

**“THE MEDIATING ROLE OF CUSTOMER EQUITY DRIVERS BETWEEN  
SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ACTIVITIES AND AUTOMOBILE BRANDS  
PURCHASE INTENTION.”**

**Dissertation submitted to Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam  
in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of  
MASTER OF COMMERCE**

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## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the project on “**The mediating role of customer equity drivers between social media marketing activities and automobile brands purchase intention**” submitted in partial fulfilment of the Master of Commerce in Mahatma Gandhi University is a record of bonafide research work carried out by me under the guidance and supervision of Professor, **Dr TESSY THOMAS**, Assistant Professor of Department of Commerce, Bharata Mata College Thrikkakara and no part of it has been submitted for any other degree or diploma.

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## **CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the Dissertation entitled “**The mediating role of customer equity drivers between social media marketing activities and automobile brands purchase intention.**” Is bonafide piece of research work done by **ARUN PS** in partial fulfilment of the Master of Commerce in Mahatma Gandhi University under my supervision at Bharata Mata College, Thrikkakara.

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Thrikkakara

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## **ABSTRACT**

*In order to investigate how customer equity drivers, namely brand, value, and relationship equities, mediate social media marketing activities and automobile purchase intention, The study was conducted in the Ernakulam region of Kerala, India, which has many automobile companies and internet connectivity. Customer survey data was obtained from a hundred people who engaged with automotive brands on social media in the form of a questionnaire. The study of the mediating role of customer equity drivers between social marketing activities and automobile brand purchase intention is limited in the existing literature. A structural equation model was run to empirically validate the model proposed after extensive review. The constructs identified were validated using CFA and SEM. In most cases, the tables and the statistical results were derived with the help of the software called Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS). The findings show that brand equity, value equity, and relationship equity partially mediate the relationship between social media marketing activities and automobile purchase intention. As a different point of the study, all the three equity drivers have high correlations and together have an effect on automobile purchase intentions of customers. Overall, the study makes important findings, suggestions, and theoretical and managerial contributions to the literature.*

**Keywords:** social media marketing activities, brand equity, relationship equity, value equity, purchase intention.



**CHAPTER I**  
**INTRODUCTION**

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Social media users can encounter a virtual environment where they can express themselves, exchange ideas, and manage messages. Marketers can now communicate with them and share ideas with them by using this virtual environment. It is the reality for marketers because it has already carved out a significant position for itself in the industry. The virtual world is dynamic, and in a short amount of time, many such platforms have sprung up in this world of virtual connections, making it difficult for marketers. Social networking and social media have taken root as the main form of inter-consumer communication thanks to smartphones and internet connectivity.

The internet acts as a bridge to eliminate the differences in customer preferences, choices, and decisions between urban and rural areas. Many people who use these platforms end up inspiring and motivating clients who are part of their network of networks. People like being a part of communities, whether they are family, professional, recreational, or sports, since they are social beings. The groupings now have a lot more personality thanks to the development of internet media. The best hobby club on earth can be contacted to exchange ideas. By establishing a professional connection with a talent expert, people can share ideas. Actually, the advent of the internet has shortened actual distances and brought everyone together on a single platform. Due to their addiction to social media group chats and the urge to express their desires, consumers frequently communicate information about the products or brands they wish to buy. A sizable number of people who are either current or potential customers of such goods or services read the ideas and information posted on these websites. When making a purchasing decision, knowledge and the source of that knowledge become essential. "The activities we engage in when we obtain, utilize, and dispose of items and services" are considered specific consumer behaviours (Blackwell, Miniard, & Engel, 2001). Environmental and personal factors have an impact on consumer behaviour (Blyth, 2008). Purchase decisions made by customers, which involve a number of processes, are a key component of consumer behaviour. In general, social networks, including organizations or people with influence over customers, can have an impact on consumers' purchase decisions (Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard & Hogg, 2010). Customers can use online social networks in order to communicate with one another and obtain information, comments, reviews, and ratings that can influence their purchasing decisions in many ways. A wide variety of people, including family, friends, coworkers, and organisations or people they would like to compare themselves to, have the power to influence consumers (Schiffman, Kamk, & Hansen, 2008). Numerous new online activities, including blogging, chatting, gaming, and messaging, have been made available to users thanks to the expansion of online social networks. One of the most widely used social networking sites is Facebook.com. Facebook users can create dynamic profiles about themselves and communicate with other members of their groups (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). Social engagement with others produced new behaviours and had an impact on consumers' daily purchasing choices (Rogers, 2003). People are influenced by the rise of online social networks in many different

ways, and it is projected that the impact would be greatest among young consumers, the target market who are more exposed to online social media. Since social networks are thought to have an impact on consumers' purchase intentions, it is crucial to research the possible effects of online social networks in this area. To properly analysis the effects of user-and firm-generated social media communication, it is essential to make a distinction between the two. This is crucial because user-generated social media communication is uncontrolled by the corporation and is instead under the power of the marketers and brand managers who handle firm-created social media communication. This study aims to investigate the influence of social media marketing activities on customer equity drivers, namely brand, relationship and value equities, and purchase intention of automobile brands.

## **1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The advancement of technology has changed how marketing is done. Although social media marketing has definitely replaced traditional marketing, it still exists. Studying the role of social media marketing on automobile brand purchase intentions is crucial given the growing popularity of employing social media activities for marketing purposes. Thus, consumers use social media platforms before making any purchase decision. Since social media marketing on automobile brand purchase intention is such a recent phenomenon and has thus received limited investigation, the research difficulty is the lack of understanding of its consequences. Even if there is limited research and resources on the subject, it can be challenging for an automobile brand to predict customer purchase intention, manage customer equity, and monitor social media marketing activity.

The study mainly focuses on addressing the following research questions:

1. Do social media marketing activities enhance customer equity drivers?
2. Are purchase intention and customer equity drivers related?
3. Is social media marketing related to purchase intention?

## **1.3 SIGNIFICANE AND NEED OF THE STUDY**

The average annual production of 17.5 million automobiles, of which 2.3 million are exported, places India as the seventh-largest producer in the world right now. By 2016, it is predicted that the Indian automobile market will surpass 5% of global vehicle sales to rank third in the globe. (Make in India, 2015; <http://makeinindia.com/sector/automobiles/>). According to a study done by the international consulting firm Capgemini with 8,000 consumers in India (Economic Times, 2015), 78% of the respondents stated they would be more likely to buy a car from a specific automobile manufacturer or

dealer if they saw positive reviews posted on social media. The social media platforms have become an important part of consumers' purchase decisions. Social media marketing activities enhance customer equity drivers. The usage of social media platforms for both automobile brand purchase intention and research has increased. The number of Indian consumers researching online reached 95% in 2011, up from 86% in 2010. This shows that it is important for automobile brands to do social media marketing to know how to get involved in social media and at the same time engage potential customers too. Moreover, social media marketing activities give existing customers a platform to voice their opinions and feedback about automobile brands. So this study tries to elaborate on the role of social media marketing on automobile brand purchase intention. Findings from the study might be useful for future research.

## **1.4 OBJECTIVES OF STUDY**

The research objectives of this study are as follows:

1. Look into the impact of social media activities on customer equity in automobile brands.
2. Look into the effect of customer equity on automobile brand purchase intentions.

## **1.5 SCOPE OF STUDY**

The scope of the study has been limited to social media marketing for automobile brands only. The purpose of the study is to determine how social media marketing activities are involved in the purchase intention of automobile brands. The study has been confined to the Ernakulum region as this area has greater internet penetration and plenty of social networking site users.

## **1.6 HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY**

H01 social media marketing activities has no significant on value equity.

H02 Social media marketing activities has no significant effect relationship equity.

H03 social media activities has no significant effect on brand equity.

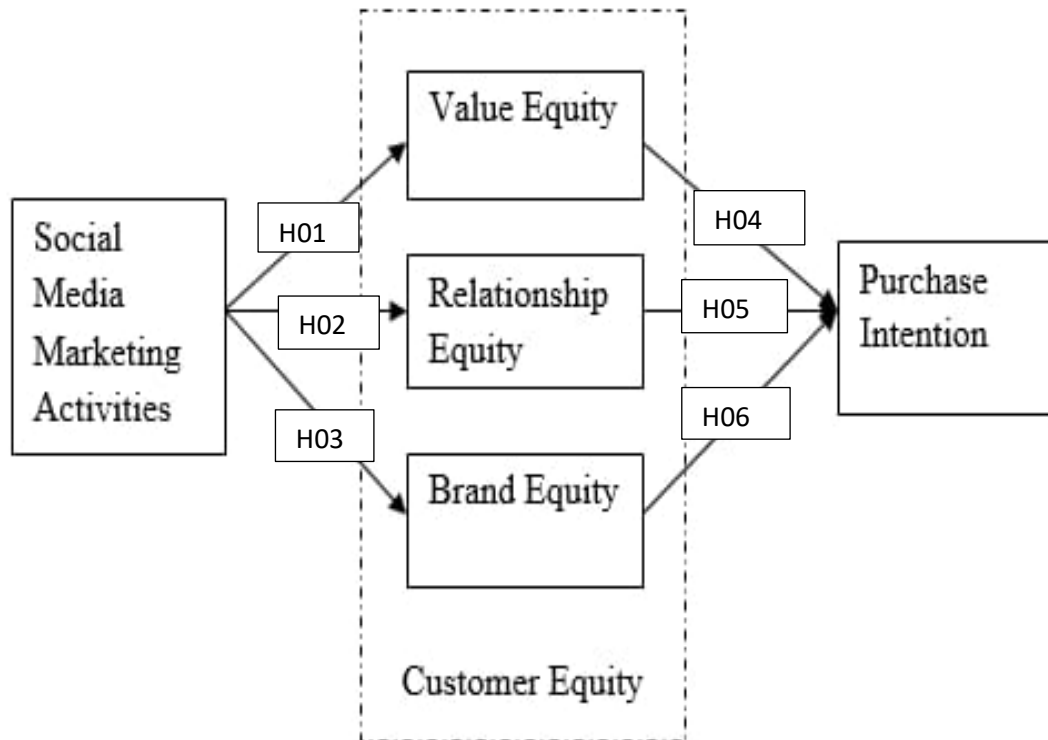
H04 value equity has no significant effect on purchase intention.

H05 relationship equity has no significant effect on purchase intention.

H06 brand equity has no significant effect on purchase intention.

## HYPOTHESISED MODEL

Figure No.1



Source: compiled by the researcher based on extensive review

### 1.7 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Based on the study "The mediating Role of customer equity drivers between Social Media Marketing activities and Automobile Brands' Purchase Intentions, "dependent variables and independent variables are tested. The source of information is collected from both primary and secondary data. The instrument used is a questionnaire. The demographics and the five-point Likert scale are in the questionnaire. The sample size of the study is 100 customers.

