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THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ACTIVITIES ON BRAND AWARENESS, BRAND IMAGE AND BRAND LOYALTY

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to examine the effect of social media marketing activities on brand awareness, brand image and brand loyalty. In addition, it has been aimed to analyze the effect of brand awareness and brand image on brand loyalty in this research. The population of the research consists of the consumers who actively follow five brands with the highest social score according to the Marketing Turkey social media brand performance data on social media communication channels such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. In this research, quantitative method has been used and research data has been obtained via online questionnaires shared on social media from 547 brand followers with applying convenience sampling method. The obtained data have been analyzed by structural equation modeling (SEM). As a result of the analysis, social media marketing activities have been found as effective factors on brand image and brand loyalty, besides it has been determined that the most obvious effect seen on brand awareness. In addition, it has been found out that brand awareness and brand image have a significant effect on brand loyalty. Furthermore, in the research, it has been achieved that the brand awareness has a limited effect on the brand image.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing Activities, Brand Awareness, Brand Image, Brand Loyalty

JEL Codes: M31, M37

SOSYAL MEDYA PAZARLAMA AKTİVİTELERİNİN MARKA BİLİNİRLİĞİNE, MARKA İMAJINA VE MARKA SADAKATİNE ETKİSİ

ÖZ

Bu araştırmanın amacı, sosyal medya pazarlama aktivitelerinin marka bilinirliğine, marka imajına ve marka sadakatine etkisini incelemektir. Buna ek olarak, araştırmada, marka bilinirliğinin ve marka imajının marka sadakati üzerindeki etkisinin analiz edilmesi amaçlanmaktadır. Araştırmanın evrenini, Marketing Turkey sosyal medya marka performans verilerine göre en yüksek sosyal skor değerine sahip beş markayı Facebook, Twitter ve Instagram sosyal medya iletişim kanallarında aktif bir şekilde takip eden tüketiciler oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmada nicel yöntem kullanılmıştır. Araştırma verileri, kolayda örnekleme yöntemi kullanılarak 547 marka takipçisinden sosyal medyada paylaşılan çevrimiçi anketler yoluyla elde edilmiştir. Elde edilen veriler, yapısal eşitlik modellemesi (YEM) ile analiz edilmiştir. Analiz sonucunda, sosyal medya pazarlama aktivitelerinin marka imajı ve marka sadakati üzerinde etkili olmakla birlikte en belirgin etkisinin marka farkındalığı üzerinde olduğu saptanmıştır. Buna ek olarak, marka farkındalığının ve marka imajının marka sadakati üzerinde anlamlı bir etkiye sahip olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca araştırmada, marka farkındalığının marka imajı üzerinde sınırlı bir etkisinin olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Medya Pazarlama Aktiviteleri, Marka Bilinirliği, Marka İmajı, Marka Sadakati

JEL kodları: M31, M37

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1. INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive environment, branding is an important competitiveness factor that differentiates similar goods and services which are produced by different firms in the minds of the consumers and makes them preferable for consumers. The brand, while reflecting an authenticity, value and commitment to the goods and services which are introduced to consumers for businesses, has a function ranging from reducing the risks related to goods and services for consumers and establishing social bonds without expressing their identity. In this regard, businesses that achieved to become a brand have been differently categorized in terms of goods and services they offer among other businesses. They have a special position in consumers' mind and build a business identity. The construction of this identity is directly proportional to the communication between the brand and the consumer. The greater the the power of communication between the brand and the consumer, the higher the consumer's brand preference and brand loyalty. In any case, the crucial thing about branding is that the strong relationship that established with consumers has the power to direct choice of the consumer and loyalty (Kotler and Armstrong, 2004: 191). Therefore, businesses are carrying out studies to attract consumers' attention, to be permanent in their minds, to create a positive brand image and to increase brand loyalty by applying all the communication channels they have in brand communications in order to create brand value or to protect brand value.

One of the common channels of communication that companies have recently applied in their marketing activities is social media. Social media can be defined as an online application program, platform, or mass media tool that facilitates interaction, collaboration, or content sharing between users in general (Kim and Ko, 2012). The effect of social media on consumer's behavior includes a wide spectrum of activities ranging from informing, sharing ideas and attitudes to acquire awareness and understanding, and visualize post-purchase behavior without purchasing (Tatar and Erdoğan, 2016). This leads businesses to be more interactive in marketing communications and to find innovative applications to make products and brands more affordable through online marketing efforts via social media communication channels. These practices, which express social media marketing activities, include actions that encourage consumers to choose products and brands and that target marketing messages to other consumers online.

