands, the products which can fulfil consumers' needs often purport high level life satisfaction. Similarly, Kuhn et al. (2018) stated that in a highly competitive business environment, consumer satisfaction is highly crucial for the brands for which there might be a dire need of strategy which can help the brand to gain higher customer influence by providing them valued products that can be resulted in high level satisfaction. Therefore, it might imply that satisfaction with life is the notion which can be used by the brands to evaluate consumer demand and offer products and services accordingly.

2.5 Self-Esteem

Bialobrzeska et al. (2018) stated that self-esteem is defined as the extent of confidence one has along with self-liking and self-competence. It has further been considered as self-evaluation which has been an effective response towards giving a self-description. The study conducted by Kristofferson et al. (2018) revealed that self-esteem is regarded as the judgement of the worth of the individual as well as what has been considered as the self-judgement. Kristofferson et al. (2018) on the other hand, professed that self-esteem is the judgement of such instances like "I don't like myself" or "I like myself". The study has further explained that self-esteem is like the degree of acceptance of a person for him/herself which might also lead towards higher self-confidence. However, it has been opined by Mruk (2013a) that many related words have been used on the notion of self-esteem such as self-worth, self-confidence, positive self-regard and self-image which have been used interchangeably. The research has further provided that the focus of self-esteem is on the degree of one's feelings of self which can be connected by self-evaluation and perception.

According to the study conducted by Philp et al. (2018) the self-perceived competencies can be regarded as the most important domain of self-esteem. It has been due to the fact that considering self-perceptions can lead towards either higher or lower self-esteem; for instance if the perception about competencies is negative the self-esteem would be lower whereas if the perceived competencies are positive the self-esteem will be higher. According to Kristofferson et al. (2018) self-esteem can be regarded as the measure of standards which are devised by the person according to their own evaluation of self. The study has further professed that self-esteem has been considered as the reflection of

good possessed by one person. Kristofferson et al. (2018) have however questioned about how the person knows that he/she is enough or how a person can consider him/herself enough or sufficient. The research has further answered that the symbolic interactions between people or objects can also make someone realise that they are enough and are sufficient. It might also imply that the person can have high self-esteem once connected with another person or object that could raise their confidence.

According to the empirical study conducted by Escalas and Bettman (2014) people often possess certain things in order to achieve higher level of self-esteem whereas sometimes to get better response or feedback from others. For instance, Bialobrzeska et al. (2018) stated that people who consider themselves, to be good are often those who get influenced by other people's positive feedback for them. Therefore, the prospect of self-esteem often starts with self-evaluation which drives from the views of other people. The intellectual legacy has been covered in the research of Pugh (2017) professed that social interactions can be regarded as the most basic formula for creating a self-esteem in a person as it usually connects with certain personality traits as well. The study has explained this notion in depth and provided that self-esteem is regarded as an enduring trait which the person believes to be a relevant way of identifying how people behave towards them.

However, many cross-cultural researches have argued by questioning the relevance of considering self-esteem a trait. For instance, Falk and Heine (2015) defined that people in individualistic societies do not prefer interaction as a way of increasing their self-esteem which means that self-esteem cannot be measured through people-to-people interaction. However, the study further justified that these societies often believe in possessing an object which can cater to their needs and provide them a notion of high self-esteem. The significant body of research has also explained self-esteem by examined through the lens of consumerism. The research undertaken by Jun et al. (2017) stated that some brands prefer to target the audience by focusing on their self-esteem so that higher demand could be achieved. It has further been explained that consumers prefer to buy those products which can make them feel confident and highly self-esteemed. Therefore, self-esteem has been measured by considering the societal and cross-cultural point of view as well as consumerism prospect which led towards better understanding about how self-esteem has been considered in different researches.

According to the empirical analysis conducted by Jun et al. (2017) self-acceptance and

self-respect are two main dimensions of self-esteem because it provides an overall evaluation and assessment of self-concept. On the other hand, many other researches such as Falk and Heine (2015) and Jun et al. (2017) have considered self-esteem as an integral part of human nature and ego as well as drive and thrive them to enhance their self-confidence and self-esteem. The topic has also been researched by Mruk (2013a) who proposed that self-esteem has been regarded as the most fundamental need of human which might also be blended with the pursuit of goal and therefore would be a crucial concept for motivational theorists as well as for theories of marketing. Research on consumer behaviour conducted by Mruk (2013a) also suggested that acquiring certain types of goods and services incline the consumers to improve their self-esteem by flattering their ego. For instance, the research has further explained that products that are bought by consumers are regarded as the self-gift that improves and sustain self-worth; it is therefore a crucial and fundamental component of self-esteem.

As per the study of Jun et al. (2017) self-esteem is a part of self-directed pleasures which the consumers avail in order to gain high confidence and zeal. It has been further demonstrated that the use of products in terms of any material possession is included in the communication and formation of self that has obtained insurmountable amount of attention. However, it has been argued by Jun et al. (2017) that it seems that the extension of the concept of self has been developed in order to incorporate branded material possessions only. Furthermore, it has been opined that brands as well as the certain values that are attached to them often become a central point of consumer identity that can further be used to express and develop a self-concept. In recent years, Falk and Heine (2015) stated that brands have seemed and proliferated the existing products by making self-brand connections with consumers. The consumers make self-connection on the basis of congruency between brand image and self-image. Therefore, brands have targeted the connection between products and consumer self-esteem in order gain higher purchases.

According to Kristofferson et al. (2018) the cultural discourses have been attached with brands and certain products and services which have allowed consumers towards communicating age, class, wealth, status and personality by selecting and purchasing particular brands so that higher self-esteem could be achieved. Falk and Heine (2015) called the brands as social communication tools which incline the consumers to communicate through brand about who they are and what are their core competencies and weaknesses. On the other hand, Jun et al. (2017) stated that consumer specific brand narrative is

one which helps to gain high level self-esteem and further devises and strengthens the relationship between brand and the consumer. It has been one of the reasons that consumers become more incline towards buying those products which can guarantee them a high level self-confidence and cater to their demand and desire.

As per the analysis presented by Falk and Heine (2015) self-esteem is an important prospect of brand connection with consumers due to the fact that certain brands provide positive societal view of consumers amongst other people; for instance if a consumer is wearing an expensive brand the society will likely to view it as rich and more privilege than others. However, this can also create a strong sense of exclusion in the society which can lower the level of self-esteem of certain consumers who cannot buy expensive products and services. Therefore, self-esteem in consumers has been one of the most debated topics in research however no research has been conducted on the relationship of self-esteem and customisation products consumed by customers.

Lifestyles satisfaction has been conceptualized by Kristofferson et al. (2018) as a cognitive constituent of subjective meaning of life where high pleasure indicates that the person is highly satisfied withlife and within the populace concerned considers him/herself as ideal. On the other hand, Mruk (2013a) stated that low satisfaction however marks intense shortcomings of a few kind. This is consistent with Mruk (2013a) who said that lifestyles delight and satisfaction displays the volume to which primary goals are met and the quantity to which a diffusion of different goals are regarded as plausible. From this perspective Lamberton, & Dahl (2018) professed that it less costly to consider that with the resource of obtaining greater goals beings more pleasure in life which may also lead towards effective growth and development. In line with Mruk (2013a) it's far believed that life satisfaction is related to better bodily, and intellectual health, sturdiness, and other results which are taken into consideration excessive first-rate in nature. In addition, Kristofferson et al. (2018) argued that superior degrees of life pride might deliver upward thrust to better fitness within the destiny

2.6   Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty has been defined in various researches due to its importance in consumer and market research. According to the study conducted by Jiang et al. (2017a) brand loyalty is regarded as the strong commitment of the consumer to repurchase the product

in future and consider the same product despite the changing market trends and environment. However, Lam and Shankar (2014) sated that various brands make efforts in terms of marketing in order to attract customer which can negatively impact the brand loyalty of existing products in the market. Nevertheless, strong brand loyalty allows the brand to retain its customers even if the other brands make robust marketing efforts. On the contrary, Pappu and Quester (2016) defined brand loyalty as the major preference of the consumer towards a particular brand and its specific category. It has been further identified in the study that brand loyalty often occurs when consumers perceive the brand to be offering right product attributes, level of quality, images and right price. Lam and Shankar (2014) stated that consumer perception has been considered as important for increasing brand loyalty because it helps to translate the preferences into repeating the purchase ultimately resulting in high level loyalty. The empirical analysis of Pappu and Quester (2016) found out that brand loyalty is connected with the attachment of consumers with the brand. It has been further identified that brand loyalty occurs only where there is a long history of the product with the consumer which further creates trust and develop a sense of long usage of the brand. One of the most comprehensive researches has been undertaken and conceptualize by Sasmita and Mohd Suki (2015) on brand loyalty. The research has identified that brand loyalty is considered as the biased consumer behaviour and response which is being expressed over a specific period of time and purported by the decision taken to make purchase of a certain one brand out of the set of various other brands and their offered products and services. Therefore, it might also imply that brand loyalty is the notion of high level influence of the brand of the consumer which stops them to shift to another brand in the market.

There have been three main definitions provided by Pappu and Quester (2016) about brand loyalty. The first definition of brand loyalty is that customers gained and loss over a period of time due to likely consequences. The second is the time sequence of the purchase decision taken by an individual whereas third is the share of market which can influence the consumers to make purchase decision. According to another study conducted by Sasmita and Mohd Suki (2015) the factor analysis can be used to conceptualise brand loyalty due to which it has been identified that brand loyalty is the percentage according to which the consumers are devoted to make higher purchase of the brand therefore brand loyalty can be simply considered as repeated purchase of the product or service offered by the brand.

As per the study of Zheng et al. (2015) brand loyalty is also an attachment of the

individual with the brand. Furthermore, the study further opined that brand loyalty reflects the notion how the consumers can or cannot be switched to another if there is a change in product attributes or its price. It has been further explained by Sasmita and Mohd Suki (2015) brand loyalty should be considered as the core of brand equity because it allows the company to gain consumer loyalty even if the product or price has been changed. Therefore, if the consumers are not inclined towards buying a product due to its price, features and convenience then there might be little concern with the brand name and therefore lower brand equity. It has been further explained by Zheng et al. (2015) that consumers who are loyal do not switch the brand even if the other brand is providing more better product attributes or prices.

Zheng et al. (2015) conceptualise the brand loyalty into five main level; the first level has been associated with the non-loyal customers who have different requirements with the brand regarding price and attributes, these customers are little influence by the brand to make purchase decisions. The second level has included those customers who have either been satisfied with the product or have been dissatisfied. The third level has been the ones who are satisfied buyers but have switching costs and do not want to take risk by changing the product and might also be called habitual buyers. The fourth level has been the loyal consumers who have been inclined towards considering the brand as their friends. Lastly, the consumers who have been highly committed to the brand and are extremely loyal have been placed at fifth level of the brand loyalty; these are the buyers who would prefer to recommend the products and services to other consumers and create a strong word of mouth.

According to Zheng et al. (2015) brand loyalty is defined as: "Feeling of security held by using the purchaser in his/her interaction with the brand in the market, that it is primarily based on the perceptions that the brand/product/service is dependable and answerable for the pursuits and welfare of the customer". As further defined by Veloutsou (2015) constructing brand loyalty through positive consumer behaviour particularly implies that brand image must be constructing by mass media communications, however also longer period of time would have to be devised for advertising activities consisting of promotional gear as a way to shape a brand image amongst consumers. Nonetheless, Dawes et al. (2015) stated that the long term brand loyalty should be observed by means of lengthy-time period of consumers to make purchases for instance if the consumer takes shorter time to make next purchase from the same brand, the loyalty level can be considered as high and vice versa.

As defined in the study of Veloutsou (2015) brand image and perception of consumers consider as important which further plays a totally crucial position in building and keeping both attitudinal and behavioural consumer and brand loyalty, its position having been researched drastically in each B2C and B2B sectors. Oh (2015) indicated that brand trust increase consumer and brand loyalty and impacts marketplace environment and help the brand to gain competitive rivalry. Constructing and maintaining brand loyalty also implies frequency of marketing programmes and activities with a purpose to maintain clients. Zheng et al. (2015) stated that traditionally, loyalty has been considered as main stance for saving the brand from consumer's brand switching.

According to Dawes et al. (2015) consumer perceived value is crucial a good way to construct brand loyalty, despite the fact that preference does not necessarily generate or increase loyalty. Some authors such as Veloutsou (2015) and Dawes et al. (2015) have emphasized an uneven relationship among loyalty and consumer preference. Dawes et al. (2015) outlined the significance of satisfying the needs of the consumers so that the brand can create behavioural and brand loyalty. Hence, a satisfied consumer has a tendency to be more dependable to brand over the years than a customer whose purchase is because of different motives inclusive of time restrictions and records deficits. Jiang et al. (2017a) asserts that brand loyalty can conveniently be done through a strong brand positioning this means that developing and dealing with a completely unique, credible, sustainable, and valued area within the consumer's minds, revolving round a benefit that facilitates the brand to stand amongst other market giants. Jiang et al. (2017a) stated that customers have to be treated with recognition in their brand experience which would further facilitate that the interaction among the brand and consumers have to be effective where rude, uncaring, or unresponsive behaviour should be prevented by the brand to create higher brand loyalty.

According to Veloutsou (2015) loyal customers should be the centre point of strategic building of any brand. The study has further explained that it should be beyond the profit maximization the company generates because loyal customer have been considered as the major source of brand improvement and development. However, Jiang et al. (2017a) warned that if the brand is unable to prioritise customer loyalty and loses its direction will be vulnerable in terms of market share, competition and customer base. The research further suggested that high level brand loyalty of the customers can increase the market share and make the brand profitable for which the company must focus on

certain strategies related to price and product attributes in order to gain higher customer loyalty. According to Dawes et al. (2015) to some extent, brand and customer loyalty can be managed and developed by all the successful brands however there are still other small brands that have been able to gain brand awareness and brand loyalty through the execution of robust marketing strategies. It has been further defined that the successful brands consistently include improvement projects in order to sustain consumers and ultimately brand loyalty.

Prior research has shown that the customer satisfaction is a mediating variable between brand loyalty and brand equity (Khan et al., 2017). Nam et al. (2011) collected the data from consumers obtaining restaurant and hotel services. Through the application of structural equation modelling, the researchers investigated the dimensions of brand equity i.e., staff behaviour, physical quality, lifestyle and self-congruence and brand identification. The study has shown that brand equity posited statistically significant and positive impacts on customer satisfaction levels. The analysis of the study showed that customer satisfaction is a partial mediator between the impacts of ideal self-congruence, brand identification and staff behaviour on brand loyalty. However, the same study has instigated that customer satisfaction posits a fully mediating role, while lifestyle congruence and physical quality impacts on brand loyalty.

Hur et al. (2011) have presented a social identity perspective on brand loyalty through an integration of brand value, identification, satisfaction and trust as prevailing factors. Results of the study have demonstrated that a statistically significant association exist in between antecedents of brand loyalty, brand identification and brand identity. The antecedents of brand loyalty taken by the authors are trust, perceived value and satisfaction. It is found that brand identity posits a direct impact on brand loyalty, whereas, brand identifications posits an indirect impact. Hur et al. (2011) claimed that the psychological pathway of the consumer's towards brand loyalty can be successfully conceptualised, by the integration of social perspectives and other perspectives into the conceptual frameworks. The authors have affirmed through their findings, that brand identification is the mediator between brand identity and brand loyalty. Also, a study showed that brand identification posits a pivotal role in the development of brand identity.

Oke et al. (2016) claimed that integrated marketing communication has an indispensable disposition in influencing the brand loyalty of the consumers. Consumers are evidenced patronizing or repurchasing products of their interests and demonstrate the consistency

of selecting the same brand, whenever they make the purchase. The dimension of brand loyalty enforces the consumers in making the decision for the same product and henceforth from the same brand. Consumers thus stick to the renowned brand names, displaying their loyalty towards the brands. A consumer does so, in the surge of getting brand recognition in the society where they live. Sasmita and Mohd Suki (2015) professed that consumers by way of brand equity generates brand loyalty, which further engenders the preference of the brand above other brands.

Hur et al. (2011) reported a phenomenon for boosting up the level of brand loyalty among brand communities. The samples collected during the course of the study were from the online channels. Behaviours of brand loyalty that were observed were word of mouth communications (only positive), constructive complaints and repurchase intentions. The research findings showed that brand trust positively increases the commitment of brand community towards the brand, which in turn induces valuable brand loyalty behaviours amongst the communities. The study affirms that brand communities posit a mediating character in between the association of brand loyalty and trust/ effect. The study has shown that commitment of brand community posits a significant influence on positive WOM in comparison to no constructive objections.

2.7   Brand Trust

According to the study conducted by Lee et al. (2015b) brand is a name, signal, symbol or design or the combination of all which means as an identification of a services or products and make it difference from the competitor. Habibi et al. (2014) evidenced that brand logo can coincide with a mediating variable which is related to brand predictability, competency, logo recognition, , brand experience, believe in organization and brand preference with consumer loyalty. On the other hand, Viktoria Rampl and Kenning (2014) stated that consumer preference gets affected with the advertising and marketing strategy which is concept which has a robust correlation with consumer's belief as well. Considered as one of the important ideas proposed by Lassoued and Hobbs (2015), consumers' belief of a brand is a cognitive component of the conduct which leads towards purchase decision. On the other hand, Gretry et al. (2015) professed that considering the expectation of the consumers involves the transactions and marketing activities as well as the risk which related with the changing and dynamic expectations and behaviour of the consumers. Portal (2017) defined brand trust as an acceptance of a brand as true

with as an expression of the sense of belonging. Erkmen and Hancer (2015) stated the sensation has an effect to cognition, affection and behaviour.

Jung et al. (2014) stated that acceptance of the brand as true with may be measured through determining the attribute and perceived value of the consumers about the brand. The study has further defined that market communication can create a degree which can enhance relationship advertising and create brand trust. Therefore, trust and dedication are mediating variables within the enterprise courting with their customers (Guo et al., 2017). According to Kim et al. (2015) there are classes of believe that consumers can accept as true with and consider believing the brand attribute would provide them satisfaction. Therefore, it might imply that brand trust is a part of trust of customers towards the brand attributes for which consumer will be willing to pay.

Consistent with Alhaddad (2015), there are numerous things could be identified as a part of brand trust. First, trust as an acceptance that brand is true and commitment are the maximum crucial variables in retaining long time dating amongst partners in the commercial enterprise and enterprise. Second, communication with the brand and dedication that the brand attributes will enable the customer to have high level satisfaction.Third, the largest difficulties of constructing the brand concept as trustworthy and the cognitive and affective based. Therefore, several elements, which include logo, accept as true with, commitment and satisfaction posit impact on loyalty.

Chinomona (2016) defined brand trust as the determination and willingness of the consumers to be relied on the brand. It has been further identified in the study that the brand trust is also an ability of the consumer to trust that the brand will function in accordance with the demand. In terms of demand, Li et al. (2015) stated that brand affects and brand trusts are the two important components which can impact the overall brand success. It has been considered as the main notion that effect brand loyalty and consumer perception of a brand. Ahmed et al. (2014) revealed that brand trust is the factor that plays a crucial role in sustaining brand loyalty because it includes the elements such as sustaining price flexibility and market share which have ultimately been associated with lucrative market results. In most of the researches such as Jin and Phua (2014), Lee et al. (2015b) and Xingyuan et al. (2015) brand trust has been evaluated and measured in two main categories such as behavioural trust and attitudinal trust; the studies have also focused on explaining that attitudinal trust is the customer attitude towards the brand which derives from brand attributes and market communication whereas behavioural trust is the consumer behaviour towards the brand which is an

amalgamation of need and demand and the commitment of the consumers towards the brand.

Brand trust has also been the centre of many researches such as Chung et al. (2015), Xie et al. (2014) and Molinillo et al. (2017) due to the growing importance of the phenomenon in the consumer research and its impact on competitive advantage and sales. The study conducted by Khadim et al. (2018) consider brand trust as the notion of firm success where the willingness of average consumer can do wonder with the market function and brand place amongst other market giants. However, Napoli et al. (2014) stated that brand trust can only arise after the evaluation of the consumers about the offerings of the company. The study has further explained that if the companies are able to provide safety, reliability and honestly in their brand attributes to the consumers, it will be resulted in high and subsequent brand trust. Integrated in the study of Hur et al. (2014) brand trust is developed and created through direct experience demonstrated that the of the consumers after using or consuming the products or services provided by the brand. The research of Schade et al. (2017) has further main difference between brand effect and brand trust is that trust can be viewed as the long process that can further be created or occurred by the consideration or thought of consumer experience of the brand whereas the brand effect is associated with the impulsive feelings of the consumers towards the brand.

Empirically, brand trust has been explained in different perspectives and contexts due to its utmost significance in branding (Jung et al., 2014; Zboja and Voorhees, 2006). Brand trust is recognised as a corner-stone in any relationship, it is considered to display a significant impact on the brand equity. Delgado-Ballester and Luis Munuera-Alemán (2005) examined the association between brand trust and brand equity via a quantitative research design. The analysis revealed that brand trust has a positive association with brand loyalty. An element of brand trust is embedded in the prior experiences that the consumers had with the brand, fostering brand equity. Jung et al. (2014) explained the perceived benefits while consuming online brand communities, revisit intentions, brand trust and attitudes. The study by Jung et al. (2014) affirmed that positive effects are created by; informal and social benefits on attitudes, which consequently influence the brand, trust and re-purchase intention amongst the consumers.

Napoli et al. (2014) examined the impact of brand authenticity on consumer brand trust and organisational growth. The study affirmed a positive association amongst brand credibility, brand authenticity, brand trust and the intention of the consumers

to purchase a product. Napoli et al. (2014) professed that authenticity helps in persevering brand's heritage and induces higher levels of satisfaction of consumers towards the brand. Considerably, brand authenticity perceptions if positive can prevalently influence quality perceptions, brand image, purchase intentions and satisfaction as the cognitive facet of the brand (Bruhn et al., 2012; Minor and LeBoeuf, 2011). Given the fact, Napoli et al. (2014) further examined the role of brand equity and brand trust role in creating high brand value for the customers. Consumers' has an internal belief that the brand will presumably perform as expected and brand developing organisation have the responsibility to resolve any forthcoming issue related to the brand experience. This explains the trust of the consumers towards the brand. Nevertheless, the building trust is yet a challenging task for the organisations, keeping-in-view the changing trends and choices of postmodern "cynical" consumers (Napoli et al., 2014). The authors further explain that authentic brands unveil contradictory behaviour, as the consumers have a belief, that organisation take actions to build the product and not acts of self-interest and profitability. Irrefutably, consumers have high trust in the authentic brands in comparison to the non-authentic ones. Napoli et al. (2014) demonstrated through the results, that the deviations are prevalent in the value drivers (brand reputation, brand equity and brand trust), in the context of authenticity. The study affirmed the variation through the comparison between professional, apprentice and master brands. Professional and Apprentice revealed significant positive relationships for all the three types of value drives, whereas, Master brands did not reveal a significant association with the facet of brand reputation. Lastly, Napoli et al. (2014) showed that prevailing markers of brand trust are sincerity and quality commitment, regardless of the context of brand authenticity.

2.8 Word of Mouth

According to Shih et al. (2015) WOM is used to explain verbal communications (both nice or negative) between companies which include the product provider, unbiased specialists, circle of relatives and pals and the actual or capacity clients. On the other hand, Hudson et al. (2015) defined word-of-mouth as the advertisement of the brands that are relatively vital amongst groups of consumers who have certain experience with the brand. The study has further identified that this is because if consumer expectations are not as appropriate as predicted from concrete product there will be a negative word

of mouth spread about the brand. In particular, King et al. (2014) stated that people' cultural conditions, earlier stories, and social environment may additionally provide different critiques about the brand attributes. It has been further explained that for this reason, people are commonly, stimulated with the aid and information provided by those who are their near buddiesand who stay at the identical circumstances and have the same cultural traits.

According to Berger (2014) the phrase-of-mouth (WOM) has been frequently referred to the best shape of communication that has been engaged in influencing customers. The study further purported that as an end result, WOM performs an excellent greater essential position today in shaping purchasers' attitudes and buying behaviours. One study conducted by You et al. (2015) indicated that, on average, one upset purchaser can be predicted to tell nine different human beings about the reviews that resulted in dissatisfaction. Therefore, it has been further stated that satisfied clients provide positive information to other five different consumers in per day. As seen by Eisingerich et al. (2015) WOM communiqu exerts a sturdy effect on customer purchasing conduct, influencing both quick-time period and long-term judgments. Academics, textbooks and managerial contributions spotlight the effectiveness and efficiency of WOM as a method of customer acquisition, commonly attributing its effectiveness to its high credibility.

Babić Rosario et al. (2016) professed that because clients communicate among themselves about positive or higher value for the company, WOM also may be an enormously efficient way for gaining new clients. In step with word of Mouth advertising affiliation, Filieri et al. (2015) found out that 92% of clients worldwide trust tips from buddies and family more than any form of marketing, and 2007 Nielsen global Survey found that 78% of humans observed "pointers from customers" is the shape of advertising that they consider maximum. On the other hand, Pfeffer et al. (2014) stated that with growing thrilled and faithful customers, the new users of the brand seek help from their friends and families for which corporations ought to achieve success to offer positive word-ofmouth conversation about products and services.

According to the empirical analysis conducted by Carpenter et al. (2016) because, positive clients, in some sense, are the advertisement source of the brand, they can be considered as volunteer advertisers and therefore a cost effective approach of the brand to attract new and potential customers. Sweeney, Soutar & Mazzarol (2014) stated that the primary element affecting WOM is notion of making decision between the demand and the recommendation source. The study of Morgenstern & Lim (2014) further opined

that the recommendation source may additionally or might not recognise the selection maker individually. Therefore, WOM is the pleasant manner for advertising and marketing enterprise or services, due to the fact there's no want to pay an element (Yoo and Park, 2016). However on the other hand Jin and Phua (2014) argued that WOM is such an element of advertising that once it is out it cannot be modified, so it may affect the corporation in an effective way or negative way.

According to Ahmed et al. (2014) word of mouth can be defined as the exchange, communication, flow of information or a conversation which is held between two or more individuals. The term word of mouth has been described in many researchers as either negative or positive communication between consumers, product providers, family, friends and independent experts. Gopinath et al. (2014) called it an effective way of attracting potential consumers and retaining the existing consumers. Word of mouth is therefore is an activity in marketing that has become increasingly important for many businesses around the world. Jain (2015) professed that the growing importance of word of mouth has been due to increasing expectations of the customers toward the certain benefits provided by the products. In the words of Babić Rosario et al. (2016) the individuals have been in engaged in experiencing brands and providing early remarks on the benefits and quality of the brand. Therefore, the word of mouth is highly important for the brands to attract larger customer base.

The empirical analysis of Leisen Pollack (2017) revealed that the individuals get influenced by their acquaintances that use the same products and live in the same circumstances; the information provided by these acquaintances can influence them more to make purchase decisions. The results of effective word of mouth play an important role in shaping consumer behaviour. One study conducted by Shin et al. (2017) the dissatisfied customers can impact negatively on brand name and image whereas satisfied consumers can impact the purchase behaviour of the other consumers positively. Therefore, it might imply that word of mouth is the one way of creating both long term and short terms judgements of consumers about brand attributes.

Hernández-Méndez et al. (2015) revealed that consumers communicate with each other through large number of means which can be the most effective way for the brand to create a strong and large customer base. It has been because the consumers can make a sense of product attribute and a high level of customer perceived value of the brand. ? stated that it can be resulted in recommending the other people to use the product and services as perceived valuable by the consumer through word of mouth. In other

words, it has been an effective marketing activity where the brand doesn't have to pay for advertisement. The study conducted by Eelen et al. (2017) revealed that word of mouth can be person-to-person or oral communication between the user of the brand and the one who has been willing to obtain information about a particular brand. This connection has also been highlighted in the study of Hajli et al. (2014) the information communicated between the user and the potential is non-commercial which leads towards the higher purchase decision.

One of the recent researches have been conducted by Yin et al. (2016) who provided that word of mouth can help the brand to draw distinctiveness about the brand from this form of advertising. However, the research has also provided that word of mouth is different from traditional advertising because it does not possess any boundaries. Another research conducted by Levy and Gvili (2015) supported this notion by stating that word of mouth has involved the exchange of spoken messages or ephemeral oral messages between the contiguous receiver and the source that are also able to communicate directly in life. It has been further explained in the research that the consumers do not usually assume the written information about the brand but rather prefer the oral or verbal information for making purchase decision.

The study undertaken by Van Hoye et al. (2016) revealed that word of mouth might not necessarily be about a product or service, some consumers perceive about the brand by the organization it is belonged to. In other words, if the organization has taken the initiatives of corporate social responsibility, the consumers will likely to spread a positive word of mouth (Dasgupta and Kothari, 2018). One of the empirical analysis conducted by Herold et al. (2016) showed that in the age and advent of electronics, the consumers have been engaged in sharing information about the brand or their personal experiences through effective electronic word of mouth. The study of Yang and S. Mattila (2014) further opined that electronic word of mouth is about the presence of the brand on social media or any other social networking website where the consumers can share their own knowledge and experience about the brand openly. However, Chen et al. (2016) argued that electronic word of mouth is also challenging for the brands due to the authenticity in the information available according to which the consumers make purchase decisions. Word of mouth as stated by He and Bond (2015) is about talking or conversation about the product or service which can create an effective flow of information. Another research conducted by Liu and Mattila (2015) professed that the talks about the brand are either unilateral or mutual conversations which are further characterised into suggestions

and advices. In general, human beings need information about the brand in order to guarantee that the brand will be able to cater to their demands and desires (Wang et al., 2016). However, Keller and Fay (2016) argued that sometimes these statements do not have consistency for which the brands integrate market communication techniques and communicate with the consumers about brand attributes so that they can be influenced to make purchase decisions. Therefore, it might imply that word of mouth can be the effective way of not only creating brand awareness but also inclining consumers to make purchase decisions on the basis of the information provided through mutual conversation about brand attributes and the experience of other consumers with the brand.

2.9 Customer's Need for Uniqueness

Liu and Mattila (2015) defined that customer need for uniqueness is the trait that the consumers use to differentiate the brands from other brands in the market. It has been further explained that the differentiation through product uniqueness is created by the utilization, acquisition and disposition for the sole purpose of creating a positive self-image in the society. The concept has derived from the study of Chaouali et al. (2016) who introduced the theory of uniqueness. The theory has been explained as the need of an individual to feel different from other people in the society which can give rise to competition as well. On the other hand, de Bellis et al. (2016) the need for uniqueness is sometimes due to the self-perception of the individual which arises at various different situations. Moreover, the research further provided that the individuals claim to their self-esteem and find the way of reducing negativity by distinguishing themselves from the other people and their behaviour. Tang and Liu (2015) stated that the expression of uniqueness is sometimes derived in various different forms due to the fact that consumers want to buy a product which can provide a unique attribute to their personality.

According to the meta-analysis of Sun et al. (2015) the consumers have a tendency to satisfy their needs from buying distinguished and unique products; the need for uniqueness has been the one driving factor of motivation which incline consumers to have a certain behaviour as well as possessions. By the notion of uniqueness theory, Bhaduri and Stanforth (2016) stated that the consumers reflect themselves from the visual display of the distinguished products which can also counter conformity. Therefore, the need for uniqueness can be the factor of motivation for making purchases. The study

conducted by Yoo and Park (2016) showed that the consumers often show motivation for distinguishing themselves by the consumption of certain goods and services. It has been further explained by the research that these products and services provide a visual display of one which led towards the wilful and volitional pursuit of differentness as compared to the others.

Hwang and Hyun (2017) have defined the notion of customer's need for uniqueness as the specific nature of the consumers which can reveal their willingness towards the uniqueness and the desire to be individuated. The researchers also called it the willingness of being different amongst other people. On the other hand, Yang and S. Mattila (2014) defined customer's need for uniqueness as the distinctive feature which can allow the consumers to be independent in terms of motivation and be inadvertently manifested in the differences provided by the society. The study further explained that the need for uniqueness is also associated with the personal taste and choices of the consumers which can lead them towards making every possible effort to be unique and different from other people. It might be one of the reasons that He et al. (2016) stated that the organizations must need to analyse the consumers demand for unique product attributes.

One empirical survey conducted by Seng and Ping (2016) revealed that consumers have been more inclined towards buying those products which have unique and differentiating factor and which can also cater to consumer demand. According to another study conducted by Junker et al. (2016) the need for uniqueness in consumers is also a trait that has been associated with pursuing the differentness through the consumption of products. The research has also stated that it has created a high level competition amongst brands which have been engaged in positioning themselves through the differentiation strategy so that larger customer base could be achieved. Choi et al. (2016) stated that the brand have derived the concept of uniqueness so that the consumer perception about the brand can be made positive. It has been due to the fact that as Mehra et al. (2015) identified that if the consumers consider the brand to be unique and build their perception on the basis of uniqueness, they can make higher purchase of the products and services offered by the brand.

The research carried out So et al. (2017) suggested that the unique possessions of the products by the consumers has made them more confident and increases their self-esteem. Furthermore, the study identified that the need for uniqueness is the concept which is viewed as the extension of the self as well as regarded as one strategy of appeasing the

need for unique products amongst consumers. It has been identified in the research of Heidenreich and Handrich (2015) that there are three main behaviours which the consumer possesses in terms of their need for uniqueness. The study has identified three behaviours to be unpopular choice, counter conformity and avoidance of similarity.

Anderson and Simester (2014) stated that conformity in the product attributes have often been countered by brands by making creative choices; these creative choices have been explained by the individual attempt of expressing the self-image through material possessions in hopes of gaining positive perception from people. The study of Kumar et al. (2015) has been carried out in the same context which explained that the need for uniqueness can be potentially included as the way through which individuals can create a close affiliation with the brand and represent their unique personality traits to other people. Therefore, the need for uniqueness can be the requisite for how the consumers want to be portrayed by other people.

According to the research of Frank et al. (2014) consumers often satisfy their needs of uniqueness by becoming the first purchaser of the product. On the other hand, the research of Sicilia et al. (2016) found that those consumers who have more motivation to be unique are likely found displaying the heightened sense of being aware about the presence of new products in the market. Perhaps more importantly, Asshidin et al. (2016) suggested that the greater need for uniqueness often lead to more interest and willingness of making purchase of new products which have been recently launched in the market. In this way, the research further identified that the consumers have been able to counter conformity in the brand attributes and create higher brand awareness for themselves.

Therefore, the need for uniqueness has been the one factor that the marketers are highly required to analyse in order to propose and implement appropriate strategies in the market. Adityan et al. (2017) also stated that unique products can also allow the brand to gain high competitive advantage because of the differentiating factor it provides to the brand. However, Srinivasan et al. (2014) argued that in some situations, the cost of uniqueness becomes too high for the company which can lead toward higher prices of the products. This might also be challenging to cater the demand of price sensitive consumers; therefore, it might be suggested to the brands to incorporate unique attributes in a manner which cannot only cater to the product demand of the consumers

but also cater their price demand as well.Therefore, the need for uniqueness can be the requisite for how the consumers want to be portrayed by other people.

2.10   Perceived Tool Support

In this era of online networks, Web 2.0, and Second Life, the postmodern perspective of the dynamic and gainful customer (Firat and Venkatesh, 1995) is turning into a reality. In IS (Information systems) investigate, it has been contended that the drastically diminishing expenses of IT (Information technology) are changing the financial aspects of basic leadership, moving the power dynamics down the progressive system and prompting decentralized organizations Bernstein et al. (1999). A new age of co-creation has been achieved (Von Hippel, 2005). Different Internet-based instruments, for example, configurators and toolboxes empower buyers to effectively take part in co-creation exercises and partake in NPD (New product development) ventures (Dahan and Hauser, 2002; Slywotzky et al., 2001; Urban and Hauser, 2004). Because of cost-effective and rich multi-media connections, opportunities offered by the Internet and the presence of online networks, co-creation has turned into a reasonable method for making value and ensuring the success of newer products (Amit and Zott, 2001; Dahan and Hauser, 2002; Dholakia et al., 2004; Füller et al., 2007; Jeppesen and Frederiksen, 2006; Kozinets, 2002; MacCormack et al., 2001; Ogawa and Piller, 2006; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004b; Ofek et al., 2010; Urban and Hauser, 2004). Shoppers are welcome to effectively take an interest in the making of new items by creating and assessing ideas for new products; explaining, assessing, or testing item ideas; talking about and enhancing discretionary arrangement subtle elements; choosing or individualizing the favored virtual model; testing and encountering the new item includes by running simulations; and requesting data about or simply expending the new item. Purchasers can go on to become co-creators (Kohler et al., 2011; Lengnick-Hall, 1996; Nambisan, 2002; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004b).

Customers' capacity to effectively achieve an action amid the development of new products to a huge degree relies upon their comprehension of the new product and their capacity to think of remarkable however helpful thoughts (Amabile et al., 1996; Von Hippel and Katz, 2002). Following Füller et al. (2009), we present tool support the degree to which the virtual condition and instruments gave power to the client to achieve the related co-creation action. Before buyers can make any contribution, they require a sound

comprehension of the development. At that point, purchasers must be given the way to share their innovative thoughts and learning which are quite difficult to communicate (Von Hippel, 2005). Interactive and clear product conditions bolster apparent as well as genuine product understanding and improve shoppers' knowledge of products (Jiang and Benbasat, 2007; Li et al., 2005a). Given the high level of interrelationship between getting a reasonable product understanding and articulating one's thoughts, we accept that tool support underlies these two aspects as a typical second-degree factor (Kim and Stoel, 2004; Füller, 2010). (Jiang and Benbasat, 2007) propose that apparent help of a site may prompt a more agreeable affair. Tool support may add to a pleasant co-creation encounter amid new item advancement.

As indicated by Csikszentmihalyi (1990), people think about exercises as very fulfilling and satisfying while encountering flow. Flow alludes to an exceedingly agreeable and inherently remunerating 'ideal' encounter amid which shoppers get completely consumed by the action and lose any sense of outside world. Innovative assignments like painting an image, taking care of an issue, or creating a tune (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002; Dahl and Moreau, 2007) and also online exercises like surfing on the web (Novak, 2000) offer ascent to such pleasureable flow encounters. Essentially, customers may thoroughly drench in and get joy from co-creation exercises, for example, creating new thoughts, assessing product ideas, enhancing conceivable arrangements, or testing new item while encountering flow. Purchasers encounter flow if a movement which draws their attention is neither too simple nor excessively troublesome, gives them the sentiment of volitional control, and is considered as intriguing in essence (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

Powerful communication devices that empower customers to effectively take part in virtual co-creation must give two fundamental capacities: (1) practical product understanding and (2) improving buyers' innovative articulation. Before purchasers can make contributions, they require a sound comprehension of the development issue to be solved. Tool kits, for instance, must empower shoppers to effectively understand and adjust inventive items some time before they really exist (Jiang and Benbasat, 2007; Schlosser, 2006). In contrast to digest images, words, and numbers, virtual models enable customers to draw from clear mental pictures of future items and settle on choices dependent on genuine present and not on past encounters (MacInnis and Price, 1987). Also, purchasers must be given the way to share their imaginative thoughts and information, which are frequently difficult to understand and hard to exchange (Von Hippel, 1998). Getting a practical item understanding and having the capacity to imaginatively

explain one's thoughts are firmly correlated. In this way, in accordance with Web inquire about exhibiting that webpage quality comprises of higher-order factors (Kim and Stoel, 2004).

Two noteworthy factors are utilized to quantify customers' item understanding execution from two points of view: perceived and real. The principal, named genuine item learning, alludes to the degree to which purchasers really comprehend product data. The second reliant variable, named perceived website diagnosticity, is characterized as purchasers' view of the degree to which a specific site is useful for them to comprehend items in web based shopping (Jiang et al., 2005; Kempf and Smith, 1998). The choice of these two factors is because of the worry that clients' self-revealing of their execution of utilizing data frameworks is once in a while a poor surrogate for their goal execution (Goodhue et al., 1995). Moreover, recognitions are key impacts on expected practices. Given that an imperative objective of item introductions on sites is to advance items and energize customers' support, it is vital to survey the impacts of the four introduction organizes on perceptual builds that can conceivably impact purchasers' goals to return to the sites.

Precedents from a wide assortment of businesses and organizations demonstrate that Internet-based item advancement for sure can prompt inventive items (Arakji and Lang, 2007; Füller and Matzler, 2007; Ogawa and Piller, 2006). Virtual client mix, consequently, speaks to "a standout amongst the most encouraging territories of advancement . . . that the new virtual client situations make conceivable" (Füller et al., 2010). In a virtual domain, shoppers convey their insight through an electronic interface with no immediate individual contact. They don't get quick feedback. In this way, the virtual condition must be made in an approach to empower and inspire shoppers to assume a functioning job in new product development and also to influence them to take an interest in further new product development ventures.