### **1.7.1 DATA**

Both primary and secondary data sources will be used for this study.

Primary data: was collected from 100 respondents by using structured pretested questionnaire prepared digitally in google forms. Responses on various measures used in the study were obtained on 5 point scale as. 1 is equal to “strongly disagree”, 2 to “disagree”, 3 to neutral, 4 to “agree” and 5 to “strongly agree”.

Secondary data: secondary data are those data which have already been collected, tabulated and presented in some form by else for some other purpose.it has been sourced from the reputed journal, magazine, newspaper and websites.

### **1.7.2. SAMPLE DESIGN**

Data was collected from 100 respondents of different age group, sample was selected by purposive sample method. 200 Google form questionnaires where send to respondents, out of these 200 only 160 responded back and after sorting the incomplete and incorrect questionnaire forms 100 where selected for conducting the research.

### **1.7.3 TOOL FOR ANALYSIS**

The collected primary data were statistically processed, classified, tabulated and analysed by using statistical and mathematical tools and techniques like percentages, mean, mode and standard deviation, Correlation analysis, multiple regression, Structural equation model was used to test the hypothesis. In most cases tables and the statistical results were derived with the help of the software called Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS).

### **1.8 LIMITATION OF STUDY**

Some of the limitations of the study are:

1. The small number of sample size selected.
2. The sample size was limited to 100 respondents only.
3. The findings of the study are based on the responses of the respondents, which might have their own limitations. The attempted objectivity has naturally been constrained.

4. It is assumed that the information given by the respondents is true as per their knowledge and hence the chances of biased information is remote but definitely cannot be ruled out
5. Due to the limited number of respondents, the findings may not be the same for the whole population

## **1.9 CHAPTERISATION**

Chapter 1	Introduction
Chapter 2	Review of literature
Chapter 3	Analysis and interpretation
Chapter 4	findings and suggestion

## **CHAPTER II**

# **REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS**



## **2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this literature review is to chart the existing literature and explain the relevant concepts related to this thesis. The topic has been reviewed and analysed in a limited number of scholarly sources. The following will describe the social media marketing activities and their influence, customer equity, its drivers and purchase intention and a conceptual framework that shows the relations between the constructs.

The structure of this literature review includes three main sections with subsections. The first section is about social media marketing activities and their influence, including social media marketing activities in automobile brands. The second section explores customer equity, its drivers and purchase intention. The third section will present a theoretical and conceptual framework that shows the constructs' hypothesized relationships.

### **2.1.2 Social media marketing activities**

In 2008, Universal Maccann International defined social media as "online applications, platforms, and media that aim to enhance interactions, collaborations, and sharing of material." There are many different types of social media, including weblogs, social blogs, microblogs, wikis, podcasts, videos, and rating systems. The use of social media by businesses for marketing and advertising is widespread. Businesses have various benefits from the shift to online marketing operations, including the ability to communicate with clients and carry out integrated marketing activities with less expense and effort than in the past. Raising sales and profitability is the primary goal of marketing initiatives (Kim and KO, 2010).

Social media is useful for marketing campaigns since it allows users of the internet to exchange product information and brand names (Trainor, 2014). Numerous studies have confirmed that social media has a favourable impact on consumers' purchasing intentions and trust, as well as on their willingness to share their knowledge and experiences (Wang, 2012). In insurance services, Ashley and Tuten (2015) determined that social media marketing operations should focus on terms like "marketing, customization, information, trendiness, and interaction."

Every business working in this dynamic environment today recognises the phenomenon that is social media. The effectiveness of social media's various components (blogs, online forums, and online communities) as it relates to sales and marketing is impacted (Stephen and Galak, 2012). There are

many social networking websites, and each one has unique characteristics. Social media sites (SNS) assist people in creating their own profiles, which businesses and partners utilise to connect and approach these profiles. The different ways that customers can use online networking to "post," "digg," "blog," and other functions are numerous. Customers' content is shared and used by other customers to research products, brands, services, and problems (Xiang and Gretzel, 2010). . By enabling customers to spread messages to individual contacts, SMM has conveyed another measurement to mass promoting and mass correspondence (Hafele, 2011). Undoubtedly, the most widely recognized and the most well-known among client is the Facebook.

Palmer and Lewis (2009) claim that the use of social media by a company can have a wide range of operational and strategic advantages. Social media networks assist businesses in understanding the wants and needs of their customers, and by asking for their input, they may notify them of new product development policies. Social networking websites have also highlighted advantages that help consumers make more informed product choices. Social media are a group of web-based applications, according to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) that foster the sharing and growth of user-generated content while also laying the theoretical groundwork for Web 2.0. According to Giese and Gote's (2000) study, social media marketing can be accomplished through sales activities, post-sale services for digital products, post-sale services for digital products, and information systems through websites based on customer information satisfaction. According to Campbell et al. (2011), social media users produce content known as Consumer Generated Advertising (CGA), in which the consumer creates the brand and particular messaging with the purpose of convincing, reminding, or enlightening others.

### **2.1.3 Types of SMM activities and their influence**

Instead of only supporting one-way online marketing, the internet and social media enable and encourage direct customer contact between businesses and consumers. According to studies, knowledge exchange and active client interaction are more effective marketing strategies for businesses than unidirectional online advertising (Kim and KO, 2012).

Recently, a number of automakers' brands have created strategies for creating and maintaining long-term online relationships with their consumers.

Companies are cutting back on traditional advertising spending in order to fund social media marketing (SMM) initiatives as a result of this new possibility. Even though social media marketing cannot replace traditional marketing, some industries, such as the automotive industry, have found success using social media marketing exclusively in place of traditional advertising.

According to Richter and Koch (2007, quoted in Kim and Ko, 2011), social media includes online tools that facilitate communication, collaboration, and content distribution. There are many different types of social media, such as podcasts, videos, weblogs, and social blogs. From the perspective of

the 6 companies, there are also a number of advantages, including improved exposure and traffic as well as decreased marketing costs. Information gathering and feedback are both improved by social media presence (Borges and Verssimo, 2014; Karamian, Nadoushan, & Nadoushan, 2015).

Companies can now more easily get client feedback and opinions than in the past.

Various studies have highlighted a variety of social media marketing goals. The primary goal of social media marketing initiatives, according to Kim and Ko (2010, referenced in Ural and Yuksel, 2015), is to increase sales and profitability. For instance, Castronovo and Huang (2012) place emphasis on many criteria. "In general, social media can be used by a business to achieve one of three objectives: raising awareness, boosting sales, or cultivating loyalty" (Castronovo and Huang, 2012, p.124).

According to Dong-Hun (2010), referenced in Gamboa and Gonçalves (2014), corporations utilise social media as a route for direct sales, a way to stay in touch with clients, a booster for word-of-mouth marketing, and a platform for social commerce. However, as Kim and Ko (2011, p. 1482) note, these goals can be coupled with two significant factors: "a brand's participation in social media acts as a marketing activity to create a relationship with customers and improve corporate profits." Because a sizable portion of users spread information to others via social media, one consumer is worth much more than what they initially spend (Karamian, Nadoushan, & Nadoushan, 2015).

**Table no.2.1**

**Measures of social media marketing activities**

<b>SL.NO</b>	<b>MEASURE/ITEMS</b>	<b>REFERENCE</b>
1	Contents found in social media about automobile brands seem interesting.	Kim & ko (2010)
2	I can watch videos of automobile brands on social media.	Kim & ko (2010)
3	Personalised information searches on automobile brands are made possible by social media.	Kim & ko (2010)
4	Social media accounts for automobile brands offer specialised services.	Kim & ko (2010)
5	It is easy to convey my opinion about automobile brand on social media.	Kim & ko (2010)
6	Through social media, it is possible to share information with other users about automobile brands.	Kim & ko (2010)
7	Contents found on social media about automobile brands are up-to-date and contain the newest information.	Kim & ko (2010)
8	Automobile brands are trendy on social media.	Kim & ko (2010)

Source: From existing Review of Literature.

**Value, Relationship and Brand Equities as Drivers of Customer Equity and purchase intention.**

**2.1.4 Types of customer equity**

According to this definition, customers are intangible assets that businesses should strategically acquire, maintain, and maximise in addition to any other financial assets (Blattberg and Deighton, 2001, cited in Kim and KO, 2011). According to Chae and KO (2016), p. 3806, "Customer equity encompasses both monetary and nonmonetary value invested by a customer in a firm during the term of exchange connection." Businesses must understand "what drives customer retention, customer switching, and new customer acquisition" in order to enhance the customer lifetime value and customer

equity (Yuan, Kim and Kim, 2016, p. 3797). There are several frameworks offered to comprehend the factors that influence client equity. Studies like "Berger and Nasr (BN) approach, Gupta and Lehmann (GL) approach, Blattberg, Getz and Thomas (BGT) approach, and Rust, Lemon and Zeithaml (RLZ) approach" have all acknowledged them (Kumar and Morris, 2007, p. 158).

According to the assumptions, data requirements, metrics, and customer/segment/firm-levels, Kumar and Morris (2007) grouped various methodologies. The RLZ technique is summarised by Kumar and Morris in Figure 1 below. The RLZ technique seems to be the most pertinent one for this theory. For instance, this study's use of sample data and customer evaluations as drivers of consumer equity makes the RLZ approach the only approach that accomplishes so.

According to the RLZ model (Vogel, Evanschitzky, and Ramaseshan, 2008, p.99), "marketing inputs alter client preferences and, consequently, decision probability for a certain brand." Additionally, according to Vogel, Evanschitzky, and Ramaseshan, the decision likelihood has an impact on customer value, which serves as the foundation for calculating a firm's customer equity.

Three main factors make up the Lemon, Rust, and Zeithaml (2000) approach: brand equity, value equity, and relationship equity. Kumar and Morris (2007, p.158) summarised Lemon, Rust, and Zeithaml's approach as follows: "To maximise customer equity, customer-level evaluations of a company and/or its product(s) can be classified into three dimensions: value of the product or service, brand issues of the product, and relational aspects of the product." According to the RLZ model, client equity is the "discounted total of customer lifetime values" (Lemon, Rust, and Zeithaml, 2001, p. 21). Customer equity is "the total of the discounted lifetime values added across all the firm's current and potential customers," taking into account potential new consumers (Rust, Lemon, and Zeithaml, 2004, p.110).