Thanks to social media marketing activities, businesses can perform activities such as creating their own personal brand profiles and introducing online customer service, product information and special offers in a simple, cheap, and continuous way (Breitsohl et al., 2015).

In addition, with a very low cost, informing customers is very functional in terms of familiarity and brand awareness that products and brands of businesses appear on social networks where millions of users sign in (O'Flynn, 2017). According to McKinsey (2007), marketers are aware of the opportunities and appealingness that social media has presented as part of its marketing strategy. In research, it has been stated that social media marketing activities are significant parts of branding actions for businesses (Gallaughar and Ransbotham, 2010; Tsimonis and Dimitriadis, 2014). However, in these studies, it has been observed that social media marketing activities generally focus on customer satisfaction and the effects on customers' behavioral intentions (Sano, 2014; Simona and Tossan, 2018).

The objectives of this research are; (1) examining the effect of social media marketing activities on brand awareness, brand image and brand loyalty, (2) measuring the effect of brand awareness on brand image, and (3) analyzing the effect of brand awareness and brand image on brand loyalty. In this respect, social media marketing activities, brand awareness, brand image and brand loyalty concepts have been included in the literature. Then, research hypotheses have been explained. The population of research, sampling, data collection tools, and data analysis techniques have been pointed out in the method part. After that, the findings obtained from the data analysis have been included. At final part, the results of the research findings have been explained and recommendations have been introduced for practitioners and researchers.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Social Media Marketing Activities

Social media is the online environment where people with common interests come together to share their thoughts, comments and ideas (Weber, 2007: 4). The use of these online communication platforms based on the usage of the Internet and mobile-based technologies in marketing actions by businesses is critical in two aspects. The first is the effect that consumers have on their products and brands and the share they create on other consumers (Sigala and Dimosthenis, 2009; Chen et al., 2011). Research has shown that social media influences the intention of trust and purchasing and facilitates sharing of knowledge and experience among consumers (Lu and Hsiao, 2010, Hajli, 2013). Many businesses use online interactions among their users by encouraging their customers to share their purchases (So et al., 2017) with simple clicks using their chosen social media channel. Second, social media is utilized by businesses as a platform through in which direct marketing actions are carried out. In this sense, social media is pushing the boundaries of time and space in the interactions of businesses with potential consumers and promoting the feeling of closeness (Mersey et al., 2010). By means of

social media tools, businesses have an opportunity to advertise product and brand promotions, promotions and advertisements at low cost to their customers and receive feedback from them (Hanna et al., 2011). In their research, Tsimonis and Dimitriadis (2014) have found that social media is at the center of today's business strategy and popularity of social media, cost-cutting measures and activities of competitors on social media motivate marketers to carry out social media marketing activities.

It is only possible for social media to have a functional role in the marketing actions of businesses with framing, defining and applying marketing activities in an effective way on social media. One of the leading classifications of social media marketing activities has been carried out by Kim and Ko (2012). Kim and Ko (2012) have categorized social media marketing activities for luxurious brands as entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth communication. Koivulehto (2017) has added the purchase intention to these components. Seo and Park (2018) have defined social media marketing activities in airline industry as entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization and perceived risk. Sano (2014) has identified the components of social media marketing in insurance services as interaction, trendiness, customization, and perceived risk. Jo (2013) has referred to marketing activities as events, information and advertisement on social networks. Yadav and Rahman (2017) have categorized social media marketing activities as interaction, trendiness, information, customization, and word of mouth communication. In this research, social media marketing activities have been considered as entertainment, interaction, trendiness, advertisement and customization.

Entertainment is a crucial component that encourages participant behavior and the continuity of follow-up, which creates positive emotions/feelings about the brand in the minds of followers on social media (Kang, 2005). Even if the reasons for using social media differ, individuals emphasize that the content which arouses the attention of them who finds the content amusing and pleasing (Manthiou et al., 2013). In this respect, with providing entertaining shares, businesses should encourage liking and sharing of large number of individuals and be able to turn it into advantage (Schivinski and Dabrowski, 2015). Social media is becoming the newest and up-to-date source of information for customers (Hamid et al., 2016) because information is simultaneously shared in real time on the social media. Unlike traditional mass communication channels, social media facilitate the interaction, content sharing and collaboration of businesses with their customers (Wang, 2012). By utilizing social media as interactive communication between business and customer, it is possible to obtain

requests and needs of customers, their opinions and suggestions on the product and brand in real time (Vukasovic, 2013). Trendiness as another component of social media marketing activities means introducing the latest/current information on products for customers (Godey et al., 2016). The advertising as a component refers to advertising and promotional campaigns that businesses have made through social media to increase sales and develop customer portfolio. Findings (Duffett, 2017; Alalwan et al., 2017) on the effects of social media advertisings on perceptions and awareness of the customers have shown that advertising is one of the significant part of social media marketing activities (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). The customization as a component is the act of creating a customer satisfaction based on the contact of the business with individual users (Ding and Keh, 2016; Seo and Park, 2018). Businesses on the social media can transfer the uniqueness of the product and brand to the customers by means of peer to peer communication. And they can deal with their individual problems and can be influential on product and brand preferences by making touches that will make them feel important.