Information technology empowers new types of producer buyer coordinated effort in new product development forms. It permits loosening up the ordinary supposition of partition among producers and buyers (Arakji and Lang, 2007). Grounded in the cooperation with its utilization, the co-creation mode has risen as an essential and developing technique for creation. Clients can expect various distinctive jobs in the new product development procedure (Nambisan, 2002). In the ideation stage, clients can fill in as an asset, and intuitive multimedia devices, virtual conceptualizing, or virtual center gatherings, and so forth bolster the clients in making new thoughts. In the structure

and improvement stage, clients can accept the job of co-creators, and apparatuses, for example, Web-based conjoint examination, virtual client plan, Internet-based structure rivalries, and toolboxes etc, enable clients to express their inclinations and to structure their very own items. In the test and dispatch stage, IT devices, for example, virtual idea testing can give profitable criticism on items.

Consequently, information systems study as an interdisciplinary, connected order plays an essential role in forming co-creation. Baskerville and Myers (2002) vision of information systems study as a source of perspective order, (Nambisan, 2002) shows how information systems research can fill in as a kind of perspective stage for new product development research. Lately information systems research has begun talking about how information technology instruments can improve the productivity and viability of virtual new product development and how new information technology can fundamentally change the idea of customer support in new product development (Nambisan, 2003). Nambisan contends that information systems hypothesis can add to a superior comprehension of the cooperation forms in the PC interceded and network situated condition of new product co-creation. He outlines four roads of research on the interface among information systems and new product development: (1) process administration (e.g., Information technology instruments that help new product development process advancement and administration), (2) venture administration (e.g., Information technology devices that encourage the administration of complex undertaking portfolios and execution of complex work process administration abilities), (3)information/learning administration (methods that help data imparting to various substances in a disseminated development condition), and (4) joint effort and correspondence (e.g., devices that help cross-practical participation and co-production of elements with various information technology capacities). information systems research ought to demonstrate how the qualities of the PC interceded condition shape new product development communications, how information representation and visual intuitive displaying impact clients' learning creation exercises, and how Web interface configuration shapes the nature and power of connections among clients and the Web and impacts human feelings (Nambisan, 2003)). Up until now, writing in advertising and new product development has tended to a portion of these issues: the difficulties of how to choose clients as trend-setters (e.g., (Von Hippel, 1986)), how to make proper impetuses to rouse clients to uninhibitedly impart their insight to the maker (e.g., (Brem et al., 2018)), and how to make and apply instruments to catch clients' implied and expressed learning in a virtual setting

(Hemetsberger and Godula, 2007; Von Hippel and Katz, 2002). Writing in the fields of virtual purchaser mix (Fuller et al., 2006), open source programming (Hemetsberger and Pieters, 2001; Harhoff et al., 2003; Shah, 2006), buyer enunciation on sentiment stages (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004), and client advancement (Franke and Shah, 2003; Conger and Kanungo, 1988) has distinguished various extraneous and inherent inspirations of clients to take part in new product development. Be that as it may, little research exists on buyers' encounters amid virtual new product development (e.g., (Nambisan and Nambisan, 2008; Novak et al., 2000)). While a few examinations investigated the effect of apparatuses and advancements on compelling critical thinking (Thomke and Von Hippel, 2002; Thomke et al., 1998) or appropriate methods for sparing time and cash (Dahan and Hauser, 2002; Thomke and Fujimoto, 2000), their effect on people's encounters has been fairly ignored. We don't comprehend what makes shoppers feel empowered to take an interest in virtual new product development and to contribute their insight to new product development, or what makes that cooperation agreeable to the degree of being rehashed. The main motive behind virtual co-creation and engagement is the fact that the consumers feel delighted and enjoy the experience (Brodie et al., 2013). Consumers derive value by getting engage for two sets of reasons; either the process or task engages them or they are interested to receive incentive by making the product better. The term namely; enjoyable co-creation experience denotes that the consumers gain entertainment, intrinsic motivation and fun during the co-creation experience. This fosters consumer to play their part superbly by participating and keeping themselves in this state of enjoyment.

It is critical for the consumers to have knowledge and understanding of the new product, in which they are going to develop or share novel and meaningful ideas related to it. Füller (2010) explained the concept of tool support that has been follow-up by Füller et al. (2011). Tool support is the ability of the consumer to complete the co-creation task virtually, via the consumption of the online tools provided. Notably, consumers must have a sound understanding about the co-creation phenomenon. They should be well-aware of the competent contributions they are expected to make. They should know about product innovation. Once the consumers are clear in their concepts, then only they can contribute in a better manner. The biggest challenge is in articulating and transferring knowledge amongst consumers.

It can be argued that product environments that are vivid and interactive can successfully enable the consumer understand the product and develop positive perceptions (Li

et al., 2013). A higher degree of association between understanding product realistically and articulation of ideas, it can be argued that tool support posit a significant impact on the two. Tool support is deemed as a second-order facet. Hsu et al. (2012) argued that website perceived tool support can significantly create enjoyable experience.

In the digital scenario, virtual co-creation is deemed as an effective strategy. This assists brand new product developers largely with the coordination of consumers. Previous researchers have explained co-creation experiences that are deemed to influence consumer-product as well as consumer-company associations. In this context, consumer co-creation is deemed as an effective tool in brand management. Füller and Bilgram (2017) conducted a research on the sample of 727 consumers and engaged them in new product development. The consumers were engaged virtually and their co-creation based relationship-effects were observed. The main focus of the research was to reveal the real potential of the co-creation experiences that could possibly cultivate the imaginary associations with the co-created products. This means the notion of a new product developed significantly before the actual market launch of this product. A multitude of research studies have revealed the moderating roles of personal characteristics of consumers in the co-creation experiences (Füller and Bilgram, 2017; Zwass, 2010). Additionally, consumers experiences of co-creation are diverse in context, as the consumers personal characteristics are different. Nevertheless, these experiences can be both; positive and negative. Casadesus-Masanell and Zhu (2013) explained that consumers in the contemporary business scenario, are having access to a myriad of products and services. They thus have a multitude of choices available. However, consumers are now a day becoming novelty seekers and become dissatisfied easily with the already available products. This further leads to a significant effect on the association between company and consumers, as their co-creation experiences are also altered in this context. Du Plessis et al. (2016) argued that consumers dissatisfaction with the current market products are deemed as influencers of novel product experiences. They are considered to initiate enjoyable customer's co-creation experiences and educed consumer's interest towards the products.

The process of virtual co-creation reveals multiple benefits for a marketing organization. For instance, it helps in enhancing process of product innovation; create higher levels of customer centeredness and gives firm an opportunity to develop novel products. This process also fosters effective brand management through the development of valuable associations between potential and existing customers (Risselada et al., 2010; Kohler et al., 2011). In this era of competition, brand developers are inclined towards

customer engagement and they look for opportunities that could effectively engage the customers. In order to develop a long term relationship with the customers, it is essential to maintain meaningful interactions on routinely basis. As the consumers interests are increasing towards creative and innovative activities, therefore, virtual co-creation is a viable opportunity for new product developers. It serves as a medium for meaningful interactions and enjoyable experiences, with the products and brands available in the organizational portfolios. In the context of relationship building, virtual co-creation experience when enjoyable increases commitment and trust of the consumers towards product and brand (Belaid and Temessek Behi, 2011).

In the wake of e-commerce development, the designs of e-commerce interfaces have substantially ease the navigation options, have powerful plug-in facets, have integrated captivating graphic interfaces and similar advances (Barnes and Hunt, 2013). Nevertheless, there are many research scholars, who still doubt on the electronic shopping interfaces effectiveness. They claim that web interfaces are restricted as the consumers can act as passive users and can receive only the available product information (Curty and Zhang, 2013). The consumers cannot check sample, feel or touch the products while purchasing them online. Due to this lack of experience, consumers are unable to proper judge product quality and thus leave the products unemotionally attached during their online shopping experiences. Thus, the consumers are less motivated to make online purchases.

Notably, there are two types of virtual controls; functional control and visual control. The purposes of these controls are to enhance the product experiences online (Skourup et al., 2012). Two softwares namely; Flash and Quick Time; enables the consumers to manipulate images of the products, with the help of their keyboards and mouse. For instance, the zoom, rotate and move their product images in and out and have a closer look at the product from different perspectives, distances and angles (Kim et al., 2013). Functional controls on the contrary, are supported via a number of softwares; for instance; Shockwave (Cai and Xu, 2011). This software assists the consumers in sampling the functions available for their products, by logging onto their computers. The functional facets of the products functions through the movement of the product, by the emission of different alarm sounds, or by changing different appearances of the chosen products. The functional facet creates a vibrant impression on the consumers and let them understand that how a product can effectively respond on the basis of their actions.

The two types of controls that is functional and visual are different from each other. The visual controls are specifically concerned to the products personality/appears/forms. On the other hand, the product behaviors can be understood through its functional controls. The products functionality can be manipulated via the functional controls. Visual control alternatively, helps in the provision of product look. The functional tools allows the users to visualize only one fixed view at a time, while in case of the visual controls, helps the consumer in rotating and enlarging the products and reviewing in detail (Jiang and Benbasat, 2004).

2.11 Moderating Role of Consumers' Need for Uniqueness on Customization and PBA

According to Grosso et al. (2004), it became important for the brands to look at that customers' need for area of expertise effects that effect brand authentication and customization. The research of Morhart et al. (2015) further provided that when consumers want to have a unique product or service for him/her they interact with organizations to customise the brand attributes so that they would be delighted as they would be able to truly do what they need to do or the use the brand which they desire to do so. Another study conducted by Das et al. (2018) revealed that brand combination of need and risk to meet the expectations i.e. to genuinely layout the attributes as consumers like will foster the feelings of relevance of that particular brand with character.

As defined by Hollebeek et al. (2017) the organizations should not neglect the relationship between identical conceptualization of the customer and brand. The study of Theotokis and Manganari (2015) further opined that while a customer has product attributes according to his/her desires and according to what has been designed in terms of needs, there will be higher preference. In other words, Khan and Rahman (2016) stated that the consumers' need for customisation is the way of identifying their own needs of possessing unique products. Therefore, feelings of customer towards the brand are the part of someone's self and self-idea that will generate the emotions of credibility, continuity and integrity.

On the same time, Ko et al. (2019) professed that as the costumer perceives the product as a part of their self-idea, customers are going to see the product as an image of their personality. All of this stuff show that the perceptions of the authenticity of brand will

growth on this way i.e. while need for area of expertise interacts with chance to personalize the brand in keeping with costumers will. Previously, it has been discovered by the study of Von Wallpach et al. (2017) that the consumers' need of uniqueness has a dire affect in the brand authenticity as well as customisation. The research of Shim et al. (2017) further demonstrated that when the consumers want to have unique attributes of the brand, they like to interact with the organization directly for deciding about the product attributes. Another study has conducted on the relationship between customisation and brand authenticity by Li et al. (2016) which has provided that the design of the product and need to have different products can incur the feelings of relevance with a product. In other words, it might be about having a product that can incline a consumer to achieve satisfaction.

2.12 Co-Creation Engagement and Perceived Brand Authenticity

According to the study conducted by France et al. (2018), the brand co-creation is the concept that has become highly important in today's competitive business environment. The study of Spielmann (2014) has further opined that it has been considered as the kind of notion that purports consumer collaboration in terms of products and its attributes where the consumers interact directly or indirectly with the brand. Another study on the notion of co-creation engagement and its relationship with consumer perception has been conducted by France et al. (2015). The study has explained that co-creation can make consumers believe that they are the producers of the product especially with the advent of the internet and other technological advancements. Adding to it, Nyangwe and Buhalis (2018) stated that the technological advancements of the world can make consumers realised that they are the owners of the product and can co-create according to their own desire. The research of Pattuglia et al. (2015) has further professed that it might also create the notion of high consumer engagement which makes them perceive highly of a brand. Therefore, in terms of consumer perception about the brand, co-creation engagement might play an important role which ultimately leads towards gaining high prominence in the market.

The previous studies on co-creation have shown that co-creation can play an essential position in building several customer relationships. This proposition includes significance

due to the major fact that purchaser and customer relationships have long been a topic of debate for both researchers and practitioners. Preceding research have additionally tested the relationship between co-creation engagement and certain types of purchaser's behaviours. According to the study conducted by Ramaswamy and Ozcan (2016), the effect of co-creation engagement can be seen on the purpose of the customer to buy a product, comments intention and goal to help others in a form of word of mouth. The researcher also discovered that the customers assist the other customers to make purchases on the basis of their overall experience with the brand. From a very easy view it can be opined that engagement of customers in the manufacturing of products or service makes that product/provider more attractive to the customer i.e. they will perceive it as greater relevant to them and much less fake i.e. surprisingly authentic.

According to the empirical analysis conducted by Vivek et al. (2018) crucial to co-creation engagement is the concept of the consumer-self connection. Co-advent engagement promotes the connection of oneself with the customer where these customers at times can experience the brand as part of themselves (Oliveira and Panyik, 2015). It has been further identified in the study that customer co-creation will embellish the feelings of the popularity of customers as they sense enlightened to be a part of manufacturing of the product. According to the study of Van Dijk et al. (2014), this means that costumers will perceive the brand as a part of their self-identification. This sense of self-identification at the equal time will cause the client to look at the brand as a symbol i.e. will understand brand authentic (as symbolism in a size of PBA).

The various researchers have identified the significant relationship between co-creation engagement and perceived brand authenticity. For instance, meta-analysis conducted by France et al. (2016) stated that co-creation is the component that can be considered from the angle of self-determination principle and argued that motivation, as well as customer engagement, comes from the delight of desires of owning the product that has been perceived as highly authentic. The study further of Riivits-Arkonsuo et al. (2015) explained that consistent with Maslow's hierarchy of wishes self-actualization needs are the most top-ranked desires of individuals for which the authentic brands in terms of attributes play a greater role. Similarly, the research carried out by Busser and Shulga (2018) professed that co-creation as previously argued enhances the experience of customers because of this co-introduction is result of the fact that their demands have been catered and thus has been further resulted in motivation to be able to lead towards the assumption that the brand is credible.

According to the research conducted by Hollebeek et al. (2017) taking the angle of principle if authenticity in the brand is impulsive, natural, and subconscious appraisal of the self that impacts spontaneous reactions to self-relevant motivations. It has been further identified in the study of Rihova et al. (2018) because human beings usually determine self-related stimuli more favourably than stimuli now not related to self, it's far probable that high-quality self-evaluation is transferred to of co-creation engagement with the brand that makes human beings to think off as a product seem extra relevant. The research of Baumgarth (2018) has demonstrated the various aspects of co-creation engagement and perceived brand authenticity by professing that people would thus translate this positivity related from the relevance of brand with self. The study of Cheah et al. (2016) further explained that this will make them perceive the brand as according to their desires. Therefore, the connection of a customer's self with the brand is also an identification of how they perceive a brand to be authentic and show higher engagement.

According to Black and Veloutsou (2017) within the current instances co-creation engagement has been introduced as a first-rate competency of the organizations to stay and gain higher competitiveness which has been defined as an all-inclusive management strategy that has further been focused on bringing sellers together to supply together the valued outcomes to the customers in order to gain positive perceptions. The study of Manhas and Tukamushaba (2015) further explained that it is an increasingly utilized strategies company that helped to gain popularity, brand cost, and aggressive benefit in the commencement of marketplace. According to Liu et al. (2018) as the company can be regarded as centric-based totally, wherein the perceived brand authenticity is about making and dispensing products and services to be offered by the organizations as per increasing demand of markets as well as significant intersection of groups, various networks, and clients in order to co-create engagement. Therefore, it might imply that the new and unique knowledge has guided in practice to offer and provide customers as well as their various personalized brands, not as unreceptive but alternatively brand perceptions to create value in order to develop customer engagement higher towards the brand.

As per the empirical analysis conducted by Shirdastian et al. (2019) whilst co-creation research has been resulted in advancing the expertise across the idea in the final decade, extraordinarily little information exists about how customers have shown higher in co-creation engagement. The research of Ilicic and Webster (2015) has also demonstrated

the methods that include in the process of co-creation engagement by stating that whereas, there were a few primary attempts to understand this method, and the expertise of the idea remains a ways entire (Ranjan and Read, 2016). The overview of the literature noted that an addition of the unique current views across the minds of customers about the brand including the attributes, the past experiences of other customers and the quality of the products have now but been converted into the perceived brand authenticity.

One critical hitherto region of studies have conducted research about the co-creation procedures nurturing from the common sense of consumers about the brand which postulated purchasers as the revenue generators and organizations as price developing domains. According to the research carried out by Kaufmann et al. (2016) with this concept in thoughts, customers' participation in co-creation engagement has been considered as the apprehend factor that involved in the method of creating a positive brand authenticity. Another study of Gürhan-Canli et al. (2016) has also demonstrated the same notion that one of these critical factors refers to motivations using customers to take part in co-creation engagement processes. The study further stated that particularly, and from a mental viewpoint, it can be rotated around various intrinsic as well as extrinsic motives to clarify why customers contribute to co-creation engagement. It has been further identified in the study that under the canopy of this consumer attitude, some other critical circulation can be focused on examining and identifying the results deriving from those tactics i.e., consumer pleasure, the customer getting to know, consumer brand loyalty.

The research of Thyne and Hede (2016) has also professed that although each perspective are significantly formative of the existing body of research, within the ultimate times a few types of research have conversed the want to familiarize new theories to recognize the consumer's co-creation engagement manner. The study of Manhas and Tukamushaba (2015) has continued to explain that in this association, a brand perception has started to cultivate from a very incipient attitude (the moral values-pushed advertising and zero paradigms, to investigate the consumer's perception about the brand. According to another study conducted by Kristal et al. (2016), the new knowledge turns around the idea that clients are more and more looking for solutions to their very own issues and are interested in making purchase decisions that are directed by their several ethical values that are involved in purchasing selection tactics. Further demonstrated in the study of Ke et al. (2016) that customers perceive positively about the brands in which the

manufacturers' goodwill, protection of environmental and duty of equality while offering their products to the customers are exhibited. In other phrases, clients' selections of services and products are an increasing number of based totally at the degree to which the brands have been permitted to fulfil the demands and needs of customers for social, environmental and financial justice.

One of the most important contributions in the area of co-creation and perceived brand authenticity has been made by Morhart et al. (2015) who professed that co-creation engagement is a fashion now, specifically in this higher competitive environment. The study has further opined that more and more marketers are integrating the involvement of clients in their competitive strategies and use them to enhance the perception of goods. The study of Choi et al. (2016) has further posited few questions while explaining why that is because co-creation engagement has capabilities: it is able to assist innovation, it includes consumer demands and it offers products and services as per consumer desired. Another main contribution in the field was made by Gürhan-Canli et al. (2016) who stated that with the information sharing facility, marketers are informed that customers can help a lot of their product innovation and expand aggressive advantages. Giving various examples in the study, it has been identified that P&G, 45% product innovation is from customer contribution as it could enhance the brand and purchaser relationship. Furthermore, take a look at on this component has the perception of the customer attachment and brand love and to explain this relationship, the movement of co-creation engagement is proposed to explain the mental mechanism of the system.

According to Southworth and Ha-Brookshire (2016) there are numerous varieties of co-creation engagement, including customers of Wikipedia supporting to construct every object consciously, social media generates quite a few customers' contents, open assets like lunix is one greater shape this is left out, but could be essential in creating brand perception and authenticity. The study has further explained that brand perceptions are created in various manners such as there are the fantastic comments every app receives every day where nearly 80% of app improvements are cautioned by way of those feedbacks are provided by the customers.

However, it has also been argued by Govers and Go (2016) the brands which show lack of innovation but also show that there's capacity for the improvement of the process, the customers can also perceive positively about the brand and enhance increase its authenticity. So is it viable that co-creation engagement may be used to give an explanation for the method of customers' system of evaluation about the brand and presents some

insights on both the perception and engagement because now not all the co-creation strategies may be explained via brand engagement. According to Xu et al. (2017), if it's far possible, the brands have to make clear how products and services can provide the better experience to the customers and on the overall have a look at on co-creation engagement of the customers. Therefore, perceived brand authenticity begins with the co-creation motivations: including inquiring for return, achievement of perceive brand experience and enhancing the product attribute by the brand.

According to the study conducted by Ko et al. (2019), the outcomes of co-creation engagement are the aim of revenue generation through higher sales by customers which also include perceived competence. The study further explained that perceived competence is individual's inclination when he/she feels assured by the brand experience and it is also the subjective evaluation of the real competence of brand attributes. According to Moreau et al. (2018), it is a critical mental praise of the customer about the brand that enables them to be engaged in the co-creation of the brand. It has further been explained that according to the brand authenticity,the enhancement of competence experience including obtaining new capabilities, advantageous feedback about the product attributes, can help improve perceived competence so that to improve internal motivation of the customer to be more engaged with the brand. Hence, it can be opined that the overall co-creation engagement and perceived brand authenticity are interrelated and impact each other significantly as identified in the previous literature

Brand co-creation is gaining huge importance in the current world. Co-creation is a type of consumer collaboration where consumer collaborates with producer in production of product (Hsieh and Chang, 2016). Bendapudi and Leone (2003) noted that central idea behind the concept of co-creation is the competitiveness of product. As co-creation involves consumers to think themselves as producers and within the world of superior internet technology popularity of co-creation has gone way far, corporations believe that engaging costumers in co-creation activities can make brand competitive.

Previous research on co-creation has shown that co-creation can play an important role in building brand relationships (Füller, 2010). This proposition carries importance because of the fact that consumer-brand relationships have long been a topic of discussion for both researchers and practitioners (Batra et al., 2012). Previous research has also examined the relationship between co-creation engagement and certain types of consumer's behaviors. Hsieh and Chang (2016) examined the impact of co-creation engagement on intention to purchase a product, feedback intention and intention to help others. They

found support for their hypothesis. From a very simple view point consider that engagement of costumers in production of goods or service makes that product/service more appealing to the costumer i.e. they will perceive it as more relevant to them and less fake i.e. highly authentic.

Central to co-creation engagement is the idea of brand-self connection. Co-creation engagement promotes the connection of oneself with the brand and consumer at times can feel the brand as a part of themselves. Brand co-creation will enhance the feelings of recognition of costumers as they feel enlightened to be a part of manufacturing of product. This means that costumers will perceive brand as a part of their self identity. This feeling of self identity at the same time will lead to the consumer to see brand as a symbol i.e. will perceive brand authentic (as symbolism is a dimension of PBA).

Consider this thing from perspective of self determination theory; SDT argues that motivation comes from the satisfaction of needs of individual. According to Maslow's hirerachy of needs, self-esteem/ self-actualization needs are the most top ranked needs of individuals. Co-creation as previously argued enhances self-esteem of consumers. This means that co-creation is a source of fulfillment of needs and thus a source of motivation which will lead the consumer to think off a brand as credible.

Take the perspective of self-esteem theory. Self-esteem is impulsive, natural, and unconscious appraisal of the person that affects spontaneous reactions to self-relevant stimuli (Bosson et al., 2000). Since individuals normally judge self-related stimuli more auspiciously than stimuli not related to self, it is likely that optimistic self-evaluation is shifted to the object (Greenwald and Banaji, 1995). Co-creation engagement makes people think off as a producer of the product and make the product appear more relevant to the individual. Individuals would thus translate this positivity associated from relevance of brand with self to the brand and this will lead them to perceive brand as relevant to them and thus authentic. This study thus proposes that:

H$_1$: Brand co-creation engagement has a significant positive impact on perceived brand authenticity.

2.13   Customization and Perceived Brand Authenticity

According to the study conducted by Kleppe and Mossberg (2015) customization is the solution to the desires of today's costumer. The study further explained that customization permits people to revel in what they need to have i.e. been unique and faucet up

their individual need as well. According to another study carried out by Rutter et al. (2018) customization has usually been seen as mass customization where mass customization refers to delivering products or services which meets individual purchaser's need. However, Lechner and Paul (2019) argued that customization is primarily based on the idea of creating customer as co-designer of the product attributes. Therefore, the idea of a customer as a co-designer is one in which the client is capable of getting access to the design procedure, such as concept layout and product development, by using expressing the necessities or even co-designing the product with the configuration toolkit

One of the most important contributions in the area of customisation and perceived brand authenticity has been made by De Vries and Go (2017) who professed that while customers have a customized product or logo his/her feelings of having a unique product will stand up. Further explained that when consumer realizes that he/she has what they truly want, they might be going to experience thrilled because of the perceptions of an area of expertise. The study of Hill et al. (2017) has further explained customization will permit a character to enjoy emotions of relatedness of brand where customers will feel product to be greater associated and relevant to his or herself, if the brand wants to cause him/her to understand the product as extra real, there must be evaluative product attributes provided to the customers.

According to another study conducted by Ozuem and Azemi (2017) customization will permit individual to design the brand the way he/she wants it to be and this can make the product part of person's self-concept and character will experience the brand to be his/her own element and her/himself to be part of brand's own family. The study of Berger (2014) has further explained that this feeling of the user or the customer of the brand as a part of self on the identical time will permit the individual to perceive the brand as a symbolic icon. Therefore, it might also imply that those perceptions of symbolism can even cause the customers to be perceived as real by costumers. The research carried out by Lim and Yang (2016) customization especially personalization involves proactive participation by way of customers. The study further defined that product's relevance to the man or woman is superior in personalization when a consumer her/himself is involved in making the product, his cognitive styles would allow him to perceive the product as true. Therefore, it might also imply that the product can be perceived as extra credible, having excessive integrity and symbol by way of the client i.e. custom-designed brand can be perceived as genuine brands.

One of the most important contributions in the area of customization and perceived brand authenticity has been made by Yu et al. (2018) who professed postmodern customer is marked by a condition wherein conventional marketers have degenerated in price. The study of Zarantonello and Pauwels-Delassus (2015) further demonstrated that without the spatial or temporal connection furnished through conventional identification, people look to manufacturers who are able to give the impression that the brand can help them to construct their own identity. Paradoxically, Bellemare and Carrier (2017) stated that individualized identities need the interpretive help of other like-minded individuals in specialised communities to give legitimacy to build identities. The study further explained that these specialized groups regularly consciousness around a life-style or a brand for which they prefer customised attributes relevant to their self-identity.

According to another research carried out by Bowen and Chen McCain (2015), the contemporary circumstance has been amplified by means of a process of individualization where identities and social relationships are mediated by a diffusion of internet linked gadgets. It has also been identified in the study of Fritz et al. (2017) that the contemporary situation and individualization have generated surroundings where human beings are unfastened to create customised identities mediated with the aid of a perceived authenticity of brand, commodities, offered products and services. Therefore, in today's world the consumers' way of life idea posits that brands appeared to be the authentic aide in identity creation. According to Curran et al. (2016) in postmodern society, people face a crisis of identity introduced about via the de-legitimation of traditional identity markers. The study has further demonstrated that customisation has created a demand for brands and their products where the consumers talk to others about how they want to be perceived.

Another study conducted by Schallehn et al. (2014) consumers' subculture posits the perception that in postmodern society the consumption of branded items serves as a useful resource in identity creation and helps make sense of the global society. The study has also suggested that identity in postmodern society relies on non-public choices not by using the cultural engineering of organizations or traditional markers of identification: to achieve success in the postmodern market brands must be perceived as having a proper place in the market.

The researches have also emphasised on understanding the relationship between a contemporary customer and the customisation and how it can ultimately lead towards higher

perceived brand authenticity. For instance one of the most important contributions in the area of customisation by a contemporary customer and perceived brand authenticity has been made by Lin et al. (2017) who professed that the purchaser way of life theory encompasses the rejection of stereotypical brands because of the private sovereignty of the customer to define the self. The research conducted by Napoli et al. (2016), on the other hand, professed that branded goods have to be perceived as cultural assets to assist create identification due to which customer perceive the brand to be authentic if it allows them to customise as per their own identity. The research has further identified that the products must appear disinterested by the customers if these are being used by everyone in the market.

According to the study conducted by Burkhalter et al. (2017) the real brand or the product needs to be perceived as a useful resource in the creation of a non-public identification: "to be authentic, brands must be disinterested: they must be perceived as invented and disseminated by folks that are intrinsically inspired via their inherent value". Another study conducted by Schepers and Nijssen (2018) stated that the contemporary condition has created a demand for brands perceived to be real where brands seemed to be properly interacting with customers while also creating various brand communities. Further defined by Yin and Shen (2017), a brand community is plenty more than like-minded individuals coming together; they may be a reflection of their self-identification mentioned through which can induce them to customise the products in accordance with their demand.

According to the study conducted by Rihova et al. (2018) one of the most vital current developments of marketing and product development by the brands in the self-customisation of the products through online means, which permits customers to layout their personal merchandise by modifying a few online appropriate capabilities in accordance with their private alternatives and expectations. The study of Taheri et al. (2018) further explained that concurrent with the expediential hobby in explaining the customers to have technological know-how, research into online self-customisation is garnering plenty current attention. This emergent form of studies replicates the extensive transmission of relatable generation among well-known groups and newly particularly designed online self-customisation agencies indeed, the net offers an outstanding platform for customers facilitating them in co-creating all through the self-customisation process and perceiving brand authenticity simultaneously.

According to Rocha et al. (2016) brand identification mentions to the specific and comparatively lasting features of a brand and brand lean towards to have a strong and appealing identity when its identity is perceived as greater exclusive and prestigious. According to the study conducted by Närvänen and Goulding (2016) despite the fact that the initial literature describes brand authenticity as an inner construct that characterises what executives want the brand to be, current research progresses the belief of brand authenticity via conceptualising it as dynamic and deriving, which includes organizations and customers. The study of Guèvremont and Grohmann (2016) noted that brand authenticity is revived together by using stakeholders and a situation where marketing mechanism and customer vow coexist. According to the study conducted by Gabay (2015), the dynamic function of brand identification additionally displays its self-expressive rewards – the manifestation of clients' self-identity where customers perceived the brand as authentic and harmonious with their subjective or social identification (i.e. logo identity similarity).

According to the study conducted by Shams (2016) brand authenticity and brand identity are thought to confidently transmit consumer perceived usefulness of online self-customisation. The study of Govers and Go (2016) has further explained that perceived usefulness refers to the degree to which purchasers agree with that specific facilities and experiences provided by the product or service. According to another research carried out by Lalicic and Weismayer (2017) brand authenticity may want to provide a beneficial evaluative context for customers to reply to the brand's advertising provided on various online channels. The study further demonstrated that a few clients may also are trying to find self-enhancement of their choice of brands. According to the study conducted by Zhu and Chen (2015) brand authenticity has an advantage of accepting such self-enhancement consumer desires, as a status brand is credited extra importantly for noticeable consumption. Existing literature also clarifies that the extra prestigious clients understand the brand identification of the product or the service; the more appealing they may examine its brand authenticity and in the end create their perceived usefulness of the brands advertising and marketing activities. Therefore, brand authenticity is also believed to undoubtedly relate to consumer perceived usefulness of online self-customisation.

According to the research conducted by Lee et al. (2015b) whether or not the motivations are additive or compensatory relies upon on customers' compatibility. The research carried out by Dwivedi and McDonald (2018) professed that identification-based totally

motivations are more likely to compensate every customer when they are incompatible in nature. As an example, it has been found that moral identification has a weaker effect on customisation when monetary incentives are provided. According to the study conducted by Vannini and Williams (2016) based totally on the idea of the hierarchy of more than one identities, social identity has a tendency to be outperformed by using personal-stage fundamental desires or non-public identity to affect attitudes and behaviours. Therefore, it can be opined that one could be given or reject social identification without losing a primary experience of identity for which customers might also be willing to undertake the activities of customisation and hence perceive the brand to be authentic.

Customization is the answer to the needs of today's costumer (Fiore et al., 2004). Customization allows individuals to experience what they want to have i.e. be unique and tap up their individual need (Lee and Moon, 2015). Customization has usually been seen as mass customization. Mass customization refers to delivering a product or service which meets individual consumer's need (Tseng et al., 1996). Tseng and Hu (2014) argued that customization is based on the concept of making costumer as co-designer. The concept of co-designer is one in which the customer is able to get access to the design process, such as concept design and product development, by expressing the requirements or even co-designing the product with the configuration toolkit (Schoder et al., 2006).

When consumer have a customized product or brand his/her feelings of having a unique product will arise. When consumer realizes that he has what he actually wants, he will feel delighted because of the perceptions of uniqueness. Customization will allow an individual to experience feelings of relatedness of brand. Costumer will feel product to be more related and relevant to his or herself which will cause him/her to perceive the product as more genuine and hence authentic.

Customization will allow individual to design the brand the way he/she wants it to be. This will make the product part of individual's self-concept and individual will feel the brand to be his part and himself to be a part of brand family. This feeling of brand as part of self at the same time will allow individual to perceive brand as a symbolic icon. These perceptions of symbolism will also cause the brand to be perceived as authentic by costumers. Customization specifically personalization involves proactive participation by costumers. Product's relevance to the person is enhanced in personalization (Tseng and Hu, 2014). When a consumer himself is involved in making the product, his

cognitive patterns would allow him to perceive product as genuine. The product will be perceived as more credible, having high integrity and symbol by the consumer i.e. customized brand will be perceived as authentic brand. Thus, this study proposes that:

H₂: Brand customization has significant positive impact on perceived brand authenticity.

2.14 Perceived Brand Authenticity and Satisfaction with Life

Studies inside the domain of consumer psychology have been growing in the contemporary business world. The study conducted by Browning (2015) showed that consumer psychology is approximately associated with the mix emotions of people in comparison to the bad feelings like tension and depression which have remained relevant to the studies in psychology through the years. Manthiou et al. (2018) also mentioned that the maximum vital and maximum studied place within the discipline of consumer psychology for identifying the prospects if brands can provide higher satisfaction with life. According to the study conducted by Helm et al. (2016), the subjective well-being is a multidimensional concept and consists of various sides. Satisfaction with lifestyles is therefore regarded as the cognitive and personal assessment of the existence of one's being which can also be the idea that satisfaction with life is also an evaluative judgment of a person concerning his lifestyles.

According to the study conducted by Sierra et al. (2016) considering perceived brand authenticity from an externalist perspective which evaluates the authenticity of brand primarily based on the capability of the brand to be a source of identity for customer. It has been further explained that perceived brand authenticity generates the feeling of authenticity and that means in brand to make the brand an identity for customers making them highly satisfied with their lives. According to the study carried out by Mazutis and Slawinski (2015) customers sense brand as part of them and themselves as a part of the brand and hence inflicting that the brand will grow to be a part of individual's self-concept. This facilitates individuals to be more inspired in lifestyles as this issue leads people closer to self-actualization and these feelings of self-actualization imply more satisfaction with life and positivity toward lifestyles.

Previous studies in the advent of satisfaction with life have especially targeted on how satisfaction with life shapes extraordinary attitudes regarding demands and desires of the customers and how the perceptions of branding can effect satisfaction with life. According to the study conducted by Davvetas and Diamantopoulos (2017) happiness has been related to satisfaction with life whereas extra happiness brings extra delight. The study of Stiehler and Tinson (2015) further explained that happiness is definitely the inner feelings of character which can get up because of any item or stimuli someone can sense glad whilst he/she feels to accept significance and to be requested even as making a decision; that means in life and relevancy can also be a supply of happiness. The study of Astakhova et al. (2017) further explained that actual manufacturers provide that means in one's lifestyles and are perceived by means of consumers to be more relevant to them. In this manner, real brands may be a supply of happiness and indeed the man or woman will feel greater satisfied with life.

According to the study conducted by Huang et al. (2017) the man or woman's belief of his or her function in existence, within the cultural context and value system she or he lives in, and in relation to his or her desires, expectancies, parameters and social relations miles a vast ranging idea that affected in a complex way by using the individual's physical and mental health, level of independence, social relationships and their relationship to salient functions in their environment. However, the study of Fritz et al. (2017) further argued that feelings of in-authenticity and being fake negatively result in mental nation of person's thoughts which could lead to the poor fine of life and therefore less satisfaction with life.

The study of Lee (2017) further explained whilst provided by feelings of relevance, genuineness and authenticity in life individuals can experience happier in life and hence the psychological domain regarding the exceptional of lifestyles will enhance which ultimately approach that people can be extra glad about their existence. According to the study conducted by Beverland (2018) marketing in today's world is full of traits, innovation and development; this, in the end, applies to branding as its far part of advertising. Further explained by Xiong and King (2015) that inside the branding are recent trends like brand constructing, brand communities, co-advent, online really worth of mouth etc. those are all methods to have interaction, connect and have interaction with the purchaser to lead them to happy and constant satisfaction with life.

According to the study conducted by Xiong and King (2015) all of it begins with a clear and sincere positioning which is regularly seen as a way to create competitive advantage.

The study of Kessous et al. (2015) further explained although, this sounds apparent it's far frequently greater difficult than it looks as if, as clients these days have complete access to quite a few brands and manufacturer facts which can help them to evaluate if any brand can actually provide them satisfaction with life. Consequently, any irregularity will cause mistrust and then the brand will be alleged as a cash chasing agency. Hung (2014) stated that understanding perceived brand authenticity is a fresh and new trending research subject matter in consumer psychology, marketing and in particular branding. It's far a topic of destiny studies is proposed with the aid of researchers (also, a few might say that brand authenticity is extra critical for the customer existence because of their personal evaluation of satisfaction with life.

According to the study conducted by Assiouras et al. (2015) a few worldwide known brands together with Adidas, use brand authenticity as a brand constructing device to layout credibility and consideration. The study of Wang and Mattila (2015) further explained as brand authenticity is a brand new research subject matter it also needs to be evaluated in terms of satisfaction with life that it can provide to the customers. According to the study conducted by Tong et al. (2018) despite the fact that, the exact definition or use of logo authenticity isn't always described but it's being utilized by brands to gain competitive advantage. The study further explained, therefore, there's an upward push in the need for authenticity as proper manufacturers cause extra cost because it has an impact on the extent of purchaser engagement with the logo as well as satisfaction with life.

Choi et al. (2016) stated that customer engagement consists of all reviews the consumers have with the logo, it's far critical to the degree because it has brand consequences which include usage, affect, and responses to advertising. According to the study conducted by Giroux et al. (2017) as yet another branding trends is that manufacturers act like people and clients tend to see brands as men and women, authenticity and engagement are assumed to be related in a nice manner which can further provide the analysis of how the use of the product can provide brand authenticity. The research carried out by Rialti et al. (2017) professed that human beings do not interact with folks that are copying other people all the time, due to the fact this results in inconsistency with satisfaction with life. Hence, human beings opt for relationships with true human beings as their behaviour is greater predictable and human beings are constantly in a search for protection which can further be providing them satisfied with life. The research carried out by Ke et al. (2016) professed that the main product class that will be used to analyse

the connection between perceived brand authenticity and customer satisfaction with life. The study further explained satisfaction with life categorises many recognised brands within the speedy transferring of goods in customer's experience with self-identification. The research carried out by Okonkwo (2016) professed that brand authenticity is becoming an increasingly more interesting subject matter as it's far possible to use this construct as a device to boost the credibility and consider satisfaction with life. The study further explained that there are already organizations which might be using brand authenticity as an advertising and marketing device in approaches like storytelling wherein the origin and the past of the logo play a crucial role. According to Berger (2017) as growing identification and staying true to identity is the most essential marketing strategy, the relevance of this subject matter is growing nowadays because purchasers are increasingly searching out honest statistics and straightforward manufacturers, the construct is also the motive force of brand accept as true and consistent with satisfaction with life. The study of Burmann et al. (2017) further explained that one of the motives for the upward push in the need for truthful brands so that the customers can make purchase decisions and perceive the brand to be authentic as it helped them to gain satisfaction with life.

According to the study conducted by Wolf et al. (2016) the authentic identities of people are being noted by considering the fact that they consider themselves as no longer fitting in to the environment, that means that people want to fit in the society by considering that the use of a certain brand will provide them with the mechanism through which they can fit in the society and gain higher satisfaction with life. The research carried out by Kososki and Prado (2017) professed that the upward push of the need for truthful statistics is visible by way of the reality that most of the customers have been depended on mediums from where they can take and obtain opinions of the others about their brand experience; while evaluating that the brand will help to gain satisfaction with life similarly as it has helped the other customers. The research of Van den Bergh and Behrer (2016) has further provided an explanation for brand authenticity as the extent to which non-public identification is clearly related to individual behaviour because of these consumers relate the behaviour of the brand to its identity and purchasers perception as to what they see and what they perceive. In other words, consumers tend to narrate often seen actions to the personality of a brand similar to the experience of other people to assure that brand will provide satisfaction with life.

