THE LINKS BETWEEN SOCIAL MOTIVATIONAL ENGAGEMENTS, BRAND COMMUNITY COMMITMENT AND REPURCHASE INTENTION ACROSS ONLINE BRAND COMMUNITIES

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Abstract. *The study focuses on the relationships between social motivational engagements, brand community commitment and repurchase intentions across marketer-generated and customer-generated online brand communities. The current study demonstrates that online brand community commitment mediates the effects of all the six motivational engagements (self-expression, connecting, helping, like-minded discussions, seeking assistance, and validation) on repurchase intention. The type of online brand community does not moderate any relationships between social motivational engagements and brand community commitment as expected. However, the current study demonstrates that the moderator affects the link between brand community commitment and repurchase intention indicating moderated mediation. In other words, the relationship between the two constructs becomes stronger in the marketer-generated online brand community. Consequently, the type of online brand community affects the links between the six social motivations and repurchase intention. Specifically, the effects of the six motivations on repurchase intention become stronger in the marketer-generated online community.*

Key words: brand community, social motivational engagements, brand community commitment, repurchase intention.

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1. Introduction

The World Wide Web has become interactive, which resulted in a rise in the number of online brand communities (Madupu & Cooley, 2010; Schau et al., 2009; Arvidsson & Caliandro, 2016; Park & Kim 2014; Tsimonis, & Dimitriadis, 2014) which allow people to get information and interact with brand owners as well as other customers of the brand from all over the world. (Gabisch & Gwebu, 2011; Brodie et al., 2013). As a result, people in online communities gradually based their social identity on their consumptive role by associating themselves to the brands they consume and started virtual interaction with the people of shared interests (Wirtz et al., 2013; Quinton & Harridge-March, 2010). In turn, as companies began to explore the new ways of building long-term relationship with their customers in digital environment, online brand communities have become focus of strategic marketing investments, designed to offer unique online brand experiences and retain loyal customers (Baldus et al., 2015; De Valck et al., 2009). A number of companies started to manage virtual platforms as marketing communication channels to keep in touch with clients and build strong customer relationships (McAlexander et al., 2002; Andersen, 2005). There are two types of online brand communities: marketer-created (initiated, formed and managed by the company) and consumer-created (initiated, formed and managed by the customers) (Lee, 2011; Muñiz & Schu, 2007). Researchers have proved that most of the customers participate in virtual brand communities because of socially-related motivations (Madupu & Cooley, 2010; Dholakia, 2004). Also, it is proved that brand community members with social motivational engagements are extremely loyal customers when it comes to high involvement products (McAlexander et al., 2002; Wirtz et al., 2013). However, no research has been conducted to explore the influence of social motivational engagements in different types (marketer-created and consumer-created) of online brand communities. To fill this research gap, the present study focuses on the following research question: what are the links between social motivational engagements, brand community commitment and repurchase intention across two types of online brand communities: marketer-created and customer-created.

2. A conceptual framework of brand communities, social motivational engagements, brand community commitment and repurchase intention

The concept of online brand communities

Before the internet era, brand communities functioned in a face-to-face form and were geographically bounded (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001; Madopu & Cooley, 2010). Later companies started to shift attention to online environment (Limba et al., 2014; Plant, 2004). A number of technologies enabled easy communication, and people started virtual interaction with their desired brands (Gabisch & Gwebu, 2011). A lot of customers began to browse online forums in order to get information before making buying

decisions. The number of brand community members is rising up, thus many companies regard the concept as an attractive option (Boa-Ventura & Zagalo, 2010; Barnes & Mattsson, 2008). Moreover, the world's largest brands started to establish long-term relationships with their customers through virtual brand communities, as a result, peoples' participation in this virtual space has been rising up by 15% every month (Boa-Ventura & Zagalo, 2010).