2.2. Brand Awareness

Brand awareness refers to the level of consumer recognition, acceptance, and recall of a brand in any case (Percy and Rossiter, 1992; Perreault et al., 2013: 199). According to Aaker (1991:61) brand awareness is “the ability of a potential buyer to recognize or recall that a brand is a member of a certain product category”. Keller (2009) has stated that brand awareness is about track or crowd power in consumers’ memories that reflect consumers’ ability to remember or recognize a brand in different conditions. Brand awareness reduces the time and risk that consumers will spend searching for the product that they will buy (Verbeke et al., 2005: 7). In this respect, consumers are expected to choose the brand that they have information. Aaker (1996: 10-16) has stated that brand awareness consists of four levels: brand recognition, brand recall, top of the mind brand and dominant brand. Brand recognition is associated with brand familiarity of the consumer while brand recall is the thinking the brand at first when a range of product is introduced (Farjam and Hongyi, 2015). Being a brand that comes to mind at first refers to becoming the most aware of brand in product category. The level of brand dominance refers to the level at which the brand replaces the product category (Aaker, 1996: 15).

2.3. Brand Image

Brand awareness is a reflection of a brand’s concrete indicators such as name, sign, symbol, and slogan, while the brand image is brand's position in the consumer's mind beyond these signs. Iversen and Hem (2008) have stated that the brand image represents consumers’ personal symbolism consisting of all the definitions and evaluations related to the brand. Keller

(2009: 143) has defined brand image as "consumer perceptions of and preferences for a brand, as reflected in various types of brand associations held in consumers' memory." The brand image contains information and ideas that a consumer has about the different products of the brand and the features of the product (Lee et al., 2011). The mental image that consumers have about a brand has formed as a result of marketing communication, consumption experience and social effects (Riezebos, 2003: 63). The effect of these factors on consumers' minds influence consumers' attitude towards brand and trust (Yang et al., 2011) and the effect of brand messages on consumers' mind (Selnes, 1993).

2.4. Brand Loyalty

The positive effect of loyal customers on business performance (Lee et al., 2003) in competitive markets of our age (Anderson and Mittal, 2000; Perreault et al., 2013:19), in the condition where the cost of acquiring new customers is higher than retaining current customers (Lee et al., 2003; Kumar et al., 2011; Keisidou et al., 2013) are gradually increasing the significance of customer loyalty. Customer loyalty is the commitment of a customer to repurchase a firm's products and services, despite all actions of competitor businesses and to commit to become a client of that business on a regular basis in the future (Dick and Basu, 1994; Oliver, 1999). In parallel, brand loyalty is a repurchase behavior that reflects a conscious decision when the consumer continues to purchase the same brand (Solomon, 2011: 646). Schiffman et al. (2010: 468) have expressed brand loyalty as consumers who prefer to purchase or purchase the same brand consistently in a particular product or service category.

Purchasing the same brand by customers shows the behavioral aspect of loyalty (Lam et al., 2004; Jones and Taylor, 2007). Reichheld and Schefter (2000) have stated that customers who demonstrate behavioral loyalty to a brand are skilled for acquiring new customers beyond they have low price sensitivity and they purchase more. Positive sharing about the brand by customers, recommending the brand to the potential customers and encouraging them to purchase it can be listed as attitudinal aspect of the loyalty. Bloemer et al. (1999) have stated that loyalty also has a cognitive aspect as well as being the first to come to mind and price tolerance. Behavioral loyalty to the brand provides direct income to the business, while attitudinal and cognitive loyalty enhances the tendency to give reliable recommendations to people in their environment and plays a crucial role in catching new customers. In this respect, brand loyalty is a significant non-material asset for businesses (Moisescu, 2014; Jiang and Zhang, 2016).

3. DEVELOPMENT OF HYPOTHESES

As a marketing tool, social networks offer significant opportunities to build brand-consumer relationships in marketing (Vukasovic, 2013). In recent years, many businesses have seen social media as one of the most effective ways to communicate and empower consumers to create distinctive brand identities and increase consumer-brand communications (So et al., 2017). Hartzel et al. (2011) have noted that interactive marketing strategies which are using social media links such as Facebook and Twitter will positively affect brand image and create a leverage effect between brand and consumer. The viral effect among social media users allows the brand to be discussed and widely known among a large number of users (Kumar et al., 2007; Sharma and Verma, 2018: 20). Tsimonis and Dimitriadis (2014) have revealed that brand awareness is one of the major outputs expected from businesses' social media marketing activities. The findings that pointed out by Fanion (2011) have shown that social media is a significant tool in constituting and increasing brand awareness. Seo and Park (2018) have found out that social media marketing activities in the airline industry positively affect brand awareness and brand image.