The research carried out by Mojsovska-Salamovska and Todorovska (2016) professed

that brand authenticity is an upcoming possibility to construct customers to agree with the brand's credibility whereas trust is a concept that's important in brand authenticity and for assuring satisfaction with life. The study of Guèvremont and Grohmann (2016) further explained that as a result, having a proper character and the credibility the brand can assure the customers that the attributes can provide them higher satisfaction with life. Similarly, Helm et al. (2016) stated that customers pursue sure behaviour of other customers towards the brand, in order to ensure how the brand will provide satisfaction with life in future. The study further defined that brand identity brings into fact that it can strongly positively related to self-fulfilment of the person. The research carried out by Veloutsou and Guzman (2017) professed that given the principle the behaviour of a real brand is akin to the behaviour of an authentic individual which means that perceived brand authenticity performs a big role in developing worthwhile, honest and durable brand identification.

The study conducted by König et al. (2018) further explained that for the reason that brand identity which isn't actual involves a positioning which does no longer occur the identification of the brand and as the brand promises its customers for better experience it is based on external elements in preference to internal genuine brand identity factors. In contradiction to it Huang and Cai (2015) stated that if a brand identity is enormously loaded with brand authenticity than the brand creates a positioning which truly reflects in the consumer's perception about the brand as to how and to what extent it can provide them satisfaction. The research carried out by Mahjoub and Naeij (2015) professed that the evaluation among those two elements, brand identity and brand authenticity makes the distinction in perceived brand authenticity inside the mind of the client, as a brand that is credible does not want external impacts to create an identity.

The study of Ilicic and Webster (2015) further explained that despite the fact that there is a sturdy operation of brand authenticity inside the enterprise, the concept has no longer but been investigated in detail in instructional advertising studies. According to Manhas and Tukamushaba (2015) for example, exploration of brand authenticity as a major part of brand, however, their research is confined to explanatory, qualitative studies, a framework that may be examined falls. Therefore, it can be opined that the authenticity principle includes the comparison among the "fake" and the "real" for instance an actual Madrid blouse signed with the aid of Cristiano Ronaldo himself is real whereas the copies of this signed blouse are faux, that is an example of goal authenticity. Research in the area of positive psychology is increasing in the current world (Pavot and

Diener, 2008). Positive psychology talks about positive emotions of individuals in contrast to the negative emotions like anxiety and depression which have remained central to the research in psychology over the years. Pavot and Diener (2008) noted that the most important and most studied area within the field of positive psychology is subjective well-being of individuals. According to Diener et al. (1999) subjective well-being is a multidimensional concept and consists of different facets. Within the construct of subjective well-being life satisfaction or satisfaction with life is an important concept. Satisfaction with life (SWL) is the "cognitive and global evaluation of overall quality of one's life" (Pavot and Diener, 2008). Concept of SWL is an evaluative judgment of a person regarding his life.

Considering PBA from an externalist perspective which evaluates authenticity of brand based on brand's ability to be a source of identity for consumer, PBA generates the feeling of authenticity and meaning in brand to make brand an identity for consumers. Consumers feel brand as part of them and themselves as part of brand causing a brand to become a part of individual's self concept. This helps individuals to be more motivated in life as this thing leads individuals towards self-actualization. These feelings of self-actualization mean more satisfaction with life and positivity towards life.

Previous research in area of SWL has mainly focused on how SWL shapes different attitudes regarding work and life with very little known about how the perceptions of branding can impact SWL. Happiness has been associated with SWL (Van Genderen et al., 2018). More happiness brings more satisfaction. Happiness is actually the internal feelings of individual which can arise because of any object or stimuli (Hayes and Fryling, 2017). A person can feel happy when he/she feels to be given importance and to be asked while making a decision. Meaning in life and relevancy can also be a source of happiness. Authentic brands provide meaning in one's life and are perceived by consumers to be more relevant to them. In this way, authentic brands can be a source of happiness and in-deed the person will feel more satisfied with life.

Embedded in the concept of SWL is the perception of individual about quality of his/her life. According to WHOQOL group of WHO (World health organization) quality of life is: *"The individual's perception of his or her position in life, within the cultural context and value system he or she lives in, and in relation to his or her goals, expectations, parameters and social relations. It is a broad ranging concept affected in a complex way by the person's physical health, psychological state, level of independence, social relationships and their relationship to salient features of their environment"* (Power et al.,

2005).

Feelings of in-authenticity and fakeness negatively effects psychological state of individual's mind which can lead to poor quality of life and thus less SWL. On the other hand, when provided by feelings of relevance, genuineness and authenticity in life individuals can feel happier in life and thus the psychological state regarding the quality of life will enhance which ultimately means that individuals will be more satisfied with life. Keeping in line with the above discussion, this study proposes that:

H₃: Perceived brand authenticity has significant positive relation with satisfaction with life.

2.15 Perceived Brand Authenticity and Self-Esteem

The research carried out by Stiehler and Tinson (2015) professed that one of the most crucial wishes of individuals is self-esteem. Further explained that people are commonly decided to feel good about them rather than feeling terrible and the ones who are excessive on self-esteem see themselves as effective (i.e. they have advantageous self-idea) and find methods to affirm their previously held views approximately their 'self'. The study carried out by Cheah et al. (2016) explained that such people consequently experience closer to the brands that offer to mean in their existence with the aid of reflecting those people' actual 'self'. The research carried out by Saju et al. (2018) professed that from the same factor of view, fake and inappropriate brands would purpose in negative self-reviews and people could see themselves as terrible i.e. they may shape terrible self-conceptions which might result in lower self-esteem.

The research carried out by Astakhova et al. (2017) professed that shallow self-esteem has been considered as bi-dimensional by using together with self-competence and self-liking as dimensions of self-competence manner and standardized it as advantageous or terrible towards oneself as a source of energy or personal efficacy. The study further explained that this idea of self-competency is relatively associated with the concept of self-efficacy, however, isn't like it. According to Khamis et al. (2017) self-liking alternatively refers to one's normal sense of real worth as an individual with social significance. It has been further explained that Social right here doesn't refer to the belief of values of the individual instead social importance additionally refers to the values that an individual acclaims to her/himself.

The research carried out by Mitchell et al. (2015) professed that considering actual brand owners as an image and part of one's self-identification might suggest that the brand can boosts self-esteem as self-importance is related with the internal emotions of superiority because of one's self identification. It has been further explained by Ko et al. (2019) that the use of an extra true brand that is also original and relevant to the person would bring about self-liking i.e. individuals would like themselves and hence improve their shallowness. The study further explained that actual manufacturers are credible and feature high integrity which means that use of such logo could assist in answering "Who am I" and might assist in shaping a person's identity and self-concept. It might imply that the authentic brands can be prone to provide self-esteem to the customers.

According to the study conducted by Southworth (2016), consumers can also be encouraged to evade self-dissonance through preference and ownership of a branded product that sustains their egocentricity. It has been further explained that self-expression concept argues that 'people make unique selections to colour particular images of themselves where on one hand, brand authenticity takes effect due to purchasers' motivation to make purchase decisions; on the other hand, purchasers' need for distinctiveness takes effect because of the inducement of psychological need for being exclusive. According to the study conducted by Yao and Wang (2018), self-customisation of the brand may be visible as more beneficial for clients with stronger want for forte; due to the fact customisation service allows customers to tailor sure product functions to make the product more unique. Therefore, brand authenticity and purchasers' need for speciality constitute identity-associated motivations.

One of the most important psychogenic needs of individuals is self esteem. People are usually determined to feel good about themselves rather than feeling bad. Those individuals who are high on self esteem see themselves as positive (i.e. they have positive self concept) and find ways to confirm their previously held views about their 'self'. Such people thus feel closer to the brands that provide meaning in their life by reflecting those individuals' actual 'self' (Malär et al., 2011). From the same point of view, fake and irrelevant brands would cause in poor self evaluations and people would see themselves as negative i.e. they will form negative self conceptions which would result in lower self esteem. This discussion thus means that PBA is associated with self esteem.

Self esteem has been considered as bi-dimensional by Tafarodi and Swann Jr (1995) including self-competence and self-liking as dimensions of self-esteem. Self competence means "overall positive or negative towards oneself as a source of power or efficacy"

(Ramsdal, 2008). This concept of self competency is somewhat related with concept of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1989) but is different from it. Self liking on the other hand refers to "one's overall sense of worth as an individual with social significance" (Ramsdal, 2008). Social here doesn't refers to the perception of values others associate with the person rather social significance also refers to the values that an individual acclaims to himself.

Considering authentic brands as a symbol and a part of one's self identity would mean that brand boosts self esteem as self esteem is related with the inner feelings of superiority because of one's self identity. Using a more authentic brand that is more genuine, original and relevant to individual would result in self liking i.e. individuals would like themselves and thus boost their self esteem. Authentic brands are credible and have high integrity which means that use of such brand would help in answering "Who am I" and would help in shaping a person's identity and self-concept. Use of irrelevant and fake brands on the other hand is a source of dissatisfaction and sometimes result in poor cognitive evaluation of brand and one self. Use of such fake brands would cause individuals an inferiority of some sort in mind and the mental models of individual would cause self-esteem to be lower. Considering this discussion, this study proposes that:

H$_4$: Perceived brand authenticity has significant positive effect on self esteem.

2.16   Perceived Brand Authenticity and Brand Loyalty

According to the research conducted by Wang et al. (2017) brand loyalty represents costumer's attitude of who prefer one brand constantly over other rival brands and displaying repurchase purpose, promote it with word of mouth and pay the premium rate for the products and services. The study further explained that it has additionally been defined as a sturdy dedication to repurchase a product permanently in future no matter the environmental effect of various advertising and marketing efforts to create capability shift toward different manufacturers.

Preceding research has proven that emotional attachment to the emblem predicts and displays brand loyalty by way of customers. The research carried out by Murray and Kline (2015) professed that perceived brand authenticity enables individual or costumer to shape emotional bond with the emblem due to the continuity, credibility, integrity

and symbolism. The study of Chan et al. (2015) further explained that these perceptions for that reason lead to attachment to the brand by using customers, which further translate into loyalty as well as towards brand perception. Therefore, as perceived brand authenticity offers relatedness and meaning in the brand for costumer which make the brand seem greater applicable to the customer, they may be extra willing to purchase and then to re-buy that product as compared to different manufacturers.

The research carried out by Chan et al. (2016) professed that retaining consistent with my preliminary concept and discussion regarding brand as part of self-concept, the relationship between perceived brand authenticity and brand loyalty can be demonstrated with the aid of the usage of the same argument of brand credibility as crucial to the self-idea and self-identification of character. The study further explained that true manufacturer offers those attributes in the products which can cater to the demand of the customers. The study conducted by Burmann et al. (2017) stated that such brands deliver a meaning to person's life if the company adds the price in accordance with the provided quality-based attributes and hence foster positivity in individuals. The study further explained that this approach that such manufacturers which might be perceived as authentic would result in better self-evaluation of customers and individuals may feel such genuine brand as part of their self-concept.

The study of Burmann et al. (2017) has further explained that this permits a link between genuine brand and customer character as this link will pressure the individual to purchase the same brand again and again because of the relatedness that costumer has associated with the brand and because of the authentic nature of it. Therefore, because of this, manufacturers being authentic in nature may have more unswerving customers i.e. authenticity of brands has prompted costumers to be loyal. Previous studies have tested the effect of self-congruency directly and circuitously carry for brand loyalty and these studies verify the connection between the two. According to Akbar and Wymer (2017), self-congruence basically refers to the Concord or similarity between one's best self and self-image. Pattuglia et al. (2015) argued that self-actualization takes place whilst one's creativeness of what he/she wants to be is in line with the actual conduct exhibited by using the one's people. The study has further explained that perceptions that brands real reduce the in-congruency among someone's perfect outlook and his/her behaviour due to the fact authenticity in brands is what consumers want to have and thus they act in a way to reach what they have by buying that specific brand.

Arguing from the attitude of self-congruency Spielmann (2014) stated that accordingly

self-congruency gives a cause for the relationship among perceptions of the authenticity of the brand and the loyalty of costumer in the direction of that brand. The research carried out by Stiehler and Tinson (2015) professed that the concept about the importance of the relationship between brand authenticity and brand loyalty in the realistic phrase may be derived with the aid of the fact that many magazines have lately published articles on the difficulty. The study further explained that In an online article at imaginative and prescient vital reports that 91% of consumers want the product they use to be true and referred to the brands as authentic where purchasers demanded authenticity as a 'have to' element in the product in order to be connected with that brand. In a piece of writing entitled 'It's the actual issue' posted in 'The Economist', mentioned that authenticity in manufacturers is the answer to the shaky loyalty of costumers toward manufacturers.

The research carried out by France et al. (2018) professed that taking a point of view against each contemporary and postmodern advertising and marketing and ways of hailing the purchaser, it can be argued that the brand new publish-post current condition of consumer tradition on the way to affect what brands survive within the future, stem from postmodern contradictions. The study of Ramaswamy and Ozcan (2016) further explained that these contradictions are ironic distance compressed, that means that purchasers see thru irony as a marketing method that is used that allows the brand to create a photograph of disinterestedness on the part of the brand using it. The research of Oliveira and Panyik (2015) provided second contradiction as the subsidized society, which means that brands' method of sponsoring popular humans and cause them to market the brand of their ordinary life could be exploited through marketers to the point whilst consumers can be able to see thru that technique and reject it, as well. Third, authenticity extinction, which means the way that it is an increasing number of entrepreneurs to discover cultural expressions, along with the advertisements, that have now not but been utilized in advertising to create authenticity.

The research carried out by Van Dijk et al. (2014) professed that inside the final decade, and client-brand relationships have gained lots attention from each practitioner and academics. In this context, two parallel but wonderful research streams in this discipline of look at have won increasing interest, i.e. research on brand authenticity on the one hand and brand loyalty on the alternative. Both standards are independently rooted in attachment concept implying that a courting among these two constructs is justifiable.

The study conducted by Busser and Shulga (2018) further explained that brand authenticity, as being the most emotionally extreme consumer-brand relationship has recently received increasing hobby each from an academic and managerial point of view. It has been further explained that inside the context of attachment idea, a strong emotional attachment is wanted so as for brand like to emerge.

Parallel streams of studies constitute customers' growing search for authenticity in brands. According to the study carried out by Hollebeek et al. (2017) authenticity is an increasing number of considerations as well as an acceptable brand feature, leading to emotional brand attachment. According to the study conducted by Black and Veloutsou (2017) as such, proper brands advantage from a competitive advantage in phrases of the introduction of the sturdy purchaser–brand connections. The study of Liu et al. (2018) further explained that towards this historical past, the underlying article seeks to shed mild on the relationship between logo authenticity and brand love, providing that perceived brand authenticity definitely affects brand loyalty.

The research carried out by Ranjan and Read (2016) professed that one of the major objectives to strengthen each the theoretical and managerial expertise of brand loyalty and brand authenticity and spotlight the constructs' relevance for clients' brand-associated behaviours. The study further explained that the reason for this is the fact whether brand authenticity has a tremendous effect on consumers to love their brands which leads towards higher brand loyalty. Another research carried out by Gürhan-Canli et al. (2016) professed that the evolved framework integrates brand loyalty and brand authenticity at the side of constructs which might be nicely-researched inside the research field of client-brand relationships; i.e. customers agree with and brand attachment.

The research has also linked them to WOM as final results of the connection with the brand. The model builds upon the look at or who have recognized a few antecedents and results of brand loyalty, and of who has developed an integrative framework of the idea of brand authenticity (Thyne and Hede, 2016). Therefore, brand loyalty and brand authenticity have been considered as highly and closely interrelated in the previous research as the customers once perceive the brand to be authentic also become loyal to it and choose the same brand over the others each time making purchase decisions.

Brand loyalty represents costumer's attitude of preferring one brand continuously over other rival brands and exhibiting repurchase intention, promote it with word of mouth and pay premium price for the brand (Zeithaml et al., 1996). It has also been defined as "A strong commitment to repurchase a product permanently in future despite the

environmental impact of various marketing efforts to create potential shift towards other brands" (Oliver, 1999).

Previous research has shown that emotional attachment to the brand predicts and reflects brand loyalty by costumers (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). Perceived brand authenticity enables individual or costumer to form emotional bond with the brand because of the continuity, credibility, integrity and symbolism. These perceptions thus lead to attachment to brand by costumers which translate into loyalty of costumers towards brand. Further, as PBA provides relatedness and meaning in brand for costumer which make the brand appear more relevant to the costumer, costumer will be more willing to purchase and then to re-purchase that brand as compared to other brands.

Keeping in line with my initial conception and discussion regarding brand as a part of self-concept, I would like to support this relationship between PBA and brand loyalty by using the same argument of authentic brand as central to the self-concept and self identity of individual. Authentic brands provide meaning to one's life and things he/she is using in life. Such brands give a meaning to an individual's life; they add value, foster positivity in individuals. This all means that such brands which are perceived as authentic would result in better self evaluation of individual and individuals might feel such authentic brand as a part of their self concept. This enables a link between authentic brand and individual. This link will force individual to purchase the same brand over and over again because of the relatedness that costumer has associated with the brand due to the authentic nature of it. This means that brands authentic in nature will have more loyal customers i.e. authenticity of brands has caused costumers to be loyal.

Previous research has examined the impact of self-congruency directly and indirectly carries for brand loyalty (Kressmann et al., 2006; Sirgy et al., 2008,?; Liu et al., 2012). These studies confirm the relationship between the two. Self-congruence basically refers to the harmony or similarity between one's ideal self and self-image. Rogers argued that self-actualization occurs when one's imagination of what he/she wants to be is in line with the actual behavior exhibited by those individuals (Geller, 1982). Perceptions about brands as authentic reduce the in-congruency between a person's ideal state and his/her behavior because authenticity in brands is what consumers want to have and thus they act in a way to reach what they have by purchasing that particular brand. Arguing from the perspective of self-congruency thus also provides a rationale for the relationship between perceptions of authenticity of brand and the loyalty of costumer

towards that brand.

The idea about importance of the relationship between brand authenticity and brand loyalty in practical word can be derived by the fact that many magazines have recently published articles on the issue. In an online article at Vision Critical reports that 91% of consumers want the brand they use to be authentic and refered to the study of BCG in 2013 where consumers demanded authenticity as a 'must' factor in brand to be attached with that brand. In an article entitled 'It's the real thing' published in 'The Economist', Mazzucato and Wray (2015) noted that authenticity in brands is the answer to the shaky loyalty of costumers towards brands. This all discussion thus leads the researcher to hypothesize that:

H$_5$: Perceived brand authenticity has significant positive impact on brand loyalty.

2.17   Perceived Brand Authenticity and Brand Trust

The research carried out by Ko et al. (2019) professed that advertising aims at generating bond among brand and customer (purchaser) and brand accept as true with is required to make this bond existent in the market. It has been further explained in the study that the significance of brand trust can be determined by the fact that higher brand trust leads towards higher purchases of the brand by the customers. However, brand trust can only be created if the customers perceive positively about the brand and the after-usage product experience has provided authentic results (Xu et al., 2017). The study conducted by (Bhattacharjee et al., 2014) defined that the customers' experience of the brand defines their trust towards it as the brand appears to be highly authentic. The research further defined that it leads towards the higher competitive advantage of the brand as well in the market.

The research carried out by Bhattacharjee et al. (2014) professed that feeling of safety held via the customer in his/her interaction with the brand, that it is based at the perceptions that the brand is reliable and answerable for the desires and demands of the customer. It has been further identified in the study that brand can also be considered as intently connected to authenticity if the customers tend to believe a brand experience will carry out as predicted or promised. The study conducted by Yu et al. (2018) revealed that authentic manufacturers respond to the consumers' desire and demand for

a sincere product or a brand as they may act as the provider of satisfaction of its customers in the market. Therefore, it might also imply that brand trust is the consumer perception of the brand that it will provide satisfaction and the after an experience of the customer that creates the belief that a certain brand is authentic.

The research carried out by Zarantonello and Pauwels-Delassus (2015) professed that the recent market condition has seen a fall in believe of purchasers in the direction of manufacturers. Researchers have additionally documented such a decrease in believe in the direction of the brand.The study of Bowen and Chen McCain (2015) further explained that as such this downfall is considered as the principle motive at the back of the rise of a phenomenon of brand authenticity. Practitioners have been calling for authenticity in brands for gaining a long-term loyalty of the customers and to counter the downfall in brand authenticity amongst the customers. Therefore, researchers have also started to notice this phenomenon of brand authenticity leads to brand considerations of the customers which can lead towards higher purchases.

The research carried out by Curran et al. (2016) professed that from some other angle, congruency itself is implicitly a crucial component of perceived brand authenticity. The study has further explained that the greater someone feels brand's values to be in line with his/her personal values, the greater agree with the well-known image and identity of the brand. According to the research carried out by Schallehn et al. (2014) from organization's point of view, it is crucial to show off identical values continuously as opposed to converting values with converting developments as continuity of values is a measurement of perceived brand authenticity. The study of Lin, Lin et al. (2017) further explained that this continuity in values might for this reason no longer only be a source of perceived brand authenticity, however, can even yield trust in that brand.

The research carried out by Napoli et al. (2016) professed that currently, and the postmodern branding paradigm is underneath the assault. The study of Schepers and Nijssen (2018) further explained that a shift in client way of perceiving a brand is essential because whilst marketers exploit the postmodern branding paradigm in which "authenticity" is within the guise of "disinterestedness" in the brand, new contradictions between that branding paradigm and the contemporary customer way of life arises. According to another study conducted by Yin and Shen (2017) the contradiction that brands are unable to create brand trust due to the lack of providing promising attributes and experiences in real is a manner that the brand that clients perceived as authentic before is alternatively visible as a way of cowardly seeking to avoid taking responsibility for

providing the customers with the same experience as promised.

The research carried out by Lima et al. (2019) professed that manufacturers now create the problem, not because they dictate tastes, however due to the fact they allow organizations to keep away from civic responsibilities. The study of Guèvremont and Grohmann (2016) further explained that in recent times, consumer resistance is first of all approximately now not accepting that a brand emerges as a colourful patch overlaying up an organization with doubtful practices, for instance, inside the form of sweatshops, doubtful bonus structures, and so on; which can all impact the brand trust of customers towards the brand. The study of Lee et al. (2015b) further explained that acknowledging that the postmodern theory of manufacturers has led to brand managers' having separated the brand nearly absolutely from the organisation in a manner that has made it viable for groups to misinterpret the clients' lifestyle that will influence the destiny branding paradigm. It might imply that the brand offers the attributes to the customers without evaluating their demand and desires and hence upon brand experience might also lose the brand trust.

According to the empirical analysis conducted by Dwivedi and McDonald (2018) trust is described as a way to maintain customers interested in the brand at a minimum stage (i.e. extra things are wished, but if the brand is not perceived as trustworthy, it is going to be discarded). The study of Browning (2015) further explained that the two articles, brand authenticity and trust, are comparable in their near attention to consumer subculture, and to the need for organizations to apprehend shifts in consumer subculture. The study further explained that shifts in branding techniques are seen to be emerging as a response to shifts in consumer culture. The research carried out by Manthiou et al., (2018) stated that explicitly opinions what consumer sees as a common perception among postmodern researchers, i.e. that entrepreneurs impose meanings on purchasers in a manner that targets at dominating the customers in order to gain their trust.

Marketing aims at generating bond between brand and costumer (consumer) and brand trust is required to make this bond existent (Hiscock, 2002). Hiscock (2002) noted the importance of studying trust in applied sciences like management and marketing. Numerous authors noted that studying trust is important in business environment as it is an important element in different relationships of business (see e.g. Garbarino and Johnson (1999). Delgado-Ballester et al. (2003) defined brand trust as:

"Feeling of security held by the consumer in his/her interaction with the brand, that it is based on the perceptions that the brand is reliable and responsible for the interests and

welfare of the consumer" (p.11)

Recent past decade has seen fall in trust of consumers towards brands. Researchers have also documented such a decrease in trust towards brand (e.g. see Gerzema and Lebar (2008). As such this downfall in trust was the main reason behind the rise of phenomenon of brand authenticity. Practitioners were calling for authenticity in brands from long time to counter the downfall in brand trust (Eggers et al., 2013). Researchers have also started to note this phenomenon that authenticity leads to brand trust (Balmer, 2011; Eggers et al., 2013).

Even from a nave approach, the more a person perceives a brand as genuine, original and relevant the more his/her feelings about the fakeness of that particular brand will decline and the more trust he/she will associate with that particular brand. Authentic brands are credible, have integrity and serve as a symbol (Morhart et al., 2015). Credibility and integrity build trust in brand. This means that more a person perceives brand as authentic the more he/she will trust that brand.

On empirical side, Eggers et al. (2013) examined the relationship between perceived brand authenticity and brand trust. Using data from 285 CEO's of German small and medium sized enterprises and applying SEM their results showed that perceptions of authenticity of brand positively influence the feelings of trust towards that brand.

From another perspective, as they call it "Person-organization fit" (Judge, 2007) in managerial literature. P-O fit represents the congruence between the values of employee and his/her organization. Extending this notion of P-O fit in consumer-brand relationship, congruent values of individual consumer and brand result in congruency between employee behaviors and organization's values Eggers et al. (2013). Congruency itself is implicitly an important component of PBA.Practitioners were calling for authenticity in brands from long time to counter the downfall in brand trust (Eggers et al., 2013).

The more a person feels brand's values to be in line with his personal values, the more trust he exhibits on the brand. From organization's point of view, it is important to exhibit same values continuously rather than changing values with changing trends (Faust and Householder, 2009), as continuity of values is a dimension of PBA (Morhart et al., 2015). This continuity in values would thus not only be a source of PBA but will also yield trust in that brand. Keeping in line with the above discussion, this study proposes that:

H_6: Perceived brand authenticity has significant positive impact on brand trust.

2.18   Impact of Brand Loyalty, Life Satisfaction, Self-Esteem and Brand Trust on Word of Mouth

Popp and Woratschek (2017) notified that the word of mouth communications means, that the customers refers a particular product/service/brands to his friends, acquaintances, family members or co-workers. With respect to the satisfaction of life, the association with the word of mouth displays contrasting opinions. The level of satisfaction differs with respect to the different customers. Popp and Woratschek (2017) explained that customers that are satisfied with their life, there is a high probability that they spread positive word of mouth in front of others. Empirically, research has pointed that the customers that are having the positive experiences with the brand, are deemed as more satisfied with the life and spread the positive word with at least eight other people Kazemi et al. (2013). Theory by Alonso et al. (1991) has explained, that the feelings if negative, they are demonstrated by the individual through his/her acts and if the feelings are positive, that they are associated to the senses and emotions. It has been argued that the people interpret the affairs that are positive to a larger one and neglects the negative matters.

Prior literature has been reviewed, investigating the impact of the brand loyalty on word of mouth communications. However, both times of impacts can be visualised, i.e., the impact of brand loyalty on word of mouth and vice versa. Erdoğmuş and Cicek (2012) pointed out that relevancy is an essential facet of brand loyalty. Organisations are vigilant in assessing the activities and needs of the customers and the present perspectives of their life. The lifestyles of the consumers are reviewed extensively by the marketers and brand developers, through the qualitative surveys and observations. The consumers are being approached at the online platforms as social media as an online platform. Researcher argued that the content that is popular amongst the consumers, serves to be the marker of consumers brand loyalty. The online environments based word of mouth is deemed as highly significant and cannot be neglected due to its massive interpretations. The consumers get involves in the discussions and campaigns on the social media platforms and the brand marketers, in the mean while, assess their behaviours and attitudes and their likes and dislikes. The study by Erdoğmuş and Cicek (2012) affirms that brand loyalty impacts positively on the word of mouth communications, through his study on the online social media environments. The authors have argued that brand

developers have kept incentives for the social media users, in order to get involved in the campaigns, increase the online presence and to execute campaigns. The target markets are also revealed across these social media platforms and the brand loyal customers, spreading the positive word of mouth can also be spotted.

Wu (2017) demonstrated the association between the word of mouth communication and brand trust. The author conducted a research in the tourism industry and collected the data based on the travel income, average growth rate and number of the travellers. The results of the study proposed that travellers first hear about the travel destinations by means of the word of mouth and then visit the location. The demand of travelling is substantially increases based on the word of mouth communications. The study further took the Easy Travel as a travel brand example and revealed positive and statistically significant associations between the word of mouth communications and brand loyalty. The study explained that the brand intensions serve as the mediating variable in between the word of mouth communications and brand trust.

Liao et al. (2010) notified that when the consumers are internally satisfied and have high trust in the brand, they will positively spread the word related the brand consumption. The loyal consumers are found open to recommendation, in front of their friends and acquaintances. The study apart from displaying the association between the word of mouth communication and brand trust, proposed the association between the satisfaction of the consumers and trust on the brand. The study showed that the consumers having high trust on the brand are internally satisfied with the brand. The results affirmed that the customers that have higher level of trust reveal specific and spontaneous behaviours. Companies are inclined at increasing the trust of the consumers, related to the brand, so that the consumers spread demonstrate increased loyalty levels and may positively spread the word about the brand. The more positive word is being spread, there is a high probability that the consumers brand recognition, brand equity and brand image will eventually increase.

A study was conducted investigating the brand personality impacts on asset management of the brand. The study integrated the concept of recognition of the brand by the consumer. The study focused on a single product i.e., cell-phone. Examining the impacts of brand recognition on the loyalty of the brand was main motive of the study. The study structured a conceptual framework with its facets inclusive of the individuality or personality of the brand, brand loyalty, word of mouth communication, brand personality self-expressive value, and brand personality attractiveness. Findings of the

study affirmed positive associations between self-expressiveness, distinctiveness and attractiveness brand personality values. The results of the study came out to be statistically significant, in determining the association between the aforementioned variables and consumers ability to recognise the brand. Brand recognition posits an indirect impact on the brand loyalty, however, a direct impact on word of mouth could be seen. This means, that word of mouth communication further impacts the loyalty of the brand (smartphone).

Research investigation by Steven Podoshen (2008) explored the concepts of brand loyalty and word of mouth communication among two categories of a sample; Non-African-Americans and African-Americans. The research was based on the examination of WOM and brand loyalty, at the time of purchasing the automobile (durable goods) brands. The study further examined the preferences to buy the services or goods that are black-owned and explored the feelings associated to purchase the goods, from those companies that previously had slavery based ties. The study sample was inclusive of 800 individuals and researcher applied the regression analysis to reveal the results. The study revealed no statistically significant relationship between brand loyalty and word of mouth communication in the sample, with respect to the black-owned services or goods. The study affirmed that the majority of consumers African American in origin, had a belief that Americans had been engaged in ties related to slavery, but, this factor did not affect the decision-making process while purchasing the goods/services.

Notably, word of mouth communications are eminent as the informal type of communication regarding the business service or product, and such communication takes place in between the consumers (Standing et al., 2016). Word of mouth communications have a myriad of benefits for the brands, they are being talked about. The consumers through word of mouth communication develop the confidence to exert normative and informational influences to reveal the purchase intentions and product evaluations of other consumers. Cyberbuzz is a platform, from where the consumers may acquire the brand specific information based on their interest, by engaging in the word of mouth communications. Consumers are thought to be more convinced when the word of mouth communication takes place on a specific platform and the level of brand trust substantially increases. Consumers having bought the product/service demonstrate the brand loyalty by spreading a positive word of mouth and fellow consumers decrease their insecurities related to the brand by getting engaged in these word of mouth communications. The consumer's purchase intentions passably increase, as they engage in the positive word

of mouth communications. See-To and Ho (2014) notified, that contented consumers having pleasant experiences with the acquired service/product willingly recommended the service to others. At this stance, they demonstrate brand loyalty as well as positive WOM communications. The WOM information is plausible and first-hand experience, which is carried forward by the satisfied consumers. WOM communications are retrieved essentially from consumers mind and have lasting impacts on the consumers.

Wells et al. (2011) examined the process of information flow among the consumers, which may potentially increase the perception of risks, before the decision to purchase the product is taken. The study explored the pre-purchase intensions namely word of mouth communication, customized information and brand. The study claimed that WOM and the customized information is a most influencing source for the consumers than any other sources, at the time when consumers get engaged to purchase the online products. However, brand as a factor posits a strong impact on the consumers perceived risks. The phase of information processing, before the consumers make a purchase decision is deemed critical in decreasing the associated risk perceptions. During the online transactions, the processing of the information related to the evaluation of product performance is considered influencing in mitigating perceived risks. The study has implications for the re-brand marketers and e-brand researchers related to the pre-purchase intention, the role of WOM and information processing by the consumers.

Several factors influence the brand trust across the online channels. Consumers are becoming tech-savvy in the contemporary marketing scenario, and they are most likely to purchase those brands, on which they have high trust. The research investigation has examined the influence of the web-based purchasing factors on the brand trust. The factors are inclusive of word of mouth communications, brand name, privacy, pleasant experiences while purchasing online, security and lastly, quality of purchase. Laroche et al. (2012) argued that not all the factors have the potential to influence the online trust of the brand. The process of trust development requires an initiation of systematic association between the web brand and consumers. The results of the study have affirmed that a set of complex and interrelated facets, impacts the consumer's decision-making process, after the development of consumer trust on the specific brand. The study confirmed that the more consumers have trust in the brand, WOM and Brand loyalty are assumed to increase substantially.

See-To and Ho (2014) explored the role of e-WOM in the purchase of the products in the social networking platforms. The authors developed a theoretical model by means

of cutting-edge investigation on value co-creation, consumer trust and eWOM. The authors conducted a systematic review and investigated the direct effects of eWOM on the consumer's intention to purchase. The analysis showed that consumer trust on the brand leads to affect the value co-creation and the source of eWOM. The study has affirmed that the SNSs provide a platform to the consumer to spread positive eWOM. SNSs platforms are revealed as moderator in between the eWOM communications and value co-creation, purchase intention and consumer's trust on the brand.

Geborek Lundberg and Lind (2016) investigated the impact of self-esteem on the WOM communication. The study notified that social media is booming and deem as a continuous phenomenon changing the perceptions of the consumers. Business organisations are diverted towards the social media platforms and are busy in exploring the behaviours of the consumers on the online platforms. Social media platforms are tremendous in conveying the messages to the global audiences within a snapshot of time. Viral marketing is an emerging concept that has revealed a myriad of benefits for the business organisations. Nevertheless, the consumer's engagement through the WOM communications is an essential attribute of the viral marketing. The study further explored what actually influences the consumers to participate and get engaged in the conversations online. Consumers perceptions related to self-confidence have been investigated through a set of six facets, which has the potential to explain the WOM perceived attitudes and behaviours (Geborek Lundberg and Lind, 2016). The research methodology was based on the quantitative design and data was collected from a sample of 292 consumers using the SNS as WOM platforms. After the statistical testing of the data, it is found that social outcome, personal outcome and consideration-set formation aspects of decision making are the prevalent self-confidence dimensions when the WOM behaviours are reviewed in the SNS.

Philp et al. (2018) claimed that WOM negative in nature can posit persuasive and pervasive impacts on consumers. There is a need to investigate the individual characteristics of the consumers, who are willing to share the information in comparison to those who are not willing to share the information. The study explored the consumer's personality trait namely self-esteem and its capability to share the negative WOM with others. The authors rationalised through the prior evidence, that self-esteem of the individual engages them to spread positive WOM, however, contradictory opinions, have enforced the authors to determine whether there is a negative spread of mouth or not. A

two-dimensional research model has been adopted by the study, visualising and understanding self-esteem with its facets; self-competence and self-esteem. The results of the study show that the individuals having higher traits of self-competence are not willing to spread the negative WOM. On the other hand, the individuals having higher traits of self-liking are seen engaged in the spread of negative WOM.

The concept of loyalty has been defined and operationalized in numerous ways. Researchers generally agree that loyalty entails both behavioral loyalty, i.e., repeat purchase behavior, and attitudinal loyalty, i.e., positive feelings towards the brand (Dick and Basu, 1994), and that it cannot be reduced to either one of these components. In addition, as noted by Oliver (1999), loyal consumers are willing to overcome obstacles (e.g., out-of-stock) that prevent them from buying a brand. In the present paper, we rely on this definition for our theorizing: "Loyalty is a deeply held commitment to (re)patronize a preferred product or service consistently in the future, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior" (Oliver, 1999). For loyal (versus non-loyal) consumers, the brand is more accessible in their minds (e.g., Alba and Chattopadhyay (1986); Yoo and Donthu (2001). Loyal consumers are likely to have more extensive networks of associations with a brand (Keller, 1993; Krishnan, 1996), which often include vivid autobiographical memories from direct experience (Baumgartner et al., 1992). As a result, thoughts and feelings about the brand come to mind more easily. In traditional word of mouth, where people talk about things that come to mind easily, these increased levels of accessibility should result in higher levels of word of mouth for consumers who are more loyal to a brand (Berger and Schwartz, 2011).

H$_{7a}$: Life satisfaction has significant positive impact on word of mouth.

H$_{7b}$: Self-esteem has significant positive impact on word of mouth.

H$_{7c}$: Brand Trust has significant positive impact on word of mouth.

H$_{7d}$: Brand Loyalty has significant positive impact on word of mouth.

2.19 Consumer's Need for Uniqueness and Perceived Brand Authenticity

According to the study conducted by Helm et al. (2016), a person on various occasions wants to be different among large institution of individuals. It has been further identified

in the study of Sierra et al. (2016) that the need for uniqueness amongst customers is referred to that the need of consumer to differentiate from the products other are using lies in the motivation to seem one of a kind from others and the need gets more potent while consumer experience any threat to his/her personal identity i.e. his/her private identification might be ruined someplace in conforming with the society. The study carried out by Mazutis and Slawinski (2015) stated that extra-officially need for strong point of consumers' to be unique may be described as the trait of pursuing differentness relative to others through the purchase, usage, and disposition of client items for the reason of developing and enhancing one's self-picture and social image.

One of the major contributions in the literature on customers' need for uniqueness and perceived brand authenticity is provided by Davvetas and Diamantopoulos (2017). In the research, it has been explained that in a domain of fake brands, clients' with high want for distinctiveness might require the brands they use to be unique. It has been further demonstrated in the study that the need for uniqueness with the aid of consumers would reason them to be greater tilted toward brand they sense are closer i.e. relevant to them. According to the empirical analysis undertaken by Astakhova et al. (2017) preceding researchers have mentioned that product or logo symbolism i.e. purchasing a brand for what they imply rather than what they do, is one of the most studied components in consumer behaviour research.

Researchers have also cited that mental developments are connected with the symbolic view of manufacturers. For instance, Huang et al. (2017) stated that mental tendencies like conformity and need for the area of expertise were related to the symbolic view of brand whereas symbolism is likewise a size of perceived brand authenticity. Therefore, it might also imply that because of this purchasers' need for the area of expertise is truly connected with perceived brand authenticity. As formerly developed, the study conducted by Bhattacharjee et al. (2014) stated that co-creation engagement fosters the emotions of relevance and originality of brand. It has been further explained that presence of consumers' want for particular attributes in the product ought to undoubtedly demonstrate this relationship. It has been identified in the study of Yuan et al. (2016) that co-creation provides the opportunity to people to fulfil consumers' needs in brands. It has been further explained in the study that it provides them avenues to design emblem as they need it to be. Hence, it might also imply that when each of those variables combines they will generate extra emotions of authenticity concerning that emblem in minds of people.

According to the study conducted by Riivits-Arkonsuo et al. (2015) while consumers' unique wishes combine with the possibility to satisfy the ones desires it, the combined effect would really create extra well worth of the product. The research of Akbar and Wymer (2017) has further demonstrated that creating a purchase decision is dependent upon the perceived well worth of the brand that will come into existence when client might be more prone to make purchase decision because of the want and need to co-create the brand and preserving in view for specialty in that product. The research of Pattuglia et al. (2015) showed that customers will take part in the selection of the brand due to the fact now he/she can experience that product to be more applicable to him/her, more authentic, greater dependable and could see that logo as having better first-rate. All of these attributes are what's called as perceived brand authenticity derived from the customers' need for uniqueness.

A person sometimes wants to be distinctive among larger group of individuals (Tian et al., 2001). Tian et al. (2001) noted that the need of consumer to differentiate from the products other are using lies in the motivation to appear different from others and the need gets stronger when consumer feel any threat to his personal identity i.e. his/her personal identity would be ruined somewhere in conforming with the group (Snyder and Fromkin, 1977). More formally need for uniqueness of consumers' can be defined as: "the trait of pursuing differentness relative to others through the acquisition, utilization, and disposition of consumer goods for the purpose of developing and enhancing one's self-image and social image" (Tian et al., 2001).

In a world of 'fake' brands, consumers' with high need for uniqueness would require the brand they use to be original. Need for uniqueness by consumers would cause them to be more tilted towards brand they feel are closer i.e. relevant to them. Further, previous researchers have noted that product or brand symbolism i.e. purchasing a brand for what they mean rather than what they do is one of the most studied aspects in consumer behavior research (Aaker et al., 2016). Researchers have also noted that psychological traits are linked with symbolic view of brands. Psychological traits like conformity and need for uniqueness have been associated with symbolic view of brand (Nunes, 2009; Simonson and Nowlis, 2000). Symbolism is also a dimension of perceived brand authenticity (Morhart et al., 2015). This means that consumers' need for uniqueness is actually linked with PBA.