A customer-specific, brand-switching matrix is a component of the RLZ method. Rust, Lemon, and Zeithaml (2004) evaluated the matrix in the airline business, and "the same approach was also applied to measure consumer equity of fashion brands in various studies" (KO & Oh, 2009; KO & Lee, 2009; Yun & KO, 2006; Zhang, KO, & Kim, 2010). (Kim & KO, 2011, Figure 1. RLZ Approach, modified from the Kumar and Morris (2007)10p.1482 model.) Based on the availability of the necessary data, this study employs an RLZ strategy. Additionally, because it has been tested in the fashion business, the RLZ technique is the most pertinent for this thesis.

### **2.1.5 Brand equity drivers**

The term "consumer brand equity behaviour" was coined by Aaker & Keller (1990). It has two components: brand awareness and brand image, and is used to describe how differently customers' acquired brand knowledge affects product marketing. According to researchers, these two dimensions can be used to discuss online customer behaviour.

According to the definition of brand equity, which goes beyond the brand's purely subjective value, consumers' entire intangible evaluation of the brand (Rust et al., 2004, p.110) This description is congruent with popular conceptualizations of brand equity, which view brand equity as consumers' attitudes toward it, its added utility, and their general brand knowledge (Dwivedi et al., 2012, p.527). Favourable brand equity has major benefits for a company, including increased opportunities to grow a brand and a higher percentage of consumer product category sales (Aaker, 1996). (Keller, 2008). Building brand equity involves both meaning and image. The brand equity serves three different purposes. In addition to serving as a reminder of the company's products and services for current customers, brand equity also has the potential to forge an emotional connection between the customer and the company (Lemon, Rust and Zeithaml, 2001)

Brand equity, according to Aaker (1991; quoted in Calvo Dopico and Calvo Porral, 2012), is based on five main dimensions: brand recognition, perceived quality, associations, loyalty, and other proprietary assets. However, this more inclusive definition of brand equity also takes into account value equity according to the RLZ model. Consider a more focused classification by highlighting the distinct effects of value equity and brand equity on customer equity in order to better identify unique customer equity antecedents (Richards and Jones, 2006).

Lemon, Rust, and Zeithaml (2001, p. 21) define brand equity as the "customer's subjective and intangible assessment of the brand, above and beyond its objectively perceived value," because they wanted to define brand equity more specifically than previous studies had done in order to distinguish the customer equity drivers. These brand equity drivers—brand awareness, attitude toward the brand, and corporate ethics—as defined by Lemon, Rust, and Zeithaml (2001) were employed by both Kumar and Morris (2007) and Kim and KO (2011). This study will distinguish between brand and value equities and look at their drivers separately because it is using the RLZ technique.

Because brand's social media marketing activities increase brand exposure and brand awareness, this thesis proposes, that perceived social media marketing activities have positive effect on brand equity. The more effective the perceived social media activities are, the higher are the assumed brand equity.

**Table no.2.2**

**Measures of brand equity drivers**

<b>SL NO</b>	<b>MEASURES/ITEMS</b>	<b>REFERENCE</b>
1	Due to social media, I have sufficient knowledge about automobile brands.	Aaker & Keller(1999) Keller(2008) and Dwivedi et al., 2012
2	I can quickly recall the names and logos of the automobile brands advertised on social media.	Aaker & Keller(1999) Keller(2008) and Dwivedi et al., 2012
3	The automobile brand which I liked appearing on social media has more variants than other brands	Aaker & Keller(1999) Keller(2008) and Dwivedi et al., 2012
4	Automobile brands I like, which appear on social media and have their own personality.	Aaker & Keller(1999) Keller(2008) and Dwivedi et al., 2012

Source: from existing Review of Literature.

**2.1.6 Value equity drivers**

The core of a customer and company relationship is value. Companies must first focus on creating value equity before enhancing it with brand equity and enhancing their relationships with relationship equity (Richards and Jones, 2006). As a result, every aspect of relationship marketing techniques will be ineffective if the company's goods and services fall short of what customers want and expect (Lemon, Rust and Zeithaml, 2001). The "customer's objective appraisal of the usefulness of a brand, based on perceptions of what is given up for what is obtained" is how value equity is defined as a result (Lemon, Rust and Zeithaml, 2001, p.20). Overall quality, price competitiveness, and convenience are the key determinants of value equity (Kumar and Morris, 2007; Lemon, Rust, and Zeithaml, 2000; Richards and Jones, 2006). Product and service quality, price competitiveness, convenience, the tangible environment of the retailer, individual value, and social value were all considered value equity

constructs in Kim and Ko's study from 2011. Building value equity can be challenging, particularly in commodity sectors like the fast-fashion industry, where items and rivals are frequently interchangeable (Lemon, Rust, and Zeithaml, 2001). However, a company can increase value equity when there are disparities between competing items by influencing how customers perceive value (Lemon, Rust and Zeithaml, 2001, p.21). Companies can enhance product quality, service quality, and convenience by using data from social media marketing operations, which in turn are related to value equity.

**TABLE NO.2.3**  
**Measures of value equity drivers**

<b>SL NO.</b>	<b>MEASURES/ ITEMS</b>	<b>REFERENCES</b>
1	I think automobile brands on social media help me in comparing prices, features, and quality.	Richards and Jones (2006), Lemon, Rust and Zeithaml (2001).
2	I feel that information regarding automobile brands has higher credibility on social media than in mass media.	Kim & KO 2011, Kumar and Morris, (2007)
3	I bought this automobile brand because it is famous and popular in social media	Kim & KO 2011, Kumar and Morris, (2007)
4	Even when I hear negative information about my likeable automobile brand on social media, I still stick with this brand.	Kim & KO 2011, Kumar and Morris, (2007)

Source: From existing Review of Literature.

### **2.1.7 Relationship equity drivers**

Relationship equity is described as "the propensity of consumers to persist with a brand, above and beyond its objective and subjective evaluations" (Rust et al., 2004, p.110). A business can improve consumer brand relationships by implementing incentive programmes, special recognition programmes, community-building initiatives, and knowledge-building initiatives (Dwivedi et al., 2012). Higher customer retention results in improved consumer-brand relationships, which increase market share (Palmatier et al., 2006). (Gustafsson and colleagues, 2005)

Relationship equity is described as "the predisposition of the consumer to stick with the brand, above and beyond the customer's objective and subjective assessments of the brand" by Lemon, Rust, and Zeithaml (2000, p. 21). It serves as the connecting thread between a customer and a brand or business



(Lemon, Rust and Zeithaml, 2001). Consumers view relationship equity to be high if they feel they are treated well, given attention, and that the product and service satisfy their expectations (Vogel, Evanschitzky and Ramaseshan, 2008).

Since businesses take varied approaches to consumer relations, relationship equity drivers vary amongst different brands. Participating in affinity programs, being a member of a loyalty program, and participating in community- and knowledge-building initiatives are all potential relationship equity drivers (Lemon, Rust, and Zeithaml, 2001; Kumar and Morris, 2007). Relationship equity factors were analysed in Kim and Ko's study on luxury fashion (2011, p. 1482) and included "preferred treatment of customers, customer service, coincidence of image with brand, and overall fondness." Consumer communication can be expanded through the use of social media marketing, which will promote client loyalty. Therefore, social media marketing initiatives affect the equity of relationships.

**TABLE NO.2.4**

**Measures of relationship equity drivers**

<b>SL NO.</b>	<b>MEASURES/ ITEMS</b>	<b>REFERENCES</b>
1	Would you recommend the automobile brands product and services to others through social media?	Rust et al (2004) and Palmatier et al (2006), Kim and Ko's (2011)
2	Through social media I can discuss about a car purchase, its shortcoming and experience with friends.	Rust et al (2004) and Palmatier et al (2006), Kim and Ko's (2011)
3	I usually use this automobile brand as my first choice in comparison with other brands in social media.	Rust et al (2004) and Palmatier et al (2006), Kim and Ko's (2011)
4	I am a true fan of a particular automobile brand in social media.	Rust et al (2004) and Palmatier et al (2006), Kim and Ko's (2011)

Source: From existing Review of Literature.

### **2.1.8 Purchase intention**

Purchase intention is defined by Kim and KO (2011, p. 1481) as "a combination of both customers' interest in and the possibility of buying a product." They assert that "customer equity is a behavioural variable accounting for actual purchasing record, whereas purchase intention is an attitudinal variable for gauging customers' future contributions to a brand." Brand memory, emotional attachment, and brand awareness are all examples of brand equity, which may pique someone's interest in the product or prompt them to make a purchase. A value equity analysis of a company's products' quality, cost, and convenience can be described as an objective assessment. Customers will be more interested in maybe buying the product if they believe the brand and its items have worth. Finally, relationship equity emphasises brand loyalty, so if a customer demonstrates a commitment to a certain brand, they may have a higher purchase intention. Overall, it can be inferred that there is a favourable association between purchase intention, brand equity, value equity, and relationship equity.

According to the literature review, branding communication promotes brand equity by making it more likely that a brand will be included in a consumer's consideration set. This helps with brand decision-making and helps the choice become a habit (Yoo, Donthu, and Lee 2000). According to the research done by Farquhar (1989), three factors are crucial for building a strong brand with the user: a favourable brand assessment, a positive brand attitude, and a trustworthy brand image. This shows that brand equity is a result of positive views, which are more likely to support brand purchases. More purchases are made by loyal customers than by moderately loyal or recently joined customers (Yoo, Donthu, and Lee 2000). This also includes more positive consumer perceptions about the superiority of a brand are related with stronger purchase intentions and Purchase intention integrates customer interest in and propensity to purchase a good. According to numerous studies, evaluating purchase intention assumes that consumers will act in the future based on their attitudes (Kim, Kim, & Johnson, 2010; Kim & KO, 2010b; Kim & Lee, 2009; Lloyd & Luk, 2010). It is highly related to attitudes and preferences towards a brand or a product. Customer equity is a behavioural variable that takes into account real purchasing history, whereas purchase intention is an attitude variable that measures customers' future contributions to a company. Forecasting consumer behavior in the future is crucial for businesses, so it needs to be estimated sooner rather than later (Park, Ko & Kim, 2010).decision making (Aaker 1991).

**TABLE NO.2.5****Measures of purchase intention**

<b>SL NO.</b>	<b>MEASURES / ITEMS</b>	<b>REFERENCE</b>
1	I intend to use social media while making a purchase decision.	Kim and KO (2011) and Yoo, Donthu, and Lee 2000
2	Use of social media platforms have helped me in making informed choice before purchasing an automobile brands product or service.	Kim and KO (2011) and Yoo, Donthu, and Lee 2000
3	I think social media platforms provide information related to brand equity, value equity, and relationship equity of automobile brands.	Kim and KO (2011) and Yoo, Donthu, and Lee 2000

Source: From existing Review of Literature.