The ultimate goal of social media marketing activities is to acquire new customers, increase sales, strengthen word of mouth communication and create customer loyalty (Tsimonis and Dimitriadis, 2014). Contrary to the traditional branding paradigm (consecutive investments and directing the image through controlled communication), social media communications actualize on a platform where the limits are uncertain, and the businesses' chances of intervention are very limited (Kohli et al., 2015). The fact that these interactions are formed without intervention of the business has increased the level of trust of the consumers. The sharings about a product or a brand have risk but content that created by the customers and peer to peer communication influence other consumers' purchasing decisions (Sashi, 2012). Moreover, firms actively utilize these kinds of content and generated information created by customers in social media marketing actions (So et al., 2017). Hajli (2014) has found that social media influences customers' trust sentiment and purchasing intent beyond easing interactions among consumers. In this sense, social media is an efficient way of interacting with current and potential customers for businesses and developing a positive brand image (Halligan and Shah, 2009; Fortezza and Pencarelli, 2015). Duffett (2017) has determined that social media marketing communications are influential on customer attitudes. İsmail (2017) has found that social media marketing activities have an effect on brand awareness and brand loyalty. Kim and Ko (2012) have found that social media marketing activities positively affect customers'

repurchasing behavior. Tatar and Erdoğan (2016) have stated that social media marketing activities in hospitality business affect customers' brand awareness, purchasing intentions and brand loyalty. The hypotheses to be tested in this direction are as follows:

H1. Social media marketing activities affect brand awareness.

H2. Social media marketing activities affect brand image.

H3. Social media marketing activities affect brand loyalty.

Brand awareness has been seen as a tool for individuals to become aware of, to be familiar with, and to remember, a brand (Djakeli and Tshumburidze, 2012; Barreda et al., 2015). Brand awareness, even at recognition phase, may arouse sense of familiarity and give an idea about the brand and a signal for commitment to the brand (Aaker, 1992). Social media marketing activities can contribute to brand awareness and create a positive brand image as businesses facilitate their interaction with potential customers as well as with current customers (Seo and Park, 2018). The awareness level of a brand is directly proportionate to the advertising spending that increases the scope and repetition of the advertising message (Gil et al., 2007). Therefore, presence of a brand on social networks is highly functional in terms of informing customers, familiarity and brand awareness, since it resolves time and space limitation (O'Flynn, 2017). Once the brand has been tested by the consumer and fulfilled consumer's expectations, increased awareness and image level will have a strong influence on subsequent purchasing behaviors (Koniewski, 2012). As it is, it has been expected that consumers who already know and are familiar with the brand should prefer it again (Macdonald and Sharp, 2003). Chang (2012) and Barreda et al. (2015) have stated that high brand awareness contributes to other brand factors such as brand image and brand loyalty and significantly affects the market share of the brand. In other words, brand awareness and brand image are significant source of brand loyalty for businesses (Baldauf et al., 2003). Perera and Dissanayake (2013) have found that there is a high positive correlation between brand awareness and brand loyalty in their research on foreign makeup brands in Sri Lanka. Fatema et al. (2013) have found that brand image has a significant effect on brand loyalty in banking services. There are several findings in the literature that point out the interactions between brand awareness, brand image and brand loyalty (Subhani and Osman, 2009, Ogba and Tan, 2009, Dhurup et al., 2014, Martinez et al., 2014; Sasmita and Suki, 2015, Aberdeen et al., 2016, Chinomona, 2016). In parallel with these studies, research hypotheses that have been determined are as follows:

H4. Brand awareness affects brand image.

H5. Brand awareness affects brand loyalty.

H6. Brand image affects brand loyalty.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Research Model

Three objectives have been identified in this study. The first examines the effect of social media marketing activities on brand awareness, brand image and brand loyalty. The second is to measure the effect of brand awareness on the brand image. The third is to analyze the effect of brand awareness and brand image on brand loyalty. Figure 1 has shown the research variables, correlation between variables, and the research model proposed for testing hypotheses. Quantitative method has been applied to test the correlation between the variables in the study and to achieve the determined objectives.