As previously developed, co-creation engagement fosters the feelings of relevance and originality of brand. Presence of consumers' need for unique attributes in brand should

positively enhance this relationship. Co-creation provides the opportunity to individuals to fulfill their needs in brands. It provides them avenues to design brand as they want it to be. Thus when both of these variables combine they will generate more feelings of authenticity regarding that brand in minds of individuals.

When consumers' unique needs combines with opportunity to fulfill those needs it, the combined effect would definitely create more worth of the end product. When making a purchase decision that perceived worth of the brand will come into play and consumer will be more prone to make purchase decision in favor the brand he/she had co-created keeping in view his/her need for uniqueness in that brand. Consumer will take this decision because now he/she will feel that product to be more relevant to him/her, more genuine, more reliable and will see that brand as having better quality. All of these attributes are what is called as PBA according to (Morhart et al., 2015).

Further, when consumers' need for uniqueness interacts with opportunity to make those needs part of a product will cause individual to see that brand as a part of his/her self; because now the consumer sees brand as what they want it to be, they will see it as something which is reflection of them or their needs. They will the brand as part of their selves and self-concept. This will lead individual to perceive brand as more authentic. Thus this study proposes that:

H_{8a}: Consumers' need for uniqueness will moderate the relation between co-creation engagement and PBA in such a way that will be stronger when consumers' need for uniqueness will be higher..

Previously, it was developed in the study that consumers' need for uniqueness effects PBA and customization also does so. When consumers need to have a unique brand for himself/herself interacts with avenue to customize the brand by themselves, they would feel more delighted as they can actually do what they want to do.

This combination of need and chance to fulfill it i.e. to actually design a brand as you like will foster the feelings of relevance of that particular brand with individual. Costumer will feel the brand to be more like what he wants to have. These feelings of relevance of brand with individual will enhance the perceptions of individual regarding the brand to be credible and indeed authentic.

Consider the relationship with the same conceptualization of brand as a part of self. When a customer has a brand which is according to his needs and he has designed the

product by himself i.e. his need has been met by customizing the product by himself in a way he wants to have it, the costumer will feel that product to be a part of himself more than a product which hasn't been designed by him and doesn't meet his needs. These feelings of brand to be part of a person's self and self-concept will generate the feelings of credibility, continuity and integrity. At the same time, as the costumer perceives the product as part of his self-concept, he will see the product as a symbol. All of these things show that the perceptions of the authenticity of brand will increase in this way i.e. when need for uniqueness interacts with chance to customize the brand according to costumer's will. This discussion points that:

H$_{8b}$: Consumers' need for uniqueness will moderate the relation between customization and PBA in such a way that will be stronger when consumers' need for uniqueness will be higher.

2.20 Moderating Role of Perceived Tool Support on Customization and Co-Creation Engagement and PBA

Research studies propose, that the consumer's involvement during the virtual development of the products, enhance the scope of the product for the organisation focused on developing it. The notion of consumer involvement is to make the products more innovative and unique (Füller, 2010). The co-creation activity is fulfilled successfully if the users have the access to the virtual tools and environment. The consumers need to be aware of the innovative elements of the products, only then they may be able to contribute competently. The consumers are provided with an opportunity to share their knowledge, opinions and innovative ideas, which are supposedly challenging to articulate and transfer (Khanagha et al., 2017). Jiang and Benbasat (2007) claimed that the provision of vivid and interactive product environments enhances the consumer's understanding and knowledge, related to the product under development. Understanding the fact, that the articulation of the novel ideas and the recognising the facets of the realistic products has a strong association between, the virtual tool integration has a significant role. For instance, the interaction between the consumer and the product through the website, impact the perceived enjoyment and usefulness, with that particular website. The website interface has the successful contribution to the co-creation joy able experiences for the consumers, utilising it. Corresponding, tools having similar perception

may be used during the process of co-creation of the new product, with an element of gratification.

According to the study conducted by Evans (2017) the customers can be regarded as highly potential in the digital era to suitably accomplish their desire and demand of consuming the product by first gaining knowledge of the brand new product as well as potential to provide them numerous benefits. Another study undertaken by Stark (2015) professed that the extent to which the digital environment and equipment provide knowledge about the product attributes to the customers. The research carried out by Li et al. (2015) stated that technological development and understanding of knowledge are defined as the major competencies of the brand which are important to the procedure and execution of product development and customer co-creation. Therefore, it might imply that technological orientation can allow the firm to incorporate product development initiatives to provide measures for the customers to co-create their own brand leading towards higher brand authenticity.

However, it has been argued by Mahr et al. (2014) in the research that technological understanding in customer co-creation has, therefore, turned out to be a key element in companies' fulfilment of consumer needs and catering to their changing demands in this turbulent global surroundings and business environment. On the other hand, Kostecki (2013) explained that it has been due to the fact that the technological advancements have allowed the companies to gain higher perceived brand authenticity as well. Another study conducted by Chandrasegaran et al. (2013) professed that companies' technological understanding in terms of co-creation of the products has introduced the method of finding information and approaching the brand that are increasingly affecting the perceived brand authenticity.

According to the empirical analysis undertaken by Roh et al. (2014) the companies' strategic goal is to revitalize their internal information in a manner that could offer higher advantage as well as know-how of the external environment. However, it has been argued by Rowley and Hartley (2017) that fierce worldwide competition, shortened product existence cycles, the increased complexities of recent technologies, growing development costs and the risks incorporated in innovation all serve as catalysts for corporations to create new technological understanding and leverage their strengths with partners across organizational obstacles. One of the major contributions in the field of technological orientation and customer co-creation has been made by Zaglia (2013) who stated that technological orientation is one of the imperative approaches for developing

and maintaining competitive gain in dynamic surroundings of the business world especially in order to cater to customer demand of product co-creation.

According to the study conducted by Sotiriadis and Van Zyl (2013) technological information has emerged as extra sophisticated where for the purpose of product co-creation maximum merchandise or innovations encompass an increasingly more broad set of technologies and excessive development which can lead towards higher perceived brand authenticity. However, the argument has been represented by researcher that professed that a single firm cannot own a full complement of abilities to capitalize at the breadth of technological advances or create all of the technological know-how needed for the firm's survival and fulfilment.

On the other hand, Cusumano et al. (2015) stated that technological orientation has ended up more state-of-the-art, and maximum merchandise or improvements encompass more and more vast set of technologies and excessive improvement in the product attributes so that higher perceived brand authenticity could be achieved. Therefore, it might also imply that technological orientation can play a major role in assisting customers to gain knowledge about the product and to engage in co-creation through firm's further co-creation leading towards positively perceived brand authenticity.

H$_{9a}$: Perceived Tool support will moderate the relation between customization and PBA in such a way that will be stronger when technological orientation will be higher.

H$_{9b}$: Perceived Tool support will moderate the relation between customization and PBA in such a way that will be stronger when consumers' technological orientation will be higher.

2.21 Mediating Role of PBA

The authenticity of the brand refers to the brand having the characteristics of being honest, real and genuine. Through the facets of high commitment to quality and demonstration of association to the norms, the brand's impact fully differentiates themselves from others. Authentic brands, by means of their metaphoric quality, connect with the consumers at the emotional and cognitive levels. The consumers when perceiving the brand as authentic may reveal higher levels of satisfaction with life, appropriate levels

of self-esteem and have significantly boosted level of trust on the brands (Rihova et al., 2018).

The consumers are the valuable assets for the brands; they help in the process of co-creation. The perceptions that are being developed in the mind of the consumers, further display the actions of the consumers. If the consumers are having the positive perceptions in their minds, then there is a high probability, that the consumers spread positive word of mouth in front of others (Morhart et al., 2015). The role of consumers is of considerable importance. However, a recent study revealed that the brand authenticities based on the perceptions of the consumers. The study notified that the consumers perceive the brand as authentic, if it cares for them, helps them in building self-recognition, and are reflective of the perseverance from past to future. Napoli et al. (2014) argued that brand authenticity is able to create a revolutionary and cherishing brand status, brand equity and brand identity.

The perceived brand authenticity serves to be a mediator during the process of brand loyalty development. Likewise, the consumer's satisfaction levels increases during the stance, when they perceive that the brand is authentic and provide them high recognition, in the environment, where they are aimed at socializing. Contemporary marketing research reveals that the brand plays a superb role in developing self-authentication behaviours amongst the consumers (Framroze, 2017). The consumers recognize their true self, as the authentic brand become instrumental to the consumer's thoughts, and attitudes. The brand authenticity perceptions being the mediator enforce the consumers to spread positive word of mouth in front of others and aid them in materializing and gaining self-identity.

Research investigation on brand trust has insights, that the marketers were concerned about the declining levels of the consumer's trust related to the specific brand (Wottrich et al., 2017). The studies further notified the significance of brand authenticity perceptions as the mediator of co-creation engagement and brand trust. When the consumers are engaged in the brand new product development, they further gain trust on the brand and mediating role is thus played by the perceived brand authenticity. In the underlying discussion, the mediating role of brand authenticity is being discussed.

According to the research conducted by Newman and Dhar (2014), the relationship between brand and the customer have long been a topic of discussion for both researchers and practitioners. Preceding researchers such as Lu et al. (2015) and Kang and Hustvedt (2014)) have also tested the relationship among co-creation engagement and positive

types of consumer's behaviors. The study of Delcourt et al. (2013) examined the effect of co-creation engagement on customers' goal to purchase a product, remarks purpose and intention to recommend the product to other people. The study has further explained that the customers determined help for their speculation. According to the research of Morhart et al. (2015) from a totally easy viewpoint it should not be negated that engagement of customers in production of goods or service makes that product/service more appealing to the customer i.e. they will perceive it as extra applicable to them and much less unreal i.e. notably true which means in existence and relevancy can also be provided making the product more authentic to the customers.

According to the study of Rose et al. (2016), authentic brands can provide the products to the customers and which can also be perceived by consumers as more relevant. The study has further explained that in this way, authentic brands may be a supply of happiness and indeed the man or woman will experience more satisfaction with their lifestyles.

However, Baker et al. (2014) argued those customers 'emotions of in-authenticity and fakeness about the products can have negative consequences on the customer perception about the brand which can lead towards customer's lower satisfaction to life. On the other hand, according to the study conducted by Laura Sidali and Hemmerling (2014) whilst furnished through emotions of relevance, genuineness and authenticity in lifestyles people can experience happiness in lifestyles and hence the psychologically concern the high calibre of lifestyles which in the long runway can be more satisfied for the customers. Therefore, it might imply that PBA can mediate inside the relationship between co-creation engagement and satisfaction with life.

According to the research carried out by Lu et al. (2015), a self-image of an individual represents what one feels about himself or herself as self-image is a source of happiness and predicts how someone feels approximately about himself/herself. Researchers such as Rim et al. (2016) and Elbedweihy et al. (2016) have argued that customers don't best show their self-image but additionally showcase approximately what they want to be i.e. real self. Research carried out by Roper et al. (2013) has shown that robust attributes of products end in the high-quality image of the brand in eyes of costumer which indeed ends in the belief of real self of that individual. It has been further identified in the research that genuine brands are brands with sturdy attributes and are credible while possessing integrity and image for purchaser so as to cause the realization of actual self and for this reason enhances one's emotions of self-guarantee.

According to the study conducted by Zhang et al. (2016), self-competence means the direction of oneself as a source of strength or efficacy. It has been further identified in the research that this concept of self-competency is relatively related to an idea of self-efficacy. However, it has been argued by Ilicic and Webster (2014) that self-liking alternatively refers to "one's normal experience of worth and the character with social importance. The research has further explained that social here doesn't refer to the perception of values of another companion about the person but an alternative social significance additionally refers back to the values that a man or woman acclaims to himself. The studies further notified the significance of brand authenticity perceptions as the mediator of co-creation engagement and brand trust.

According to the study conducted by Liao and Ma (2009) considering real brands as an image and a part of one's self-identity would imply that brand and products boost the confidence of the individual and is associated with the inner feelings of superiority because of one's self-identification. According to the study carried out by Das (2014), the use of a greater brand can also lead towards greater brand authenticity which can also be authentic and applicable to man or woman and might result in self-liking i.e. people would love them and hence increase self-image and self-efficacy.

Therefore, PBA has mediated inside the relationship among co-creation engagement and self-image of the individual. The research carried out by Moulard et al. (2016) stated that maintaining in step with my preliminary concept and dialogue concerning brand as a part of self-idea, it can be assisted that the relationship between PBA and brand loyalty can be determined by the usage of the same argument of authentic brand as relevant to the self-idea and self-identity of man or woman.

According to the study conducted by Van Dijk et al. (2014), actual brands offer which means to one's satisfied lifestyles and things he/she is using in lifestyles. It has been further identified in the research that such brands give means to a character's life, and make them pay the price to foster positivity in their own lives. Further explained by Pappu and Cornwell (2014) that such brands which can be perceived as authentic might bring about better self-evaluation of character and people might feel such authentic brand as a part of their self-concept. According to the study conducted by Kashyap and Rangnekar (2016), customer positive perception enables a hyperlink among authentic brand and a person and will provide the character to buy the same brand over and over due to the relatedness.

The impact of self-congruency immediately and not directly includes brand loyalty. It

has been further identified in the research that those studies affirm the relationship between the self-congruence basically also refer to the Concord or similarity among one's ideal self and self-image (Hede et al., 2014). According to the study conducted by Morhart et al. (2015), self-actualization takes place while one's imagination of what he/she desires to be is in line with the actual conduct exhibited by using those people. It has been further identified in the research that perceptions about a brand being authentic reduce the in-congruency among people due to the fact that authenticity in brands is what clients want to have and as a result, they act in a way to reach the brand by means of purchasing that unique product.

Arguing from the angle of self-congruency Kang and Hustvedt (2014) stated that for that reason additionally presents a rationale for the connection between perceptions of the authenticity of a brand and the loyalty of customer closer to that brand. Therefore, PBA has mediated within the courting among co-introduction engagement and brand loyalty. Practitioners had been calling for authenticity in brands from long-term to counter the downfall in brand perception. Researchers such as Youn and Kim (2017), Roh et al. (2014) and Rowley and Hartley (2017) have also commenced observing this phenomenon that authenticity leads to higher customer preference of the brand. According to the study conducted by Newman and Dhar (2014) congruency is implicitly an essential aspect of PBA. It has been further identified in the research that if the customer feels brand's values to be consistent with his non-public values, the extra trust the customer will put in the brand.

From agency's point of view, it is vital to show off equal values continuously rather than converting values with changing tendencies, as continuity of values is a size of PBA. According to the study conducted by Lu et al. (2015) customization will permit a person to enjoy feelings of relatedness of a brand. It has been further identified in the research that customer will sense product to be greater associated and relevant to his or herself on the way to purpose him/her to perceive the product as greater proper and therefore genuine. Delcourt et al. (2013) stated that customization will permit a person to design the brand in the manner he/she wants it to be.

It has been further identified in the research of Mahr et al. (2014) that this can make the product part of individual's self-concept and individual will feel the brand to be his component and himself to be a part of logo family and this feeling of brand as a part of self at the equal time will allow individual to understand brand as a symbolic icon.

These perceptions of symbolism will even make the brand to be perceived as genuine via customers.

2.22 Mediating Role of PBA in the Relationship between Co-Creation Engagement and Satisfaction with Life, Self-Esteem, Brand Loyalty and Brand Trust

Consumers play a significant role in the promotion of the brand. Prior researchers have investigated the association between the types of consumer behaviours and co-creation engagement. Co-creation impact on the intention of the consumer to purchase a product, intention to help others and feedback intention has been shown in the study by See-To and Ho (2014). The authors have argued that the brand authenticity increases substantially, as the consumers, are engaged during the initial phase of service or product development. This is because, the service or product is then developed on the basis of the consumer choices and interests, and therefore, the brand seems to be more realistic. One prevailing source of happiness is the meaning of life and its association. It has been argued that the authentic brands serve as an essential source of happiness, and add meaning and value to the life of the person, consuming the brand (Batey, 2015). The satisfaction level of the person increases as a sequence. It has been argued, that the person psychological states are disrupted, at the stance they develop the feelings of fakeness and un-authenticity (Gabay, 2015). The quality of life is further reduced and the personal satisfaction with life decreases gradually. Nevertheless, if the psychological desires of the individuals get fulfilled and the individual receives the feeling of authenticity, relevance and genuineness in the life, the satisfaction towards the life substantially increases.

Faccio (2012) notified that the self-image is representative of the feelings, which the individual has for herself or himself. Self-image is revealed as a significant facet of self-esteem and prevails how an individual develops a perception and feeling for herself. Prior researchers have shown that the consumers are inclined to represent themselves through their self-image, but the story does not end here, the consumer presents their "actual self" by means of this self-image (Kim and Hall, 2014). Halloran (2014) argues that the strong elements of the brands are potent enough to create positive perceptions in the minds of the consumers. These perceptions are deemed to further create the

realization of actual self, within the consumers using those brand attributes. Williams (2014) notified that the authentic brands are the brands, that are inclusive of strong facets, which are realistic, credible, and high in integrity and serves to be an insignia for the consumers. The authentic brand thus creates the feeling of actual self within the consumers and increases the levels of self-assurance within them.

Self-efficacy and self-competence are the two terms that are often overlapped. The term self-competence is representative of; the overall negative or positive attitude that a person develops towards himself as an efficacy or power source (Mruk, 2013b). On the contrary, the term self-liking means; the sense of worth that an individual has, in the context of social significance. In this stance, the social significance is basically the values acclaimed by the individual towards himself and not the perception of the values that are being developed. In the view that the authentic brands serve as a symbol for the consumers, providing them with the self-identity and recognition, possibly means that the brand has the potential to boost up the levels of individual's self-esteem (Mruk, 2013b). This is because; the self-esteem has a strong connection with the sense of superiority as an element of self-identity. It can be argued, that a brand with higher levels of originality, relevance and equality, will essentially result in the self-liking by the consumers. This further would enhance the self-esteem of the individuals.

As mentioned previously, the association between the PBA and brand loyalty is central to the self-identity and self-concept that the individual has within. Gobe (2010) argued that the authentic brands have the power to give meaning to the love of the individuals, with whatever they are already implementing in their social lives. The authentic brand marvellously creates positivity in the life of the individuals, they add value to their goals, and they increase the level of satisfaction in their lives. The brands having the perception of being authentic will thus create impactful self-evaluation within the consumers and the consumers develop a feeling and sensation related to the authentic brands as an attribute of self-concept. This creates an association between the consumer and the brand. As the brand gets related to the personality of the consumers, there is a probability that the consumer purchase the brand again and again. The consumer re-purchasing habits are representative of the brand loyalty (Kressmann et al., 2006; Sirgy and Su, 2000; Liu et al., 2012).

The relationship between the brand loyalty and self-congruence has been affirmed by the aforementioned studies. The similarity or the harmony between the individual's self-image and the ideal image perception is referred to as self-congruence. Self-actualisation

means that the behaviour exhibited by the individuals synchronise, with what actually the individuals idealises (Geller, 1982). The authentic perceptions developed related to the brands, successfully diminishes the in-congruency that the person may develop in between the idealised and actual behavioural states, as the consumer's wishes to have an authentic brand and act in a manner to purchase the same brand. The perspective of self-congruency as part of the authentic brand perceptions serves as the pioneers of this relationship. This further increases the levels of the consumer's loyalty towards the authentic brands.

The concept of brand authenticity got the attention of the researchers, due to the fact that the trust elements of the consumers were massively declining. This served to be a call for the new research investigations, on the brand authenticity concepts. Prior studies have shown the association between the consumer trust and the brand authenticity (Balmer, 2011; Eggers et al., 2013). It has been argued that PBA has congruency as an essential facet. Consumers when recognise, that the brand has closed connection with his/her values, where the probability is increased that consumers start to trust the brand. In the organisational perspective, one needs to be consistent in the execution of the similar values, apart from encompassing different value with the distinct levels of trends coming up (Morhart et al., 2015). The perseverance in the values will lead to the rise in the consumer's trust and thus develop significantly higher levels of PBA. The increased levels of PBA will further increase the levels of the consumer's trusts.

Consumer-brand relationships have long been a topic of discussion for both researchers and practitioners (Batra et al., 2012). Previous research has also examined the relationship between co-creation engagement and certain types of consumer's behaviors. Hsieh and Chang (2016) examined the impact of co-creation engagement on intention to purchase a product, feedback intention and intention to help others. They found support for their hypothesis. From a very simple view point consider that engagement of costumers in production of goods or service makes that product/service more appealing to the costumer i.e. they will perceive it as more relevant to them and less fake i.e. highly authentic. Meaning in life and relevancy can also be a source of happiness. Authentic brands provide meaning in one's life and are perceived by consumers to be more relevant to them. In this way, authentic brands can be a source of happiness and in-deed the person will feel more satisfied with life. Feelings of in-authenticity and fakeness negatively effects psychological state of individual's mind which can lead to poor quality of life and thus less SWL. On the other hand, when provided by feelings of relevance, genuineness

and authenticity in life individuals can feel happier in life and thus the psychological state regarding the quality of life will enhance which ultimately means that individuals will be more satisfied with life (Power et al., 2005). Keeping in line with the above discussion, this study proposes the mediating role of PBA and that is:

H$_{10a}$: PBA will mediate in the relationship between co-creation engagement and satisfaction with life.

Self-image of individual represents what one feels about himself or herself (Graeff, 1996), self-image is source of self-esteem and predicts how a person feel about himself. Researchers have argued that consumers don't only show their self-image but also exhibit about what they want to be i.e. "actual self" (Aaker, 1997). Research has shown that strong attributes of brand leads to the positive image of brand in eyes of costumer (Freling& Forbes, 2005) which in deed leads to the realization of actual self of that person. Authentic brands are brands with strong attributes, are credible, have integrity and are symbol for consumer (Morhart et al., 2015) which will lead to the realization of one's actual self and hence enhances one's feelings of self-assurance. Self-competence means "overall positive or negative towards oneself as a source of power or efficacy" (Ramsdal, 2008). This concept of self-competency is somewhat related with concept of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1989) but is different from it. Self-liking on the other hand refers to "one's overall sense of worth as an individual with social significance" (Ramsdal, 2008). Social here doesn't refers to the perception of values others associate with the person rather social significance also refers to the values that an individual acclaims to himself. Considering authentic brands as a symbol and a part of one's self-identity would mean that brand boosts self-esteem as self-esteem is related with the inner feelings of superiority because of one's self identity. Using a more authentic brand that is more genuine, original and relevant to individual would result in self-liking i.e. individuals would like themselves and thus boost their self-esteem.

H$_{10b}$: PBA will mediate in the relationship between co-creation engagement and self-esteem.

Keeping in line with my initial conception and discussion regarding brand as a part of self-concept, I would like to support this relationship between PBA and brand loyalty by using the same argument of authentic brand as central to the self-concept and self

identity of individual. Authentic brands provide meaning to one's life and things he/she is using in life. Such brands give a meaning to an individual's life; they add value, foster positivity in individuals. This all means that such brands which are perceived as authentic would result in better self evaluation of individual and individuals might feel such authentic brand as a part of their self concept. This enables a link between authentic brand and individual. This link will force individual to purchase the same brand over and over again because of the relatedness. the impact of self-congruency directly and indirectly carries for brand loyalty (Kressmann et al., 2006; Sirgy and Su, 2000; Sirgy et al., 2008; Liu et al., 2012). These studies confirm the relationship between the two. Self congruence basically refers to the harmony or similarity between one's ideal self and self image. Self-actualization occurs when one's imagination of what he/she wants to be is in line with the actual behavior exhibited by those individuals (Geller, 1982). Perceptions about brands as authentic reduce the in-congruency between a person's ideal state and his/her behavior because authenticity in brands is what consumers want to have and thus they act in a way to reach what they have by purchasing that particular brand. Arguing from the perspective of self congruency thus also provides a rationale for the relationship between perceptions of authenticity of brand and the loyalty of costumer towards that brand.

H$_{10c}$: PBA will mediate in the relationship between co-creation engagement and brand loyalty:

Downfall in trust was the main reason behind the rise of phenomenon of brand authenticity. Practitioners were calling for authenticity in brands from long time to counter the downfall in brand trust (Eggers et al., 2013). Researchers have also started to note this phenomenon that authenticity leads to brand trust (Balmer, 2011; Eggers et al., 2013). Congruency is implicitly an important component of PBA. The more a person feels brand's values to be in line with his personal values, the more trust he exhibits on the brand. From organization's point of view, it is important to exhibit same values continuously rather than changing values with changing trends (Faust & Householder, 2009), as continuity of values is a dimension of PBA (Morhart et al., 2015). This continuity in values would thus not only be a source of PBA but will also yield trust in that brand. Keeping in line with the above discussion, this study proposes that:

H$_{10d}$**:** PBA will mediate in the relationship between co-creation engagement and brand trust.

2.23 Mediating Role of PBA in the Relationship between Customization and Satisfaction with Life, Self-Esteem, Brand Loyalty and Brand Trust

Consumers develop a feeling of being related to the brand through an individual experience, as explained by the concept of customization. The consumer develops a sense of feeling that the brand is related to their personality and that the brand has higher relevance to their life. In this stance, the brand product/service creates a perception of being authentic, genuine and credible in the minds of the consumers. With an element of customization, the consumers may successfully design the brand; in a manner, they have internal desires (Keller and Richey, 2006). Through this, the development of the self-concept will take place, on part of the product. This further creates the sense of attachment of the consumer with the brand family, as the consumer considers that the brand is part of his own self. Due to these prevailing perceptions, the consumers take the authentic brand as an emblematic icon. Once the symbolic representation takes shape, the brand is perceived to be authentic in the eyes of the consumers.

Research scholars belonging to the psychological and philosophical domains have conducted research on authenticity. Authenticity has been investigated with respect to the emotions, contemplations, and human practices that are representative of the actual character of the individual (Lenton et al., 2013). Cooper (2015) notified that authenticity refers to the ability of an individual to represent itself as unique, different and having sense of individuality. The author further, explains that authenticity of a brand is represented through its "essence, real self and irreducible nature". Researcher argued that the consumers perceive the brands as authentic if they have the attributes of being uncommon, unique, rare, original and discrete. The authentic nature represents the perseverance and consistency of the brand identity. Researcher conceptualise brand authenticity on the grounds of the self-determination theory. The theory defines that the individuals are revealed as authentic, in case the actions associated with them are representative of their true self, self-determination and autonomist. The individuals when considering that the brand is honest and self-determining in context, the individuals are

seen more satisfied with their personal lives.

People develop standards and benchmarks for themselves after they make the comparison with the other people. For instance, people may compare themselves with respect to the interpersonal relationships, healthy and achievement. These comparisons, in turn, become the prevailing aspects of self-evaluation and may induce either negative or positive feelings, within the individuals (Poortvliet and Darnon, 2010). Prior studies suggest a positive correlation between brand use and social comparisons. People after making themselves compared with others, use to buy a brand and experience negative or positive feelings. The buyer's self-evaluation is considered to enhance comparatively to a large extent, then the non-buyers. Certainly, the consumers may successfully compare themselves by making the choice of the authentic brands and may self-evaluate as being authentic and complete. The contemporary ubiquitous online media platforms and television channels, continuously assail youngsters and children with prevailing advertising tactics, to make them purchase the products/services. This increases the consciousness of the brand amongst target customers (Kumar and Sharma, 2017). Value orientations are regarded as the pioneers of materialism. Zhang et al. (2014) examined the self-enhancement values namely; achievement, hedonism and power in a sample of students, acquiring education in university. The study results showed that the materialistic values from the peers, community and parents, when internalises, enforce the people to adopt these values, at the time they aim at socialising. A research study based on the sample of teenagers concluded that teenagers ranked the financial success aspirations to a higher extent, in contrast to the aspirations that are pro-social. The reason behind these rating is the underlying fact, that the teenagers had their belongings from the socioeconomic backgrounds that were disadvantaged.

Review of literature has shown the studies analysing the role of the peer rejection and peer pressure in order to predict the higher levels of materialism. Materialism gets fostered by means of the observational learning at the time of the socialisation (Nagpaul and Pang, 2017). Else, the materialism emerges when the individual develops a belief to adopt the material possessions so that he/she will be accepted in the society and recognised to a massive level. Nevertheless, the self-esteem pathway demonstrates that individual develops feelings of self-doubt or insecurity, in case the life circumstances do not give permission of autonomy, connectedness and competence while socialising. Such experiences are developed mainly due to the interpersonal interactions or to more of the random socioeconomic surroundings. Individuals mainly having the lower self-esteem,

try to fulfil the void by means of materialising themselves, as a profound compensating strategy (Spinella et al., 2014). For these individuals, the compensatory strategy of materialising deem fruitful, as the ultimate purpose of the materialisation is to create a social and personal recognition in the society. The materialising objects are self-communicating, for instance; cars, clothes, travel, gadgets, gatherings, etc are representative of socioeconomic status and social standing within the community. All these materialistic objects, in turn, facilitate the process of image building. Arguably, materialism role in combating the lower self-esteem levels of the individuals appears productive in the short term (Nagpaul and Pang, 2017). The individuals in the provoking situation of self-doubt successfully gain the self-esteem.

Considerable research evidence demonstrates the brand-related association may integrate an item (Beristain and Zorrilla, 2011), a company (Chang and Fong, 2010), retailers, representatives, customers with specific way of living or the socioeconomic backgrounds, stores or the nation of origin (Nam et al., 2011). Joy and James (2012) examined the brand affiliations and revealed the three types of measurements; demeanours, benefits and attributes. The consumers evaluate the brand and this refers to the brand attitude. In the contemporary marketing tactics, brand associations are an important concept. Brand associations are developed in the consumer's mind and are recognised as an essential consequence of brand image (Joy and James, 2012). Brand association play a significant role in differentiation of the brand, position it in the minds of consumers and displaying the critical components of the service or product (Buil et al., 2013). Qu et al. (2011) claimed that positive brand perceptions can be generated, through the strong, positive, singular and favourable brand associations, which in turn recruit the brand equity. Furthermore, brand image is regarded as a group of brand associations, which are arranged in a propelling and consequential manner. Underlying these findings, brand association researchers mainly emphasize on the brand image. Hence, customization may significantly increase the loyalty of the brand, through the association between the company and the brand.

Notably, if the consumers are satisfied with a specific product/service/logo/brand, then they most likely provide soaring value to the brand, have high trust on the chosen brand item and are willing to pay large premiums, with respect to costs paid to consume the brand (Veloutsou, 2015). It is essential to gain customer trust and loyalty for the brand, which is totally dependent on the manner the brand positive perceptions are being developed. Evidence has shown, that the consumers that are having positive brand images,

they have a strong connection to the brand. These consumers make a choice specifically for the brand items and end up being loyal to the brands (Lin, 2010; Veloutsou, 2015). Aforementioned discussion clarifies that the brand image and brand mindfulness are the significant antecedents of brand dependability. Consumer's devotion and trust towards the brand substantially increases through the process of customisation. Romaniuk and Nenycz-Thiel (2013) notified that the consumer's behaviour is affected by a mixture of brand mindfulness and brand affiliations. The impact is notably positive, with the intention of the consumer to purchase the brand potentially increased. The consumer-based affiliations are markers of the consumers brand behavioural intentions and devotions. Consumers trust on the brand can be substantially increased by means of the perceived brand authenticity. Buil et al. (2013) notified that the consumer's beliefs are critical to the process of branding, the consumer's internal beliefs are recognised as a construct that is hazard oriented in context. Certainly, the brand trust is built on the grounds that the consumer will receive the promised attributes from the brand. If the consumers do not receive, what they expect, then the brand trust is substantially threatened by the thought. Keeping in view, brand capacities and brand expectations are significant from both consumer and organisational perspective. The organisation needs to focus on its brand specialities and capacities and demonstrate it truly in front of its prospects. Nevertheless, the consumers have the expectation, that the brand will eventually fulfil its promise. The goals developed by the brand are motivational in context, based on the thought, that the brand promise will be fulfilled, in order to fulfil the desires of the consumers.

Gabay (2015) argued that in case, the brand fails to fulfil the promise, the consumer trust and brand image may then get threatened massively. However, if the brand is deemed successful in delivering the expected promise, both the brand trust and image can be potently amplified. Congruity and consistency are recognised as the essential facets of the credible brand. These two facets are the verification elements of the capacity of the brand, and henceforth, will enhance up the level of consumer trust on the brand. This may be understood better by the term of brand guarantee, revealing its ability to deliver a product, with assurance and credibility. The aforementioned discussion, thus explains that the authentic/valid brand is reflected by its guarantees and capacities. The brand guarantees can be presumed as the positive outcomes of brand authenticity, in the context of consumer brand expectations and fulfilment. Therefore, the association between brand trust and customisation can be proposed under such discussion.

Customization will allow an individual to experience feelings of relatedness of brand. Costumer will feel product to be more related and relevant to his or herself which will cause him/her to perceive the product as more genuine and hence authentic. Customization will allow individual to design the brand the way he/she wants it to be. This will make the product part of individuals self-concept and individual will feel the brand to be his part and himself to be a part of brand family. This feeling of brand as part of self at the same time will allow individual to perceive brand as a symbolic icon. These perceptions of symbolism will also cause the brand to be perceived as authentic by costumers.

Customization specifically personalization involves proactive participation by costumers. Product's relevance to the person is enhanced in personalization (Tseng and Hu, 2014). When a consumer himself is involved in making the product, his cognitive patterns would allow him to perceive product as genuine. The product will be perceived as more credible, having high integrity and symbol by the consumer.

The philosophy and psychology literatures give broad research on authenticity. It is in this literature where authenticity alludes to being consistent with the self as far as a person's contemplations, emotions, and practices rejecting their actual character (Van Leeuwen, 2001). An individual is consistent with the self when they are bona fide, unique, and one of a kind (Van Leeuwen, 2001).

Tolson (2013) also attributes authenticity to being oneself in terms of creating an image of individuality, uniqueness, and differentiation. Moreover, he acknowledges that brand do possess an "inner, irreducible essence, a real self" Tolson (2013). Moulard et al. (2016) also find that Brand are perceived as authentic when they are rare or uncommon, in that they are discrete, and original (Moulard et al., 2016). Both Ilicic and Webster (2016) and Moulard et al. (2016) argue that the creation of a identity and the consistency of this identity is what makes a Brand authentic. Authenticity is defined in the psychology literature as "the unobstructed operation of one's true- or core-self in one's daily enterprise" (Reinecke and Trepte, 2014). Reinecke and Trepte (2014) conceptualization of authenticity is based on Self-Determination Theory (Reeve et al., 2004), which posits individuals are authentic when their actions reject their autonomous, self-determining true self. When individuals feel self-determining and honest brand they may feel more satisfied with their life, hence

H$_{11a}$: PBA will mediate in the relationship between customization and satisfaction with life:

People use others as standards to compare themselves in many domains such as achievement, interpersonal relationships and health. Such comparisons serve as source of self-evaluation and are able to elicit either positive or negative feelings (Collins, 1996; Festinger, 1954). Studies suggest that social comparisons are positively correlated with Brand use. Furthermore, after comparing one's self to significant others through purchase of authentic brands, people experience negative feelings or positive feelings (Lee et al., 2015a). In Comparison to other people, buyers' self-evaluation may enhance. Indeed, purchase of authentic Brands constitutes a perfect platform for users to compare themselves with relevant others and thus find their self more complete and authentic.The ubiquitous television and online media constantly bombard children as well as adolescents with images emphasizing consumption of a variety of products. This is evidenced by the increasing brand consciousness among the younger generations as documented in several previous studies (Achenreiner and John, 2003; Workman and Lee, 2013). In order to acknowledge the role of value orientations as precursors of materialism, Karabati and Cemalcilar (2010) found that self-enhancement values such as power, achievement, and hedonism were highly predictive of materialism in a large sample of Turkish university students. Thus, the internalization of materialistic values from parents, peers, and the larger community leads people to adopt these values at early stages of socialization. For example, Maio (2016), showed that teenagers who rated financial success aspirations relatively higher than more prosocial aspirations tended to be raised in disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds, and their mothers also valued financial success highly. (Banerjee and Dittmar, 2008) demonstrated the role of peer pressure and peer rejection in predicting greater materialism. These early socialization experiences foster materialism through passive observational learning from socialization agents at one level and by fostering an implicit belief that one needs to acquire material possessions in order to feel accepted and valued at a deeper level. The second pathway, the self-esteem repair pathway proposes that feelings of insecurity or self-doubt are generated when life's experiences do not afford an individual with feelings of autonomy, competence, and connectedness with social others. Generally, such life experiences may range from the immediate interpersonal environments to the more distal socioeconomic environments.

In order to fill the void (empty self) created by low self-esteem, individuals turn to materialism as a compensatory strategy (Spinella et al., 2014).Intuitively, this compensatory strategys seems effective because material possessions have communicative power and thus helps to build one's personal and social identity. For instance ,clothes, cars, gadgets, travel, etc. are all symbols of social standing and socioeconomic status, which may facilitate image building (Banerjee and Dittmar, 2008). Materialism as a self-esteem repairing mechanism is productive especially in the short-term, in terms of temporarily providing relief from the self-doubt provoking situation. Research examining low self-esteem/self-doubt as an antecedent condition of materialism has provided consistently corroborating evidence.

H$_{11b}$**:** PBA will mediate in the relationship between customization and self-esteem:

Various examinations have shown that the brand related connections may incorporate an item (Tasci and Guillet, 2011), nation of inception (Yasin and Yavas, 2007; Chien et al., 2011), an organization (Blombäck and Axelsson, 2007; Fagan et al., 2004; Chang and Fong, 2010), representatives, retailers, stores (Yoo et al., 2015), or clients with specific socioeconomics or ways of life (Nam et al., 2011). Brand affiliations can be further divided into three measurements i:e Attributes, benefits, and demeanors (Qu et al., 2011). Credits allude to the attributes/highlights/properties of every item or benefit, and can be ordered as item related or non-item related, the estimation of the item and the normal results based upon the perception of customer reflects benefits. "Consumers' overall evaluation about the brand" refer to Brand attitude (Keller, 1993). Brand associations is outcome of brand's image in the mind of consumer, and it convey the brand's uniqueness and value to consumers (Qu et al., 2011). Brand associations are the means to differentiate between competing brands, to extend and position brands in the mind of consumer furthermore it highlights attributes of a product or service (**?**). Researchers have claimed that favorable, positive, strong and singular brand associations can create a brand image, which is one of the major contributor towards building brand equity (Bill Xu and Chan, 2010; Qu et al., 2011). (Aaker, 1997) also asserts that "a brand image is a set of associations, usually organized in some meaningful way" (p. 109). Therefore, most research on brand association mainly focuses on brand image (Sun and Ghiselli, 2010). Therefore, Customization may enhance brand loyalty through association between consumer and the company itself.

H$_{11c}$**:** PBA will mediate in the relationship between customization and brand loyalty:

At the point when shoppers are more comfortable with a specific brand or logo, they have a tendency to highly value and put their trust into the nature of the brand's item and eagerly pay a premium in term of cost or to go for the item (Kim and Hyun, 2011). Then again, it is additionally asserted that building and managing a positive reliable brand picture is basic for creating and keeping up brand trust (Kayaman and Arasli, 2007). Studies propose that purchasers who have a positive picture of a brand tend to hold a great state of mind toward the brand's items and, thus, are probably going to end up noticeably faithful toward these items (Kim and Hyun, 2011; Kandampully et al., 2011; Wallace et al., 2013). The former talk recommends that brand mindfulness and brand picture are essential predecessors of brand dependability. Through customization apparatuses we purchaser may have upgraded brand mindfulness which inturn may lead towards mark trust and devotion. Among few examinations expecting to fill this hole, (Kim and Hyun, 2011) contend that the blend of brand affiliation and brand mindfulness positively affects clients' behavioral devotion which originates from behavioral affiliations. Romaniuk and Nenycz-Thiel (2013) additionally contend that there is minimal exact proof supporting the connection between a purchaser's image affiliations and his/her future buying behavior. Their investigation reports that behavioral brand devotion is decidedly identified with buyer mark affiliation. Comparable findings are accounted for by Funk et al. (2009).

Perceived authenticity has been contended to expand the level of trust. Believe itself is a hazard oriented construct, which is critical in circumstances where the trusting party is uncertain of future activities of the trust-taker (Alhabeeb, 2007; Wallace et al., 2013). The apparent hazard comes about out of the vulnerability that the trust-taker will fulfill an errand in light of a legitimate concern for the trusting party already guaranteed unequivocally or certainly. The conjectured constructive influence of authenticity on trust can be hypothetically clarified as the future activities of valid individuals or dependable individuals are probably going to be steady with their past conduct and consequently appreciate extensively higher consistency of full filled guarantees. As their conduct is essentially driven by their personality, authentic individuals/brands take after directing standards. Subsequently, associations with authentic individuals/brands are accordingly more sensible and live longer (Li et al., 2005b).

Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) characterized brand trust as the conviction that the

brand will fulfill its brand promise. There is an unanimity in the writing that the view of brand capacities and brand expectations are important for anybody to put stock in a brand (Delgado-Ballester et al., 2003). Brand capacities are specialized in nature which are tried and true on ability of organization/brand and henceforth in light of customers' convictions that the brand has the fitness to fulfill its brand promise. Brand goals are motivational basically and they are established on the conviction that the brand will act to the greatest advantage of its clients to satisfy brand guarantee. Brand credibility is speculated as positively affecting these two basic confide in segments: consistency and congruity serve in a more extensive sense as verification of brand capacities which in turn increment the level of trust. The beneficial outcome of authenticity on brand expectations can be clarified by the inspiration of self-fulfillment talked about prior: The guarantees of a valid brand reject its character and henceforth the brand has an individual enthusiasm for fulfilling its image guarantee. The research model of this study therefore.

$\mathbf{H}_{11d}$: PBA will mediate in the relationship between customization and brand trust.

2.24 Impact of Perceived Brand Authenticity on Brand Loyalty, Life Satisfaction, Self-Esteem and Brand Trust

Consumer's behaviour are changing in the contemporary marketing scenario, they are becoming authenticity seekers. Empirical investigations based on the brand authenticity are limited in context. A mushroom research is required to evaluate the impact of the antecedents and outcomes of the brand authenticity and associated constructs. The study conducted by Napoli et al. (2014) demonstrated fruitful results related to the impact of brand authenticity on the loyalty of the consumers towards the brand. The authors recognised the roles of brand authenticity based on its dimensions, in relation to brand loyalty and brand association. The results of the study affirmed the impact of the brand authenticity facets in influencing the consumers based brand associations. The consumers self-connections are found associated with the dimensions of brand authenticity namely; quality, heritage and reliability. The study affirms that authenticity of the brand enables its prospects to create their own self-identity.

The soft and emotional facets of the brands are considered by the contemporary marketers and research scholars. This is because the functional facets of the brand are now

considered as trivial. Brand personality is inherent with the emotional and psychological associations of the consumers, with the authentic brands. The perceptions that are developed for the authentic brands are the customary markers of consumer's loyalty and purchase intention behaviours. This is because brand reflects the symbolic and emotional value and reinforces the self-expression for the consumers. Qu et al. (2011) further mentioned, that quality of brand image and awareness of the brand are reflected meaningfully by the brand associations. Brand personality is recognized as a facet of brand image, inclusive of sincerity and authenticity. Therefore, the brand perceived authenticity considerably impact the brand loyalty.

Philp et al. (2018) proposed a study on the negative word of mouth communication and association to the self-esteem. The study made an assumption that the word-of-mouth that is negative in context, posit a persuasive and pervasive impact on the consumers self-esteem. The authors analysed the dimensions of self-esteem namely; self-competence and self-liking. The authors showed that the negative word of mouth communications were strongly and statistically significantly impact the self-esteem of the consumers. However, study by Lu et al. (2016) notified that self-esteem has a connection to the positive word of mouth. The study showed that as the level if self-competence as a facet of self-esteem is increased, there is a lower inclination of the consumer to spread the negative word of mouth. Furthermore, the study showed that if the consumers are high in the self-liking, than there is more willingness to spread the negative word of mouth communications by them. Underlying this discussion, self-esteem posits the impact on the word of mouth communication in both the ways.

The concept of brand authenticity has achieved considerable attention of the scholars during the past decade (Eggers et al., 2013). In the contemplation of the global economic crises, customer trusts has been massively eroded. In the wake of corporate dissonance, the trust of the consumers and there is no connection between organisational assured objectives with its accomplishments. These disconnections ultimately lead to a threat to brand reputation and consumer trust on the brand. Past research scholars enforced that consumers distrust is creating serious challenges for the brands. Al-Ali et al. (2018) on the other hand, mentioned that brand authenticity can be remarkable at changing the perceptions of the consumers, they may successfully counter the downward twirl of brand equity and consumers distrust. Sadly, a few researchers have yet embraced the significance of brand authenticity in the success of the business and brand. Affinity and authenticity are the elements on which brand has high dependence. Authentic brands

have specified a core value, which defines the orientation of business practices and actions (Balmer, 2011).

This core value evidently elevates the trust of the consumers and places a positive direct effect on the bottom line of the brand. In the context of brand management, consumers' trust on the brand is a momentous marker of customer loyalty. This is because, the consumers having high trust on the brand, utilise more of the services/products, spread positive word of mouth and recommend other fellow consumers to purchase the brand. Nuttavuthisit and Thøgersen (2017) argued that it is challenging to gain the trust of the consumers, whereas, the trust as a factor can be lost again.

The marketers need to be vigilant at making a brand promise with their customers. The promise if not fulfilled, may lose a chain of satisfied and loyal customers, with the never-ending distrust of the customers. Contemporary marketing literature proposes that the consumers demand the products from the trustworthy brands and display repulsion from the brands that consumer trust as a selling factor. According to the grapevine, authentic brands are imperative in experiencing growth and reputation, if they focus in creating sustainable and trusted brand (Vallaster and Kraus, 2011).

Eggers et al. (2013) examined the impact of perceived brand authenticity on the brand trust. Research authors have professed that brand authenticity has three factors; congruency, consistency of the brand and customer orientation. Brand consistency assures that the brand is experienced by the stakeholders at all the expected points. Renowned brands namely Porsche, Colgate or Apple are deemed as consistent brand, in situation when their corporate strategy, vision and values are unified with the promise they have made with respective stakeholders. Companies gain competitive edge and uniqueness, if they have experienced an evolution of corporate values from their history and inception. Authentic consistency can instigate from the assortment of brand attributes as communication tools, services, products, behaviours, etc. On the contrary, the orientation of the customers towards the brands refers to their self-expressive and emotional functional focus on brand benefits. Organisations that are customer focused are aimed at sustaining and creating top-notch value for the consumers. Customer orientation is although, focus towards the desires and demands of valuable customers, whereas, brand customer orientation solely refers to the satisfaction of the customers. In this perspective, when the individualised benefits of the brands are delivered as expected, than a positive perception is developed in the minds of consumers and stakeholders. They will perceive the

brand as authentic and thus, the level of trust substantially increases (Ngo and O'Cass, 2009).

2.25   Theoretical Framework

The research investigation has derived insights from two renowned theories namely self-expansion theory (Aron et al., 1995) and self-concept theory (Super et al., 1963). These theories are all-encompassing and serve as the fundamental source I n probing individuals' ability and aspirations to "recognize thy self" along with the inclusion of objects, people, etc. Empirically, self-concept is dynamic and fluid in context (Onorato and Turner, 2004). The ability of the individual to achieve greater positive outcomes in a physical, social, psychological and academic environment (Marsh and Hau, 2003), build up a sense of self and encompass healthy well-being is central to positive self-concept development.

Self-expansion theory conceptualizes that the individual seeks to enhance their potential viability via expansion of social assets, standpoints, personalities and physical assets, in the way of accomplishing the life goals. The point of infection is the essence to attain assets is to have the aptitude to achieve goals. Preferably, individuals deem the most prevailing asset in achieving their tasks as information. The individualistic preferences differ in different context, for instance, societal positions, riches and belongings, power and authority, and well-being. The concept of self-expansion and self-improvement are nearly similar in context (Taylor et al., 1995). Empirically, considerable research investigations have been carried out on a multiplicity of data on self-improvement and self-verification, but the work of Taylor et al. (1995) has been remarkable and unique in illustration of self-improvement concept.

Conceptualization of self-concept may assist in the effective and cognitive understanding of what and who the human beings are. Self-concept may take the form of "ideal self" or "actual self". The perception of oneself based on the realities is defined as the "actual self". The person having a belief in who he/she is and what he/she is, in reality, is demonstrative of an actual self. Nevertheless, the "ideal self" is representative of the ideal persona/character that the individual desire to become. In the context of branding, the consumers achieve the state of self-congruence, when they recognize the brand traits that may represent their ideal or actual self. Actual self-congruence is reflective of consumer's thoughts about robustness in-between brand traits and actual self. On

the contrary, the ideal self-congruence is perception developed by the consumers' ideal self and associated brand traits. Notably, the ideal self-congruent brands are illustrative of consumers' idealized desires while actual self-congruent brand enables the consumers' to represent who they are in actual practice. It has been argued that self-concept has the potential to reinforce the process of brand attachment (Malär et al., 2011). Apparently, the self-congruent concept is reflective of similarity between self-concept of the consumers with the brand traits. It is basically the degree of the association, further revealing positive rejoinders of the consumers' towards specific brands (Grohmann, 2009). Higher levels of self-congruence must be perceived in between authentic brands and consumers.

Insights from self-expansion theory reveal that individuals have the capability to amalgamate things/situations (in current study context, brands) into their self-idea. Presumably, brand authenticity is the ultimate reason of unison between brand and self-motion. Underlying these rationales, it is now evident, that the individuals show their willingness to customize and co-create brands as a phenomenon of integrating the authentic brands with their self-concept. Furthermore, the brand-consumer associations are advanced through the prevailing concept of self-congruence. For consumers revealing greater levels of self-credibility, the authentic brands are deemed as the self-checking instruments. Preferably, in the society high at authenticity, the consumers may be assumed to use authenticity of the brand as a self-improvement tool.

Based on the insights from the self-concept theory and self-expansion theory, a theoretical model has been structured by the researcher. Open innovation model has been designed with the inclusion of customization and co-creation facets that ultimately leads to brand authentication. The output elements are inclusive of psychosocial individual features. In this case, the independent variables are customization, brand authenticity and co-creation, while the dependent variables are the individualistic psychosocial characteristics.

H$_1$: Brand co-creation engagement has a significant positive impact on perceived brand authenticity.

H$_2$: Brand customization has significant positive impact on perceived brand authenticity.

H$_3$: Perceived brand authenticity has significant effect on satisfaction with life.

H₄: Perceived brand authenticity has significant positive effect on self-esteem.

H₅: Perceived brand authenticity has significant positive impact on brand loyalty.

H₆: Perceived brand authenticity has significant positive impact on brand trust.

H₇ₐ: Life satisfaction has significant positive impact on word of mouth.

H₇ᵦ: Self-esteem has significant positive impact on word of mouth.

H₇ᵪ: Brand Trust has significant positive impact on word of mouth.

H₇d: Brand Loyalty has significant positive impact on word of mouth.

H₈ₐ: Consumers need for uniqueness will moderate the relation between co-creation engagement and PBA in such a way that will be stronger when consumers need for uniqueness will be higher.

H₈ᵦ: Consumers need for uniqueness will moderate the relation between customization and PBA in such a way that will be stronger when consumers need for uniqueness will be higher.

H₉ₐ: Perceived Tool support will moderate the relation between co-creation engagement and PBA in such a way that relationship will be stronger when perceived Tool support is higher.

H₉ᵦ: Perceived Tool support will moderate the relation between customization and PBA in such a way relationship will be stronger when perceived Tool support is higher.

H₁₀ₐ: PBA will mediate in the relationship between co-creation engagement and satisfaction with life.

H₁₀ᵦ: PBA will mediate in the relationship between co-creation engagement and self-esteem.

H₁₀ᵪ: PBA will mediate in the relationship between co-creation engagement and brand loyalty.

H₁₀d: PBA will mediate in the relationship between co-creation engagement and brand trust.

H₁₁ₐ: PBA will mediate in the relationship between customization and satisfaction with life.

H$_{11b}$**:** PBA will mediate in the relationship between customization and self-esteem.

H$_{11c}$**:** PBA will mediate in the relationship between customization and brand loyalty.

H$_{11d}$**:** PBA will mediate in the relationship between customization and brand trust.

2.26   Theoretical Framework of Study
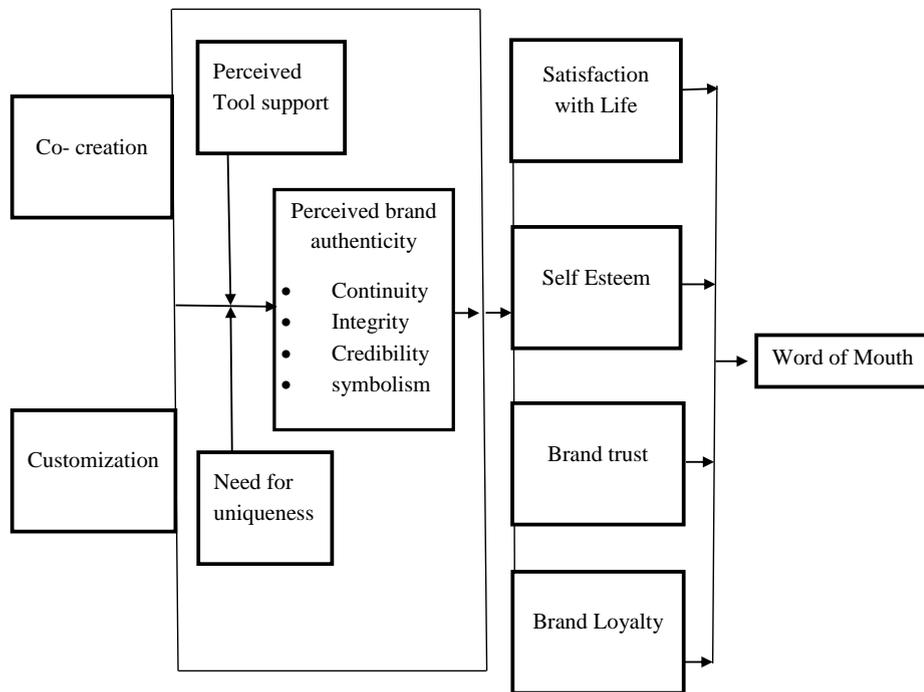
FIGURE 2.1: Theoretical Framework

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the philosophy of research, research approach, methodological choice, research design, data collection methods, data analysis techniques those were applied to test the proposed theoretical framework in chapter 2.

3.2 Research Approach

The research epistemology is use to achieve the desired objective of present study. The concept /idea of epistemology is concerned with questions of what are the necessary and adequate conditions of knowledge. However (Easterby-Smith et al., 1991) consider it as study of method of knowledge. Normally epistemology is based on four patterns as Positivism, Constructivism, Critical Theory and Realism.

3.2.1 Positivism

According to Mill (1868) positivism is based on the logic that "there can be no real knowledge but that which is based on observed facts". He stresses on observational factors. He Easter by ?, further extends positivism as knowledge, which is required to be measured quantitatively. As per (Muijs, 2011) positivism is more appropriate in the discipline of laws and can be use to describe the relationship of cause or effects. It is one-way mirror.

3.2.2 Constructivism

It is the type of qualitative theory like ethnography where the researcher is "passionate participants" with in the world being investigated. It is reality-based theory and varies person to person and is not suitable for business research (Sobh and Perry, 2006).

3.2.3 Realism

It is fabrication of positivism and constructivism as qualitative and quantitative. Research methodology is usually taken as one of the elements discussed earlier but some researcher takes two at the same time as well (Borch and Arthur, 1995; Hyde, 2000), and it possible to have different results by using two methods. According to (Reed and Jones, 2019), is appropriate become it deals with reality and researcher. It is growing increasingly among social researcher. As per (Rice, 2019) is appropriate due to its scientifically tested acceptability. Positivism approach used in the current study.

3.3 Research Design

The primary objective of this research is to measure "Impact of brand co-creation, customization on Psychological outcomes; mediating role of Brand authenticity and moderating role of need for uniqueness and perceived tool support". For a study of this type, the most appropriate method for the analysis is survey.

3.3.1 Quantitative Research

Researchers are given the choice to both maintain and conduct qualitative research or quantitative research based on the nature of the research. This research will be quantitative in nature and based on data collected through questionnaires from respondents. The data will be collected and analyzed using various statistical tools. On the other hand, the quantitative approach is consistent with the study because it permits the problem of research carried out in very specific terms established (Cooper and Schindler, 2008). In addition, quantitative research clearly and definitely identifies the dependent variables object and independent research.

3.4 Research Type (Cross-Sectional)

Referring to the time horizon, this research is cross-sectional in nature. In cross-sectional studies data collected from respondents only at a single time and use them for more analysis.

3.5 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis basically shows the unit / level of the data to be collected. For example, the unit of analysis in an investigation is person, group, organization or whole culture. Since the main objective of this study is to address the factors i:e co-creation, customization determining perceived brand authenticity in consumers. The unit analysis of this study are individual consumers.

3.6 Procedures for Survey Approach

There are several procedures used for survey as per desire and convenience of researchers like in mailed questionnaire, web survey, telephonic survey and online questionnaires. For any method survey group is targeted as population, size is determined as sample size; sampling techniques are decided and measurement instruments are selected. All these procedures are discussed as following:

3.6.1 Population

Ladipo et al. (2020) and Dikko (2016) described the world is a total group from which sample is selected. Population is a collection of elements and unit of interest for the analyzer from which they would like to hypothesize the conclusion of the research. Hence, in a research methodological sense a population is the collectively of all cases that confirms the designated set of specification, "people" and residing in any area". The research population for the current study is consumers/customers purchasing or using customized, co-created sustainable brands.

Okubo (2007) stated that sampling is the process of selecting the unit from a population of interest for impartially simplification of results of our study. There are many cases where it is not possible to cover the whole population. In this situation, sampling delivers

better choice and makes valid results because in a short period of time its coverings a research population.

3.6.2 Sampling Technique along with Justification

The main objective of sampling technique is to select a representative group of elements that really reflects the characteristics of the population. As the majority of cases, researcher cannot collect data of the total population; sampling is the only viable option for collecting data.

A popular form of non-probability sampling is purposive sampling so that data of the sample is based upon members of population who are consumers of sustainable brands deploying customization and co-creation. This research deployed purposive sampling technique. Online questionnaire was developed on Google form and posted on different fan pages of brands for data collection. Data was collected from the members of fan pages, who have participated in brand co-creation contest and similar events. They were requested through e-mails and Private Messages on their social media profiles.

3.6.3 Web-Based Survey

Web-based Surveys are very common and widely used in marketing research. According to Saunders (2011), there are multiple advantages of using a survey: (1) it is cost effective, (2) it is efficient to cover a large sample, (3) a large amount of data can be collected from a sizable population, (4) the standardized nature of data, and (5) easy comparison. One survey category is the web-based survey, which is a collection of data through self-administered questions on a website (Archer, 2008). It is recognized as a valuable medium of conducting surveys (Dillman, 2000). The second study of this research follows a web-based survey. Normally, the URL (Universal Resource Locator) address of the survey is sent to potential respondents via email or any other way, such as Facebook posts or tweets. Once respondents complete and submit the survey on the website the data are transferred electronically to a database for the researcher to analyze.

3.6.4 Justification of Web-Based Survey

The benefits of a web-based survey over the traditional paper-based survey are manifold. The prominent reasons for employing this kind of survey in study two are given below. First, a web based survey provides access to a vast pool of potential and geographically-diverse respondents (Alvarez et al., 2003). This benefit helps the study to get people from different areas of Australia with demographic diversity. Second, traditional surveys incur higher costs, such as paper, postage, mail out, and data entry, whereas these costs are eliminated in web-based surveys (Cobanoglu et al., 2001; Dillman, 2000). Third, web-based surveys require less time to complete and the data from the survey can be displayed just after the respondents submit the survey (Archer, 2008; Cobanoglu et al., 2001). Fourth, a web-based survey can be linked to a database, where data are collected automatically (Berry, 2005), which can be easily accessible through statistical software for analysis (Archer, 2008; Evans and Mathur, 2005). Lastly, reminder and follow-up messages and emails can be sent to the respondents who did not respond the first time (Archer, 2008). However, like other kind of surveys, web-based surveys have a few limitations. First, if the potential respondents do not have access to the internet this method of survey is not effective (Dillman, 2000).

The web-based survey instrument contained several sections. On entering the survey site, respondents could read the participant information page that indicated what the research was about, how they would participate, together with their rights of participation in terms of any benefits, any risks involved, their privacy and confidentiality, ethics information, and contact details of the research team. Respondents were advised that if they were happy to participate in the survey they should click the "Next" button in order to begin the questionnaire.

Section A: There were two screening questions to match the sample criteria. The first question asked about the respondent's participation in a brand contest. Respondents having at least 6 months of engagement with their brand pages or online band community were allowed to proceed, and those who indicated 'no' were exited from the survey with a thank you message.

Section B: This section formed the main part of the survey document. The construct measurement items were placed in this section in short batches. Respondents simply used their mouse to click the relevant radio buttons to answer the questions. The radio

buttons reflected the five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

3.7 Research Instruments

At the general level, current study collected responses a 5-point scale. These items, the sources from where the items were adapted are summarized below.

3.7.1 Brand Co-Creation Engagement

Brand co-creation engagement was measured by 12 item scale developed by Hsieh and Chang (2016). Hsieh and Chang (2016) developed scale on co-creation engagement using scale of Schaufeli et al. (2002) on engagement. Scale is further divided in three parts which are vigor, dedication and absorption. Sample item from all three parts is "when I work on the task for the brand contest, I feel bursting with energy", "To me, my task in the brand contest is challenging", "When I working on the task for the brand contest, I forget everything else around me".

3.7.2 Customization

Study used 39 item scale of Lee and Moon (2015) to measure customization. The scale was originally made for online customization. Scale was adapted with minor modifications.

3.7.3 Satisfaction with Life

Study used 5 item scale of Lucas et al. (2003) for life satisfaction. One sample item is "In most ways my life is close to my ideal."

3.7.4 Self-Esteem

Study used Rosenberg self-esteem scale RSE of Rosenberg (1965). Scale consists of 10-items. Sample item is "I feel I do not have much to be proud of."

3.7.5 Brand Loyalty

Study used 4-item scale of Delgado-Ballester et al. (2003). Sample item is "I recommend to buy this brand."

3.7.6 Brand Trust

Study used 11-item scale of Delgado-Ballester et al. (2003). Scale consist of two parts i.e. fiability and intentionality. One Sample item for both is "Brand [X] gives me confidence and certainty in the consumption of a [product]" and "Brand [X] would make any effort to make mebe satisfied."

3.7.7 Word of Mouth

Word-of-mouth is usually defined as an exchange, flow of information, communication, or conversation between two individuals (Goyette et al., 2010).

3.7.8 Perceived Brand Authenticity

Study used 14 item scale of Morhart et al. (2015). Scale covers four dimensions of PBA which are continuity, credibility, integrity and symbolism. Sample item for each dimension is: "I will prefer a brand with a history", "I will prefer a brand that will not betray you", "I will prefer a brand that gives back to its consumers", "I will prefer a brand that adds meaning to people's lives."

3.7.9 Need for Uniqueness

Study used 31 item scale of Tian et al. (2001). One sample item is "Having an eye for products that are interesting and unusual assists me in establishing a distinctive image."

3.7.10 Perceived Tool Support

Perceived tool support consisted of two sub dimensions: product understanding and creative articulation. The two items of product understanding resemble Kempf and Smith (1998) website diagnosticity scale. The two items to measure creative articulation were derived from interview by Füller and Bilgram (2017).

3.8 Statistical analysis

3.8.1 Diagnostic Testing

Before data analysis pilot testing of 200 individuals was done. Confirmatory factor analysis i.e. CFA was applied on data collected through pilot testing in order to check validity of scales used. For reliability analysis, cronbach alpha reliability was checked.

3.8.2 Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

Study will employ SEM for analyzing data. In case of multiple IV's and DV's it is better to go for SEM. SEM is a comprehensive approach towards analysis of primary data. Results are easier to interpret and are clear in visual form. SEM allows to conduct and combine a vast variety of statistical procedures, it can be seen as a speedy sports car (Nachtigall et al., 2003).

Point of concern in SEM is goodness fit of model and direct and indirect effects. For goodness fit, different criteria are used which include goodness fit index, adjusted goodness fit index, RMSEA and chi sq/ d.f. For all of these criteria it is the value of factor on which these criteria depend which decides that whether the model is good fit or poor fit. In case of direct and indirect effect (i.e. regression) point of concern is estimate and its p value. Hypothesis is accepted if p value is less than 0.05.

3.9 Pilot Testing

We started our data analysis with a confirmatory factor analysis to ascertain the distinctiveness of our study constructs. Several measurement models were performed and compared as can be seen in subsequent section.

3.9.1 CFA for Co-Creation Engagement

The measurement models for Co creation engagement entailed twelve indicators, which capture the concept. We conducted a series of CFA prior to hypothesis testing to examine the distinctiveness of main study variables. The first model for co creation items was loaded onto a single factor and values for several global fit indices were examined on

four global fit indices. The results for single factor were: ^{2} (2) = 158.139, [CFI = 0.911], [TLI =.889], [RMSEA = .100] and [SRMR = .069].
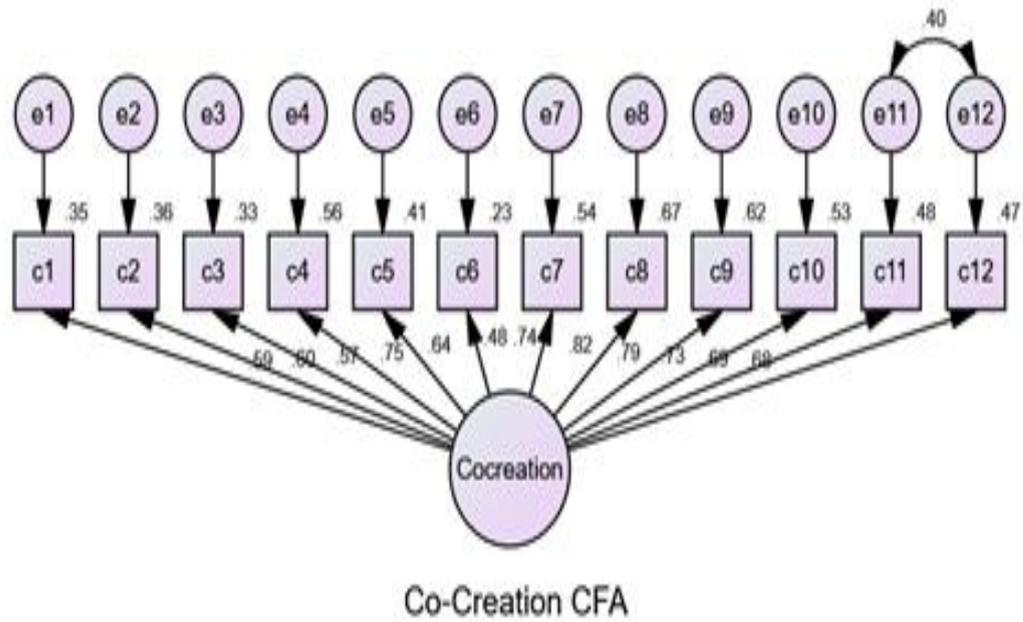
FIGURE 3.1: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Model of Co-Creation Engagement

TABLE 3.1: Co-Creation Engagement

Measure	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	158.139	–	–
DF	53.000	–	–
CMIN/DF	2.984	Between 1 and 3	Excellent
CFI	0.911	>0.95	Acceptable
SRMR	0.066	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.010	<0.06	Excellent
PClose	0.000	>0.05	Not Estimated

No items were deleted

TABLE 3.2: Factor Loadings of Co-Creation Engagement (Standardized Regression Weights)

		Estimate
C1	$< - - -$ Cocreation	.592
C2	$< - - -$ Cocreation	.598
C3	$< - - -$ Cocreation	.575
C4	$< - - -$ Cocreation	.746
C5	$< - - -$ Cocreation	.641
C6	$< - - -$ Cocreation	.476
C7	$< - - -$ Cocreation	.736
C8	$< - - -$ Cocreation	.821
C9	$< - - -$ Cocreation	.789
C10	$< - - -$ Cocreation	.728
C11	$< - - -$ Cocreation	.689
C12	$< - - -$ Cocreation	.684

3.9.2   CFA for Customization

We performed CFA for Customization and results showed that the overall model fit exhibited where global fit indices showed an acceptable ranges of CFA model fit, with χ^2 (527) = 1155.213, [RMSEA = .077], [TLI = .833], [CFI = .844] and [SRMR = .055]. As per Hair Jr et al. (2017) who suggested that at least three indices must be fitted well to specify the model fit.

Accordingly, with the recommendation of Mueller and Hancock (2008), the model fit satisfactorily since all the scores of fit indices are very good.

FIGURE 3.2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Model of Customization

TABLE 3.3: Customization

Measure	Estimate	Estimate (After item deletion)	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	1155.213	1200.213	–	–
DF	527.000	600.000	–	–
CMIN/DF	2.192	2.002	Between 1 and 3	Excellent
CFI	0.844	0.964	>0.95	Excellent
SRMR	0.058	0.058	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.077	0.021	<0.06	Excellent
PClose	0.000	0.000	>0.05	Not Estimated

Items deleted were Co4, Co5, Co10, Co13 and C028.

TABLE 3.4: Factor Loadings of Customization (Standardized Regression Weights)

		Estimate
Co1	$< - - -$ Customization	.598
Co2	$< - - -$ Customization	.603
Co3	$< - - -$ Customization	.724
Co6	$< - - -$ Customization	.565
Co7	$< - - -$ Customization	.584
Co8	$< - - -$ Customization	.727
Co9	$< - - -$ Customization	.696
Co11	$< - - -$ Customization	.660
Co12	$< - - -$ Customization	.602
Co14	$< - - -$ Customization	.591
Co15	$< - - -$ Customization	.715
Co16	$< - - -$ Customization	.757
Co17	$< - - -$ Customization	.715
Co18	$< - - -$ Customization	.804
Co19	$< - - -$ Customization	.744
Co20	$< - - -$ Customization	.740
Co21	$< - - -$ Customization	.511
Co22	$< - - -$ Customization	.660
Co23	$< - - -$ Customization	.740
Co24	$< - - -$ Customization	.764
Co25	$< - - -$ Customization	.705
Co26	$< - - -$ Customization	.634
Co27	$< - - -$ Customization	.500
Co29	$< - - -$ Customization	.725
Co30	$< - - -$ Customization	.584
Co31	$< - - -$ Customization	.685
Co32	$< - - -$ Customization	.523
Co33	$< - - -$ Customization	.576
Co34	$< - - -$ Customization	.642
Co35	$< - - -$ Customization	.663
Co36	$< - - -$ Customization	.684

Co37	$< - - -$ Customization	.688
Co38	$< - - -$ Customization	.728
Co39	$< - - -$ Customization .	704

3.9.3 CFA for PBA

We performed CFA for Perceived Brand Authenticity and results showed that the overall model fit exhibited where global fit indices showed an acceptable ranges of CFA model fit, with χ^2 (54) = 156.940, [RMSEA = .098], [TLI = .862], [CFI = .887] and [SRMR = .060]. As per Hair Jr et al. (2017) who suggested that at least three indices must be fitted well to specify the model fit. Accordingly, with the recommendation of Mueller and Hancock (2008), the model fit satisfactorily since all the scores of fit indices are very good.

FIGURE 3.3: Confirmatory Analysis of Model of Perceived Brand Authenticity

TABLE 3.5: PBA

Measure	Estimate	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	156.940	108.940	–	–
DF	54.000	2.011	–	–
CMIN/DF	2.906	2.906	Between 1 and 3	Excellent
CFI	0.987	0.987	>0.95	Excellent
SRMR	0.066	0.066	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.008	0.008	<0.06	Excellent
PClose	0.000	0.000	>0.05	Not Estimated

Items deleted were PBA4 and PBA10

TABLE 3.6: Factor Loadings of Perceived Brand Authenticity (Standardized Regression Weights)

		Estimate
P1	$< - - -$ PBA	.631
P2	$< - - -$ PBA	.602
P3	$< - - -$ PBA	.731
P5	$< - - -$ PBA	.496
P6	$< - - -$ PBA	.615
P7	$< - - -$ PBA	.634
P8	$< - - -$ PBA	.771
P9	$< - - -$ PBA	.724
P11	$< - - -$ PBA	.647
P12	$< - - -$ PBA	.622
P13	$< - - -$ PBA	.473
P14	$< - - -$ PBA	.620

3.9.4 CFA for SWL

We performed CFA for Satisfaction with Life and results showed that the overall model fit exhibited where global fit indices showed an acceptable ranges of CFA model fit, with χ^2 (5) = 10.494, [RMSEA = .074], [TLI = .957], [CFI = .979] and [SRMR = .040]. As per Hair Jr et al. (2017) who suggested that at least three indices must be fitted well to specify the model fit. Accordingly, with the recommendation of Mueller and Hancock (2008), the model fit satisfactorily since all the scores of fit indices are very good.

FIGURE 3.4: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Model of Satisfaction with Life

TABLE 3.7: SWL

Measure	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	10.494	–	–
DF	5.000	–	–
CMIN/DF	2.099	Between 1 and 3	Excellent
CFI	0.979	>0.95	Excellent
SRMR	0.043	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.074	<0.06	Acceptable
PClose	0.217	>0.05	Excellent

No items were deleted

TABLE 3.8: Factor Loading of Satisfaction with Life (Standardized Regression Weights)

	Estimate
L1 $< - - -$ SWL	.638
L2 $< - - -$ SWL	.752
L3 $< - - -$ SWL	.669
L4 $< - - -$ SWL	.659
L5 $< - - -$ SWL	.569

3.9.5 CFA for Self-Esteem

We performed CFA for Self Esteem and results showed that the overall model fit exhibited where global fit indices showed an acceptable ranges of CFA model fit, with χ^2 (26) = 112.469, [RMSEA = .129], [TLI = .899], [CFI = .927] and [SRMR = .062]. As per Hair Jr et al. (2017) who suggested that at least three indices must be fitted well to

specify the model fit. Accordingly, with the recommendation of Mueller and Hancock (2008), the model fit satisfactorily since all the scores of fit indices are very good.

FIGURE 3.5: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Model of Self Esteem

TABLE 3.9: Self Esteem

Measure	Estimate	Estimate (After item deletion)	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	112.469	52.469	–	–
DF	26.000	26.000	–	–
CMIN/DF	4.326	2.326	Between 1 and 3	Acceptable
CFI	0.927	0.927	>0.95	Acceptable
SRMR	0.066	0.066	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.129	0.029	<0.06	Excellent
PClose	0.000	0.000	>0.05	Not Estimated

S1 items was deleted

TABLE 3.10: Factor Loading for Self-esteem (Standardized Regression Weights))

		Estimate
S2	$< - - -$ SelfEsteem	.657
S3	$< - - -$ SelfEsteem	.749
S4	$< - - -$ SelfEsteem	.797
S5	$< - - -$ SelfEsteem	.791
S6	$< - - -$ SelfEsteem	.787
S7	$< - - -$ SelfEsteem	.776
S8	$< - - -$ SelfEsteem	.768
S9	$< - - -$ SelfEsteem	.703
S10	$< - - -$ SelfEsteem	.710

3.9.6 CFA for Brand Trust

We performed CFA for Brand Trust and results showed that the overall model fit exhibited where global fit indices showed an acceptable ranges of CFA model fit, with χ^2 (43) = 144.883, [RMSEA = .109], [TLI = .903], [CFI = .924] and [SRMR = .058]. As per Hair Jr et al. (2017) who suggested that at least three indices must be fitted well to specify the model fit. Accordingly, with the recommendation of Mueller and Hancock (2008), the model fit satisfactorily since all the scores of fit indices are very good.
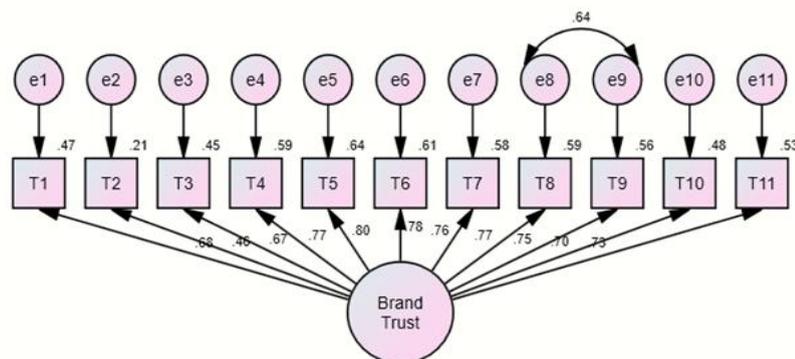
FIGURE 3.6: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Model of Brand Trust

TABLE 3.11: Trust

Measure	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	144.883	–	–
DF	43.000	–	–
CMIN/DF	3.369	Between 1 and 3	Acceptable
CFI	0.924	>0.95	Acceptable
SRMR	0.062	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.02	<0.06	Excellent
PClose	0.000	>0.05	Not Estimated

No items were deleted

TABLE 3.12: Factor Loadings for Brand Trust (Standardized Regression Weights)

			Estimate
T1	$< - - -$	Brand_Trust	.684
T2	$< - - -$	Brand_Trust	.459
T3	$< - - -$	Brand_Trust	.668
T4	$< - - -$	Brand_Trust	.770
T5	$< - - -$	Brand_Trust	.802
T6	$< - - -$	Brand_Trust	.781
T7	$< - - -$	Brand_Trust	.764
T8	$< - - -$	Brand_Trust	.766
T9	$< - - -$	Brand_Trust	.750
T10	$< - - -$	Brand_Trust	.695
T11	$< - - -$	Brand_Trust	.730

3.9.7 CFA for Brand Loyalty

We performed CFA for Brand Loyalty and results showed that the overall model fit exhibited where global fit indices showed an acceptable ranges of CFA model fit, with

χ^2 (2) = 14.168, [RMSEA = .175], [TLI = .774], [CFI = .925] and [SRMR = .051]. As per Hair Jr et al. (2017) who suggested that at least three indices must be fitted well to specify the model fit. Accordingly, with the recommendation of Mueller and Hancock (2008), the model fit satisfactorily since all the scores of fit indices are very good.
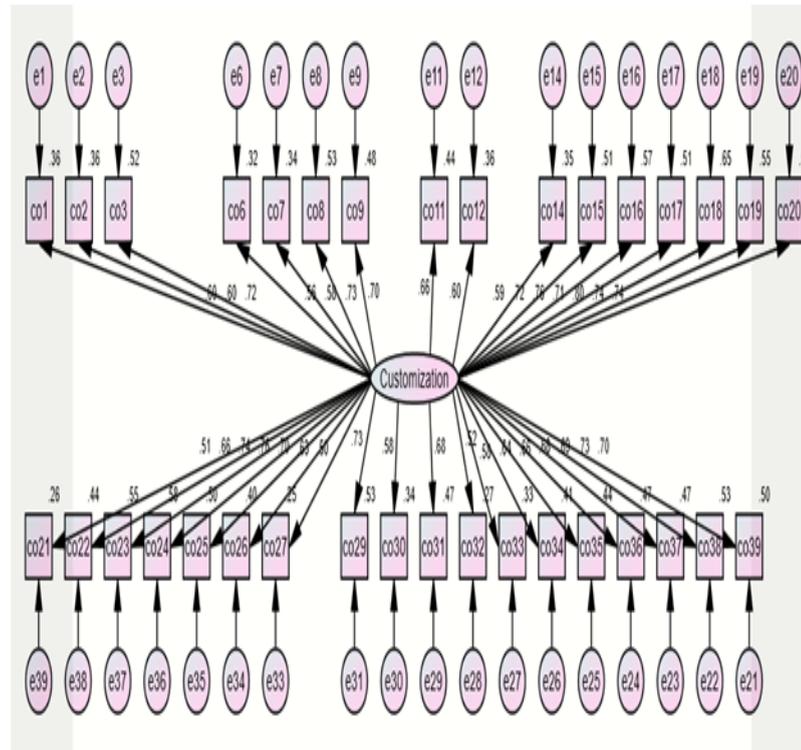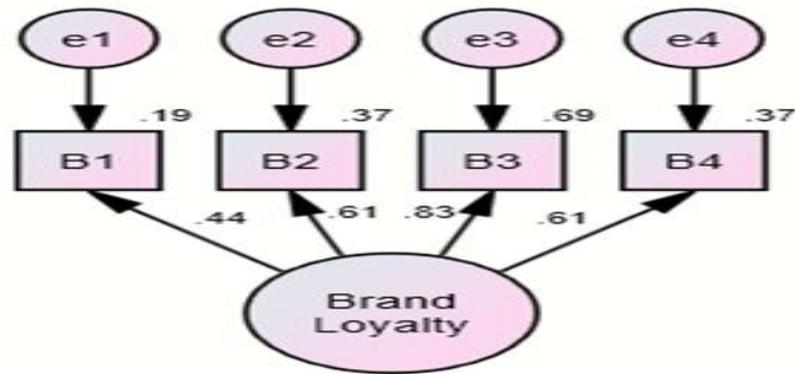

FIGURE 3.7: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Model of Brand Loyalty

TABLE 3.13: Brand Loyalty

Measure	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	14.168	–	–
DF	2.000	–	–
CMIN/DF	7.084	Between 1 and 3	Terrible
CFI	0.925	>0.95	Acceptable
SRMR	0.071	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.05	<0.06	Excellent
PClose	0.06	>0.05	Excellent