**2.1.9 CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR IN AUTOMOBILE**

In their 2010 study, "Car Acquisition and Ownership Trends of Motorized Vehicle Owning Households," Banerjee, Walker, Elizabeth, and Kanafani provided details. The primary factor influencing consumer behaviour when a household buys a vehicle is household income. The size of the family is the least important factor in determining consumer behaviour because large families also tend to buy smaller vehicles.

In his explanation of the variables influencing car-buyer preferences, White (2004) noted that consumers want to bargain with dealers over incentives, rebates, and pricing. He noted that in the event of multi-car households, auto dealers must target the potential customer while taking into account the significance of life stage and the nagging power of children. Despite the fact that women represent the majority of new car purchasers, the leadership of the automotive industry has historically been contemptuous of women's participation in the car-purchasing process. Jacob and Khan (2010) found that women have a significant influence on the purchase decisions made by families. Numerous women are driving cars in Indian cities and towns, demonstrating the advancement of women.

Vaddae (2010) conducted research on how perception, experience, and belief influence consumer behaviour when making a two-wheeler purchase. Friends and family have no bearing on the decision to buy. While respondents stated that mobility is preferred in a vehicle when purchasing a two-wheeler, urban consumers prefer to own two-wheelers to manage their hectic schedules. Therefore, it follows that the decision to buy a two-wheeler is not influenced by a single element; rather, a number of variables have an impact on the process. As a result, marketers must thoroughly research all of the aspects that influence the decision-making process.

### **2.1.10 Based on past study review**

- The effective social networking strategies for auto dealers were investigated by Michael Bowen (2013) in his article. Techniques like successfully communicating with customers on a variety of social networking sites to urge them to buy from their dealership. Facebook, which offered the option of using social consideration, was discovered to be the most widely used social platform. It was a place where businesses provided customer service to their clients and merchants connected with the majority of the crowd. Websites like dealer.com, cars.com, and dealerrater.com, which provided audits and evaluations, gave customers extensive thought to assist them in making the right choice.
- Michael A. Stelzner (2013) in his report evaluated how marketers used social media to grow their businesses. He studied 3000 advertisers and discovered that there was a commitment from advertisers' sides on a weekly basis to social advertising, which led to them receiving actual preferences from social promoting efforts. He also discovered which platform was used by them most frequently to market their goods or services, social destinations, and that there was a period of responsibility from the advertisers' side.
- Ramya k. Prasad (2018) The study Youtube Videos As An Effective Medium in Branding – A Study Among Urban Women In Mysuru City aimed to study the role of YouTube as a social media platform and its impact on creating visibility for brands and to determine the effect of opinions of YouTubers on its viewers. The study was conducted among 300 urban women in Mysuru city between the ages 20-35 was proposed for this paper. The study concluded that YouTube has grown as an effective marketing tool in the recent decade and 57% of the respondents believed that the videos they watch are genuine and truthful.
- Email marketing was cited by V12 Group (2013) as the most evident media channel for collecting customer leads and as a major force in the current battles for online, social, and mobile advertising. According to the report, email continues to be the primary channel for acquiring new clients; 86% of respondents indicated they intended to use it for this purpose.

According to Target Marketing's March 2012 Media Usage Forecast, regular mail came in second with a 69% utilization rate for obtaining within 2012.

- In his paper, Curt Kellar (2013) posed a series of questions about the state of car dealerships' email marketing campaigns and provided answers that could encourage both new and returning customers to make purchases. Through a dissection of their execution metrics, a viewpoint on the current state of the automobile and cruiser dealership email wars was gained; real procedures were held, which advance the state of the existing industries would speak to the motoring consumer.
- In his 2013 study, Ashutosh Agrawal discussed how online decision-making was becoming more and more common among prospective auto buyers. With the availability of sophisticated foot-shaped impressions and discriminating information, online activity gave them a variety of options that influenced their decision to buy or not to buy. Recent studies showed that the automotive industry was the leading generator of online debates. Thus, by getting Infosys Car advanced results, the sector was able to cater to customer wants online, as was detailed in this article. By welcoming these outcomes, this induced an element that was favourable to the advertising.
- Angella J. Kim & Eunju KO this study aims to examine Do social media marketing activities enhance customer equity? An empirical study of luxury fashion brands The study set out to identify characteristics of SMM activities and investigate the relationships among those perceived activities, value equity, relationship equity, brand equity, customer equity, and purchase intention using a structural equation model in light of the growing interest in the use of social media marketing (SMM) among luxury fashion brands. Entertainment, engagement, trendiness, customisation, and word of mouth are the five components that make up what luxury fashion firms' SSM activities are regarded to be like. They have a notably beneficial impact on brand equity, relationship equity, and value equity. Brand equity has a strong negative impact on customer equity, whereas value equity and connection equity have no discernible effects. This is true for the link between customer equity drivers and customer equity. Value equity and relationship equity have a strong beneficial impact on purchase intention.
- In his article from 2013, Earl J. Hesterberg discussed the impact of online advertising on the car selling industry. He discovered that 95% of scientists acknowledged automobile reviews and audits before deciding to buy; 72% of web users used a web search tool to inquire about local merchants; and 90% of new auto buyers used the internet throughout their shopping process. The database of customers also increased as a result of the web advertising methodology, which increased offers of auto products in comparison to traditional advertising.
- Satish Kumar's (2012) study on the evolving ideals of marketing communication underlined the importance of social media as a powerful tool for tailored advertising. The report examined Ford

India's strategy for using social media to raise awareness and interest in the Ford Figo car. Ford Motors was able to adapt its vehicles and technological innovations to the Indian market. Ford's success was largely attributed to the creation and execution of a successful marketing strategy for the Indian market. The company was able to successfully use social media to create reliable brands and strengthen its client relationships. Ford India used the social media campaign "Uncover Smart Drive" to promote its Ford Figo car and the campaign's outcomes. The "Discover Smart Drive" campaign for the Ford Figo's major success factors and how Ford India may successfully use social media were also explained in the paper.

- When Nina Bonagura (2011) performed a poll in Western Europe, she found that the top motivation for using social media was to raise brand awareness of the business and its products. The next two drivers were far behind this one in terms of generating ideas and input for products and services, as well as managing relationships with clients and potential clients.

## **2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.2.1 History of social media marketing**

In India, internet marketing first appeared between 1996 and 2005. However, when internet connections became widely available and people began utilising search engines like Google, digital marketing began to truly take off. Few individuals were familiar with SEO in 2000, and there weren't many businesses in India providing digital marketing services. In India, new digital marketing agencies began to operate by 2008. Many business owners now recognise how critical it is to increase their brand's presence on Google. By 2010, both small and large businesses began launching sponsored and organic initiatives to create leads for inbound marketing. After 2010, India's digital marketing industry experienced a tremendous development, which is still going strong today.

Technology and business practises have seen a significant shift in the 21st century. The consumer and their decision-making process have evolved significantly as a result of the internet revolution. The automobile business has also been impacted by the use of information technology in social media marketing. Customers can now obtain information about the vehicles they want to purchase without going inside a physical business. Regarding the purchase and selling of cars, they can instantly obtain any information on their PC at their doorstep, according to their convenience. Through the social media platform, it is simple to extract all the vital facts and details about automobiles.

In order to enhance sales, automakers and dealers are constantly working hard to make the process of purchasing and selling cars faster and more enjoyable. The consumers, on the other hand, have grown impatient and now anticipate a one-stop-shop for all their demands and inquiries from the dealers and

original equipment manufacturers (OEMs). A state of demand and supply disequilibrium is produced by the ease of access to information. The advantages of social media marketing in this situation offer a venue for resolving this by raising brand awareness and attracting buyers to the product. This study's main objective is to investigate how SMM may influence consumers' car-buying decisions.

Social media marketing (SMM) is establishing itself as a fresh marketing approach in the incredibly dynamic commercial operating environment. Different web groups, social networking sites, blog showcases, and other online venues are employed by different Marketers to promote brands. Numerous websites, including Linked In, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, are popular social media websites that are utilised by individuals in general. The typical amount that businesses spend on social media platforms to bring in new clients is 15% of their marketing budget. Due to this, many businesses focus heavily on social media to attract, cultivate, and maintain relationships with customers in order to increase their level of trust in the marketing company. This development of trust will prompt the customer to acquire more information about their brand by visiting the official website. Overall, this will result in generating awareness and revenue for the firm

Understanding consumer behaviour and creating a social media marketing strategy for digital media have become strategically crucial for the growth of nearly every business operation in today's extremely competitive marketplace. Business managers immediately respond to customer inquiries with high-quality service because they are aware of the necessity for rapid response times on these platforms. The major goals of SMM are to increase brand awareness and develop a deeper understanding of consumers in order to meet their needs. With the introduction of technology, commercial organisations are attempting to evaluate consumers from a 360-degree perspective in order to improve the level of service that they require.

### **2.2.2 Meaning of social media marketing**

Internet marketing that makes use of the social media platforms is known as social media marketing (SMM).

These social media platforms enable brands to connect with their audience to:

- Build a brand
- Increase sales;
- Drive traffic to a website; and
- Build a community of followers to share and engage with content.
- Producing relevant content that users will share with their own networks helps brands increase their exposure. It also extends their reach toward fans, potential customers and even potential employees when used as a recruitment tool.

- While making the company seem more personable. Social media enables organizations to create relationships with their audience. It gives end users a platform to ask questions, voice complaints and generally be heard. It also gives brands the opportunity to respond, adapt and adjust business processes or products.
- Some popular social media apps include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Pinterest, Instagram and Snapchat. Each platform has elements that makes it attractive to use. And when a company uses several in combination to deliver a multichannel message, consumers can see those messages on their preferred channels.

### **2.2.3 Benefits of social media marketing in the automobile industry**

Angela Hausman on April 20, 2022.

Every industry discovers advantages in digital marketing that save costs and/or boost sales. The difficulties that each industry encounters vary, though. Today, as part of our continuous discussion of the distinct advantages of digital marketing for various industries, we'll pay particular attention to the automobile sector.

#### **1. Reach a wider audience**

Digital marketing allows you to reach a broader audience at a much lesser cost than traditional marketing techniques. It is difficult to target potential clients through traditional marketing channels based on their geography, age, gender, interests, etc. Spending wastefully on people you have no chance of converting, no matter what incentives you provide, is eliminated by concentrating your money on those customers who are most likely to make a purchase.