The main principle of online brand communities can be realized from the same standpoint, as there are several definitions of this term and almost all of them emphasize the social interaction through online space and shared interests of community members. For instance, online brand community is defined as an online space, where individuals feel part of it and where they can interact on a common topic or interest, provide and share information about products, services and different brands (Rothaermel & Sugiyama, 2001). Herewith, Muñiz and O'Guinn determined brand communities as "non-geographically connected group of people based on a structured set of social relations among customers of a brand" (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001). Likewise, Madopu and Cooley provided a definition of online brand community as aggregated virtual space, where communication is supported by technology and where individuals communicate around shared interests (Madopu & Cooley, 2010). As can be seen from these definitions, the core essence of an online brand community is an interaction between brand admirers, who are socially motivated to exchange information. On the other hand, recent research by Baldus et al. (2015) showed that development of the internet technologies and new marketing strategies of the companies promoted new motivational engagements, different from social interaction. For instance, the research showed that sometimes people participate in online brand communities because of rewards like earning money, getting some kind of bonuses etc. Often people become online brand community members because they need information about the product, they read other people's comments, find out their opinions, learn about their experiences with the brand, but they never engage in the brand community. Their participation is restricted to just getting information. Therefore, they do not have any need of social interaction with other community members, even if this brand community represents their favorite brand. On the whole, although there are people with different motivational engagements in the online brand communities, the authors (Baldus et al., 2015; Madopu & Cooley, 2010; Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001) unanimously agree that the vast majority of brand community members still participate and engage in virtual communities because of socially-related motives, and there is no doubt that with the development of different marketing strategies, the essence of online brand communities is also improving and becoming multi-functional.

The significance of online brand communities for companies is doubtless. There are opinions which emphasize that these new communication channels are one of the key tools to increase brand awareness, build customer loyalty or even influence purchasing decision (Pitta & Fowler, 2005; Barness & Matsson, 2008, Jang et al., 2008). Moreover,

McAlexander et al. (2002) state that they are valuable business media in terms of learning customers' needs before offering new products, exploring competitive actions and spreading information, and according to Bagozzi and Dholakia (2006), brand community building appears to be essential at least for two reasons: firstly, creation and managing of brand community is not linked to many problems that traditional marketing encounters – difficulties with the media and resistance faced during mass media advertising campaigns, and problems of delivering messages through different channels. Secondly, brand communities empower people to influence the development of the brand and give possibility to companies to consider their customers as their partners, who are helping the brand in gathering information, being innovative and successful (Füller et al., 2008). For instance, such well-known global brands as Starbuck's coffee, Boston Red Fox, Microsoft, Dell, Procter & Gamble, are making a number of investments in managing virtual brand communities in order to build strong customer relationships; they are considering their customers' requirements and allow them to influence the development of the brand (Baldus et al., 2015). Virtual brand communities are very useful from customer perspective as well. They serve community members as a considerable information resource and benefit them with economic, physical, emotional and cognitive factors (McAlexander et al., 2002). For instance, Coca-Cola has a social page "MyCoke", where people can share their interests about the brand, also about music, films and videos related to the company. Therefore, community members feel valued by getting information and in turn, having possibility to express their emotions, visions and innovative ideas about the brand (Baldus et al., 2015; Sicilia & Palazon, 2008). Muñiz and O'Guinn stated that sometimes customers who are members of online brand communities feel that the brand belongs to them as much as the manufacturer does and they are linked emotionally with this brand (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001).

So, it is reasonable to say that online brand communities are important communication media in order to establish long-term two-way relationship with customers, provide positive experiences and influence their loyalty. They provide a huge perspective to create a team of brand ambassadors who will be very enthusiastic about the brand. They will spread a lot of information and build positive word of mouth. Such marketing activities make companies very competitive and they bring a lot of benefits for the company. Therefore, in the current research, online brand communities are seen as strategic marketing communication channels, by which it is possible to build customer relationships and influence their repurchase behavior.

Brand experiences through online brand communities

For building strong brand community, positive experiences of people are focal point in order to maintain customer relationships (Ha & Perks, 2005). It is empirically proved that brand experience is the main factor for creating brand loyalty (Brakus et al., 2009) and influencing repurchase behavior (Ha & Perks, 2005). Also it is a core factor for

creating a consumer's satisfaction about the product or about the brand itself, because nothing can influence people's mind (commercials, word of mouth, different activities, promotions, etc.) in such a way as experiencing of the brand on their own (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Alemán, 2005). Most of the researchers relate brand experience with behavioral, cognitive and emotional aspects, stating that brand experiences are "sensations, feelings, cognitions and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of brand's design and identity, packaging, communications and environment" (Brakus et al., 2009). Likewise, Sahin and others determined that brand experiences are sensations, feelings, cognitions and behavioral responses evoked by brand related stimuli (Sahin et al., 2011).