No items were deleted

TABLE 3.14: Factor Loading for Brand Loyalty (Standardized Regression Weights)

	Estimate
B1 $< - - -$ Brand_Loyalty	.435
B2 $< - - -$ Brand_Loyalty	.608
B3 $< - - -$ Brand_Loyalty	.830
B4 $< - - -$ Brand_Loyalty	.607

3.9.8 CFA for WOM

We performed CFA for Word of Mouth and results showed that the overall model fit exhibited where global fit indices showed an acceptable ranges of CFA model fit, with χ^2 (5) = 13.781, [RMSEA = .094], [TLI = .968], [CFI = .984] and [SRMR = .029]. As per Hair Jr et al. (2017) who suggested that at least three indices must be fitted well to specify the model fit. Accordingly, with the recommendation of Mueller and Hancock (2008), the model fit satisfactorily since all the scores of fit indices are very good.
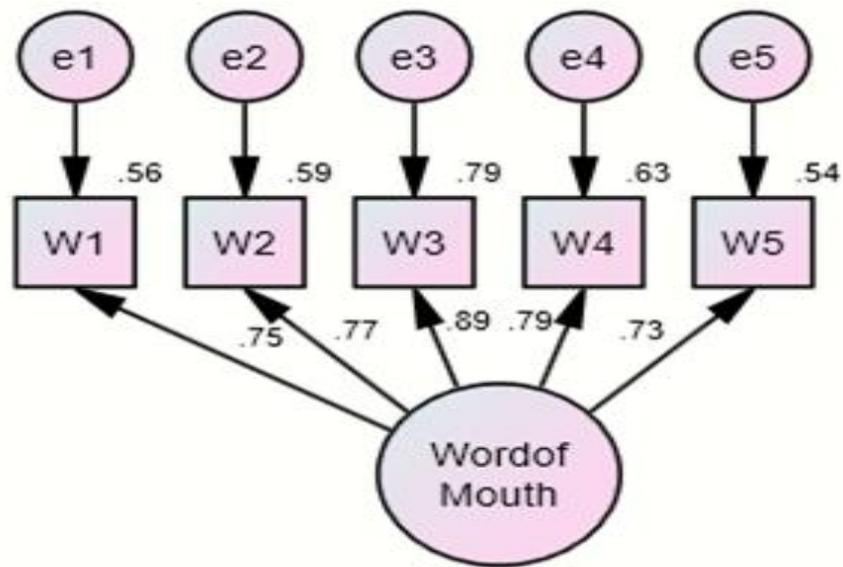
FIGURE 3.8: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Model of Word of Mouth

TABLE 3.15: WOM

Measure	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	13.781	–	–
DF	5.000	–	–
CMIN/DF	2.756	Between 1 and 3	Excellent
CFI	0.984	>0.95	Excellent
SRMR	0.031	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.04	<0.06	Excellent
PClose	0.093	>0.05	Excellent

No items were deleted

Need for Uniqueness

TABLE 3.16: Factor Loadings for WOM Standardized Regression Weights

			Estimate
W1	$< - - -$	Wordof_Mouth	.748
W2	$< - - -$	Wordof_Mouth	.769
W3	$< - - -$	Wordof_Mouth	.889
W4	$< - - -$	Wordof_Mouth	.791
W5	$< - - -$	Wordof_Mouth	.734

3.9.9 CFA for Need for Uniqueness

We performed CFA for Need for Uniqueness and results showed that the overall model fit exhibited where global fit indices showed an acceptable ranges of CFA model fit, with χ^2 (299) = 716.148, [RMSEA = .084], [TLI = .847], [CFI = .859] and [SRMR = .054]. As per Hair Jr et al. (2017) who suggested that at least three indices must be fitted well to specify the model fit. Accordingly, with the recommendation of Mueller and Hancock (2008), the model fit satisfactorily since all the scores of fit indices are very good.
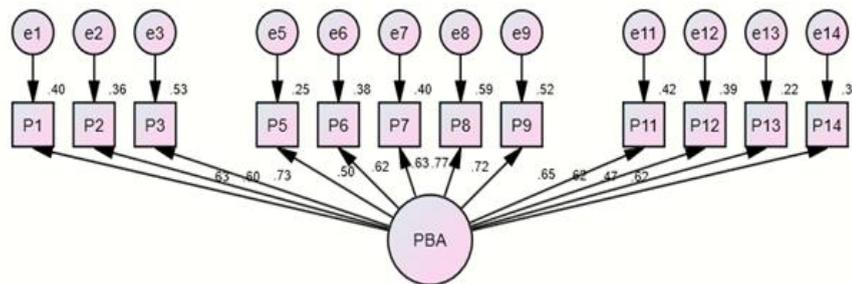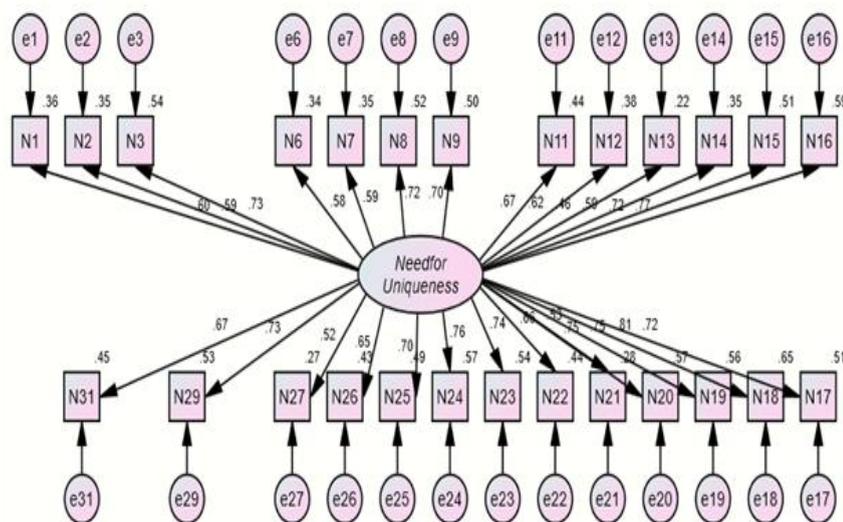

FIGURE 3.9: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Model of Need for uniqueness

TABLE 3.17: Model Fit Measures

Measure	Estimate	Estimate (After item deletion)	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	716.148	600	–	–
DF	299.000	299.000	–	–
CMIN/DF	2.333	1.99333	Between 1 and 3	Excellent
CFI	0.899	0.999	>0.95	Excellent
SRMR	0.058	0.048	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.04	0.03	<0.06	Excellent
PClose	0.070	0.000	>0.05	Not Estimated

Items deleted were C3, C4, C10, C28 and C30.

TABLE 3.18: Factor Loadings for NfU Standardized Regression Weights

			Estimate
N1	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.603
N2	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.591
N3	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.733
N6	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.583
N7	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.592
N8	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.719
N9	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.704
N11	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.666
N12	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.616
N13	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.464
N14	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.591
N15	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.716
N16	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.770
N31	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.672

N29	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.729
N27	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.522
N26	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.654
N25	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.701
N24	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.755
N23	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.736
N22	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.665
N21	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.528
N20	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.752
N19	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.747
N18	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.807
N17	$< - - -$	Needfor_Uniqueness	.717

3.9.10 CFA for Perceived Tool Support

We performed CFA for Perceived Tool Support and results showed that the overall model fit exhibited where global fit indices showed an acceptable ranges of CFA model fit, with χ^2 (5) = 13.781, [RMSEA = .094], [TLI = .968], [CFI = .984] and [SRMR = .029]. As per Hair Jr et al. (2017) who suggested that at least three indices must be fitted well to specify the model fit. Accordingly, with the recommendation of Mueller and Hancock (2008), the model fit satisfactorily since all the scores of fit indices are very good.
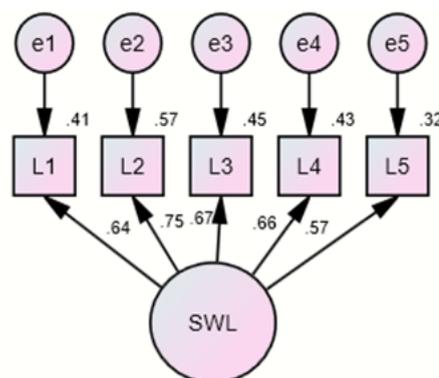

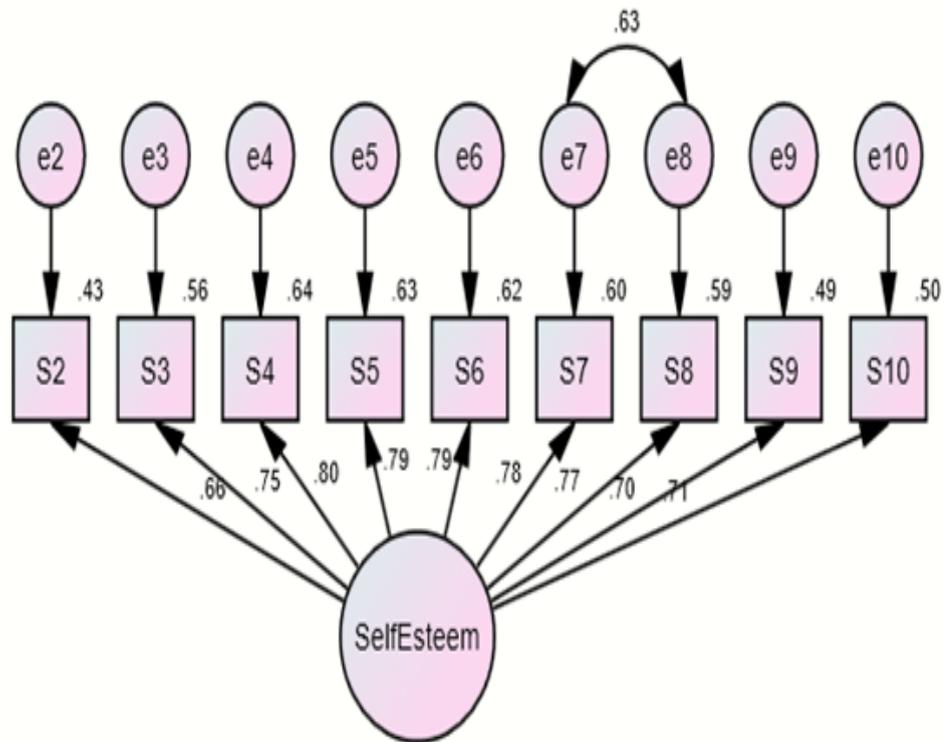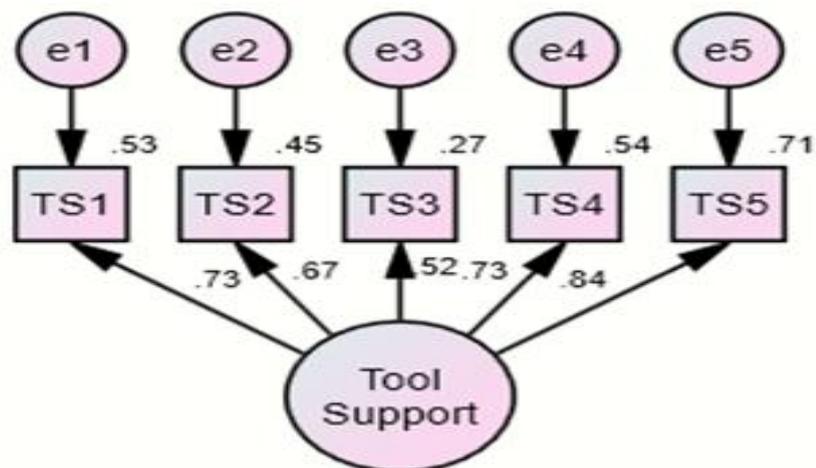FIGURE 3.10: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Model of Perceived Tool Support

TABLE 3.19: Tool for Support

Measure	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	18.204	–	–
DF	5.000	–	–
CMIN/DF	3.641	Between 1 and 3	Acceptable
CFI	0.963	>0.95	Excellent
SRMR	0.058	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.115	<0.06	Terrible
PClose	0.026	>0.05	Acceptable

No items were deleted

TABLE 3.20: Factor Loadings for Tool Support (Standardized Regression Weights

	Estimate
TS1 $< - - -$ Tool_Support	.728
TS2 $< - - -$ Tool_Support	.673
TS3 $< - - -$ Tool_Support	.523
TS4 $< - - -$ Tool_Support	.735
TS5 $< - - -$ Tool_Support	.845

Chapter 4

Results

4.1 Data Analysis

This chapter deals with empirical results of data and testing of study hypotheses. Foremost, this chapter presents the characteristics of respondents profile, response rate, normality test and descriptive statistics includes study sample. Secondly, this chapter provides a description of the research method used in this study. Third, we used we used structural equation modeling (SEM) to analyze the estimation of measurement model of each category of constructs and the analysis of the data addressing the research questions are discussed. This chapter continues the results of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), reliability and validity of the measures used in this research are also reported includes in this research variables. Finally, in this chapter, a detailed analysis including direct and moderating effects by using is reported. Using hierarchical regression analysis we tested our hypothesized model and found positive relationship among all variables of study. We also found that Need for Uniqueness and Tool Support moderated the relationship between both Independent Variable (CoCreation & Customization) and Perceived Brand Authenticity. Statistical analyses were performed using software packages-AMOS version-22 and SPSS version-22.

4.2 Characteristics of Study Participants

The collected responses in the current study varied widely on personal and participants country and state. Since this study used self-reported survey technique, therefore, response error was a concern because researchers had no control over how it was completed.

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Hence, relevant data screening approaches such as descriptive statistics, missing values, unengaged responses identifying Univariate/multivariate outliers were also reported. Table 4.1 showed the summary of the demographic profiles of the participants.

TABLE 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Variables	Category	Sample Size (N=912)	
		Frequency	% Age
Gender	Female	179	19.62
	Male	733	80.37
	Total	912	100
Age	20-30	496	54.30
	31-40	294	32.23
	41-50	111	12.17
	51 and above	11	1.20
	Total	912	100
Education	Graduate and under	662	72.58
	Master	196	21.49
	MS/M. Phil and above	64	7.01
	Total	912	100
Country	American	540	59.21
	European	202	22.14
	Asian	73	8.00
	African	68	7.45
	Australia	29	3.17
	Total	912	100

Although we retrieved 955 questionnaires, however, after removing some respondents during data screening process the final 912 respondents were retained who took part represented 733 were male in the sample and 179 were female in sample. It shows that in sample, the frequency of men was higher (80.37%) than women (19.62%). This statics also describes that the majority of brand contest participants are male. Breakdowns of age showed that 54.30% ranged in age from 20 to 30 years in the sample, similarly,

32.23% and 12.17 (ranged 31 to 40, 41-50), 1.2%, (ranged 51and above) in sample.

Of the participants, 72.58% had graduate and undergraduate degree in the sample, similarly, 21.49% had master degree, 7% had an MS/MPhil and above degree. This study included 59.21% Americans, 22.14% (U.S.A, Brazil, Argentina, Cuba, Bahamas, Costa Rica, Canada, Chile, Columbia etc.) European, 8.00% (Russia, Germany, France, U.K, Portugal, Italy etc.)Asian (Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, China, Japan etc.), 7.45% African (South Africa, Egypt, Zimbabwe) and 3.17% Australians.

4.3 Data Screening

The procedure of scrutinizing data for errors and addressing them before starting data analysis. The data screening procedure may include inspecting raw data, identifying outliers and handling of missing values contained data set. During the data screening process, we emphasized on important issues commonly facing researchers before walking through multivariate outliers. Here are some precautionary measures are given that are necessary to be considered while proceeding on statistical analysis:

- Do the data accurately reflect the responses made by the participants of my study?

- Are all the data in place and accounted for, or are some of the data absent or missing?

- Is there a pattern to the missing data?

- Are there any unusual or extreme responses present in the data set that may distort my understanding of the phenomena under study?

- Do these data meet the statistical assumptions that underlie the multivariate technique I will be using?

- What can I do if some of the statistical assumptions turn out to be violated?

4.3.1 Missing Values Per Case

Missing data has been a challenge for the researchers since the starting of the pasture of research. The large scale of missing values reduces the quality of statistical analysis, yet, some statistical analysis cannot be run in the presence of missing values. This

research involves self-reported cross-sectional data, therefore, further detail regarding longitudinal data is not necessary; however, dealing with the missing data is important in both type of research. Thus, for achieving high quality and smooth statistical analysis it is essential to gain insights into data to identify the missing values and their treatment (Hair Jr et al., 2017; Hair et al., 2010). This research conducted study across continents, similarly, data were collected (N = 955) from multiple countries through online survey.

TABLE 4.2: Missing Values

Missing data	Category	Case
1		21
2		68
3		72
4	Gender	134
5		138
6		199
7		702
8	Age	218
9	Education	272
10	Nationality	467
11		574
12		589
13		661
14		703
15		884
16		911

In examining the missing values, we performed an analysis by using SPSS-22 and tested the frequency of each variable of each item and it was found 16 respondents were missing for some of the variable measurement section and these missing values are reported in table 5.2 under their unique IDs which were allotted during data entry process. It was also observed that those missing respondents contained 20% or more overall unanswered. Since we had a sufficient data set, so we decided to remove these values from dataset

rather replacing these values by imputation. After omitting of 16 cases, a total 939 usable cases were retained for further analysis to identify the outliers and normality of data (Missing data Hair Jr et al. (2017); Allison and Uhl (1964).

4.3.2   Unengaged Responses

Another category of outlier is some unengaged responses, in the data set unengaged responses are also very important, in the data set some of the respondents who responds with the same value for every single question for example, for all the questions a person responds 1,1,1, 1or 2,2,2, 2...or 3,3,3,3,3...or...5,5,5,5and some other unengaged respondents involve, for example, 1,2,3,4,1,2,3,4,1,2,3,4and such type of responses are difficult to detect. However, visual inspection is useful to detect such unengaged respondents. The unengaged responses are not really useful because they have very small or zero variance in the responses. Before moving towards assessing the of normality study, performed analysis to detect unengaged responses in both datasets separately, accordingly, we checked the Standard-Deviation of each case of latent variables, after thoroughly scrutinizing we, observed that there is no value of Standard-Deviation is less than 0.5. Since all the values of Standard-Deviation were greater than 0.5 it shows the absence of unengaged responses in the both data set.

4.3.2.1   Outliers

Considering the outliers in a data set can aware calculators to experimental errors in the measurements engaged, therefore, in the next section we discuss the two categories of outliers (i.e. Univariate and multivariate) and how to best treat should any problems occurred at this stage.

4.3.3   Univariate Outliers

After the cases incorporating missing values were omitted and manual observation of the unengaged responses, an inspection of the matrix (in SPSS) was carried out for identifying the extreme values that might create some hazards in terms of distorting effects (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001). However, according to Hair Jr et al. (2017) outliers might be caused while data entry process errors or inappropriate quality of coding. Generally, these errors are required to be fixed during the data cleaning process. In addition, some

outliers are unexplainable and are required to be deleted from the data. For achieving this objective an effort was made to identify the univariate outliers, therefore, we separately performed analysis and SPSS-22 produced the box-plot for each variable and the outliers appeared at the extremes as shown (see annexure). The box plot showing many outliers in some variables includes in this study. Generally, the researchers suggest that it is better to omit outliers from the data set if the sample size is larger, because outliers may affect the results. On the other hand, we have less autonomy to remove the outliers if the data set is small. As the graphical representation of box-plot showing several outliers appeared on multiple variables in both samples, on the other hand, Gaskin (2016) stated that outliers are largely not a concern in Likert-scales. However, responses at the extreme (1 or 5) are not representative of outlier behaviors. Hence, we decided to keep these cases in the data. We proceed now to verifying the second type of outliers, which are the multivariate outliers.

4.3.3.1 Multivariate (MV) Outliers

In the family of outliers, there are multivariate outliers whose uniqueness occurs in their pattern of a combination of values on several variables, for example, unusual combined patterns of age, gender, and a number of variables. In sample, we found some cases that exceeded the maximum range (< 2 / -2) of kurtosis, thereby an attempt by means of Mahalanobis distance was employed to further detect the presence of multivariate outliers. According to the McLachlan and Mclachlan (1999) MV outlier identification is a robust assessment of the parameters in the Mahalanobis d2 and the comparison with a critical value of the χ. Mahalanobis d2 is multidimensional of Z-Score. It calculates the distance of a case from the centroid (multi diensional mean) of a distribution, given the covariance (multidimensional variance) of the distribution. A case would be considered as a multivariate outlier if the chi-square probability of Mahalanobis d2 is 0.001 or less (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001). Owing to this criteria, we found 22 cases of multivariate outliers having a Mahalonobis d2 with a probability of less than .001 in sample. It was suggested that removing multivariate outliers will improve the results of Skewness and kurtosis tests (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001). The following section therefore discuss the results of normality tests with the aforementioned suggestion.

4.3.3.2   Assumption of Linearity

Linearity refers to the consistent slope of change that represents the relationship between an IV and a DV. If the relationship between the IV and the DV is radically inconsistent, then it will throw off SEM analyses. Linearity results are as following;

TABLE 4.3: Normality

Linearity Diagnostic 1							
			Sum of Squares	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
SWL * CoCreation	Between Groups	(Combined)	328.798	51	6.447	3.081	0
		Linearity	55.402	1	55.402	26.475	0
		Deviation from Linearity	273.396	50	5.468	2.613	0.15
		Within Groups	1799.625	860	2.093		
		Total	2128.423	911			
SelfEsteem * CoCreation	Between Groups	(Combined)	271.306	51	5.32	4.167	0
		Linearity	31.915	1	31.915	24.999	0
		Deviation from Linearity	239.391	50	4.788	3.75	0.11
		Within Groups	1097.921	860	1.277		
		Total	1369.227	911			
BrandLoyalty * CoCreation	Between Groups	(Combined)	341.131	51	6.689	2.244	0
		Linearity	51.286	1	51.286	17.205	0
		Deviation from Linearity	289.845	50	5.797	1.945	0.13
		Within Groups	2563.628	860	2.981		
		Total	2904.759	911			
BrandTrust * CoCreation	Between Groups	(Combined)	415.972	51	8.156	3.655	0

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
		Linearity	54.435	1	54.435	24.392	0
		Deviation from Linearity	361.537	50	7.231	3.24	0.121
		Within Groups	1919.205	860	2.232		
		Total	2335.177	911			
WOM * CoCreation	Between Groups	(Combined)	283.19	51	5.553	2.413	0
		Linearity	37.225	1	37.225	16.179	0
		Deviation from Linearity	245.965	50	4.919	2.138	0.091
		Within Groups	1978.728	860	2.301		
		Total	2261.918	911			
Linearity Diagnostic 2							
			Sum of Squares	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
SWL * Customization	Between Groups	(Combined)	1815.71	45	40.349	111.739	0
		Linearity	61.316	1	61.316	169.804	0
		Deviation from Linearity	1754.394	44	39.873	110.42	0.13
		Within Groups	312.713	866	0.361		
		Total	2128.423	911			
SelfEsteem * Customization	Between Groups	(Combined)	596.303	45	13.251	14.847	0
		Linearity	42.674	1	42.674	47.813	0
		Deviation from Linearity	553.629	44	12.582	14.098	0.082

		Within Groups	772.924	866	0.893		
		Total	1369.227	911			
BrandLoyalty * Customization	Between Groups	(Combined)	1059.123	45	23.536	11.043	0
		Linearity	72.301	1	72.301	33.925	0
		Deviation from Linearity	986.821	44	22.428	10.523	0.071
		Within Groups	1845.636	866	2.131		
		Total	2904.759	911			
BrandTrust * Customization	Between Groups	(Combined)	1890.179	45	42.004	81.743	0
		Linearity	60.412	1	60.412	117.566	0
		Deviation from Linearity	1829.767	44	41.586	80.929	0.098
		Within Groups	444.998	866	0.514		
		Total	2335.177	911			
WOM * Customization	Between Groups	(Combined)	1802.8	45	40.062	75.566	0
		Linearity	33.616	1	33.616	63.408	0
		Deviation from Linearity	1769.183	44	40.209	75.843	0.099
		Within Groups	459.118	866	0.53		
		Total	2261.918	911			

4.3.3.3 Results of Normality Tests

For statistical estimation process, it is essential to test the normality of the data that is going to be used for testing of hypotheses. Hence, statistical processes require that a distribution of data to be normal or near to be normal. There are both graphical and statistical methods for evaluating normality: (1) Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test, (2) skewness and Kurtosis, (3) histogram (graphical method). We discuss now the results of these three tests of normality.

TABLE 4.4: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
CoCreation	912	1	5	3.8730	1.47276	1.171	1.068
Customization	912	1	5	3.6998	1.22944	1.670	-1.990
SWL	912	1	5	3.7544	1.52852	1.002	1.230
SelfEsteem	912	1	5	3.8700	1.22597	-0.539	1.747
BrandLoyalty	912	1	5	3.4702	1.78565	0.381	-1.330
BrandTrust	912	1	5	3.6528	1.60103	0.468	0.924
WOM	912	1	5	3.6322	1.57572	0.428	-0.174
PBA	912	1	5	3.6828	.86210	-0.934	1.066
NfU	912	1	5	3.7064	1.61163	1.007	1.116
Valid N (listwise)	912						

Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk Test:

First, we performed Kolmogorov-Smirnov and (K-S) and Shapiro-Wilk (S-W) test of normality (Shapiro and Wilk, 1965; Razali et al., 2011) in SPSS-22 whereby we found both tests reject the null hypothesis of normality, since p ($< .001$) values of both tests are less than 0.05, and it seems to depart from the population that is not normally

distributed. According to these tests, the data includes in this study are non-normal (). However, one limitation of K-S and S-W is that the larger the sample size, the more likely it is to get significant results. Since the sample size in the present study is relatively large (N = 955), the significance of the K-S and S-W tests might indicate deviations from normality. Consequently, it is plausible to perform Skewness and Kurtosis tests owing to the pursue of normality distribution for the data in the present research.

Skewness and Kurtosis:

Skewness and Kurtosis tests entails that the data distribution in either high ranges of Skewness and Kurtosis (+2 / -2) should be considered as non-normal, which may influence regression estimates (George and Mallery, 2010). To calculate the Skewness and Kurtosis we included all items of the study variables. Annexure shows the values of Skewness and kurtosis for sample. All the values of Skewness and Kurtosis were found close to the threshold level (< 2 / -2) of normality distribution criteria. Considering the criteria proposed by George and Mallery (2010), we presume data sets for both samples are normally distributed.

Histogram:

In the series of normality test, we need to visualize our data (using histograms) to determine for ourselves if the data rise to the level of non-normal. For graphical presentation, we conducted an analysis for producing histograms for all constructs includes in this study. For testing the normality, we must inspect the histogram for all constructs visually, and they must have approximate a shape of the normal curve. Results from visualizing the data by means of histogram concluded that approximately all the constructs have normal curve for the all the variables.

To ensure that our data is actually normally distributed, we conducted a final test to verify the presence of multivariate outliers, as the latter can cause problems in the normality assumption. After omitting the 27 cases of multivariate outliers (see discussion in the preceding section of multivariate outliers) from the sample, results from the normality test indicated that the significance values of both tests given the same results i.e. p ¡.05, thus no significant improvement was observed.

However, when we examined the normality through several Skewness and Kurtosis tests, that is, by removing the cases of multivariate outliers, we found satisfactory values that were close to the threshold level (< 2 / -2). This result therefore suggested that removing the 27 cases of multivariate outliers was effective to finally conclude that our data is

normally distributed. The final dataset therefore entails that we have 912 observations in sample that passed the assumption of normality for further regression-based analyses.

4.3.3.4   Common Method Bias (CMB)

Common method biased is related to the degree of counterfeit correlations shared among the variables used in the model because of mono-method used to collect data (Buckley et al., 1990; Podsakoff et al., 2003; Malhotra et al., 2006). The research regarding common method biased has dealt with different kinds of assumed measurement techniquesself-reports, rather effects and assessment center exercises (Conway and Lance, 2010). In this study, we are more concerned about the self-report research design as the same has been used for this research. According to Podsakoff and Todor (1985), the concern of common method variance would arise when self-report measures obtained from the same sample are used MacKenzie and Podsakoff (2012). Similarly, Organ and Ryan (1995) reported that Studies that use self-ratings of measures along with self-report of dispositional and attitudinal variables invite spuriously high correlations confounded by common method variance.

It is generally assumed that common method biased shared the variance among the variables measured by self-report. In other words, data obtained for research will be having the features of both constructs as anticipated and variances from the measuring scales, which do not signify the constructs. Thus, it would be calling common method variance (CMV) and this may problematic in statistical inferences and interpretations. More precisely, CMV can inflate or deflate the relationship between the variables. Considering certain reasons, it is essential to deal with the probable effects of CMV in the data. Extant research shows that there are many approaches described by the researchers to control the common method biased includes; measuring instruments and data analysis techniques (Podsakoff et al., 2003; MacKenzie and Podsakoff, 2012). Since the designed instrument determines the quality of the data thus, the researchers put more emphasis on designing instruments rather than data analysis strategies (Baumgartner and Weijters, 2012). Various researchers also demonstrated remedies to reduce the potential CMB for example, Podsakoff et al. (2003) stated that the researchers should avoid to obtain the data for IVs and DVs from the same source, focusing on the participants anonymity and make it sure that the participants that there is no right or wrong answer only their opinions are important for the study, provision of temporal separation when

it is time lag between various measurements, improve the quality of instrument items and counterbalance the questions order.

Although recommendations of Podsakoff et al. (2003) but argued that data obtained through self-reported surveys are appropriate to produce the accurate results, however, a well-designed survey questionnaire is compulsory to minimize the CMB. Whereas adopting a well-established instrument from the past research and pilot-testing are suitable strategies to minimize the CMB (Baumgartner and Weijters, 2012). On the other hand, Spector (2006) argued that the influence of CMB is not as high as could be expected. In this study, we carefully taken into the considerations precautions suggested in preceding discussion to minimize the measurement errors.

The present study employed a cross-sectional self-reported survey for obtaining the data; the researcher used personal and professional contacts for data collection. Similarly, a well-established instrument with high alpha reliabilities were chosen published in renowned research studies for better statistical inferences and interpretation of valid conclusion.

This study follows the process of pilot-testing and tested the alpha reliabilities pre-testing before launching the final survey. The results of pre-testing were quite satisfied (CFA and alpha reliabilities) moreover, all instruments used in this study showed good psychometric properties. We also tried to make sure anonymity of the respondents, the questionnaire does not contain any item regarding the personal information, and the cover letter clearly shows that only the respondents opinion is required and there were no right or wrong questions in this study.

Despite, various precautionary measures were taken to minimize CMB, therefore, we expect that CMB cannot be ruled out in the current study. However, to make it sure we also statistically tested the presence of CMB in our study, we used Harman's single factor test in SPSS, common latent factor in AMOS as suggested by Podsakoff et al. (2003).

4.3.3.5   Harmans Single Factor

For testing the presence of CMB in the current study first we used Harman (1960) single factor technique during the EFA in SPSS where all the measures in the study were loaded onto a single factor with no rotation (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The newly factor would not be a part of the research model, the only intended to develop this factor is to find

out the presence of CMB and later on omitted from the study. Consequently, Harman's single factor test exhibits the absence of the CMB in this study. Podsakoff et al. (2003) refer this test as a diagnostic approach that actually does nothing to statistically control for (or partial out) method effects. This approach also has a benefit due to its simplicity but on the other hand, there are various weaknesses of this approach.

TABLE 4.5: Harman Single Factor

Component	Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	**% of Var**	**$\sum$V %**	**Total**	**% of Var**	**$\sum$V %**
1	7.520	13.008	13.008	7.520	5.489	47.974
2	5.772	9.984	22.992			
3	4.692	8.115	31.107			
4	3.969	6.866	37.973			
5	3.848	6.655	44.628			
6	3.365	5.821	50.449			
7	3.084	5.334	55.783			
8	2.951	5.104	60.887			
9	2.759	4.773	65.660			
10	2.678	4.632	70.293			
11	2.393	4.138	74.431			
12	2.327	4.024	78.455			
13	2.048	3.543	81.998			
14	1.929	3.337	85.335			
15	1.884	3.259	88.594			
16	1.778	3.075	91.669			
17	1.637	2.831	94.500			
18	1.614	2.792	97.293			
19	1.565	2.707	100.000			

4.3.3.6 Common Latent Factor (Zero-Constrained Approach)

Considering the weaknesses in Harmans single factor technique in finding out the common method biased in the data we also used the common latent factor technique (Podsakoff et al., 2003). To verify the common method biased we conducted the common

latent factor analysis during the CFA using AMOS-22. For testing the percentage of variance explained by a common latent factor we used our CFA model which contained all constructs and introduced a common latent factor in the model.

In this technique, we developed a new latent variable and we connected all the observed variables in the model with common latent factor and constrained the paths to be equal and variance of common factor is constrained to be zero. Accordingly, to compare the constrained and unconstrained models we used the chi-square difference ($\Delta\chi^2$) test as:

$$\Delta\chi^2 = \chi2constrained\chi^2unconstrained$$
$$\Delta\chi^2 = \chi^2(1318) = 1642.126\chi^2(1265) = 1577.281$$
$$\Delta = \chi^2(53) = 64.846$$

The results showed that chi-square difference ($\Delta\chi^2$) between constrained and unconstrained models Δ^2 (53) = 64.846, which is statistically insignificant.

The Chi-square difference test has shown that the amount of shared variance across all variables is not significant from zero. Therefore, we conclude that the common method biased does not exist in our measure (Gaskin, 2016).

4.4 Assumption of Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity is a situation when two or more independent variables are highly correlated with each other, and of course, the multicollinearity is not desirable in the multiple regression models.

For example, in a multiple regression (see equation below) we assume that IVs (X1 and X2) are independent of each other, and how these independent variable impacts on the dependent variable (Y).

$$Y = \beta o + \beta 1 X 1 + \beta 2 X 2 + \varepsilon$$

In case we have multicollinearity, it means the variance our IVs explain independent variable included in the regression model are overlapping with each other, therefore, these would not have a unique variance in DVs.

If, we desire to examine the unique impact of independent variable X1 dependent variable on Y we want to be sure that is X2 is not a disturbance. Similarly, X2 has a unique impact on Y where is X1 is constant means there is no disturbance of it.

There are different approaches to assess the multicollinearity for example, according to Kline (2005) collinearity can be tested through bivariate correlations, roughly bi-variate correlations greater than r = .80 would be considered the potential problem. However, (Obrien, 2007), recommended that multicollinearity can be tested through regression analysis by calculating variance inflation factor (VIF).

The rules of thumb for the VIF are as follows:

TABLE 4.6: Cut-off Values for VIF

No.	Threshold Level	Description
1.	VIF < 3	No collinearity issue
2.	VIF < 3	Potential Issue
3.	VIF < 5	Very likely Issue
4.	VIF < 10	Definitely Issue

TABLE 4.7: Assumption of Multicoleanirity

Coefficients[a]

Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
							Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.651	0.103		25.751	0		
	CoCreation	0.151	0.019	0.258	8.114	0	0.969	1.032
	Customization	0.121	0.022	0.172	5.43	0	0.969	1.032

a. Dependent Variable: PBA

TABLE 4.8: Assumption of Multicoleanirity

Coefficients[a]

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	1.992	0.213		9.35	0		
SWL	0.106	0.034	0.103	3.073	0.002	0.922	1.085
SelfEsteem	0.153	0.043	0.119	3.571	0	0.929	1.077
BrandLoyalty	0.089	0.029	0.1	3.046	0.002	0.947	1.056
BrandTrust	0.094	0.033	0.096	2.878	0.004	0.932	1.072

a. Dependent Variable: WOM

However, according to Hair Jr et al. (2017) VIF scores less than 10 are typically considered acceptable. Thus, before moving to test our hypothesis we examined the multicollinearity test in SPSS and calculated the VIF for each independent variable includes in this study. For detecting multicollinearity among the set of independent variable we, performed several regression models by swapping all the IVs one by one and finally, an inspection of the variance inflation factor scores (VIFs) indicated that all variables were less than 5 for sample (below the critical value of 10) are typically considered acceptable (Hair and Babin, 2006). There were no instances of multicollinearity among any of the variables (VIF < 3) so we concluded there is no multicollinearity issue among independent variables includes in this study.

4.4.1 Factor Analysis

Factor analysis (FA) can be defined as a broader term representing of several statistical approaches that offer to assess the population level (i.e., un-observed) structure underlying the deviation from the observed variables with their correlation (Mueller et al., 2006; Gorsuch, 1990). In other words, FA is an analytical technique that tells us whether collected data is consistent with the theoretically anticipated model.

4.4.2 From EFA to CFA

Factor analysis is commonly used in the fields of education and psychology and is considered the technique of selection to interpret self-reported questionnaire. According to Byrne (2010), there are two major classes of factor analysis: exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Indeed, based on the distinct features of these classes the researchers select one of appropriate method whether EFA or CFA. For example, in CFA one or more underlying models must be specified even the run the analysis, moreover, CFA offers errors covariance to be correlated which is not possible in EFA. However, some procedures are regular in the EFA, suchlike factor rotations which are entirely extraneous in CFA. Predominantly, CFA is an important aspect of a broader class of analysis which is called structural equation modeling (Thompson, 2004).

Typically, EFA is used earlier in the process of establishing a new theory by exploring latent factors that most excellent corresponds for the variations and interrelationships between the manifest variables (Henson and Roberts, 2006). Whereas Bandalos and Boehm-Kaufman (2010) stated that CFA is commonly used to test an existing theory, and this technique hypothesizes a priori model of the underlying structure of the target constructs and investigates whether this model is consistent with the data sufficiently. CFA also estimates the degree of model fit, the explained variances and standardized residual for the measurement variables, and the appropriateness of the factor loadings. A certain score of model fit is essential prior examining of the general model is done (Mulaik and James, 1995). Taking the considerations of various researchers regarding the choice of EFA or CFA for this study, we decided to perform the CFA instead of EFA as the measures used in this study are well established, and scale demonstrates higher alpha reliabilities in the past literature.

4.4.3 Sample Size for Structural Equation Modeling

There is a long-standing debate in the literature with regards to sample size requirement for structural education modeling, for example, Anderson and Gerbing (1988) recommended that minimum 150 or more sample size is to be sufficient when constructing structural equation models. Whereas Boomsma (1985) suggested that at least 400 sample size will be satisfactory, on the other hand, Hu et al. (1992) argued that in some cases even the 5000, the sample size is insufficient. Kline (2010) suggested that 10 to

20 respondents will be needed to obtain parameters estimates, however, Jackson (2003) examined a very little effect of sample size on model fit, that an inadequate sample size shown poor fitting models.

The aforementioned debate seems paradox because there is no common agreement on the adequate sample size for constructing SEM. The researcher can face a conflicting situation while choosing the sample size, it depends on their different resources. To summarize, the different recommendations about sample size, Weston and Gore Jr (2006) presumed that there is no problem with the sample and recommended a minimum sample size of 200 for any SEM. Before moving for testing of study hypothesis we performed a series of confirmatory factor analyses for evaluating the psychometric properties of all constructs includes in this study. Once the measurement model is specified and estimates are calculated, the next step is to validate the model fit and verify whether the model is consistent with the data or not? For gaining this objective, the researchers have been proposed several fit indices measures for determining the overall model fit of the hypothetical model. Since, the advancement and estimation of latent variable models and associated procedures, the theme evaluation of model/selection of fit indices are very important for the researchers (e.g., Bollen and Long (1993); Austin and Calderón (1996)).

TABLE 4.9: Global Model Fit Indices with their Cut-offs Levels

Measures	Fit-Index	Cut-offs
CFA	χ^2/df	< 2 great; < 0.30 good
	Comparative fit index (CFI)	$< .95$ great; $< .90$ good
	Tucker-Lewis Index(TLI)	$< .95$ great; $< .90$ good
	Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	$< .05$ great; $< .08$ good
	Standardized root mean residual (SRMR)	$< .05$ great; $< .08$ good

According to Deng et al. (2013) there is no consensus on fit indices, thus, acceptable cutoff values for the Maximum Likelihood 2 (ML)-based in this study the adequacy of

the model fit was determined by five global-fit-indices (see table 5.3) the most commonly used in the literature is (CMIN/DF) recommended by Marsh and Hocevar (1985) that explains that how model fits the data Cohen and Roussel (2005). An insignificant value of chi-squared presents the good model fit the data and hypothesized model, however, sample size affects this fit index (Chen and Gursoy, 2001).

Past literature suggests other fit indices which are most commonly used: Root Mean Square Error of Approximation RMSEA, Browne et al. (1993); Byrne (2013); Comparative Fit Index CFI, Bentler (1990); Cohen and Roussel (2005); Byrne (2013); Tucker-Lewis Index TLI, Bentler and Bonett (1980); Byrne (2013) and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual SRMR, Hu and Bentler (1999).