#### **2. Generate more leads**

One of the key advantages of digital marketing for your automobile business is generating more leads, therefore enlist the aid of automotive advertising firms. We've already discussed how focusing your advertising on your target market may increase efficiency and reduce costs. Additionally, when you employ the appropriate terms, search advertisements might reach users when they're actively looking to buy. The same is true for employing those same keywords in your content to bring targeted consumers to your website or physical location, a practise known as SEO.

#### **3. Improve customer engagement**



You may increase customer interaction through digital marketing with both your target market and the automobile industry. You may engage your community, which distributes your message, as you can see below, generates positive word of mouth from users who comment about your business, and even benefits your SEO efforts because participation on social media platforms is a significant ranking component.

#### 4. Customers can find more information on specific vehicles

Different information about the cars that potential purchasers are interested in buying are sought after. Others are more interested in the typical resale value while some people desire the technical specifications. When my children were young, the number of cupholders was the only feature that really interested me; I was completely ignorant of all the technological details.

Customers (and brands) gain from digital marketing because it gives potential customers access to the information they need. Salespeople don't have to rely on guesswork to determine how much information to provide a customer before their eyes start to glaze over. Instead, the consumer can view the information that they believe will have a greater impact on their choice. With the aid of digital marketing, customers can discover additional details about particular vehicles that suit their demands. For instance, it's simple to find vehicle history records, dealer reviews, and other crucial information online, along with resale values and videos of the vehicle in action. Customers can choose the automobile they want to buy thanks to this.

#### 5. Financing and insurance estimates make it easier for customers to know what they can afford

Consumers may more easily decide which automobiles meet their budgets when a solid digital marketing plan is in place. Automotive companies have a better chance of closing the deal and making money from selling insurance or financing the car if they make these goods available online. This is so that prospective buyers can simply locate your dealership online and view all of the many financing alternatives you offer without having to switch to another website that offers financing options.

They are more likely to locate one that fits their demands and budget because there are so many selections accessible.

When potential consumers may see your many financing choices up front, trust-building is made easier. Because of the trust it fosters, customers are more inclined to conduct business with you in the future.

#### 6. Lower Cost

Automotive advertising companies are using digital marketing to assist them reach their target consumers as they adjust to the shifting automotive scene.

As was already mentioned, conventional marketing strategies are expensive and wasteful. A \$6 million Super Bowl ad reaches both those who might buy a car in the next six to twelve months and a number of people who don't plan to. Because it is targeted to only people who have expressed an interest in purchasing and allows you to monitor your return on investment, digital marketing is more economical (ROI). With the use of metrics from your digital marketing initiatives, you can more effectively create your budget and improve it based on actual data about what is and isn't working. Digital marketing allows you to track your ROI and make real-time campaign changes, which is not possible with the meagre analytics offered by traditional advertising. You can then change your budget based on what you find to be effective and ineffective.

## 7. Access to easier services and parts for your existing vehicle

One of the industries that has changed the most recently is the automobile one. Your company may keep ahead of the curve and gain access to more accessible services and auto parts with modern technologies and digital marketing.

## 8. Availability of vehicles

One of the sectors with the highest levels of competition is the automobile one. Customers now have more alternatives than ever because to the wide variety of brands and models available. This is a situation where digital marketing can help your company. You can make sure that potential buyers constantly have access to and are thinking about your automobiles by using a variety of digital marketing strategies.

### **2.2.4 Challenges faced by automobile brands in social media marketing**

1. Negative comments on automobile brands.
2. High competition in social media platforms.
3. No growth in publicly promoted posts on different social media platforms.
4. Unavailability of physical experiences of automobile brands.
5. Unpredictable mind set of customers.

6. Social media marketing sometimes create confusion in mind-set of customers.

## **2.2.5 Advantages and disadvantage**

### **1. Advantages**

Some of the possible advantages of social media marketing includes:

- Reduced marketing costs
- Increased sales
- Increased traffic to your website
- Improved ranking on search engines
- Greater customer engagement
- Opportunity for customer feedback
- Opportunity to conduct market research about your customers
- Improved networking opportunities with customers and other businesses

### **2. Disadvantages**

Some of the possible disadvantages of social media marketing include:

- Not having a clear marketing or social media strategy may result in reduced benefits for your business.
- Additional resources may be needed to manage your online presence.
- Social media is immediate and needs daily monitoring.
- If you don't actively manage your social media presence, you may not see any real benefits.
- There is a risk of unwanted or inappropriate behaviour on your site including bullying and harassment.
- Greater exposure online has the potential to attract risks. Risks can include negative feedback information, leaks, or hacking.

## **2.2.6 Digital Consumer Behaviour in Automobile Sector:**

Digital consumer behaviour is on the rise, and the impacts are increasingly being seen in the auto industry. Online decision-making is prevalent among potential car buyers. Customers' online behaviours produce digital footprints and vital information that, in the digital age, affect brand

impression and purchasing choices. The automotive industry is the largest creator of online conversations, according to recent statistics. According to Millennial Media's (2011) analysis of recent industry data, more than 30% of customers who receive automotive content see it on average once per week, and another 21% do it daily. Campaigns for generating traffic through the use of engaging and imaginative according to a survey conducted by a reputable online research business, 62% of individuals will soon utilise the internet as their main source of information when buying a car. Additionally, people are falling for applications for smartphones and mobile vehicles. People are becoming engaged and proud participants in the online communities for their respective automakers, where they can connect with others who share their interests and exchange experiences. They express their annoyance on social media as well. People actively accept all digital techniques used by the business, such as banner advertising, online test drive and vehicle booking, personalised marketing, etc. Therefore, it can be safely inferred that digital technologies and digital marketing are changing consumer behaviour in the automotive industry.

Businesses are now aware of the enormous potential of digital marketing and are working to keep their digital marketing portfolios active as well as give their goods and services a digital edge. In a study by McKinsey (2012) that examined 24 customer touch points during the purchase of a car for more than 9000 customers, it was discovered that the digital experience came in second place, barely behind the live experience. The purchasing "journey" for cars encompasses a number of various phases, from awareness to contemplation to short listing to purchase to service, and finally, repurchasing. It was also discovered in the study that digital channels dominate this process. Customers use digital channels more frequently as they move through their journey. As an illustration, during the consideration stage, one might browse the websites of brands, read reviews, and visit social media sites and forums. Recent data has shown that more than 50% of consumers actually make their purchasing decisions online, highlighting the significance of managing the internet channel for auto manufacturers. This digital revolution is changing how consumers behave when making purchases through traditional channels. As an illustration, from roughly four visits on average in the past to one today, consumers make fewer showroom visits before making a purchase. This instance demonstrates how the dealer's position has dramatically diminished in terms of knowledge as individuals now prioritise hands-on product experience and pricing negotiations.

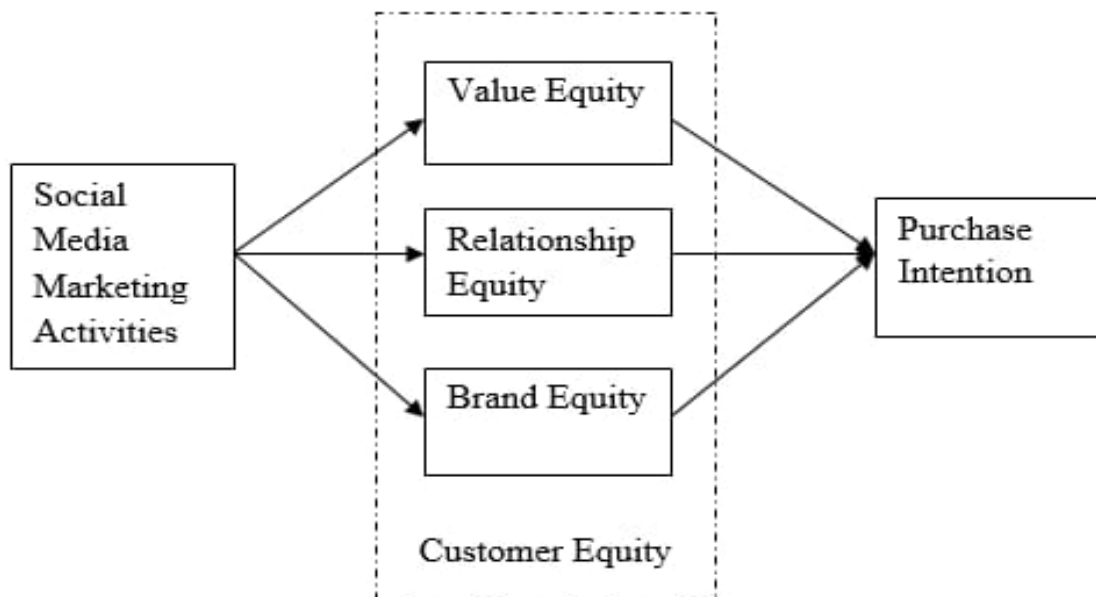
### **2.3 Conceptual framework**

The conceptual framework below aims to demonstrate how the constructs connected to this thesis relate to one another. The model is based on designs by Ural and Yuksel and Kim and KO from 2011. (2015). The Rust, Lemon, and Zeithaml approach will be used in this study, which holds that customer equity has three drivers: value, relationship, and brand equities.

This conceptual framework proposes the above-mentioned equities' connections to social media marketing activities as well as to purchase intention. This thesis will study the relations between these constructs to find out if perceived social media marketing activities enhance customer equity of a company in the automobile brands. The framework proposes that perceived social media marketing activities would have positive effect on value equity, relationship equity and brand equity. In turn, the framework proposes that brand equity, value equity and relationship equity are positively related to both purchase intention and customer equity. Value equity, relationship equity and brand equity are customer equity's drivers, but purchase intention effects on customer equity as well.

### MODEL FOR VALIDATION

FIGURE NO.3



### 2.4 SUMMARY

In this chapter the theoretical framework of automobile purchase intention was made and the model development and review regarding the construct used are done. This provides a detailed idea and structure to ahead the project in the track and questionnaire development was made easeful. The variables or construct mentioned here were measured using several items identified in the present review itself. To conclude all the available previous studies were reviewed to make a meaningful model to be validated.

**CHAPTER III**  
**DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter deals with the analyses of the data collected. The data was analysed in three different Stages. The first section is the profile analysis which includes a brief analysis of the Demographic profile of the sample respondents. In the second section the descriptive analysis and factor analysis of the measures are done. In the third section the hypothesis formed at the outset were tested and model validation.

### SECTION I

#### 3.1 Demographic profile of the respondents

##### 3.1.1 AGE

Table 3.1.1 presents the age wise composition of respondents.