The importance of brand experience has become very significant, since marketing practitioners realized that people are looking for brands which will give them possibility to be provided with unique and satisfying experiences. (Sahin et al., 2011; Verhoef et al., 2009). Other researchers suggest that brand experience occurs in every touch point between company and customers (Brakus et al., 2009; Meyer & Schwager, 2007). Touch points are defined as any moments whenever customers interact with a brand directly or indirectly through different places and get some kind of impressions. Such kind of direct interaction can be searching for goods in the shop, or on the internet, opening a bottle of wine, consuming a product and so on. Indirect interaction can be a piece of advice from acquaintances, friends and other people. It means that every single moment when customers are interacting with a brand can create memorable and strong brand experience (Brakus et al., 2009; Limba et al. 2014; Franzen & Moriarty, 2008).

Online brand communities are those virtual places where customers are getting unique experiences about the brand by satisfying their motivational engagements. (Nguyen et al., 2011). Such kind of brand experiences can be transferred in any winning direction for the company like consumer's trial consumption, start consuming and becoming a loyal customer (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001). Also it can be transferred in any indirect connection with the brand like actively participating in the word of mouth, increasing brand awareness and brand reputation (McAlexander et al., 2003). As a result, brand experience through virtual brand communities is very important in every touch point, or interaction between the *customer* and the *brand*. Ha and Parks determined that brand community experience leads to better memory, because experience attributes are clearer and it requires more concentration about the brand and internal self-generation (Ha & Perks, 2005).

Summing up, online brand communities are unique places in order to provide positive brand experiences, which are a focal point for building brand loyalty. Therefore, satisfying motivational engagements, which are the reasons why people participate in online brand communities, provide positive experiences for the community members and make them feel valued. As a result, it is very important to understand community members' behavior and give them possibility to satisfy their needs through virtual community.

Engagement in online brand communities

In order to build a strong brand community, engagement of people is a focal point for every brand (Madopu & Cooley, 2010). According to Burnett and Buerkle (2004), there are two types of engagements: interactive and non-interactive. Barnes and Matsson (2008) determined that interactive members of community are those people who actively exchange information, ideas and opinions in the online brand community. In most cases, they are loyal customers and they have social motivational engagements in order to communicate with other brand admirers (Dennis & Fowler, 2005). Herewith, there activeness is also different according to their contributions to the community – some of them may participate in interaction more often compared to others. In this case, it means that they have stronger social motivational engagements compared to other community members (Dholakia et al., 2004). There is another method of participation in the online brand community, which is called non-interactive participation. This method means that community members do not make any comments in brand community, they do not share any content, they just explore the web-site, read other members' comments and observe the brand's actions. Most of non-interactive members of online brand community are regarded as indirect active users, who are called "lurkers" (Madopu & Cooley, 2010). This type of engagement means that non-interactive users do not comment anything in online brand community, but they use other channels to spread information which is taken from the community. For example, a community member can read information in the community generated by other customers and then he/she can spread this information through Facebook. This means that they are active participants of word of mouth. Also, lurkers are regarded as the people who contact the author of the comment by email, social network, telephone and face-to-face, but they do not write anything in the community. On the whole, both interactive and non-interactive participation are very significant for building and managing strong online brand communities. However, as it was already clarified by different authors, only those members who participate in the interaction of the community have social motivational engagements, and it is the biggest method of being involved in this virtual platform (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001; Madopu & Cooley, 2010). Therefore, as the current study focuses on defining the influence of social motivational engagements on repurchase brand loyalty, the target audience for conducting research consists of members of the community who are regarded as interactive.

Social motivational engagements and brand community commitment

Researchers agree that motivations which refer to social engagements are the major drivers for participating in online brand communities (McAlexander et al., 2002; Dholakia et al., 2004; Brodie et al., 2013). Sukoco and Wu explain that socially-related motivations are all about participants' interest to join online brand community to have

some interaction with other members and acquire social status (Sukoco & Wu, 2010). People enjoy communicating with other community members who have shared interests about the brand and they like to exchange information and adopt themselves in their favourite brand's virtual community (Wellman & Gulia, 1999). Socially-related motivations are classified into affiliation and acquiring social status inside the virtual community. The affiliation motive is related to customer desire to establish friendly relationships among community members with shared interests. On the other hand, the status motive refers to community participant's desire to get social status, acknowledgement and place inside the community (Sukoco & Wu, 2010). Wiertz and de Ruyter (2007) posit that a lot of people engage in online brand communities just to participate in discussions in order to gain recognition as it gives them joy and pleasure. Indeed, gaining of status strongly depends on other community members' behaviour, opinions, ideas and reviews (Madopu & Cooley, 2010). In order to address the research aim, the current study draws on the work of Baldus and others (Baldus et al., 2015, p. 979), which conceptualises online brand community engagement as a set of "the compelling, intrinsic motivations to continue interacting with an online brand community". The present study employs six of the eleven engagement dimensions proposed by Baldus et al. (2015) which pertain to social motivation: connecting, helping, like-minded discussion, seeking assistance, self-expression, and validation (see Table 1).