4.2. Population and Sampling

The population of this research is consisted of users who actively follow the top five brands with the highest social score on the social media communication channels such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram according to social media brand performance data of the Marketing Turkey January 2018. These brands are as follows: Madame Coco (Household Linens Industry), Turkish Airlines (Airline Industry), Mercedes Benz (Automotive Industry), Zen Diamond (Jewelry Industry) and Turkcell (Communication Industry). With considering information limitation on users of the population, convenience sampling method which is one of the sampling method that not based on probability has been applied in the research.

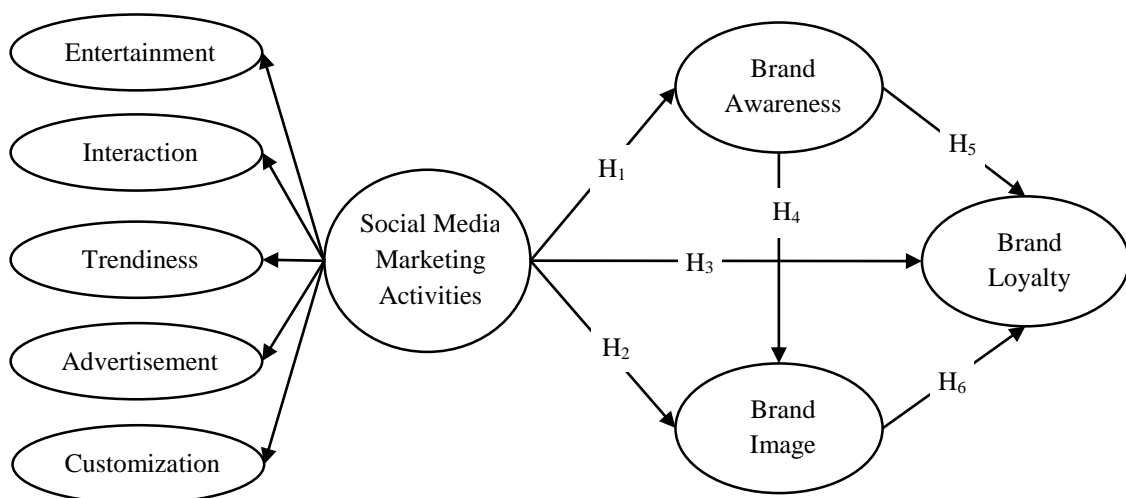


Figure 1. Proposed Research Model

4.3. Measurement

Questionnaire technique has been applied in obtaining research data. The research questionnaire consists of three parts. In the first part, there are 14 items include participants' thoughts on social media marketing activities of the brands. Social media marketing activities of the brands have been examined in terms of five dimensions including entertainment, interaction, trendiness, advertisement and customization. Nine items about entertainment, interaction, trendiness and customization have been cited a research conducted by Seo and Park (2018). Three items that form advertisement dimension have been adapted from the study conducted by Boateng and Okoe (2015).

In the second part, there are nine items about brand image, brand awareness and brand loyalty. Six items for measuring brand awareness and brand image have been cited the research conducted by Seo and Park (2018), and the three items for measuring brand loyalty cited a study carried out by Sasmita and Suki (2015). The validity of a total of twenty-one (21) item included in the scale have been tested by consulting the opinions of three specialists in the field of marketing and two experts in the field of translation. In line with the opinions of experts, the item: "The sharings of this brand on social media are interesting" has been added to entertainment dimension of the study, "I can easily obtain information that I need thanks to the directions on social media account of the brand" as an expression has been added to customization dimension. All of the measurement items have been shown in the Appendix.

Respondents' opinions on the expressions in the measurement model have been measured by applying the 5-point Likert scale (5 = strongly agree, 1 = strongly disagree). At the final part of the measurement tool there are five (5) statements about the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Participants' demographic characteristics have been measured by closed-ended questions.

4.4. Data Collection and Analysis

Aftermath of forming data collection tool, the data collection phase has been started. In the data collection process, preliminary test has been applied to measure the reliability of the research scale at the first step. The prepared questionnaire form has been sent to 500 users (population of the research) who follow five brands. Besides, the questionnaire has been applied to 25 brand followers in face to face form to test the validity of the measurement tool in addition to its reliability. In this phase, reliability analysis has been applied to the data obtained from 84 brand followers. As a result of the analysis, the Cronbach's Alpha score has been found out as

0.912 for all items on the scale indicates that the scale is quite reliable. Aftermath of applying preliminary test, research data has been obtained via online questionnaires that filled by 547 brand followers between 01-22 February 2018. The data obtained to test the research hypotheses has been analyzed by applying SPSS 18.0 and Amos 20.0 statistical package programs. The data applied in the pretest has not been included in the analysis.