**Table 3.1.1**

##### Age

Age	frequency	percentage
less than 20 Years	7	7.0
20-25 years	73	73.0
25-30 Years	10	10.0
30-40 Years	2	2.0
40-50 Years	3	3.0
Above 50	5	5.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Primary Data

The table show the age classification of 100 respondents. Majority of the respondents are under the category of 20-25 years (73%) followed by 25-30 years (10%), less than 20 years (7%), above 50(5%), 40-50 years (3%) and 30-40 years (2%).

### 3.1.2 Gender

Table 3.1.2 presents the gender wise composition of respondents.

**Table 3.1.2**

#### **Gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>MALE</b>	50	50.0
<b>FEMALE</b>	50	50.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Data

Out of total 100 respondents, 50% are distributed by male and another 50% by female. From the above data it is evident that male respondents and female respondents are equally done.

### 3.1.3 Occupation

Table 3.1.3 presents the occupation wise composition of respondents.

**Table 3.1.3**

#### **Occupation**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>government employee</b>	4	4.0
<b>private employee</b>	22	22.0
<b>own business</b>	6	6.0
<b>Housewife</b>	3	3.0
<b>Student</b>	65	65.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Primary Data



Out of 100 respondents, 4% were government employee, 22% were private employee, 6% were own business, 3% were housewife and 65% were student. This in short means that majority of social media users are students.

### 3.1.4 Annual income

Table 3.1.4 presents the annual income wise composition of respondents.

**Table 3.1.4**  
**Annual income**

<b>Annual income</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Below 250000</b>	17	17.0
<b>250000 – 500000</b>	8	8.0
<b>500000 – 750000</b>	5	5.0
<b>750000 – 1000000</b>	6	6.0
<b>above 10 lakh</b>	64	64.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Primary Data

Out of 100 respondents, 17% have annual income below 250000 8% have annual income 250000-500000, 5% have annual income 500000-750000, 6% have annual income 750000-1000000 and 64% have annual income above 10 lakhs. Majority user's annual income is above 10lakhs.

### 3.1.5 Personal preference for automobile brand:

Table 3.1.5 presents automobile brand preference wise composition of respondents.

**Table 3.1.5**  
**Automobile brands**

<b>Automobile brands</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Maruti Suzuki</b>	24	24.0
<b>Tata motors</b>	23	23.0
<b>Honda</b>	16	16.0
<b>Hyundai</b>	20	20.0
<b>Toyota</b>	17	17.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Primary Data

Out of 100 respondents, 24% prefer Maruti Suzuki, 23% prefer Tata motors, 16% prefer Honda, 20% prefer Hyundai, and 17% prefer Toyota. Majority of users prefer Maruti Suzuki than other brands.

### 3.1.6 Social media usage

Table 3.1.6 presents social media usage wise composition of respondents.

**Table 3.1.6**  
**Social media usage**

<b>Social media usage</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>less than 6 months</b>	5	5.0
<b>6 months - 1 years</b>	4	4.0
<b>1-2 years</b>	9	9.0
<b>2-3 years</b>	7	7.0
<b>more than 3 years</b>	75	75.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Primary Data

Out of 100 respondents, 5% were less than 6 months, 4% were 6 months-1 years, 9% were 1-2 years, 7% were 2-3 years and 75% were more than 3 years. This proves that majority of social media usage customers were more than 3 years.

### 3.1.7 Social media platform usage time

Table 3.1.7 presents social media platform usage time wise composition of respondents.

**Table 3.1.7**  
**Social media platform usage time**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>15 minutes</b>	5	5.0
<b>30 minutes</b>	11	11.0
<b>1 hour</b>	22	22.0
<b>1-5 hour</b>	57	57.0
<b>more than 5 hours</b>	5	5.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Primary Data

Out of 100 respondents, 5 % were 15 minutes, 11% were 30 minutes, 22% were 1 hour, 57% were 1-5 hour and 5% were more than 5 hours. This proves that majority of social media platform usage time by customers is 1-5 hours.

### 3.1.8 Login pattern on social media.

Table 3.1.8 presents login pattern on social media wise composition.

**Table 3.1.8**

#### **Login pattern on social media**

<b>Login pattern</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>always connected</b>	47	47.0
<b>once a day</b>	10	10.0
<b>several times a day</b>	40	40.0
<b>once a week</b>	1	1.0
<b>every mid night</b>	1	1.0
<b>once a month</b>	1	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Primary Data

Out of 100 respondents, 47% were always connected, 10% were once a day, 40% were several times a day, 1% were once a week, 1% were every mid-night, and 1% were once a month. This proves that the majority of customers' login patterns are always connected to social media.

### 3.1.9 Social media platform

Table 3.1.9 presents the type of social media platform wise composition of respondents.

**Table 3.1.9**  
**Social media platform**

<b>Social media platform</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Facebook</b>	6	6.0
<b>Instagram</b>	53	53.0
<b>YouTube</b>	37	37.0
<b>Twitter</b>	1	1.0
<b>others</b>	3	3.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Primary Data

Out of 100 respondents, 6% were Facebook, 53% were Instagram, 37% were YouTube, 1% were twitter and 3 % were others. This proves that majority of customer use Instagram.

## SECTION II

### 3.2 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

#### 3.2.1 RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

A Reliability test was carried out using Cronbach's Alpha, which measures the internal consistency of research construct and the result is exhibited in Table 3.2.1. The Alpha values for all the nine factors are above 0.70, the threshold suggested by Nunnally (1978). Thus it can be concluded that the scale has internal consistency and reliability. In other words, the items that are used in it measure what are intended to measure.

**Table 3.2.1**

**Cronbach's co-efficient alpha**

SL NO.	Factors(constructs)	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
1	SMMA	8	.879
2	BE	4	.857
3	VE	4	.844
4	RE	4	.848
5	PI	3	.873

Source: Author's Calculation.

### 3.3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

#### 3.3.1 Social media marketing activities

Social media marketing is the practice of promoting a product or service using social media websites and platforms. Even while e-marketing and digital marketing continue to rule in academia, social media marketing is becoming increasingly popular among practitioners and scholars. Among additional social media marketing initiatives include entertainment, interactivity, trendiness, customization, and others. Social media refers to a wide range of electronic communication methods, such as websites and mobile apps that people use to establish online communities for the exchange of knowledge, concepts, and messages (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). Social media marketing (SMM) makes use of social media to help a business, for instance, to contact more clients and gather data. In

order to understand the purchase intention, social media marketing activities are assessed in this study using consumer equity factors.

**Table 3.3.1**  
**Measures of social media marketing activities**

<b>MEASURES</b>	<b>ITEM ACRONYM</b>	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>MODE</b>	<b>SD</b>
Contents found in social media about automobile brands seem interesting.	SMM1	3.96	4	.695
I can watch videos of automobile brands on social media.	SMM2	4.02	4	.829
Personalised information searches on automobile brands are made possible by social media.	SMM3	3.82	4	.770
Social media accounts for automobile brands offer specialised services.	SMM4	3.47	3	.758
It is easy to convey my opinion about automobile brand on social media.	SMM5	3.76	4	.818
Through social media, it is possible to share information with other users about automobile brands.	SMM6	4.08	4	.631
Contents found on social media about automobile brands are up-to-date and contain the newest information.	SMM7	3.97	4	.674
Automobile brands are trendy on social media.	SMM8	3.92	4	.787

Source: Primary source

This table shows the mean, mode and standard deviation of the different measures of social media marketing activities. The measure of SMM6 has the highest mean of 4.08 which is followed by SMM2 with a value of 4.02. Standard deviation is the lowest for the measure SMM6 with a value of .631. Since all the mean value are near to 4 which is clearly indicates that customers are using social media platform before making any purchase intention.

### 3.3.2 Brand equity

In addition to a brand's clearly visible value, brand equity is the consumer's unique and intangible evaluation of the brand. Brand equity includes emotional connections between a company and its customers as well as brand awareness and recall (Lemon, Rust & Zeithaml, 2001).

**Table 3.3.2**  
**Measures of brand equity**

<b>MEASURES</b>	<b>ITEM ACRONYM</b>	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>MODE</b>	<b>SD</b>
Due to social media, I have sufficient knowledge about automobile brands.	BE1	3.65	4	.903
I can quickly recall the names and logos of the automobile brands advertised on social media.	BE2	3.83	4	.943
The automobile brand which I liked appearing on social media has more variants than other brands	BE3	3.61	4	.875
Automobile brands I like, which appear on social media and have their own personality.	BE4	3.69	4	.849

Source: Primary Data

This table shows the mean, mode and standard deviation of the different measures of brand equity. The measure BE2 has the highest mean of 3.83 which is followed by BE4 with a value of 3.69. Standard deviation is the lowest for the measure BE4 with a value of .849. As the mean are high in all items of brand equity the respondents agree brand equity consider while doing purchase intention.

### 3.3.3 Value equity

Value equity gauges how customers feel about a company's goods, services, prices, and convenience (Lemon, Rust & Zeithaml, 2001). Compared to brand equity, value equity evaluations are more impartial.



**Table 3.3.3****Measures of value equity**

MEASURES	ITEM ACRONYM	MEAN	MODE	SD
I think automobile brands on social media help me in comparing prices, features, and quality.	VE1	3.88	4	.856
I feel that information regarding automobile brands has higher credibility on social media than in mass media.	VE2	3.77	4	.962
I bought this automobile brand because it is famous and popular in social media	VE3	3.38	4	1.052
Even when I hear negative information about my likeable automobile brand on social media, I still stick with this brand.	VE4	3.41	3	.954

Source: Primary Data

This table shows the mean, mode and standard deviation of the different measures of value equity. The measure VE1 has the highest mean of 3.88 which is followed by VE2 with a value of 3.77 Standard deviation is the lowest for the measure VE1 with a value of 0.856. As the mean are high in all items of value equity the respondents agree there value equity while doing purchase intention.

**3.3.4 Relationship equity**

In addition to the customer's objective and subjective judgments of the brand, relationship equity refers to the customer's affinity to be brand loyal (Lemon, Rust & Zeithaml, 2001).

**Table 3.3.4****Measures of relationship equity**

<b>MEASURES</b>	<b>ITEM ACRONYM</b>	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>MODE</b>	<b>SD</b>
Would you recommend the automobile brand's products and services to others through social media?	RE1	3.52	4	.882
Through social media, I can discuss a car purchase, its shortcomings, and experience with friends	RE2	3.69	4	.916
I usually use this automobile brand as my first choice in comparison with other brands on social media.	RE3	3.65	4	.936
I am a true fan of a particular automobile brand on social media	RE4	3.54	3	1.029

Source: Primary Data

This table shows the mean, mode and standard deviation of the different measures of relationship equity. The measure RE2 has the highest mean of 3.69 which is followed by RE3 with a value of 3.65. Standard deviation is the lowest for the measure RE1 with a value of 0.882. As the mean are high in all items of relationship equity the respondents agree there relationship equity while doing purchase intention.