Wiener defines community commitment as an attitude to continue participation in an online brand community (Wiener, 1982). In line with Hur et al. (2011), the current study conceptualises brand community commitment as "each member's attitude

TABLE 1. **Online brand community engagement dimensions.**

Engagement dimensions	Definitions
Connecting	The extent to which a community member feels that being a member of the brand community connects them to some good thing bigger than themselves.
Helping	The degree to which a community member wants to help fellow community members by sharing knowledge, experience, or time.
Like-minded discussion	The extent to which a community member is interested in talking with people similar to themselves about the brand.
Seeking assistance	The degree to which a community member wants to receive help from fellow community members who share their knowledge, experience, or time with them.
Self-expression	The degree to which a community member feels that the community provides them with a forum where they can express their true interests and opinions.
Validation	A community member's feeling of the extent to which other community members affirm the importance of their opinions, ideas, and interests.

Source: adapted from Baldus et al., 2015, p. 981.

toward the community". Based on the literature reviewed, it is likely that social motivations have effects on brand community commitment. Hence, we hypothesize that:

H_1: Self-expression has a direct positive effect on brand community commitment.

H_2: Connecting has a direct positive effect on brand community commitment.

H_3: Helping has a direct positive effect on brand community commitment.

H_4: Like-minded discussions have a direct positive effect on brand community commitment.

H_5: Seeking assistance has a direct positive effect on brand community commitment.

H_6: Validation has a direct positive effect on brand community commitment.

H_7: Brand community commitment has a direct positive effect on repurchase intention.

The moderating effects of brand community types

Brand community can be classified into two types: marketer-created and consumer-created (Lee, 2011; Muñiz & Schu, 2007). Marketer-created brand communities are very effective for companies in order to use them for marketing activities like advertising, spreading information, offering new products and building strong customer relationships (Rothaermel & Sugiyama, 2001). On the other hand, marketer-created brand communities are very simple and cheap media for communicating with customers, and they do not contain such risks as inefficiently spending a lot of money in media commercials and spreading information which will not be delivered to target audiences. (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001). Herewith, researchers confirm that this virtual platform is a very specific communication medium for establishing relationship with customers, compared to other traditional marketing channels (Rheingold, 1993; Rothaermel & Sugiyama, 2001, Brodie et al., 2013). Muñiz and O'Guinn even conceptualized the interaction model of brand communities and explained that the main difference is that there are three parts when communication occurs in virtual community: brand to customer, customer to brand and customer to customer (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001).

The main value of engagement in marketer-created communities is that it gives an opportunity to customers to engage with each other, while in other traditional marketing channels interaction takes place only between brand and customer. On the other hand, as the spread of the internet gave an opportunity to people to be online in any time and from any place, an unlimited number of people can participate in engagement (Vromen, 2008; Tsai & Men, 2013). For instance, millions of customers can access internet and engage with each other at the same time from different countries. Unlike real brand communities, which are geographically bounded, virtual brand community members have no obstacles to access their favorite brands' online communities (Cova & Pace, 2006; Muñiz & Schau, 2007). As for consumer-created online brand communities, people create them about their favorite brands and lead other customers to partici-

pate in engagement, exchange ideas and opinions, give recommendations to each other (Lee et al., 2011; Fournier & Avery, 2011). According to Felix (2012), in most cases customers who are managing online communities don't expect any kind of financial wellness, they are just brand admirers and extremely loyal customers who are getting pleasure and value by organizing their favorite brand's online community. So, these two types of communities are different not only in terms of their management (who is the host), but they are different in consumer behavior as well. The current study suggests that as customers' attitude toward the brand inside the community is influenced by both the actions of the brand and other customers (Sukoco & Wu, 2010), there must be different outcomes in terms of repurchase behaviour arising from participating in these two different types of online brand communities. Therefore, our research will explore both types of online brand communities and compare the results. Based on the theory reviewed, it is expected that:

H_8: Online brand community type moderates the relationship between self-expression and brand community commitment.