5. FINDINGS

5.1. Demographic Characteristics

In the research, demographic characteristics of the respondents have been firstly examined. 308 of the participants are female and 239 are male. 33.8% of participants is in the age range of 26-35 years and 11.7% is 46 years of age or older. 34.9% of participants have income of 4.500 TL and above and 23% of them have income of 2500 TL and below. The most frequently used social media communication channel by the participants is Instagram with 62.5%. 34.7% of the participants spend 1-2 hours per day on social media. Finally, 43% of participants are followers of more than 5 brands on social media.

5.2. Measurement Model

Before testing hypotheses between social media marketing activities, brand awareness, brand image and brand loyalty, the coverage validity of the measurement model has been tested. In this direction, explanatory factor analysis has been applied to the obtained data at the first step. The conformity of the data set to factor analysis has been tested by KMO and Bartlett test. The obtained values (KMO .861 and Bartlett test $\chi^2 = 4104.919$, $p < .000$) have indicated that the data set is compatible with factor analysis. In the Explanatory Factor Analysis (EFA), the measurement model for social media marketing activities and the measurement model for brand variables have been tested in an order. It has been considered that the Factor Eigen Value of EFA is at least 1, the factor load is at least 0.50, and that there is a difference at least as .10 between the factor loads of the expressions that are under the two factors. As a result of the analysis, social media marketing activities have been compiled under 5 factors which explain 77.487 % of the total variance. The factor loadings of all items in the factor structure are between .702 and .871. The items related to brand variables have been collected under 3 factors which explain 72.803 % of the total variance. The factor loadings of items which form three factors are between .729 and .858. The reliability level of all dimensions included in the measurement model of EFA varies between .70 and .91. The results of the EFA has shown that the measurement model is compatible with the structure that carried out.

After this phase, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) has been applied to the data set according to the EFA results in order to test and validate what was pointed out in the EFA. In the measurement model, social media marketing activities have been considered as a latent variable in five sub-dimensions. Therefore, second order CFA has been applied to the obtained data. Factors (first-level factors) obtained from the observed variables in the second-level CFA have been defined as endogenous variables, and the structure formed by these factors (second-level factors) has been defined as exogenous variable. Table 1 has shown CFA results.

Table 1. Results of the confirmatory factor analysis

<i>Latent variable/Measured variable</i>		Items mean	Items S.D.	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE	Factor Loadings
Social Media Marketing Activities							
<i>Entertainment</i>	Entertainment1	3.78	.890	.873	.821	.713	.728
	Entertainment2	3.50	.934				.914
	Entertainment3	3.44	.958				.881
<i>Interaction</i>	Interaction1	3.25	.972	.763	.737	.523	.674
	Interaction2	3.52	.959				.729
	Interaction3	3.78	.897				.764
<i>Trendiness</i>	Trendiness1	4.11	.689	.714	.518	.545	.802
	Trendiness2	4.35	.773				.669
<i>Advertisement</i>	Advertisement1	3.52	.974	.806	.786	.587	.794
	Advertisement2	3.53	1.01				.818
	Advertisement3	3.53	1.02				.680
<i>Customization</i>	Customization1	3.58	.957	.901	.853	.788	.886
	Customization2	3.61	.911				.934
	Customization3	3.69	.845				.841
Brand Awareness							
	Brand awareness1	3.94	.711	.811	.956	.685	.811
	Brand awareness2	3.98	.653				.844
	Brand awareness3	--	--				--
Brand Image							
	Brand image1	3.73	.900	.847	.955	.651	.761
	Brand image2	3.73	.976				.858
	Brand image3	3.84	.898				.799
Brand Loyalty							
	Brand loyalty1	3.99	.724	.826	.933	.617	.812
	Brand loyalty2	3.95	.743				.820
	Brand loyalty3	3.95	.760				.722

Goodness of fit: $\chi^2=444.064$, $df=198$, $CMIN/DF=2.43$, $p=0.000$, $GFI=.934$, $AGFI=.915$, $NFI=.933$, $IFI=.961$, $CFI=.961$, $RMR=.033$, $RMSEA=.048$

Cronbach's alpha has been applied to test the reliability of each structure and to test the validity of all variables forming the measurement model with CFA. However, it has been seen that an item (Brand awareness3) which measures brand awareness as latent variable included

in measurement model that proposed in CFA has low factor loading. This item has been removed from the analysis and the measurement model has been retested. Following this procedure, the compliance values have been examined and the measurement model has shown a satisfactory compliance ($\chi^2 / df = 2.43$, $p = .000$, AGFI = 0.91, GFI = 0.93, NFI = 0.93, IFI = 0.96, CFI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.048). As shown in Table 1, the factor load of each observed variable in the measurement model ranges from .674 to .934. Moreover, the AVE values for the variables in the model are above the 0.50 level proposed by Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2009). The reliability levels of the variables included in the measurement models ($\alpha > 0.7$) are quite high. In addition, the correlation between the research's latent variables has been examined by applying Pearson correlation analysis, and it has been verified that the latent variables became indifferent to each other. Table 2 has shown the correlation results between the variables.