4.4.4 Convergent and Discriminant Validity

Generally, it is assumed that the research process encompasses some flaws, it is difficult to conduct a perfect research project, yet, without research and theoretical advancements in social sciences would not happen. Resultantly, the social science scholars and practitioners required to be confident that theoretical findings are arrived at through both sound conceptual arguments and the applications of rigorous and relevant methodological techniques.

TABLE 4.10: Validity Measures Fit Indices and Threshold Levels

Measures	Fit Indices	Threshold
Reliability	Composite Reliability (CR) (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1978)	> .90 great; > .80 good; > .70 fair
Convergent Validity (Accuracy of instrument)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE) (Linn, 2000; Stewart et al., 2009)	AVE > .50
Discriminant validity	Maximum Shared Squared Variance (MSV)	MSV > AVE
	Average Shared Squared Variance (ASV)	ASV > AVE

Within the social science research, SEM technique has gained considerable attention of both researchers and practitioners (Steenkamp and Van Trijp, 1991; Baumgartner and Homburg, 1996). The assessment of scale is often linked with the EFA or CFA, in addition to that testing to establish the validity of measures such as convergent and discriminant validity.

To verified the convergent validity among our study constructs, in our case, we confirmed that all the ten variables convergent validity Rho, VC is >.50 regardless of sample size, it is required to have threshold level which is greater than 0.50 and averaging out to greater than 0.70 for each factor as the threshold level is shown in table 5.4. For testing of discriminant validity explains that the extent to which factors are different. The rule is that variables should relate more strongly to their own factor than to another factor, however, Maximum Shared Squared Variance: MSV should be less than Average Variance Extracted: AVE (Hair Jr et al., 2017) accordingly results revealed that the value of MSV are less than AVE of all our constructs in their respective sections.

TABLE 4.11: Convergent Validity and Discriminant Validity

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10
F1	0.74	0.52	0.573	0.742	**0.7190271**									
F2	0.86	0.59	0.631	0.868	0.556***	**0.76681**								
F3	0.72	0.56	0.673	0.722	0.457***	0.712***	**0.82037**							
F4	0.72	0.59	0.661	0.729	0.357***	0.357***	0.512***	**0.85381**						
F5	0.72	0.6	0.731	0.724	0.447***	0.337***	0.594***	0.312***	**0.77201**					
F6	0.73	0.61	0.813	0.724	0.557***	0.447***	0.571***	0.331***	0.442***	**0.78166**				
F7	0.81	0.55	0.551	0.815	0.667***	0.517***	0.688***	0.303***	0.507***	0.676***	**0.73892**			
F8	0.79	0.75	0.802	0.794	0.717***	0.437***	0.591***	0.497***	0.437***	0.712***	0.515***	**0.86313**		
F9	0.82	0.61	0.732	0.825	0.701***	0.647***	0.588***	0.517***	0.444***	0.698***	0.717***	0.502***	**0.78166**	
F10	0.71	0.72	0.731	0.715	0.411***	0.527***	0.401***	0.417***	0.397***	0.559***	0.707***	0.757***	0.616***	**0.84676**

4.5   Structural Equation Modeling

Structural equation modeling includes two components: first is factor analysis and second is path analysis, more precisely, SEM is a set of measurement and structural model. The measurement model demonstrates the association between observed variables and latent variables; however, the structural model describes the interrelationships among study constructs. The model may be called a full structural model when both measurement and structural model are considered together. The current study, considered the measurement model to ascertain the distinctiveness of study constructs.

4.5.1   Measurement Models

The measurement model of SEM permits the researchers to appraise how well-observed variables combine to recognize underlying the hypothesized constructs, however, confirmatory factor analysis is used in examining measurement model and hypothesized variables are called as latent variables. Further, a latent variable is described more appropriately to the degree that the measures that describe strongly related to each other. For example, if a construct has four measures and one of four is weakly correlated with three other measures it means that construct will be poorly defined. Resultantly, this model would not be specified in the hypothesized relationships among study variables. However, there are several places in the measurement model where a researcher may develop the hypothesized model. Therefore, to achieve this, we have performed CFA specify posit to the relationships of the observed variables to the latent variables.
Field (2005) advocates the suggestion of Guadagnoli and Velicer (1988) to regard a factor as reliable if it has four or more loadings of at least 0.6 regardless of sample size. Hahs-Vaughn (2016) suggests using a cut-off of 0.4, irrespective of sample size, for interpretative purposes. When the items have different frequency distributions Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) follow Comrey and Lee (2013) in suggesting using more stringent cut-offs going from 0.32 (poor), 0.45 (fair), 0.55 (good), 0.63 (very good) or 0.71 (excellent).

4.5.2   Multicollinearity

The multiplicative interactive term in regression analysis can create the problem of multicollinearity. Therefore, we calculated for multicollinearity using criteria for variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance values (Kleinbaum et al., 1988). VIF scores, which
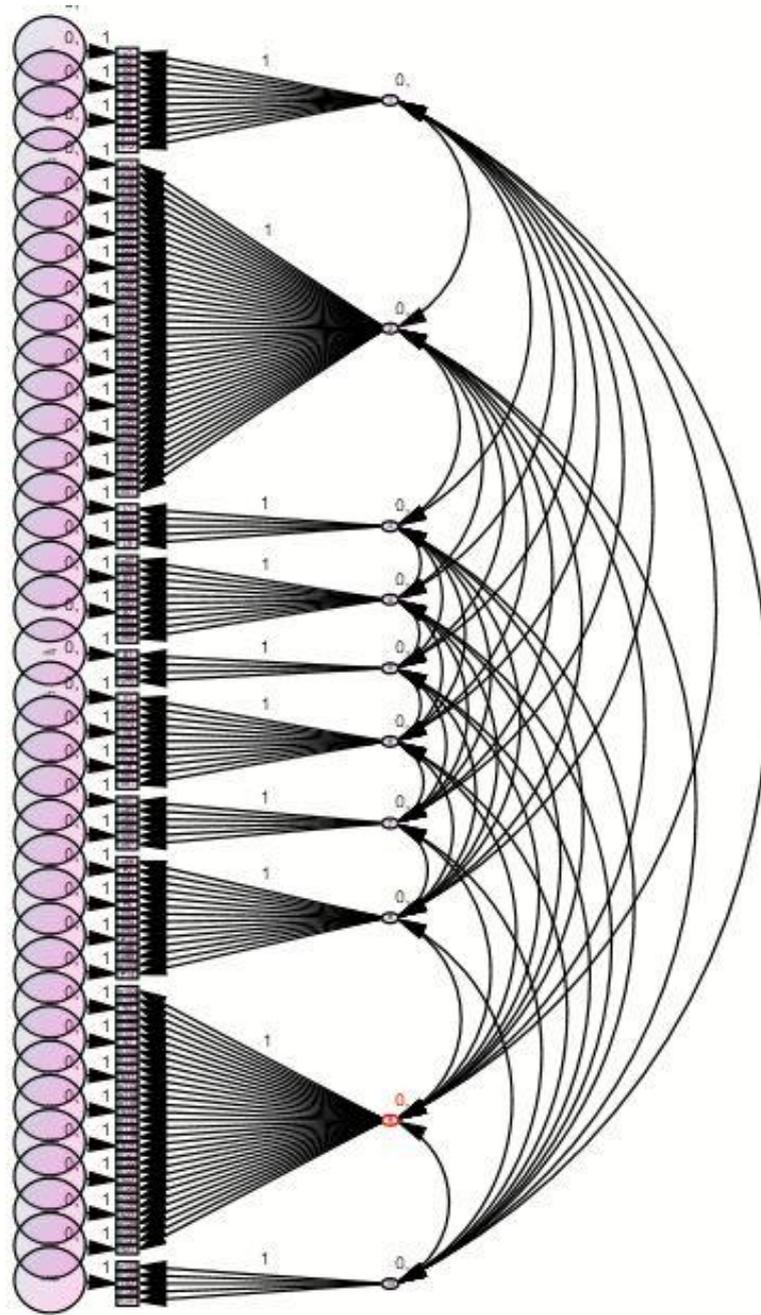
FIGURE 4.1: Measurement Model

measure the extent to which collinearity among the predictors affects the precision of a regression model in each step. Variation inflation factor for all variables were less than 5. VIF scores less than 10 are typically considered acceptable (Hair Jr et al., 2017). Finally, an inspection of the variance inflation factor scores (VIFs) indicated that there were no instances of multicollinearity among any of the variables (largest VIF = 4.9).

TABLE 4.12: Correlational Analysis

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
CoCreation	1								
Customization	.177**	1							
SWL	.161**	.170**	1						
SelfEsteem	.153**	.177**	.195**	1					
BrandLoyalty	.133**	.158**	.164**	.159**	1				
Brand Trust	.153**	.161**	.195**	.178**	.143**	1			
WOM	.128**	.122**	.161**	172**	150**	151**	1		
PBA	.288**	.218**	.238**	.284**	.203**	.226**	272**	1	
NfU	.139**	.127**	.125**	.148**	.127**	.128**	.147**	.289**	1
ToolSupport	.149**	.160**	.132**	.133**	.107**	.160**	.113**	.246**	.161**	1

Correlational analyses were used to examine the relationship between variables of the study Results indicated positive and significant relationship among variables of the study.

TABLE 4.13: Alpha Reliabilities

No	Variable Name	No of Items	Alpha Reliability
I	Co-Creation	12	0.808
II	Customization	39	0.865
III	Perceived Brand Authenticity	14	0.794
IV	Satisfaction with Life	5	0.789
V	Self-Esteem	10	0.816
VI	Brand Loyalty	4	0.718
VII	Brand Trust	11	0.821
VIII	Word of Mouth	6	0.880
IX	Need for uniqueness	31	0.857
X	Perceived Tool Support	5	0.830

The results suggest that 10 out of 10 correlations were statistically significant The results of bi-variate correlations revealed Customization was positively related to CoCreation ($r = .177$, $< .001$), SWL was positively related to CoCreation and Customization ($r = .161$, $< .001$, $r = .170$, $< .001$) respectively.), Self-esteem was positively related to CoCreation, Customization and SWL ($r = .153$, $< .001$, $r = .177$, $< .001$, $r = .195$, $< .001$) respectively. Brand Loyalty was positively related to CoCreation, Customization, SWL and Self-esteem ($r = .133$, $< .001$, $r = .158$, $< .001$, $r = .164$, $< .001$, $r = .159$, $< .001$) respectively. Brand Trust was positively related to CoCreation, Customization, SWL and Self-esteem and Brand Loyalty ($r = .153$, $< .001$, $r = .161$, $< .001$, $r = .195$, $< .001$, $r = .178$, $< .001$, $r = .143$, $< .001$) respectively.

WOM was positively related to CoCreation, Customization, SWL, Self-esteem, Brand Loyalty and Brand Trust (r = .128, < .001, r = .122, < .001, r = .161, < .001, r = .172, < .001, r = .150, < .001, r = .151, < .001) respectively. PBA was positively related to CoCreation, Customization, SWL, Self-esteem, Brand Loyalty, Brand Trust and WOM (r = .228, < .001, r = .218, < .001, r = .238, < .001, r = .284, < .001, r = .203, < .001, r = .266, < .001, r = .272, < .001) respectively.

Nfu was positively related to CoCreation, Customization, SWL, Self-esteem, Brand Loyalty, Brand Trust, WOM and PBA (r = .139, < .001, r = .127, < .001, r = .125, < .001, r = .148, < .001, r = .127, < .001, r = .128, < .001, r = .147, < .001, r = .289, < .001). Tool Support respectively was positively related to CoCreation, Customization, SWL, Self-esteem, Brand Loyalty, Brand Trust, WOM, PBA and Nfu (r = .149, < .001, r = .160, < .001, r = .132, < .001, r = .133, < .001, r = .107, < .001, r = .160, < .001, r = .113, < .001, r = .246, < .001, r = .161, < .001) respectively.

Cronbachs alpha values that ranged from 0.718 to 0.865 when measured on a nine-point Likert scale. Hence in order to maintain the data analysis consistency of current study five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree) has been used.

Indeed, in the regression equation, we entered IV (X) and MV (Z) for testing the moderating effects. Predictors were mean centered (**?**), and interactive terms between the independent variable and the moderator were computed. The moderating effect may be supported when the relevant production term is significant, after introducing the main predictors. Then, we the plotted the interaction graphs using Jeremy Dawsons tools for graphing interaction:

http://www.jeremydawson.co.uk/slopes.htm.

4.6 Results of Hypothesis Tests

For study, we tested our hypotheses with two separate hierarchical multiple regression analysis (HMR; see Raudenbush and Bryk (2002)). A relationship between an independent variable (IV) = X and a dependent variable (DV) = Y, changes according to the value of a moderating variable (MV) = Z. To test a moderation effect, we included moderating variable = Z, and interaction term created (X) (Z) by multiplying both variables.

4.7 Structural Equational Modeling without Moderation
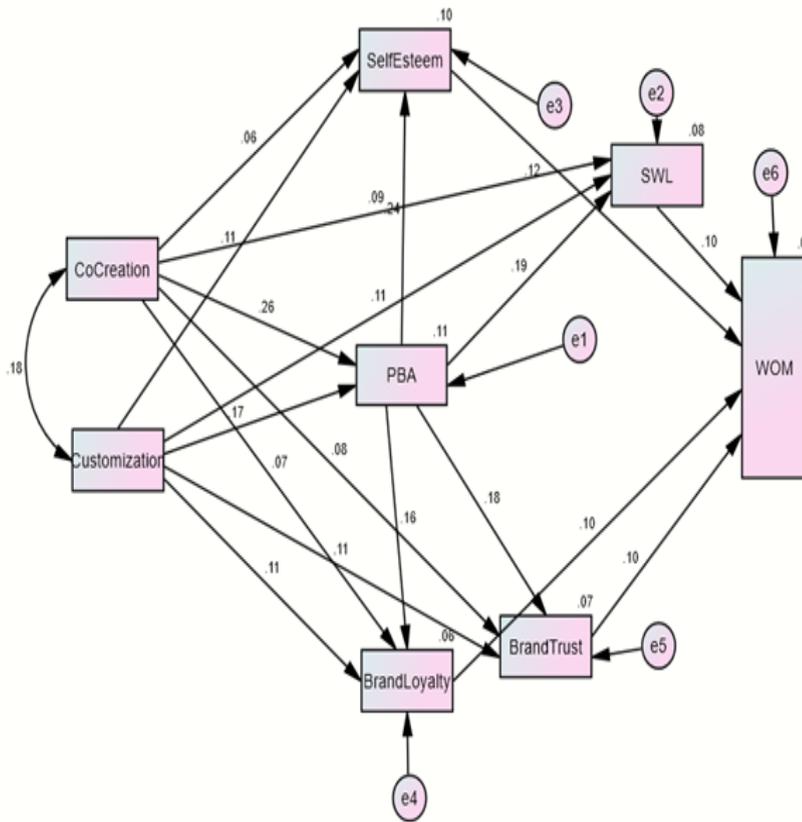
FIGURE 4.2: Structural Equational Modeling without Moderation

When Customization goes up by 1 units, PBA goes up by 0.168 unit. When CoCreation goes up by 1 units, PBA goes up by 0.252 unit. When PBA goes up by 1 units, SWL goes up by 0.221 unit. When PBA goes up by 1 units, SelfEsteem goes up by 0.271 unit. When PBA goes up by 1 units, BrandLoyalty goes up by 0.199 unit. When PBA goes up by 1 units, BrandTrust goes up by 0.208 unit. When Customization goes up by 1 units, SWL goes up by 0.119 unit. When Customization goes up by 1 units, SelfEsteem goes up by 0.117 unit.

When Customization goes up by 1 units, BrandLoyalty goes up by 0.122 unit. When Customization goes up by 1 units, BrandTrust goes up by 0.112 unit. When CoCreation goes up by 1 units, SWL goes up by 0.076 unit. When CoCreation goes up by 1 units, BrandTrust goes up by 0.073 unit. When CoCreation goes up by 1 units, SelfEsteem goes up by 0.053 unit insignificantly.

When SWL goes up by 1 units, WOM goes up by 0.132 unit. When SelfEsteem goes up by 1 units, WOM goes up by 0.141 unit. When BrandLoyalty goes up by 1 units,

WOM goes up by 0.12 unit. When BrandTrust goes up by 1 units, WOM goes up by 0.122 unit.

TABLE 4.14: SEM without Moderation (Standardized Regression Weights)

			Estimate	P
PBA	$< - - -$	Customization	.172	***
PBA	$< - - -$	CoCreation	.258	***
SWL	$< - - -$	PBA	.188	***
SelfEsteem	$< - - -$	PBA	.241	***
BrandLoyalty	$< - - -$	PBA	.159	***
BrandTrust	$< - - -$	PBA	.178	***
SWL	$< - - -$	Customization	.113	***
SelfEsteem	$< - - -$	Customization	.113	***
BrandLoyalty	$< - - -$	Customization	.111	***
BrandTrust	$< - - -$	Customization	.107	.001
SWL	$< - - -$	CoCreation	.087	.009
BrandTrust	$< - - -$	CoCreation	.082	.014
SelfEsteem	$< - - -$	CoCreation	.063	.056
BrandLoyalty	$< - - -$	CoCreation	.067	.046
WOM	$< - - -$	SWL	.103	.001
WOM	$< - - -$	SelfEsteem	.120	***
WOM	$< - - -$	BrandLoyalty	.101	.002
WOM	$< - - -$	BrandTrust	.096	.003

TABLE 4.15: Total Effects SEM without Moderation (Standardized Regression Weights)

	CoCreation	Customization
PBA	.258	.172
SWL	.136	.146
BrandTrust	.128	.138
BrandLoyalty	.108	.139
SelfEsteem	.125	.154

The standardized total (direct and indirect) effect of CoCreation on PBA is .258. That is, due to both direct (unmediated) and indirect (mediated) effects of CoCreation on PBA, when CoCreation goes up by 1 unit, PBA goes up by 0.258 units. The standardized total (direct and indirect) effect of CoCreation on SWL is .136. That is, due to both direct (unmediated) and indirect (mediated) effects of CoCreation on SWL, when CoCreation goes up by 1 unit, SWL goes up by 0.136 units. The standardized total (direct and indirect) effect of CoCreation on BrandTrust is .128. That is, due to both direct (unmediated) and indirect (mediated) effects of CoCreation on BrandTrust, when CoCreation goes up by 1 unit, BrandTrust goes up by 0.128 units. The standardized total (direct and indirect) effect of CoCreation on BrandLoyalty is .108. That is, due to both direct (unmediated) and indirect (mediated) effects of CoCreation on BrandLoyalty, when CoCreation goes up by 1 unit, BrandLoyalty goes up by 0.108 units. The standardized total (direct and indirect) effect of CoCreation on SelfEsteem is .125.

That is, due to both direct (unmediated) and indirect (mediated) effects of CoCreation on SelfEsteem, when CoCreation goes up by 1 unit, SelfEsteem goes up by 0.125 units. The standardized total (direct and indirect) effect of Customization on PBA is .172. That is, due to both direct (unmediated) and indirect (mediated) effects of Customization on PBA, when Customization goes up by 1 unit, PBA goes up by 0.172 units. The standardized total (direct and indirect) effect of Customization on SWL is .146. That is, due to both direct (unmediated) and indirect (mediated) effects of Customization on SWL, when Customization goes up by 1 unit, SWL goes up by 0.146 units. The standardized total (direct and indirect) effect of Customization on BrandTrust is .138.

That is, due to both direct (unmediated) and indirect (mediated) effects of Customization on BrandTrust, when Customization goes up by 1 unit, BrandTrust goes up by 0.138 units. The standardized total (direct and indirect) effect of Customization on BrandLoyalty is .139. That is, due to both direct (unmediated) and indirect (mediated) effects of Customization on BrandLoyalty, when Customization goes up by 1 unit, BrandLoyalty goes up by 0.139 units. The standardized total (direct and indirect) effect of Customization on SelfEsteem is .154. That is, due to both direct (unmediated) and indirect (mediated) effects of Customization on SelfEsteem, when Customization goes up by 1 unit, SelfEsteem goes up by 0.154 units.

TABLE 4.16: Standardized Direct Effects without Moderation (Standardized Regression Weights)

	CoCreation	Customization
PBA	.258	.172
SWL	.087	.113
BrandTrust	.082	.107
BrandLoyalty	.067	.111
SelfEsteem	.063	.113

The standardized direct (unmediated) effect of CoCreation on PBA is .258. That is, due to the direct (unmediated) effect of CoCreation on PBA, when CoCreation goes up by 1 unit, PBA goes up by 0.258 units. This is in addition to any indirect (mediated) effect that CoCreation may have on PBA. The standardized direct (unmediated) effect of CoCreation on SWL is .087. That is, due to the direct (unmediated) effect of CoCreation on SWL, when CoCreation goes up by 1 unit, SWL goes up by 0.087 units. This is in addition to any indirect (mediated) effect that CoCreation may have on SWL. The standardized direct (unmediated) effect of CoCreation on BrandTrust is .082.

That is, due to the direct (unmediated) effect of CoCreation on BrandTrust, when CoCreation goes up by 1 unit, BrandTrust goes up by 0.082 units. This is in addition to any indirect (mediated) effect that CoCreation may have on BrandTrust. The standardized direct (unmediated) effect of CoCreation on BrandLoyalty is .067. That is, due to

the direct (unmediated) effect of CoCreation on BrandLoyalty, when CoCreation goes up by 1 unit, BrandLoyalty goes up by 0.067 units. This is in addition to any indirect (mediated) effect that CoCreation may have on BrandLoyalty. The standardized direct (unmediated) effect of CoCreation on SelfEsteem is .063. That is, due to the direct (unmediated) effect of CoCreation on SelfEsteem, when CoCreation goes up by 1 unit, SelfEsteem goes up by 0.063 units. This is in addition to any indirect (mediated) effect that CoCreation may have on SelfEsteem.

TABLE 4.17: Standardized Indirect Effects without Moderation (Standardized Regression Weights))

	CoCreation	Customization
PBA	.000	.000
SWL	.048	.032
BrandTrust	.046	.031
BrandLoyalty	.041	.027
SelfEsteem	.062	.042

The indirect (mediated) effect of CoCreation on SWL is .048. That is, due to the indirect (mediated) effect of CoCreation on SWL, when CoCreation increase 1 unit, SWL increase by unit 0.048. This is in addition to any direct (unmediated) effect that CoCreation may have on SWL. The indirect (mediated) effect of CoCreation on BrandTrust is .046. That is, due to the indirect (mediated) effect of CoCreation on BrandTrust, when CoCreation increase 1 unit, BrandTrust increase by unit 0.046. This is in addition to any direct (unmediated) effect that CoCreation may have on BrandTrust. The indirect (mediated) effect of CoCreation on BrandLoyalty is .041. That is, due to the indirect (mediated) effect of CoCreation on BrandLoyalty, when CoCreation increase 1 unit, BrandLoyalty increase by unit .041.

This is in addition to any direct (unmediated) effect that CoCreation may have on BrandLoyalty. The indirect (mediated) effect of CoCreation on SelfEsteem is .062. That is, due to the indirect (mediated) effect of CoCreation on SelfEsteem, when CoCreation increase 1 unit, SelfEsteem increase by unit 0.062. This is in addition to any direct

(unmediated) effect that CoCreation may have on SelfEsteem. The standardized indirect (mediated) effect of Customization on SWL is .032. That is, due to the indirect (mediated) effect of Customization on SWL, when Customization increase 1 unit unit, SWL increase by unit 0.032 units. This is in addition to any direct (unmediated) effect that Customization may have on SWL.

The standardized indirect (mediated) effect of Customization on BrandTrust is .031. That is, due to the indirect (mediated) effect of Customization on BrandTrust, when Customization increase 1 unit unit, BrandTrust increase by unit 0.031 units. This is in addition to any direct (unmediated) effect that Customization may have on BrandTrust. The standardized indirect (mediated) effect of Customization on BrandLoyalty is .027. That is, due to the indirect (mediated) effect of Customization on BrandLoyalty, when Customization increase 1 unit, BrandLoyalty increase by 0.027 units. This is in addition to any direct (unmediated) effect that Customization may have on BrandLoyalty. The standardized indirect (mediated) effect of Customization on SelfEsteem is .042. That is, due to the indirect (mediated) effect of Customization on SelfEsteem, when Customization increase 1 unit, SelfEsteem increase by unit 0.042 units. This is in addition to any direct (unmediated) effect that Customization may have on SelfEsteem.

4.7.1   Structural Equational Modeling with Moderators
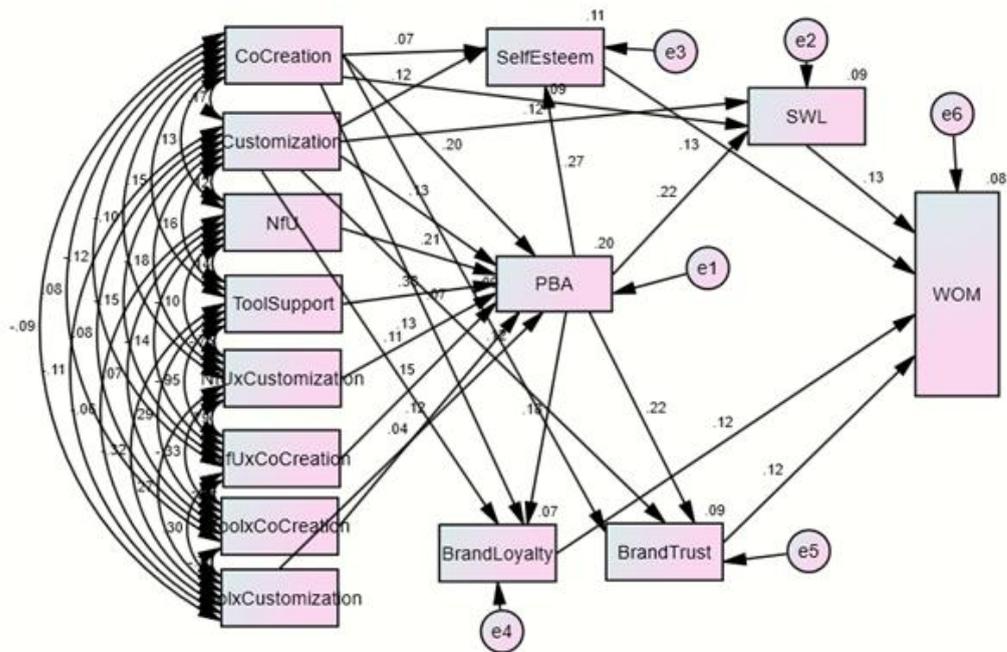
FIGURE 4.3: Structural Equational Modeling with Moderators

SEM tested our hypotheses with two moderating variables i:e Need for uniqueness and Tool Support. A relationship between an independent variable (IV) = X and a dependent variable (DV) = Y, changes according to the value of a moderating variable (MV) = Z. To test a moderation effect, we included moderating variable = Z, and interaction term created (X) (Z) by multiplying both variables. Indeed, in the SEM, we entered IV (X) and MV (Z) for testing the moderating effects. Predictors were mean centered (**?**), and interactive terms between the independent variable and the moderator were computed. The moderating effect may be supported when the relevant product term is significant, after introducing the main predictors. Then, we the plotted the interaction graphs using Jeremy Dawsons tools for graphing interaction.

TABLE 4.18: SEM with Moderation Standardized Total Effects (Standardized Regression Weights)

	Toolx Customization	CoCreation	Toolx CoCreation	NfUx CoCreation	NfUx Customization	Tool Support	NfU	Customization
PBA	.037	.197	.117	.146	.135	.382	.208	.131
SWL	.008	.134	.025	.032	.029	.083	.045	.146
BrandTrust	.008	.132	.025	.032	.029	.083	.045	.144
BrandLoyalty	.007	.106	.021	.026	.024	.069	.038	.138
SelfEsteem	.010	.119	.031	.039	.036	.102	.056	.151

TABLE 4.19: SEM with Moderation Standardized Direct Effects (Standardized Regression Weights)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
PBA	.037	.197	.117	.146	.135	.382	.208	.131	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
SWL	.000	.091	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.117	.217	.000	.000	.000	.000
BrandTrust	.000	.089	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.115	.217	.000	.000	.000	.000
BrandLoyalty	.000	.070	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.114	.181	.000	.000	.000	.000
SelfEsteem	.000	.066	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.116	.267	.000	.000	.000	.000
WOM	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.127	.123	.117	.135

TABLE 4.20: SEM with Moderation Standardized indirect Effects (Standardized Regression Weights)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PBA	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
SWL	.008	.043	.025	.032	.029	.083	.045	.028	.000
BrandTrust	.008	.043	.025	.032	.029	.083	.045	.028	.000
BrandLoyalty	.007	.036	.021	.026	.024	.069	.038	.024	.000
SelfEsteem	.010	.053	.031	.039	.036	.102	.056	.035	.000
WOM	.004	.062	.013	.016	.015	.043	.023	.073	.111

TABLE 4.21: Standardized Regression Weights: (Group Number 1 - Default Model)

Parameter			Estimate	Lower (Llci)	Upper (Ulci)	P
PBA	<—	Customization	.172	-.034	.375	.310
PBA	<—	CoCreation	.258	.140	.689	.001
SWL	<—	PBA	.188	.058	.399	.006
SelfEsteem	<—	PBA	.241	.114	.446	.000
BrandLoyalty	<—	PBA	.159	.064	.282	.001
BrandTrust	<—	PBA	.178	.021	.449	.059
SWL	<—	Customization	.113	.031	.378	.002
SelfEsteem	<—	Customization	.113	.036	.320	.001
BrandLoyalty	<—	Customization	.111	.059	.228	.001
BrandTrust	<—	Customization	.107	-.001	.432	.109
SWL	<—	CoCreation	.087	.021	.239	.016
BrandTrust	<—	CoCreation	.082	.030	.428	.002
SelfEsteem	<—	CoCreation	.063	.010	.366	.011
BrandLoyalty	<—	CoCreation	.067	.017	.209	.018
WOM	<—	SWL	.103	.032	.374	.001
WOM	<—	SelfEsteem	.120	.032	.446	.004
WOM	<—	BrandLoyalty	.101	.053	.298	.000
WOM	<—	BrandTrust	.096	-.001	.490	.104

The above mention table depicts the moderation effects of Need for Uniqueness and Customization in the relationship of Co-Creation Engagement and Customization. Need for Uniqueness has no effect in the relationship of Co-creation engagement and PBA

TABLE 4.22: Moderation's Standardized Regression Weights

Paths	β	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	Results
CoCreation*Nfu	0.146	0.04	1.634	0.091	0.04	-0.251	Rejected
Customization*Nfu	0.135	0.04	2.276	0.015	-0.212	-0.142	Accepted
CoCreation*ToolSupport	0.117	0.04	3.768	0.011	0.114	0.348	Accepted
Customization*ToolSupport	0.037	0.04	1.288	0.085	0.574	-0.253	Rejected

(β=0.146, p>0.05). Need for Uniqueness has positive effect in the relationship of Customization and PBA (β=0.135, p<0.05). Tool Support has positive effect in the relationship of Co-creation engagement and PBA (β=0.117, p<0.05). Tool Support has no effect in the relationship of Customization and PBA (β=0.037, p>0.05).

4.8 Summary of Hypothesis Accepted and Rejected

TABLE 4.23: Summary of Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Direct Effect	Indirect effect	Result
Cocreation → PBA	.197** (Sig.)		Accepted
Customization→PBA	.131** (Sig.)		Accepted
Cocreation → PBA→Self-Esteem	.066** (Sig.)	.053** (Sig.)	Accepted Mediation
Cocreation→PBA→SWL	.091** (Sig.)	.043** (Sig.)	Accepted Mediation
Cocreation→PBA→Brand Loyalty	.070** (Sig.)	.036** (Sig.)	Accepted Mediation
Cocreation→PBA→Brand Trust	.089** (Sig.)	.043 (n.s)	Rejected No Mediationn
Customization→PBA→Self-Esteem	.116** (Sig.)	.035 (n.s)	Rejected No Mediation
Customization →PBA→SWL	.117** (Sig.)	.028 (n.s)	Rejected No Mediation
Customization →PBA→Brand Loyalty	.114** (Sig.)	.024 (n.s)	Rejected No Mediation
Customization → PBA→Brand Trust	.115 (n.s)	.028 (n.s)	Rejected No Mediation
PBA→Self-Esteem	.267** (Sig.)		Accepted
PBA→SWL	.217** (Sig.)		Accepted
PBA→Brand Loyalty	.181** (Sig.)		Accepted
PBA→Brand Trust	.217* (Sig.)		Accepted
Self-Esteem→WOM	.135** (Sig.)		Accepted
SWL→WOM	.127** (Sig.)		Accepted
Brand Loyalty→WOM	.117** (Sig.)		Accepted
Brand Trust→WOM	.123** (Sig.)		Accepted
NfU→PBA	.208** (Sig.)		Accepted
CoCreationxNfU→PBA	.146 (n.s)		Rejected
CustomizationxNfU→PBA	.135** (Sig.)		Accepted
ToolSupport→PBA	.382** (Sig.)		Accepted

CoCreationxToolSupport→PBA	.117** (Sig.)	Accepted
CustomizationxToolSupport→PBA	.037 (n.s)	Rejected

4.9 Results of Hypothesis

We tested our hypotheses with two moderating variables i:e Need for uniqueness and Tool Support. A relationship between an independent variable (IV) = X and a dependent variable (DV) = Y, changes according to the value of a moderating variable (MV) = Z. To test a moderation effect, we included moderating variable = Z, and interaction term created (X) (Z) by multiplying both variables. Indeed, in the SEM, we entered IV (X) and MV (Z) for testing the moderating effects. Predictors were mean centered (**?**), and interactive terms between the independent variable and the moderator were computed. The moderating effect may be supported when the relevant product term is significant, after introducing the main predictors. Then, we the plotted the interaction graphs using Jeremy Dawsons tools for graphing interaction:

http://www.jeremydawson.co.uk/slopes.htm

SEM exhibited that Co-Creation is positively and significantly related to PBA (βPBA = .197, p < .001). These results support the Hypothesis 1 as

H_1: Co-creation engagement has a significant positive impact on perceived brand authenticity (Accepted)

SEM exhibited that Customization is positively and significantly related to PBA (βCUS = .131, p < .001). These results support the Hypothesis 2 as

H_2: Brand customization has significant positive impact on perceived brand authenticity. (Accepted)

SEM exhibited that Perceived Brand Authenticity is positively and significantly related to Satisfaction with Life (βSWL = .217, p < .001). These results support the Hypothesis 3 as

H_3: Perceived brand authenticity has significant positive relation with satisfaction with life. (Accepted)

SEM exhibited that Perceived Brand Authenticity is positively and significantly related to Satisfaction with Life (βSWL = .217, p < .001). These results support the Hypothesis 4 as

H_4: Perceived brand authenticity has significant positive effect on self-esteem. (Accepted)

SEM exhibited that Perceived Brand Authenticity is positively and significantly related to Brand Loyalty (βSE = .181, p < .001). These results support the Hypothesis 5 as

H_5: Perceived brand authenticity has significant positive impact on brand loyalty SEM exhibited that Perceived Brand Authenticity is positively and significantly related to Brand Trust (βBT = .217, p <

.001). These results support the Hypothesis 6 as

H$_6$: Perceived brand authenticity has significant positive impact on brand trust. (Accepted)

SEM exhibited that Satisfaction with Life is positively and significantly related to Word of mouth (βWOM = .127, p < .001). Self-Esteem is positively and significantly related to Word of mouth (βWOM = .135, p < .001). Brand Trust is positively and significantly related to Word of mouth (βWOM = .123, p < .001). Brand Loyalty is positively and significantly related to Word of mouth (βWOM = .181, p < .001).

H$_{7a}$: Satisfaction with Life has significant positive impact on word of mouth (Accepted)

H$_{7b}$: Self-esteem has significant positive impact on word of mouth. (Accepted)

H$_{7c}$: Brand Trust has significant positive impact on word of mouth. (Accepted)

H$_{7d}$: Brand Loyalty has significant positive impact on word of mouth. (Accepted)

SEM exhibited that Consumers need for uniqueness moderated the relation between co-creation engagement and PBA (β = .146, p > .05). Consumers need for uniqueness moderated the relation between customization and PBA (β = .135, < ¡ .001)

H$_{8a}$: Consumers' need for uniqueness will moderate the relation between co-creation engagement and PBA in such a way that will be stronger when consumers need for uniqueness will be higher. (Rejected)

H$_{8b}$: Consumers need for uniqueness will moderate the relation between customization and PBA in such a way that will be stronger when consumers need for uniqueness will be higher. (Accepted).

SEM exhibited that Perceived Tool Support moderated the relation between co-creation engagement and PBA (β = .117, < .001). Perceived Tool Support moderated the relation between customization and PBA (β = .037, > .05)

H$_{9a}$: Perceived Tool support will moderate the relation between co-creation engagement and PBA in such a way that relationship will be stronger when perceived Tool support is higher. (Accepted)

H$_{9b}$: Perceived Tool support will moderate the relation between customization and PBA in such a way relationship will be stronger when perceived Tool support is higher. (Rejected)

SEM exhibited that Perceived Brand Authenticity mediated the relation between co-creation engagement and Self-Esteem (β = .053, p < .001), co-creation engagement and Satisfaction with life (β = .043, p < .001), co-creation engagement and Brand Loyalty (β = .036, p < .001), co-creation engagement and Brand Trust (β = .043, > .05). Perceived Brand Authenticity mediated the relation between Customization and Self-Esteem (β = .035, > .05), Customization and Satisfaction with life (β = .028, p > .05), Customization and Brand Loyalty (β = .024, p > .05), Customization and Brand Trust (β = .028, > .05).
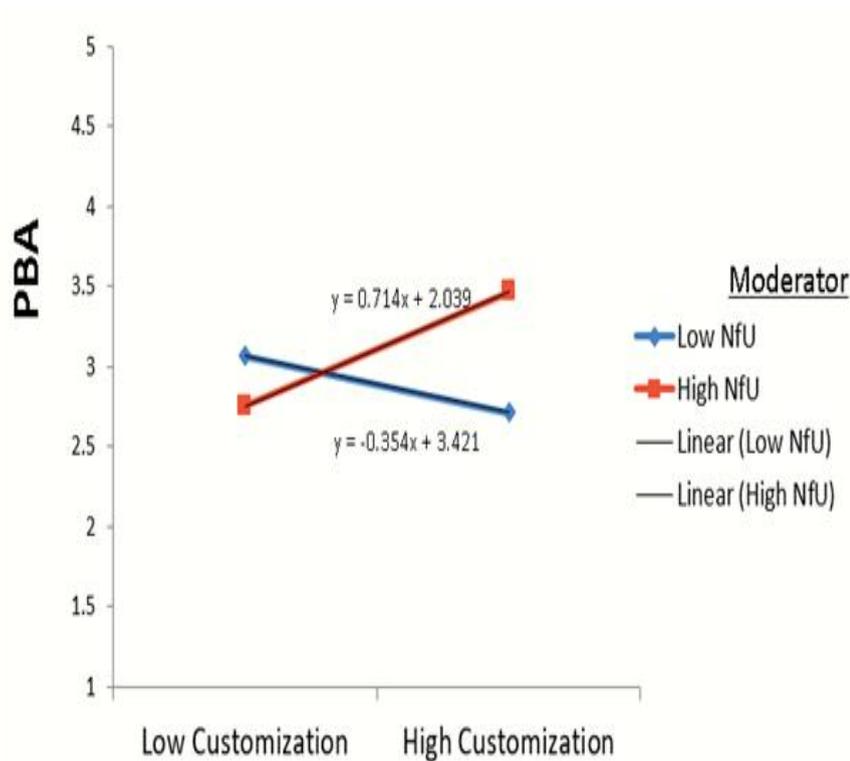
FIGURE 4.4: Mod Graph I

H$_{10a}$: PBA will mediate in the relationship between co-creation engagement and satisfaction with life. (Accepted Mediation)

H$_{10b}$: PBA will mediate in the relationship between co-creation engagement and self-esteem. (Accepted Mediation)

H$_{10c}$: PBA will mediate in the relationship between co-creation engagement and brand loyalty (Accepted Mediation)

H$_{10d}$: PBA will mediate in the relationship between co-creation engagement and brand trust (Rejected, No Mediation)

H$_{11a}$: PBA will mediate in the relationship between customization and satisfaction with life (Rejected, No Mediation)

H$_{11b}$: PBA will mediate in the relationship between customization and self-esteem (Rejected, No Mediation)

H$_{11c}$: PBA will mediate in the relationship between customization and brand loyalty (Rejected, No Mediation)

H$_{11d}$: PBA will mediate in the relationship between customization and brand trust (Rejected, No Mediation)
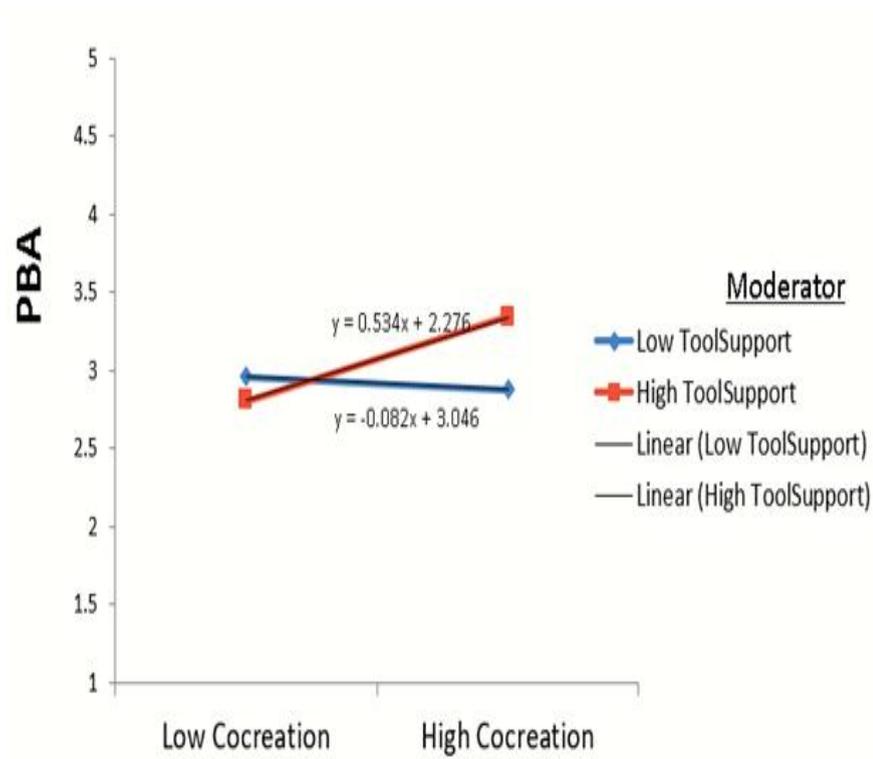
FIGURE 4.5: Mod Graph II

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

The results of this study recommend that co-creation changes the way a brand is experienced and the value it offers for consumers. The brand authenticity is enriched when consumer recognises that brands work in partnership as in co-creation with consumers in new product development. The finding that co-creation enhances Perceived brand authenticity of a brand is a meaningful Finding, as PBA is important in the formation of other important brand relation behaviours. Similar to friendships, relationships with sincere brands deepen and strengthen over time and can grow as a result of increasing trust, loyalty, satisfaction with life and self-esteem (Haigood, 2001; Smit et al., 2007). Judging by the effects of the co-creation usage, it appears that co-creation especially influences brand associations. These Findings are in line with the notion that consumers make brand inferences based on the brand's behaviour (Keller, 1993). Brand trust and brand loyalty towards the product were directly affected by co-creation process. The justification for this effect is that product inferences are probably more focused on the tangible outcome after the development process and relative advantages of the product compared with existing products.