### **3.3.5 Purchase intention**

Heijden, Verhagen, and Creemers (2003) found that a consumer's attitude about product information and online shopping at a website greatly influences their decision to make a purchase. Additionally, trust-oriented models rather than website-oriented models are more relevant to describe online purchase intention.

**Table 3.3.5****Measures of purchase intention**

<b>MEASURES</b>	<b>ITEM ACRONYM</b>	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>MODE</b>	<b>SD</b>
I intend to use social media while making a purchase decision	PI1	3.70	4	.882
Use of social media platforms has helped me to make an informed choice before purchasing an automobile brand product or service	PI2	3.87	4	.861
I think social media platforms provide information related to brand equity, value equity, and relationship equity of automobile brands.	PI3	3.86	4	.853

Source: Primary Data

This table shows the mean, mode, and standard deviation of the different measures of purchase intention. The measure PI2 has the highest mean of 3.87, which is followed by PI3 with a value of 3.86. The standard deviation is the lowest for the measure PI1, with a value of 0.882. Based on the above mean scores, there exists a high rate of automobile brand purchase intention among social media marketing activities using customers.

### 3.3.6 Measures of variables

Table 3.3.6 shows the construct used to measure social media marketing activities and automobile brand purchase intention.

**Table 3.3.6**  
**Measures of variables**

<b>MEASURES</b>	<b>ITEM ACRONYM</b>	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>SD</b>
Social media marketing activities	SMM	3.8750	.49937
Purchase intention	PI	3.8100	.71892
Brand equity	BE	3.6950	.71207
Value equity	VE	3.6100	.74732
Relationship equity	RE	3.6000	.77606

Source: Primary Data

## SECTION III

### 3.4 CORRELATION ANALYSIS

Correlation analysis is carried out before conducting regression analysis in order to quantify the strength of relationship between the variables. It tests the linear relationship between the variables. Each correlation appears twice: above and below the main diagonal. The correlations on the main diagonal are the correlation between each variable and itself.

**Table 3.4**

**The table presents of Correlation between all the variable**

<b>CONSTRUCTS</b>	<b>SMM</b>	<b>BE</b>	<b>VE</b>	<b>RE</b>	<b>PI</b>
<b>SMM</b>	1	.637**	.590**	.569**	.508**
<b>BE</b>		1	.694**	.649**	.535**
<b>VE</b>			1	.732**	.614**
<b>RE</b>				1	.636**
<b>PI</b>					1

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on above table it is inferred that there exists a high positive correlation between all the variables.

### 3.5 Model validation and hypothesis testing

In this section of analysis a SEM analysis done to validate the 5-dimension model for factors of social media marketing activities and automobile brand purchase intentions and to test the hypothesis set at the outset of the study. Structural equation modelling is a multivariate statistical analysis technique that is used to analyse structural relationships and it is used to analyse the structural relationship between measured variables and latent constructs. This is used in the study because it estimates the multiple and interrelated dependence in a single analysis. In this analysis, two types of variables are used endogenous variables and exogenous variables. Endogenous variables are equivalent to dependent variables and are equal to the independent variable.

The General Fit indices of the structural model which is validated is given in table3.5

**Table 3.5**  
**Model estimates and fit index of model**

Fit index	Recommended value	Model value	Suggested by author
$\chi^2/df$	<3	2.627	Bentler and Bonett
GFI	>0.8	.901	Seyal et al.
AGFI	>0.8	.862	Scott
NFI	>0.9	.904	Bentler and Bonett
CFI	>0.9	.912	Bentler and Bonett
RMSEA	<0.8	.438	Hair et al.

Source: Authors 'calculation

The below shown model was run and the result showed to be fit for the analysis, Besides using the relative normed Chi square ( $\chi^2/df$ ;  $df$  = degrees of freedom) which should not exceed five for models with good fitness (Bentler 1989), the following additional indices from the literature were also considered for assessing the model fit. They are goodness of fit (GFI), adjusted GFI (AGFI), CFI, NFI, and RMSEA. The GFI should exceed 0.90 as recommended by Hair et al. (2010) for a good model. AGFI value greater than 0.80, indicates an acceptable fit to the data (Gefen et al. 2003). A comparative fit index (CFI) value greater than 0.90, indicates an acceptable fit to the data and the normed fit index

(NFI) values of 0.90 or greater indicate an adequate model fit (Bentler 1992). Recommendations as low as 0.80 as a cut-off have been preferred (Hooper et al. 2008 p. 55). According to Hu and Bentler (1999), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) must be equal to or less than 0.08 for an adequate model fit. The model fit indices of the 5-dimension model were  $\chi^2/df = 2.627$ , GFI = .901, AGFI = .862, CFI = .912, NFI .904, and RMSEA = 0.438. The model fit indices for the 5-dimension model for factors of social media marketing activities and automobile brands purchase intentions indicate that the model fits thus the model results are as below:

### 3.5.1 Regression weights of variables used in the model.

**Table 3.5.1**

**Regression weights of variables used in the model.**

Variable Regression	Standardised beta coefficient	P Value
SMMA → VE H01	.590**	<.001
SMMA → RE H02	.569**	<.001
SMMA → BE H03	.637**	<.001
VE → PI H04	.286**	<.001
RE → PI H05	.393**	<.001
BE → PI H06	.345**	<.001

The above table states that there is a significant relation between the variables.

The entire null hypothesis (H01, H02, H03, H04, H05, H06) are rejected and it is proved that there exist a strong significant relationship between these variables. Based on the Standardised beta coefficient given in the above table following interpretations can be made:

- H01: SMMA → VE: since the p value is below 0.01 the beta coefficient of the variable is significant and the coefficient (.590) being positive proves there exist a positive effect of SMMA over VE. In short SMMA positively affect VE. SMMA has 59 percentage positive relations to VE.
- H02: SMMA → RE: since the p value is below 0.01 the beta coefficient of the variable is significant and the coefficient (.569) being positive proves there exist a positive effect of

SMMA over RE. In short SMMA positively affect RE. SMMA has 56.9 percentage positive relations to RE.

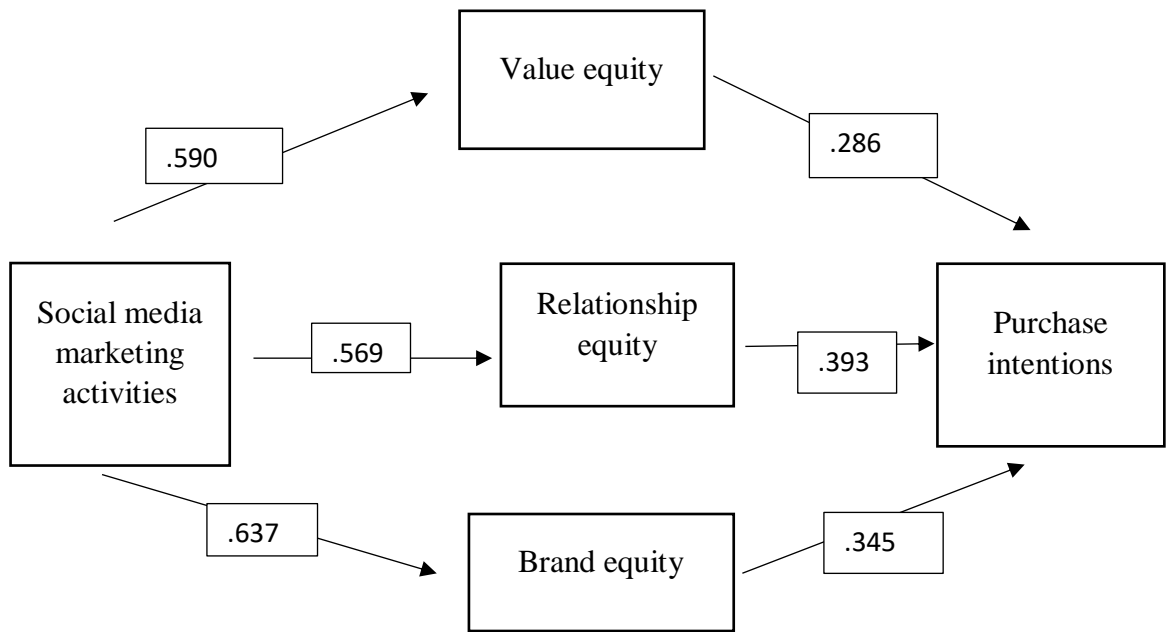
- H03: SMMA → BE: since the p value is below 0.01 the beta coefficient of the variable is significant and the coefficient (.637) being positive proves there exist a positive effect of SMMA over BE. In short SMMA positively affect BE. SMMA has 63.7 percentage positive relations to BE.
- H04: VE → PI: since the p value is below 0.01 the beta coefficient of the variable is significant and the coefficient (.286) being positive proves there exist a positive effect of VE over PI. In short VE positively affect PI. VE has 28.6 percentage positive relations to PI.
- H05: RE → PI: since the p value is below 0.01 the beta coefficient of the variable is significant and the coefficient (.393) being positive proves there exist a positive effect of RE over PI. In short RE positively affect PI. RE has 39.3 percentage positive relation to PI
- H06: BE → PI: since the p value is below 0.01 the beta coefficient of the variable is significant and the coefficient (.345) being positive proves there exist a positive effect of BE over PI. In short BE positively affect PI. BE has 34.5 percentage positive relation to PI.



The validated model for the mediating role of customer equity drivers between social media marketing activities and automobile brand purchase intention is given below.

**Validated model**

**Figure no.3**



Source: Author's calculation

**3.6 SUMMARY**

This chapter deals with the analyses of the data collected. The data was analysed in three different Stages. The first section is the profile analysis which includes a brief analysis of the Demographic profile of the respondents. In the second section the descriptive analysis and factor analysis of the measures are done. In the third section the hypothesis formed at the outset were tested. It was found that all three mediating independent factors value equity, relationship equity and brand equity. There is a significant relationship social media marketing activities and automobile brands purchase intention.