Table 2. Correlation Matrix Among Each Construct

Construct	1	2	3	4	Mean	S.D.
1. Brand awareness	1.00				3.96	.682
2. Brand image	.412	1.00			3.76	.924
3. Brand loyalty	.636	.491	1.00		3.96	.742
4. Social media marketing activities	.718	.438	.639	1.00	3.69	.913

$p < 0.01$.

5.3. Structural Model

After confirming the model fit in confirmatory factor analysis, research hypotheses have been tested with structural equation model. The adaptive values which have been obtained by path analysis ($\chi^2 / df = 2.4$, $p < .001$, AGFI = 0.91, GFI = 0.92, NFI = 0.93, IFI = 0.96, CFI = 0.96, TLI = 0.95, RMR = 0.033 and RMSEA = 0.04) have indicated that the structural model has a good fit. Figure 2 has shown the results of structural model. According to the path analysis results, the effect of social media marketing activities on brand awareness is significant at high level ($\beta = .718$, CR = 11.549, $p < .001$). In addition, social media marketing activities have been seen as they have a significant effect on brand image ($\beta = .293$, CR = 3.483, $p < .001$) and brand loyalty ($\beta = .331$, CR = 4.108, $p < .001$). Therefore, the hypotheses proposed H1, H2 and H3 have been accepted. Otherwise, the analysis results have shown that the most important social media marketing component is consumer customization.

This component is followed by entertainment, advertisement, interaction and trendiness respectively. In addition, the analysis results have shown that brand awareness ($\beta = .321$, CR = 4.427, $p < .001$) and brand image ($\beta = .222$, CR = 4.667, $p < .001$) have a significant effect on brand loyalty. In this direction, alternative hypotheses have been rejected and H5 and H6 hypotheses have been accepted. Finally, brand awareness has a significant effect on brand image ($\beta = .201$, CR = 2.458, $p < .01$). At this point, the proposed H4 hypothesis has been accepted. However, this value has pointed out the lowest effect level among the latent variables included in path analysis.

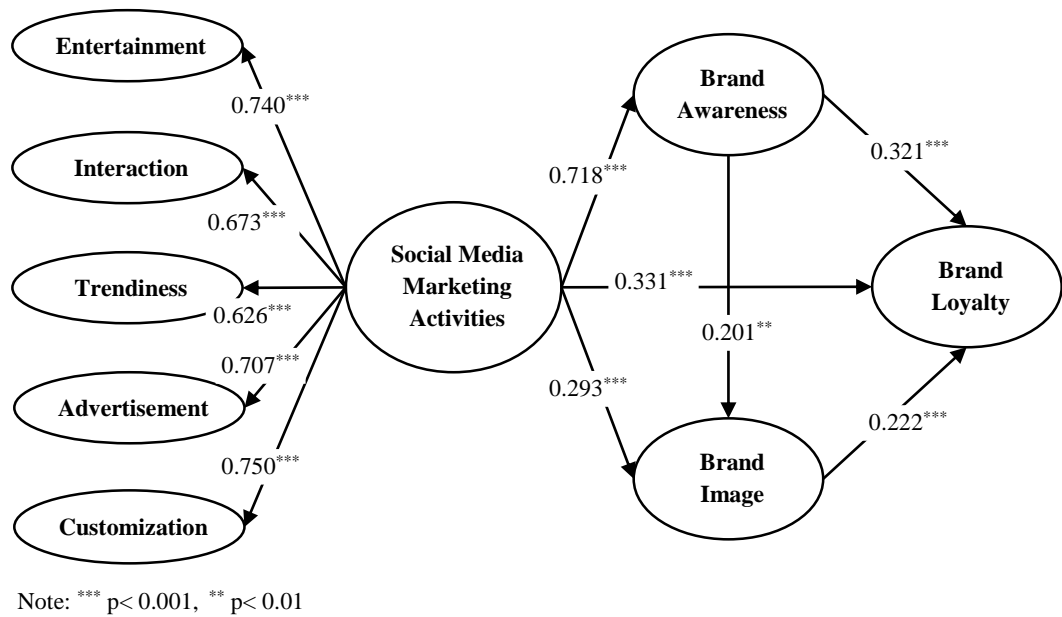


Figure 2. The Results of Structural Model

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In today's information age, social media has become an integral part of daily life as a communication channel in which consumers reflect their consumption habits, preferences, opinions, likes and experiences in their own eyes and interact with other users. This widespread communication area where consumers interact with each other and with other users, offer significant opportunities for product and brand communication actions, such as cost, time and ease of reaching large consumer masses. For this purpose, many businesses create their own brand profiles on social media communication channels and develop activities that will engage consumers with content sharing such as online product information, discounts, advertisements and promotions. This research has been conducted to determine whether marketing activities

on social media are effective in consumers' brand awareness, brand image perceptions and brand loyalty.