The current study shows that a product is appraised more positively when it is presented as 'co-created with consumers' and evidences of co-creation are also presented in the form of band contests. Co-created products are given more preference over non-co-created product as they are considered more attractive, innovative, unique and better suited to needs compared with the same. The Findings in this study provide strong evidence in favour of incorporating co-creation as an element in marketing and branding strategies. However, it is noted that the main purposes of co-creation are creating more innovative and better products, and empowering consumers in value-creating processes.

Once co-creation is incorporated in a company, the enduring consequences of marketing this fact to the mass of consumers comes into play. Brands that engage in authentic collaboration such as co-creation are in turn valued higher by consumers. It will be challenging to find the most effective way of communicating co-creation to the mass target group of consumers. Because the concept is relatively new, it might be difficult for consumers to fully understand the co-creation process.

Overall, brand authenticity is associated with favourable responses: consumers are more inclined to purchase authentic brands (Napoli et al., 2014) and are more willing to talk positively about such brands to others (Morhart et al., 2015). Brand authenticity relates positively to emotional brand attachment attitudes. Brand authenticity does alleviate the effect of brand scandals, brand trust (Eggers et al., 2013), and brand choice likelihood (Morhart et al., 2015). Although research supports positive reactions to brand authenticity, individual and contextual variables moderate this relation, some of the evidence is provided by this research as well (Guèvremont and Grohmann, 2016).

The self-referential dimension of brand authenticity mainly derives from Arnould and Price's notion of authenticating acts, which are "self-referential behaviors actors feel reveal or produce the true self" (p. 140). This in line with Holt (2002), who suggests that brands might help consumers in producing the self and cultivating their identities. Thus, a brand is authentic only if it is "a genuine expression of an inner personal truth. I like this because I am like that" Postrel (2003) in Beverland (2005a). In particular, consumers seek authenticity when they want to feel virtuous, looking for the brand connection with personal moral values (Beverland et al., 2008, 2010). Freedom and excellence are two examples of self-authenticating cues. Note, some authors call this last type of authenticity "existential" (Leigh et al., 2006; Morhart et al., 2015), deriving from the self and helping the consumer in achieving funny and pleasurable experiences (Leigh et al., 2006).

H₁: Co-creation engagement has a significant positive impact on perceived brand authenticity

Brodie et al. (2013) noted that if consumers were a part of the creation of the product the attitude of consumers toward a product is more positive. If the company has been shown to empower the consumers, non-participative consumers will also have positive intentions towards their product (Fuchs and Schreier, 2011). Paasovaara et al. (2012)

state that familiarity with the brand influences the attitudes and intention to purchase as well as the expectations of consumers.: Lay's Patatje Joppie (Joppie Sauce Chips) and Pickwick's Dutch tea blend (co-created products) were sold much more in quantity than other similar products.

H$_2$: Customization has significant positive impact on perceived brand authenticity

Enabling customers to personalize their goods at the moment of purchase builds feelings of ownership and product loyalty. With advancements in technology, customization is no more limited to provide a predefined set of configurator (e.g., colors, materials), but has developed into a more advanced service such as product visualization (e.g., 3D digital modeling) (Gandhi et al., 2014). As customization is viewed as one of the key sources of value creation in a highly competitive and segmented market (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004b; Valenzuela et al., 2009), a number of companies have embedded customized services in their websites (e.g., Nike's NikeID, Louis Vuitton's Mon Monogram). Indeed, the adoption of customization strategy is found in a wide range of industries including apparel (e.g., Levi Strauss), sport shoes (e.g., Adidas), computers (e.g., Dell), cars (e.g., Land Rover), food (e.g., General Mills), cards (e.g., Hallmark), etc.

H$_3$: Perceived brand authenticity has significant positive relation with satisfaction with life

H$_4$: Perceived brand authenticity has significant positive effect on self esteem

H$_5$: Perceived brand authenticity has significant positive impact on brand loyalty

H$_6$: Perceived brand authenticity has significant positive impact on brand trust.

(Mazutis and Slawinski, 2015) customers sense brand as part of them and themselves as a part of the brand and hence inflicting that the brand will grow to be a part of individual's self-concept. This facilitates individuals to be more inspired in lifestyles as this issue leads people closer to self-actualization and these feelings of self-actualization imply more satisfaction with life and positivity toward lifestyles.
Stiehler and Tinson (2015) professed that one of the most crucial wishes of individuals is self-esteem. Further explained that people are commonly decided to feel good about

them rather than feeling terrible and the ones who are excessive on self-esteem see themselves as effective (i.e. they have advantageous self-idea) and find methods to affirm their previously held views approximately their 'self'. The study carried out by Cheah et al. (2016) explained that such people consequently experience closer to the brands that offer to mean in their existence with the aid of reflecting those people' actual 'self'. The research carried out by Saju et al. (2018) professed that from the same factor of view, fake and inappropriate brands would purpose in negative self-reviews and people could see themselves as terrible i.e. they may shape terrible self-conceptions which might result in lower self-esteem. Within psychology, perceived partner authenticity significantly affects relationship quality evaluations (Wickham, 2013). Thus, transferred to the branding context, it can be assumed that authentic brands are better qualified for the role of being an intimate and long-term partner.

The study of Burmann et al. (2017) has further explained that this permits a link between genuine brand and customer character as this link will pressure the individual to purchase the same brand again and again because of the relatedness that costumer has associated with the brand and because of the authentic nature of it. Therefore, because of this, manufacturers being authentic in nature may have more responding customers i.e. authenticity of brands has prompted costumers to be loyal

H$_{7a}$: Life satisfaction has significant positive impact on word of mouth.

H$_{7b}$: Self-esteem has significant positive impact on word of mouth.

H$_{7c}$: Brand Trust has significant positive impact on word of mouth.

H$_{7d}$: Brand Loyalty has significant positive impact on word of mouth.

With regard to market research conducted by Szabó et al. (2017) consumers often evaluate the quality of life with the product available to them as per their desire or need. It has further been opined that high availability of such products in the market make the consumers believe that the quality of life is higher. However, Whisman and Judd (2016) stated that the condition might not be considered as ideal as well as acceptable for all the customers because where some customers want product to be available in the market, others might want certain attributes and prices of the products. Therefore, it might also imply that high satisfaction can be highly associated with how the product is available in the market, what attributes have been offered and what prices have been

devised by the companies. Wu (2017) demonstrated the association between the word of mouth communication and brand trust. The author conducted a research in the tourism industry and collected the data based on the travel income, average growth rate and number of the travellers. The results of the study proposed that travellers first hear about the travel destinations by means of the word of mouth and then visit the location. The demand of travelling is substantially increases based on the word of mouth communications.

According to the study conducted by Philp et al. (2018) the self-perceived competencies can be regarded as the most important domain of self-esteem. It has been due to the fact that considering self-perceptions can lead towards either higher or lower self-esteem; for instance if the perception about competencies is negative the self-esteem would be lower whereas if the perceived competencies are positive the self-esteem will be higher. According to Kristofferson et al. (2018) self-esteem can be regarded as the measure of standards which are devised by the person according to their own evaluation of self. The study has further professed that self-esteem has been considered as the reflection of good possessed by one person. Kristofferson et al. (2018) have however questioned about how the person knows that he/she is enough or how a person can consider him/herself enough or sufficient. The research has further answered that the symbolic interactions between people or objects can also make someone realise that they are enough and are sufficient. It might also imply that the person can have high self-esteem once connected with another person or object that could raise their confidence.

H$_{8a}$: Consumers' need for uniqueness will moderate the relation between co-creation engagement and PBA in such a way that will be stronger when consumers' need for uniqueness will be higher.

H$_{8b}$: Consumers' need for uniqueness will moderate the relation between customization and PBA in such a way that will be stronger when consumers' need for uniqueness will be higher

Through the consumption of authentic brands, consumers define their own (authentic) identity (Firat and Venkatesh, 1995), express their morals and principles (Beverland et al., 2010), and find ways to be true to themselves (Price et al., 2000). Consumers' need to express their true self should be heightened when they experience situations that evoke feelings of in authenticity. Consumers' requirement for uniqueness is grounded in

Snyder and Fromkin (1977) uniqueness hypothesis, which shows itself in the person's quest for material merchandise to separate themselves from others (Tian et al., 2001). Customers' requirement for uniqueness is exhibited in three sorts of buyer conduct: innovative decision counter-congruity; disliked decision counter-similarity; and evasion of comparability. In the main kind of conduct, imaginative decision counter-similarity, shoppers buy merchandise that express their uniqueness and furthermore are adequate to others. Different buyers readily risk social dissatisfaction to set up their uniqueness by choosing items that veer off from group standards however disagreeable decision counter similarity shopper conduct. To avoid comparability with others, purchasers may build up an assortment of procedures. This research thus is in line with authenticity literature by providing a better understanding of self-authentication strategies discussed in previous research (Ilicic and Webster, 2014; Napoli et al., 2014). Falk and Heine (2015) stated that brands have seemed and proliferated the existing products by making self-brand connections with consumers. The consumers make self-connection on the basis of congruency between brand image and self-image. Therefore, brands have targeted the connection between products and consumer self-esteem in order gain higher purchases. When customization is being done by the person involved, the need for self requirements are more important the Brand Authenticity and Brand Trust thus not leading to mediating role of Brand Authenticity.

H$_{9a}$: Perceived Tool support will moderate the relation between co-creation engagement and PBA in such a way that relationship will be stronger when perceived Tool support is higher.

H$_{9b}$: Perceived Tool support will moderate the relation between customization and PBA in such a way relationship will be stronger when perceived Tool support is higher.

Consumer's involvement during the virtual development of the products, enhance the scope of the product for the organisation focused on developing it. The notion of consumer involvement is to make the products more innovative and unique (Füller, 2010). The co-creation activity is fulfilled successfully if the users have the access to the virtual tools and environment. The consumers need to be aware of the innovative elements of the products, only then they may be able to contribute competently. The consumers are provided with an opportunity to share their knowledge, opinions and innovative ideas, which are supposedly challenging to articulate and transfer (Khanagha et al.,

2017). Jiang and Benbasat (2007) claimed that the provision of vivid and interactive product environments enhances the consumer's understanding and knowledge, related to the product under development. Mahr et al. (2014) in the research that technological understanding in customer co-creation has, therefore, turned out to be a key element in companies' fulfilment of consumer needs and catering to their changing demands in this turbulent global surroundings and business environment. On the other hand, Kostecki (2013) explained that it has been due to the fact that the technological advancements have allowed the companies to gain higher perceived brand authenticity as well. While co-creating something, organizations have influential tactics which make a persons need for uniqueness being engaged into more focused on co-creation thus, this might be the reason for which need for uniqueness is not moderating the main effect relationship.

H_{10a}: PBA will mediate in the relationship between co-creation engagement and satisfaction with life.

H_{10b}: PBA will mediate in the relationship between co-creation engagement and self-esteem.

H_{10c}: PBA will mediate in the relationship between co-creation engagement and brand loyalty

H_{10d}: PBA will mediate in the relationship between co-creation engagement and brand trust

H_{11a}: PBA will mediate in the relationship between customization and satisfaction with life

H_{11b}: PBA will mediate in the relationship between customization and self-esteem

H_{11c}: PBA will mediate in the relationship between customization and brand loyalty

H_{11d}: PBA will mediate in the relationship between customization and brand trust

Individuals mainly having the lower self-esteem, try to fulfil the void by means of materialising themselves, as a profound compensating strategy (Reeves, 2012). For these individuals, the compensatory strategy of materialising deem fruitful, as the ultimate purpose of the materialisation is to create a social and personal recognition in the society. The materialising objects are self-communicating, for instance; cars, clothes, travel,

gadgets, gatherings, etc are representative of socioeconomic status and social standing within the community. All these materialistic objects, in turn, facilitate the process of image building. Arguably, materialism role in combating the lower self-esteem levels of the individuals appears productive in the short term (Nagpaul and Pang, 2017). The individuals in the provoking situation of self-doubt successfully gain the self-esteem. Consumers trust on the brand can be substantially increased by means of the perceived brand authenticity. Buil et al. (2013) notified that the consumer's beliefs are critical to the process of branding, the consumer's internal beliefs are recognised as a construct that is hazard oriented in context. Certainly, the brand trust is built on the grounds that the consumer will receive the promised attributes from the brand.

It has been argued that the authentic brands serve as an essential source of happiness, and add meaning and value to the life of the person, consuming the brand (Batey, 2015). The satisfaction level of the person increases as a sequence. It has been argued, that the person psychological states are disrupted, at the stance they develop the feelings of fakeness and un-authenticity (Gabay, 2015). The quality of life is further reduced and the personal satisfaction with life decreases gradually. Nevertheless, if the psychological desires of the individuals get fulfilled and the individual receives the feeling of authenticity, relevance and genuineness in the life, the satisfaction towards the life substantially increases.

Faccio (2012) notified that the self-image is representative of the feelings, which the individual has for herself or himself. Self-image is revealed as a significant facet of self-esteem and prevails how an individual develops a perception and feeling for herself. Prior researchers have shown that the consumers are inclined to represent themselves through their self-image, but the story does not end here, the consumer presents their "actual self" by means of this self-image (Kim and Hall, 2014). Halloran (2014) argues that the strong elements of the brands are potent enough to create positive perceptions in the minds of the consumers. These perceptions are deemed to further create the realization of actual self, within the consumers using those brand attributes. Williams (2014) notified that the authentic brands are the brands that are inclusive of strong facets, which are realistic, credible, and high in integrity and serves to be an insignia for the consumers. The authentic brand thus creates the feeling of actual self within the consumers and increases the levels of self-assurance within them.

The Self Expansion Model includes two main principles. The first main principle is a general motivation to expand the self. Self expansion refers to a "fundamental human

motivation... to enhance potential self efficacy [which is the ability to accomplish desired goals by attaining] greater material, social, and informational resources". These findings are in line with the self-expansion theory that consumers may interact with brands through means of co-creation and customization to enhance self-esteem, better satisfaction with life, inclusion of authentic brand contributes to brand trust and loyalty.

5.1 Managerial Implications

From a managerial perspective, it is essential for brands to be consistent with their image and values (Eggers et al., 2013) and to avoid promises they cannot keep. Consumers show more clemency towards a brand that is perceived as authentic.

Higher levels of brand authenticity can be achieved by focusing brand actions and brand communication on the brand authenticity dimensions identified in past work (i.e. continuity, credibility, integrity, symbolism; Morhart et al. (2015). A longstanding brand could emphasize its founding date or its connection to past to signal continuity (Beverland et al., 2008). Stella Artois, for instance, communicates continuity ("since 1366"). A reputable brand could highlight its quality standards to communicate credibility (Beverland, 2006). Victorinox's advertisements, for example, highlight that its Swiss Army knife "sets the standards". A brand could further emphasize its integrity by promoting its social involvement. Whole Foods, for instance, engages in local initiatives and donations to charities (McNew 2015). A symbolic brand could emphasise its human image to increase its potential to connect with consumers' identity (Morhart et al., 2015). Apple's trendy, cool, and young brand image, for example, helps consumers express themselves through brand use. Other ways to signal authenticity include—but are not limited to—designing a image rooted in tradition (Beverland, 2006), emphasizing the excellence and superiority of the brand (Napoli et al., 2014), communicating values consumers care for (Morhart et al., 2015), and acting upon one's word (Eggers et al., 2013). Managers should note, however, that consumers interpret marketing cues related to brand authenticity carefully (Brown et al., 2003) and are increasingly skeptical towards advertisement (**?**). Thus, the communication of brand authenticity must reflect what the brand really stands for (Nandan, 2005). With that in mind, managers can induce stronger connections with consumers (Morhart et al., 2015) and to some extent protect their brand against negative brand-related information. Based on the hypotheses which are being rejected, to make a more stronger bond with the consumer. A brand should

not influence consumers while in the process of co-creation and should be recognizing their need for uniqueness and making the products as per uniqueness of the individual desire. In addition to these consumers whom are part of customization process should be made technically strong and trained thoroughly on the tools which are to be used for customization. This will ensure that tools support is yielding the bond between customization and Perceived Brand Authenticity.

5.2 Theoretical Implications

The present study thereby provides an important contribution and augments our understanding on brand co-creation and customization. First, it provides a fresh perspective on consumer brand co-creation and customization by proposing a model that illustrates the effect of consumer brand authenticity. The process of the brand co-creation experience to create brand co-creation engagement, which further affects consequent brand responses. This study amplifies the understanding of the brand co-creation process and complements prior research that has emphasized mostly on specific facets of the process. Second, past studies have mainly focused on the economic gains of consumer brand co-creation and few studies have examined the influence of brand co-creation on consumer brand relationships. This study extends the literature by revealing the crucial psychological causes of brand co-creation engagement. Third, this study advances the understanding of the co-creation effects on psychological outcomes. In addition to the above contribution this study will provide insight in to the phenomenon of Perceived brand authenticity. Perceived brand authenticity is a new concept in marketing and consumer behavior research. Previous researchers have mainly focused on the conceptualization and operationalization of the concept of perceived brand authenticity with very little attention being paid towards the examination of the relationship between perceived brand authenticity and other concepts in marketing. This study thus aims to enrich and enhance body of knowledge in several different ways in context of perceived brand authenticity. The study will examine co-creation engagement and customization as the antecedents of perceived brand authenticity. Previous researchers have never examined these variables as antecedents of perceived brand authenticity. In fact, Morhart et al. (2015) proposed for future researchers to examine both of these as antecedents of perceived brand authenticity. Secondly, researchers in past have not shown keen interest in examining the effects of perceived brand authenticity on other consumer behaviors

with exception of a few (Fritz et al., 2017). This study also addresses this gap and extends the body of knowledge by examining the relationship between perceived brand authenticity and other consumer behaviors which are brand trust, brand loyalty, self-esteem, and life satisfaction. Lastly, study's other unique contribution towards the body of knowledge is that study proposes the moderating mechanism between the relationship of co-creation engagement, customization and perceived brand authenticity by examining costumer's need for uniqueness as moderator between these relationships and opens up the venue for future researchers to examine different other moderating mechanisms on antecedents perceived brand authenticity relationship and perceived brand authenticity and its effects.

5.3 Limitations

The process of 'co-creation' can be applied to a wide variety of purposes in value creation. In this study, the term was used quite generally: as collaboration between consumers and a brand with the purpose of jointly developing a new product and working together as equal partners. This study has not provided insights into the effects of single and narrower approaches, such as co-creation in packaging design. In the latter case, the product itself could be developed by the Firm, and consumer participation starts only at the Final stages of product development. There are certain limitations regarding to this study firstly the issue of generalizability as the data was collected conveniently, although the sample was adequate but it was not sampled from the identified population. Secondly this study evaluates the data as a whole without considering the variation of different types of organizations. Thirdly the study is unable to state many other independent variable effects contributing to the Perceived brand authenticity and psychological outcomes.

It is also interesting to investigate what will happen to consumers' evaluations when many Firms start engaging in co-creation practices. As literature shows, this is an upcoming development. When more and more companies engage in co-creation it might influence people's level of interest or attention, or the co-creation effects might even wear out.

Longitudinal studies can provide more insights into the long term effects of co-creation on consumer perceptions. For instance, it could evaluate how consumers perceive a brand that provides claims of co-creation, but no actual proof, compared with a brand

that shares a lot of information about the partnership and offers room for participation. Exploring interaction effects among these can help identify the most effective ways for brands to behave in – and communicate about – co-creation practices.

5.4 Conclusions

In response to the consumer quest of authentic offerings, building brand authenticity has emerged as a strategic imperative for marketers. The issue that we addressed is how consumer co-creation and customization may help develop consumer perceptions of brand authenticity. Finding concerns the conceptualization of brand authenticity in marketing research. Overall, our results demonstrate the suitability of the understanding of authenticity and, in particular, brand authenticity within the literature, as variations in the attribution of authenticity among brands due to perception of need for uniqueness and perceived tool support. Despite of the recent attempts towards conceptualization of perceived brand authenticity, researchers seem unwilling to study the predecessors and impact of perceived brand authenticity on other variables and constructs in marketing research. Morhart et al. (2015) called for future research on the antecedents and consequences of perceived brand authenticity. Future researchers may study customization and co-creation engagement in relation with perceived brand authenticity (Morhart et al., 2015). Even on the side of consequences of perceived brand authenticity, very less is known in existing research. Researchers have also called for more thorough and rigorous examination of different outcomes of perceived brand authenticity (e.g. see Oishi et al. (2009).Also as previously mentioned, Heidenreich and Handrich (2015) have noted that the problem with research in marketing is that new concepts keep on emerging without examination of the link between previously known concepts. This is a major criticism on the ongoing research in marketing and consumer behavior. It thus becomes an opportunity to look at the relationship between different prevailing concepts in marketing.

With developments in technology, customization and co-creation is no more restricted to predefined configurators (e.g., colors, materials), but has advanced into a more tools such as product visualization for example 3D modeling (Gandhi et al., 2014). In a highly competitive and segmented market customization is viewed as an important source of value creation (Valenzuela et al., 2009; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004b), a number of Sustainable brands have embedded customized ser- vices in their websites (e.g., Louis

Vuittons Mon Monogram, Nikes NikeID). Co-creation and customization strategy has been adopted in an extensive range of activities includ- ing apparel for example Levi Strauss, computers (e.g., Dell), sport shoes e.g., Adidas), cars (e.g., Land Rover), cards (e.g., Hallmark), food (e.g., General Mills) etc. With the extensive use of customization and emerging phenomenon of co-creation in market- ing practices, a research stream on factors affecting consumer responses to co-creation and customization has established, such as system factors (e.g., user-design interface) (Randall et al., 2007; Dellaert and Dabholkar, 2009), individual factors (e.g., ones capability to direct preference) (Franke et al., 2009), customiza- tion process (Atakan et al., 2014), values of customization (Merle et al., 2010; Franke et al., 2010), and even interaction effect with brand (Miceli et al., 2013). However, regardless of the significance of co-created and customized prod- uct as a vehicle to drive in ones self-concept, research on aspects related to a consumers motivation to characterize his/her individuality into the customized product is scarce (Miceli et al., 2013; Atakan et al., 2014). This study has contributed in this area by examining the consequents of co-creation and customization.

Self-concept theory (Super et al., 1963) along with self- expansion theory acts as an overarching theory in this study, as it provides the basis to examine individuals' abil- ity and desire to know thy self and expand it by inclusion of others i:e people, objects etc. Developing positive self-concept is proposed as central to a sense of self, integral to healthy psychological development (Dubois and Tevendale, 1999), and associated with greater achievement of positive outcomes: psychologically, physically, socially and aca- demically (Marsh and Hau, 2003).

Results revealed positive impact of co-creation and customization on Perceived brand authenticity, Satisfaction with life, Self-esteem, Brand Loyalty and Brand Trust. Mod- erating effects of Need for uniqueness and Perceived Tool support were also observed. Study further supported effects of psychological outcomes on Word of Mouth. Brand could further emphasize its integrity by promoting its social involvement. Whole Foods, for instance, engages in local initiatives and donations to charities. Other ways to signal authenticity include, but are not limited todesigning a image rooted in tradition (Bev- erland, 2006), emphasizing the excellence and superiority of the brand (Napoli et al., 2014), communicating values consumers care for.

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Appendix-A

Section-1: Research-Questionnaire

Dear respondent,

I am PHD Scholar at Faculty of Management Sciences, Capital University of Science and Technology-Islamabad and conducting research on the impact of perceived brand authenticity on consumers outcomes.

Please read the instructions carefully and answer all the questions. There are no trick questions, so please answer each item as frankly and as honesty as possible. It is important that all the questions be answered.

I once again thank you for your assistance and cooperation in this academic pursuit.

Regards and Jazakallah,

Ali Haider Bajwa

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Note:

The statements in questionnaire concern your perception about yourself in a variety of situations. Please chose a number from 1-5 against each statement in provided blank, to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement by using the following scale.

Section-2: Life Satisfaction

Strongly disagree: 1, Disagree: 2, Neutral: 3, Agree: 4, Strongly agree: 5

1	In most ways my life is close to my ideal.	1	2	3	4	5
2	The conditions of my life are excellent.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am satisfied with my life	1	2	3	4	5
4	So far I have gotten the important things I want in life. unit or department	1	2	3	4	5
5	If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.	1	2	3	4	5

Section-3: Brand Trust (Fiability and Intentionality Dimentions)

1	With [X] brand name I obtain what I look for in a [product]	1	2	3	4	5
2	[X] is a brand name that meets my expectations	1	2	3	4	5
3	I feel confidence in [X] brand name	1	2	3	4	5
4	[X] is a brand name that never disappoints me unit or department	1	2	3	4	5
5	5. [X] brand name is not constant in satisfying my needs	1	2	3	4	5
6	[X] brand name would be honest and sincere	1	2	3	4	5
	in addressing my concerns	1	2	3	4	5
7	[X] brand name would make any effort to satisfy me	1	2	3	4	5
8	I could rely on [X] brand name to solve the problem	1	2	3	4	5
9	[X] brand name would be interested in my satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5
10	[X] brand name would compensate me in some way for	1	2	3	4	5
	the problem with the [product]	1	2	3	4	5
11	[X] brand name would not be willing in solving	1	2	3	4	5
	the problem I could have with the [product]	1	2	3	4	5

Section-4: Brand Loyalty

1.	I consider myself to be loyal to brand [X].	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I am willing to pay more for brand [X] than	1	2	3	4	5
	for other brands on the market.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	If brand [X] is not available at the	1	2	3	4	5

	store, I would buy it in another store.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I recommend to buy brand [X]	1	2	3	4	5

Section-5

Brand Co-creation:						
1	**When I work for the [X] brand, I feel bursting with energy**	1	2	3	4	5
2	At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well	1	2	3	4	5
3	I can continue working for the [X] brand for very long periods of time	1	2	3	4	5
1	**To me, my work for the [X] brand is challenging**	1	2	3	4	5
2	My work for the [X] brand inspires me	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am proud of the things that I do in the [X] brand	1	2	3	4	5
4	I find the work that I do in the [X] brand have full of meaning and purpose	1	2	3	4	5
1	**When I working for the [X] brand, I forget** everything else around me	1	2	3	4	5
2	Time flies when I am working for the [X] brand	1	2	3	4	5
3	I get carried away when I am working for the [X] brand	1	2	3	4	5
4	I feel happy when I am working intensely for the [X] brand	1	2	3	4	5
Self-Esteem:						
1	**On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.**	1	2	3	4	5
2	At times I think I am no good at all.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I am able to do things as well as most other people.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I certainly feel useless at times.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I wish I could have more respect for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
9	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	1	2	3	4	5

10	I take a positive attitude toward myself.	1	2	3	4	5
Percieved brand Authenticity:						
1	I will always prefer a [X] brand with a history.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I will always prefer a [X]brand that survives times.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I will always prefer a [X] brand that survives trends.	1	2	3	4	5
Credibility:						
4	I will always prefer a [X]brand that will not betray you.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I will always prefer a[X] brand that accomplishes its value promise.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I will always prefer an honest brand.	1	2	3	4	5
Integrity:						
7	I will always prefer a [X]brand that gives back to its consumers.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I will always prefer a [X]brand with moral principles.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I will always prefer a [X]brand true to a set of moral values.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I will always prefer a [X]brand that cares about its consumers.	1	2	3	4	5
11	I will always prefer a [X]brand that adds meaning to peoples lives	1	2	3	4	5
12	I will always prefer a [X]brand that reflects important values people care about.	1	2	3	4	5
13	I will always prefer a [X]brand that connects people with their real selves.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I will always prefer a [X]brand that connects people with what is really important.	1	2	3	4	5
Need for Uniqueness:						
1.	I collect unusual products as a way of telling people Im different	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I have sometimes purchased unusual products or brands as a way to create a more distinctive personal image	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I often look for one-of-a-kind products or brands so that I create a style that is all my own	1	2	3	4	5

4.	Often when buying, an important goal is to find something that communicates my uniqueness	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I often combine possessions in such a way that I create a personal image for myself that cant be duplicated	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I often try to find a more interesting version of run-of-the-mill products/services because I enjoy being original	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I actively seek to develop my personal uniqueness by buying special products or brands	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Having an eye for products that are interesting and unusual assists me in establishing a distinctive image	1	2	3	4	5
9.	The products and brands that I like best are the ones that express my individuality	1	2	3	4	5
10.	I often think of the things I buy and do in terms of how I can use them to shape a more unusual personal image	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Im often on the lookout for new products or brands that will add to my personal uniqueness	1	2	3	4	5
12.	When purchasing, I have sometimes dared to be different in ways that others are likely to disapprove	1	2	3	4	5
13.	As far as Im concerned, when it comes to the products I buy and the situations in which I use them, customs and rules are made to be broken	1	2	3	4	5
14.	I often purchase unconventionally even when its likely to offend others	1	2	3	4	5
15.	I rarely act in agreement with what others think are the right things to buy	1	2	3	4	5
16.	Concern for being out of place doesnt prevent me from buying what I want to buy	1	2	3	4	5
17.	When it comes to the products I buy and the situations in which I use them, I have often broken customs and rules	1	2	3	4	5
18.	I have often violated the understood rules of my social group regarding what to buy or own	1	2	3	4	5

19.	I have often gone against the understood rules of my social group regarding when and how certain products are properly used	1	2	3	4	5
20.	I enjoy challenging the prevailing taste of people I know by buying something they wouldnt seem to accept	1	2	3	4	5
21.	If someone hinted that I had been purchasing inappropriately for a social situation, I would continue to purchase in the same manner	1	2	3	4	5
22.	When I purchase differently, Im often aware that others think Im peculiar, but I dont care	1	2	3	4	5
23.	When products or brands I like become extremely popular, I lose interest in them	1	2	3	4	5
24.	I avoid products or brands that have already been accepted and purchased by the average consumer	1	2	3	4	5
25.	When a product I own becomes popular among the general population, I begin using it less	1	2	3	4	5
26.	I often try to avoid products or brands that I know are bought by the general population	1	2	3	4	5
27.	As a rule, I dislike products or brands that are customarily purchased by everyone	1	2	3	4	5
28.	I give up purchasing products or brands that Ive purchased once they become popular among the general public	1	2	3	4	5
29.	The more commonplace a product or brand is among the general population, the less interested I am in buying it	1	2	3	4	5
30.	Products dont seem to hold much value for me when they are purchased regularly by everyone	1	2	3	4	5
31.	When a product or brand that I own becomes too commonplace, I usually quit using it	1	2	3	4	5
Customization (Social):						
1.	I am concern that using a customized product/service might be too noticeable.	1	2	3	4	5

2.	The thought of purchasing a product/service causes me to experience unnecessary tension.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	The thought of purchasing an online mass-customized product makes me feel psychologically uncomfortable.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	The thought of purchasing an online mass-customized product gives me a feeling of unwanted anxiety.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I am afraid that those I value (e.g., my friends) would think that using a customized product/service might be too noticeable.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I am concerned that others would not like my customized product/service.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I am concerned that other people would make negative comments about my customized product/service.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I am concerned that a customized product/service might be too noticeable.	1	2	3	4	5
Delivery:						
1.	The delay in receiving an online mass-customized product makes me anxious.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I am concerned about waiting longer to receive an online mass-customized product ordered via the Internet.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Delivery times may be longer for ordering an online mass-customized product via the Internet.	1	2	3	4	5
Additional Effort:						
1.	The online mass-customized process may be tiring.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Coordinating detailed options would not be easy. It may be cumbersome to go through the whole customization process.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	It would be a lot of work to place an order for a customized product.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Going through the customization process would be a hassle.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	The customization process provides me with too many options.	1	2	3	4	5

6.	The customization process confuses me by providing too much information.	1	2	3	4	5

Return:

1.	It is not easy to return an online mass-customized product.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Returning an online mass-customized product would be difficult.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I am concerned that I would not be able to return an online mass-customized product.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	It may be difficult to return an online mass-customized product because it is made just for me.	1	2	3	4	5

Financial:

1.	If I buy an online mass-customized product for myself within the next 12 months, I may not cant find in stores.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I am concerned about paying more for online mass-customized products.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Purchasing an online mass-customized product may involve financial losses.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I am uncertain about whether I need to spend a little more money for online mass customized products.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Purchasing an online mass-customized product within the next 12 months would be a bad use of my money.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I am worried that I need to pay more for online mass-customized products to gain features I get my moneys worth.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Im not certain whether I can get the product that I want.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I am concerned that the product would be different from what I want.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I am afraid that the online mass-customized product would not come out the way I want.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Im afraid that the gap between the product image I see online and the actual product would be larger than that for non-mass-customized products.	1	2	3	4	5

11.	Im concerned that the final customized product may be different from what I want.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I am concerned that the product image I see online is different from the actual product.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	I am concerned about whether an online mass-customized product would really perform as well as it is supposed to.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	I am concerned that the product I design would be different from the way it looks on the screen.	1	2	3	4	5
Psychological:						
1.	I doubt that I would be able to understand the jargon used in the online mass-customized process.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Im concerned about my ability to coordinate detailed options used to customize a product.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I doubt whether I have the ability to create a customized product that I may like.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I am concerned about whether I have the ability to understand all possible options in the online mass-customized process.	1	2	3	4	5
WOM:						
1.	I like introducing new brands and products to my friends and family.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I like to talk to others about my product and brand experiences.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I share information about new brands and products with people other than my close friends and family.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I often tell others about new products and brands.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I usually spend a lot of time sharing my knowledge about products and brands.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I share brand and product information with others in various social occasions.	1	2	3	4	5
Perceived Tool support:						
1.	This website is helpful for me to evaluate the product.	1	2	3	4	5

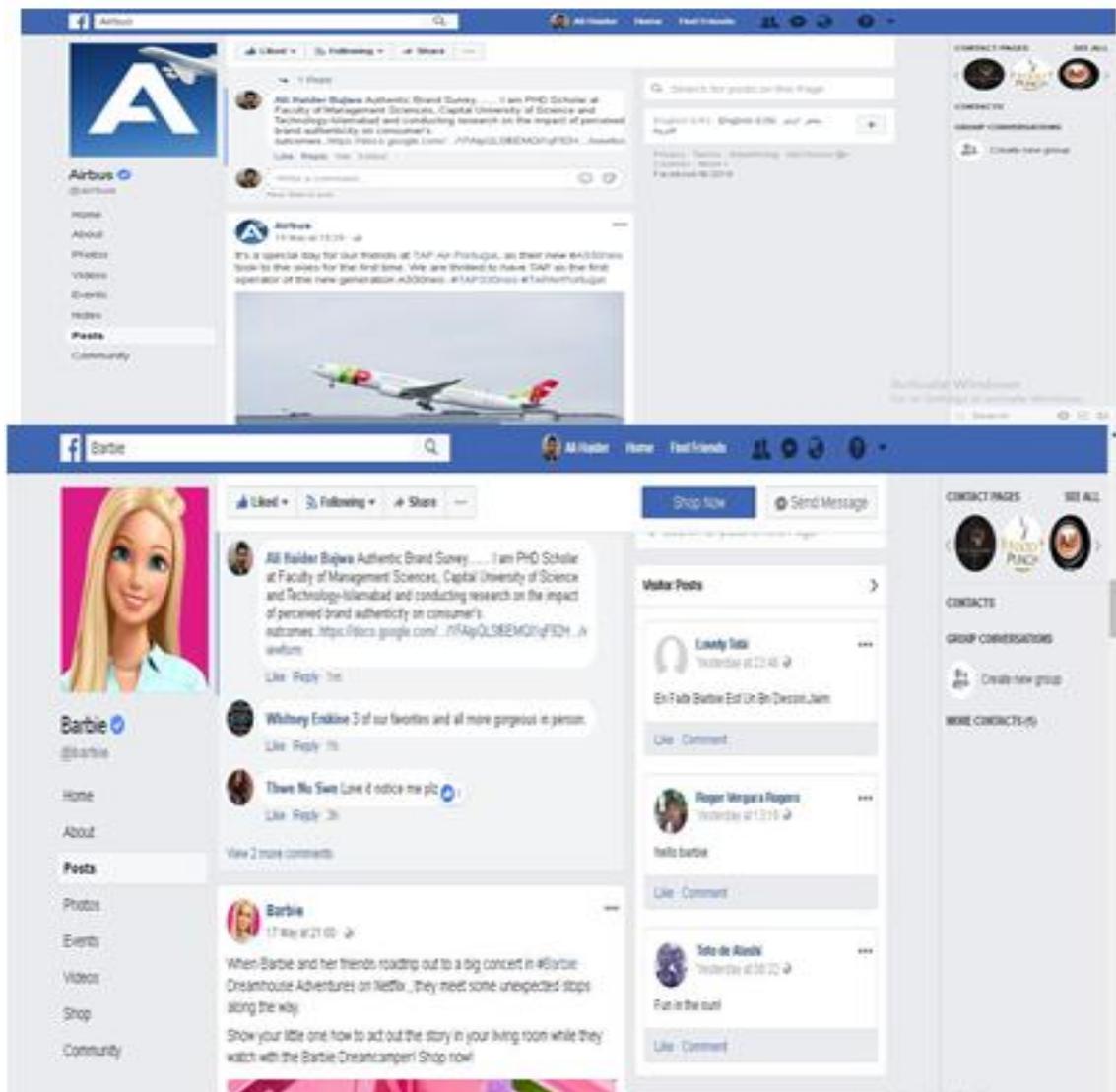| 2.	This website is helpful in familiarizing me with the product.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	This website is helpful for me to understand the performance of the product.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	The design of the virtual co-creation tool helped me to get inspired.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	The design of the virtual co-creation tool helped me to better articulate my ideas.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix-B

FIGURE 5.1: Co-Creation 1

FIGURE 5.2: Co-Creation 2

FIGURE 5.3: Co-Creation 3

FIGURE 5.4: Co-Creation 4