**CHAPTER IV**  
**FINDINGS, SUGGESTION AND**  
**CONCLUSION**

# **FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS**

## **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

Social media marketing refers to the use of websites and social media platforms to advertise a good or service. Social media marketing activities are online platform activities that people engage in to create social networks or interpersonal connections with others who have similar interests, experiences, activities, or real-world connections. Due to smartphones and broadband, social networking and social media have established themselves as the primary means of inter-consumer communication. Automobile manufacturers use social media channels to sell their specific brands. Several automakers have developed plans for establishing and preserving enduring internet connections with their customers. This study attempted to explore the relationship between social media marketing activities and value equity, relationship equity, and brand equity, as well as the relationship between purchase intention and value equity, relationship equity, and brand equity. The goal of the study was to look into the impact of social media activities on customer equity in automobile brands and also look into the effect of customer equity on automobile brand purchase intention. All the set hypotheses were supported. This section discusses the findings and suggestions from the study conducted.

## **4.2 OBJECTIVES OF STUDY**

The research objectives of this study are as follows:

1. Look into the impact of social media activities on customer equity in automobile brands.
2. Look into the effect of customer equity on automobile brand purchase intentions.

## **4.3 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

The following are the major findings of the study.

### **4.3.1 DEMOGRAPHIC FINDINGS.**

1. The majority of the respondents are age between 20-25 years around 73% of social media users.
2. The respondents from male and female were 50% each equally.
3. Majority of the respondents were students and followed by private employee. A very few respondents belongs to other categories.
4. Majority of the respondent's annual income is above 10lakhs.
5. Majority of the respondents choose Maruti Suzuki brand than other brands.
6. The majority of social media usage customers were more than 3 years.
7. Usage time of social media platform by respondents is 1-5 hours higher than rest of other users.

8. Majority of the respondents were always connected to social media platform than others.
9. Majority of the respondents use Instagram and followed by YouTube than other social media platform.

#### **4.3.2 DESCRIPTIVE FINDINGS.**

1. The customers are using social media platforms before making any purchase intentions.
2. The customer considers brand equity while deciding on purchase intention.
3. As the mean is high in all items of value equity, the respondents consider value equity while making purchase intentions. As a result, customers consider value equity in automobile brands' purchase intentions.
4. As the mean is high in all items of relationship equity, the respondents consider relationship value while making purchase intention. As the customer considers relationship equity in automobile brand purchase intentions.
5. There exists a high rate of purchase intention among automobile brands marketing on social media platforms.
6. The effects of social media marketing activities on brand equity, value equity, and relationship equity on automobile brand purchase intention are positively related.

#### **4.3.3 STRUCTURED EQUATION MODEL FINDINGS**

1. There is a positive effect of social media marketing activities over value equity. In short, SMMA positively affects VE. The beta coefficient has a 59 percent positive relationship with value equity. Thus, it is evident that SMMA has a strong influence over value equity.
2. There is a positive effect of social media marketing activities on relationship equity. In short, SMMA positively affects RE. The beta coefficient contributes 56.9% of positive relationships to relationship equity. Thus, it is evident that SMMA has a strong influence over relationship equity.
3. There is a positive effect of social media marketing activities on brand equity. In short, SMMA positively affects BE. Brand equity has a 63.7 percent positive relationship, according to the beta coefficient. Thus, it is evident that SMMA has a strong influence over brand equity.
4. There is a positive effect of value equity over purchase intention. In short, VE positively affects PI. PI's Beta coefficient has a 28.6 percent positive relation to PI. Thus, it is evident that value equity has an influence over purchase intention.

5. There is a positive effect of relationship equity over purchase intention. In short, RE positively affects PI. The beta coefficient has a 39.3% positive relationship with purchase intentions. It is evident that relationship equity influences purchase intention.
6. There is a positive effect of brand equity over purchase intention. In short, BE positively affects PI. The beta coefficient is 34.5 percent related to purchase intention. It is evident that relationship equity has an influence on purchase intention.

#### **4.4 SUGGESTIONS**

This study aims at identifying the mediating role of customer equity drivers between social media marketing activities and automobile brands purchase intentions. Findings of the study might be useful for students and academicians doing similar nature of research in academic field in future.

1. It is recommended that automobile companies may provide more information on social media about their brands and products.
2. Automobile brands' information in social media marketing activities should be reached in all age groups.
3. Automobile brands should improve their marketing strategies on social media platforms.
4. Automobile brands should focus on high-level social media usage platforms.
5. Customers focus on social media marketing activities before making purchase intentions, so relevant information about automobile brands should be provided.

As proposed, this study's findings imply that further research is needed regarding social media marketing activities and customer equity drivers. For a company to be fully able to embrace the opportunities and avoid the risks of social media marketing, it's necessary to further discover these relationships between all equity drivers and social media marketing activities. For example, this study focused on only one particular region and age group. Further research could expand this setting, for instance, and explore the researched relationships within different region and age groups. Further research should also consider this study's limitations and try to improve upon them. This study on the mediating role of customer equity drivers between social media marketing activities and automobile brands' purchase intentions is a new addition to previous studies on the same topic, regarding other brands and the automotive industry, and shows that the same relationships exist in yet another industry. As a result, additional industries and brands could be researched to expand the topic's research.

## **4.5 THEORITICAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY**

This study examines the mediating role of customer equity between social media marketing activities and automobile brands purchase intentions. For further research, there is a need to search for additional measure and constructs to improve the validity of model. Findings of the study useful for the students, automobile companies and academicians as an input for doing similar nature of research in academic field in future.

## **4.6 CONCLUSION**

Based on the study, the mediating role of customer equity drivers between social media marketing activities and automobile purchase intentions. The study concluded that there were certain limitations to this study. Despite the fact that the research was carried out in the Ernakulam region of Kerala, India. Taking into account automobile brand marketing on social media platforms, consumer purchase intentions, and social media marketing activities, the effect on brand equity, value equity, and relationship equity is significant, according to the findings. On the other hand, brand equity, value equity, and relationship equity are positively related to purchase intention. Automobile brands are a global phenomenon, with international brands implementing new world marketing strategies on social media, which is a widely used method. Therefore, the issue of lack of knowledge concerning social media marketing effects in the automobile industry is international. Although there were certain limitations in this study, the findings show that social media marketing activities have a positive effect on brand equity, value equity, relationship equity, and purchase intention concerning automobile brands. As previously said, little research has been done on the effects of social media marketing, and this study demonstrates that there are significant correlations between these constructs. It's crucial for marketers to consider these connections. Additionally, businesses ought to design and carry out their social media marketing initiatives in accordance with these findings. Furthermore, companies should plan and implement their social media marketing activities according to these findings. The findings propose that marketers should increase their presence on social media platforms or networks. As the findings show, Social media marketing activities really enhances customer equity because it creates effective communication between brand and customer. If marketers use social media marketing activities, according to findings, this will increase customers' intent to purchase a particular automobile brand and therefore increase the brand's future profits. Because of certain limitations, this study's findings are rather inconclusive and do not give precise suggestions or guidelines on how to enhance the marketing activities' effects.

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**APPENDIX**  
**MATERIALS USED FOR THE STUDY**

**I. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE- CUSTOMERS**

1. Age

- a) >20 ( )
- b) 20-25 ( )
- c) 25-30 ( )
- d) 30-40 ( )
- e) 40-50 ( )
- f) 50-60 ( )
- g) Above 60 ( )

2. Gender

- a) Male ( )
- b) Female ( )
- c) Others ( )

3. Occupation :

Government employee	private	Own business	housewife	Retired	Student

4. Annual income

- a) >250000
- b) 250000-500000
- c) 500000-750000
- d) 750000-1000000
- e) 1000000<

5. Individual preference about the automobile brand:

Brand of the car I like:

Maruti Suzuki	Tata motors	Honda	Hyundai	Toyota

6. Determinants of social media usage pattern

1. Do you use social media?

Yes / no

2. If yes, how long have you been using social media website?

- I. <6 months
- II. 6 months – 1 year
- III. 1-2 years
- IV. 2-3 years
- V. >3 years

3. On an average, how often do you use social media sites in a day?

- I. 15 minutes
- II. 30 minutes
- III. 1 hour
- IV. More than 1 hour
- V. More than 5hour

4. Describe your login pattern in social media?

Always connected	
Once a day	
Several times a day	
Once a week	
Every mid night	
Once a month	

5. Choose your preference:

	FACEBOOK	INSTAGRAM	YOUTUBE	TWITTER	OTHER S
Which social media network you use most of the time.					
Which social media network gives you more information about automobile brand?					

**7. Determinants of social media activities.**

Please select each of the following statement as how strongly you agree or disagree.

(SA- strongly agree, A- agree, N- neutral, DA- disagree, SDA- strongly disagree)

SL. NO.	DETERMINANTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITIES	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
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**ENTERTAINMENT**

1	Contents found in social media about automobile brands seem interesting.					
2	I can watch videos of automobile brands in social media.					

**CUSTOMIZATIONS**

3	Personalised information searches on automobile brands are made possible by social media.					
4	Social media accounts for automobile brands offer specialised services.					

**INTERACTION**

5	It is easy to convey my opinion about automobile brand in social media.					
6	It is possible to share information with other users about automobile brand through social media.					

**TRENDINESS**

7	Contents found on social media about automobile brands are up-to-date and newest information.					
8	Automobile brands are trendy in social media.					

8. Please select each of the following statement as how strongly you agree or disagree. (SA – strongly agree, A- agree, N- neutral, DA- disagree, SDA- strongly disagree)

SL.NO	BRAND EQUITY	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
1	Due to social media, I have sufficient knowledge about automobile brands.					
2	I can quickly recall the names and logos of the automobile brands advertised on social media.					
3	The automobile brand which I liked appearing on social media has more variants than other brands					
4	Automobile brands I like, which appear on social media and have their own personality.					
	<b>VALUE EQUITY</b>					
5	I think automobile brands on social media help me in comparing prices, features, and quality.					
6	I feel that information regarding automobile brands has higher credibility on social media than in mass media.					
7	I bought this automobile brand because it is famous and popular in social media					
8	Even when I hear negative information about my likeable automobile brand on					

	social media, I still stick with this brand.					
	<b>RELATIONSHIP EQUITY</b>					
9	Would you recommend the automobile brand's products and services to others through social media?					
10	Through social media, I can discuss a car purchase, its shortcomings, and experience with friends					
11	I usually use this automobile brand as my first choice in comparison with other brands on social media.					
12						

## 9. PURCHASE INTENTION

Please select each of the following statement as how strongly you agree or disagree. (SA- strongly agree, A- agree, DA- disagree, SDA- strongly disagree)

SL.NO	PURCHASE INTENTION	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
1	I intend to use social media while making a purchase decision.					
2	Use of social media platforms have helped me in making informed choice before purchasing an automobile brands product or service.					
4	I think social media platforms provide information related to brand equity, value equity, and relationship equity of automobile brands.					