When the components that form social media marketing activities are examined, the most significant social media marketing activities are found out as customization and entertainment. Social media marketing activities which have been valued as the lowest by the consumers are trendiness and interaction. It can be considered that components such as trendiness and interaction have been attached importance at a low level by the consumers, since these components are regarded as requisites of social media communication. These results have indicated that businesses that intend to establish and maintain a successful brand communication on social media attach importance to individual communication with customers and paying strict attention to content sharing about the brand with considering being interesting and entertaining rather than regarding currentness, advertisement, and content of promotion. In researches conducted by Kim and Ko (2012) and Seo and Park (2018), it has been revealed that entertainment is a significant component of social media marketing activities. However, the finding claimed by Seo and Park (2018) has pointed out that trendiness is the most considered component for the consumers in social media marketing activities the result obtained in this research has differed from this finding.

Analysis results have shown that social media marketing activities have a significant effect on consumers' brand awareness, brand image and brand loyalty. This result has been complied with the results of the researches conducted by Godey et al. (2006), Kim and Ko (2012), Duffett (2017) and Seo and Park (2018). Furthermore, the effect that social media marketing activities have on customers is mostly appears in brand awareness. In other words, social media marketing activities are significant awareness tools in terms of reminding consumers and staying in their minds. Nevertheless, findings have shown that brand awareness does not reflect on brand image and brand loyalty that perceived by the consumers who are at similar level. The limited effect of brand awareness on the brand image has obviously established this result. Beyond this, it has been determined that the level of effect is lower in the research, although brand awareness and brand image are significant for consumers' brand loyalty.

It is an interesting and remarkable result that profound effect of social media marketing activities on brand awareness does not reflect on the brand image and brand loyalty. It has been thought that the reason behind that the consumers follow the brands that they are already familiar with on social media. In other words, as consumers follow a brand in the social media,

they create brand-related content, or share their experiences and it means that they reflect brand image and brand loyalty in their minds. Moreover, since consumers have a certain image in their minds or follow brands that they are loyal, social media marketing activities may not be effective enough to create a positive brand image and brand loyalty in consumers' minds. In this respect, it has proposed that social media marketing activities should be considered as activities that support the brand value and social media marketing activities should be integrated to traditional brand communication studies by businesses which plan to start up social media marketing activities.

The results of this research have been obtained from consumers who follow five brands from five different sectors with the highest social score as of January 2018 on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram according to social media brand performance data of Marketing Turkey. In researches that will be carried out, reflections of social media marketing activities of the brands belong to similar product groups on the consumers can be focused on. Furthermore, the effects of interactions of consumers about a product group or a brand that exist (independently of business) on brand awareness, brand image, and brand loyalty on social media can be examined. In addition, the researches that will be conducted can include social media channels such as WhatsApp, Google+, YouTube, and LinkedIn thus, the effect of social media on consumers' brand preferences can be studied on a wide scale.

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APPENDIX

MEASUREMENT OF INSTRUMENTS

Social Media Marketing Activities

Entertainment

The social media account of this brand is enjoyable.

The content shared by social media of this brand is enjoyable.

The sharings of this brand on social media are interesting.

Interaction

Information sharing is possible on social media of this brand.

The discussion and exchange of opinions is possible on social media page of this brand.

The expression of opinions is easy on social media of this brand.

Trendiness

The information shared on social media of this brand is up to date.

The use of social media by this brand is trendy.

Advertisement

I like the ads that this brand has published on social media.

The ads that this brand has released on social media are interesting.

Social media ads of this brand positively affect my attention for the brand.

Customization

The information that I need can be found on social media account of this brand.

The social media of this brand provided the information that I needed.

I can easily obtain information that I need thanks to the directions on social media account of this brand.

Brand Awareness

I am always aware of this brand.

I am aware of the characteristics of this brand.

I can always remember the logo of this brand.

Brand Image

This brand is a leader in its sector.

I have fond memories regarding this brand.

This brand is customer-centered.

Brand Loyalty

I am satisfied with brand that appeared on social media.

I usually use this brand as my first choice in comparison with the other brand.

I would recommend this brand to others through the social media.