H_9: Online brand community type moderates the relationship between connecting and brand community commitment.

H_{10}: Online brand community type moderates the relationship between helping and brand community commitment.

H_{11}: Online brand community type moderates the relationship between like-minded discussions and brand community commitment.

H_{12}: Online brand community type moderates the relationship between seeking assistance and brand community commitment.

H_{13}: Online brand community type moderates the relationship between validation and brand community commitment.

3. Research Design and Methods

As the current research focuses on the influence of social motivational engagements on repurchase intention in online brand communities, the best method is an online survey. The Red Bull's online brand communities were used in order to identify people with social motivational engagements and conduct research. This paper centers on both types of online brand communities: marketer-created (initiated and managed by the company) and consumer-created (initiated and managed by the consumers).

Red-bull is an international energy drink sold by an Austrian company for more than 27 years. The brand became a market leader a long time ago and it maintains the leading position today with the biggest market share in the energy drinks market. In 2014, the company sold 5612 billion cans (www.red-bull.com). B-BOYS is a marketer-initiated international online brand community, which links more than 30000 break dance lover boys and girls from all over the world in one virtual platform. There are plenty of videos, pictures and other content shared by the customers. They create common topics and

establish personal relationships, share their experiences and the best moments from their life related to the brand. The marketers of the company lead interaction and moderate the content. Moreover, the company organizes a variety of events in different countries related to break dance. In order to collect data, we used the consumer-created and marketer-created Facebook sites. The present study is based on a convenience sample which comprises 314 responses. Of the 314 respondents, 56.2% are male and 43.8% are female. Moreover, 47.8% of the respondents are the members of the marketer-created online brand community, whereas 43.3% belong to the consumer-created community.

In order to gauge social motivational engagements, the present study employs six out of the eleven dimensions put forward by Baldus et al. (2015): connecting, helping, like-minded discussion, seeking assistance, self-expression, and validation (See Table 1). The remaining five dimensions (brand influence, brand passion, hedonic rewards, utilitarian rewards, and up-to-data information) are not related to social motivation and therefore they are ignored. The present study aims to identify the relative importance of social motivation engagements in respect to online brand community commitment and repurchase intention. Thus, the set of independent variables is limited to social motivations.

TABLE 2. **The results of factor analysis.**

Connecting	Factor Loadings	Reliability
1. Increasing the strength of the connection I have with this brand community makes me want to participate more in the community.	.80	.87
2. Being part of this brand community makes me feel more connected to the brand.	.75	
3. Being part of this brand community makes me feel more connected to other consumers of the brand.	.73	
Helping		
1. I like participating in the brand community because I can use my experience to help people.	.83	.86
2. I like to share my experience and knowledge with others in this brand community to help them be more educated about the brand.	.82	
3. I really like helping other community members with their questions.	.74	
4. I feel good when I can help answer other community members' questions.	.71	
Like-mindedness discussions		
1. I look forward to discussing my opinions about the brand with others who share the same interest as me.	.75	.86
2. I enjoy conversing with people similar to myself in this brand community.	.74	
3. I look to this brand community when I want to discuss a topic with people who have similar interests.	.74	
4. Having conversations with people in this brand community who share the same views about this brand is important to me.	.74	

TABLE 2 (continued)

Seeking assistance		
1. I am motivated to participate in this brand community because I can receive help from other community members.	.80	.80
2. I am motivated to participate in this brand community because community members can use their knowledge to help me.	.73	
3. I like to participate in this brand community because it gives me an opportunity to receive help from other community members.	.72	
4. It is important to me to be able to use this community to find answers to my questions about the brand.	.71	
Self-expression		
1. I feel that I can freely share my interests in the brand community.	.77	.83
2. I would express any opinion on the idea I had about this brand in this brand community.	.74	
3. This community makes it easy for me to express my true beliefs about the brand.	.73	
Validation		
1. Receiving more affirmation of the value of my comments makes me want to participate in this brand community.	.80	.86
2. I feel good about myself when other community members share my ideas.	.76	
3. I appreciate when others agree with the ideas I express in this brand community.	.73	
4. When others support my ideas and opinions in this brand community, I feel better about myself.	.72	
Brand commitment		
1. I feel sense of belonging in this brand community.	.73	.88
2. I will visit this brand community continuously.	.72	
3. I will exchange information and opinions with the members of this brand community.	.72	
4. I will collect information through this brand community.	.70	
Repurchase Intention		
1. If I could, I would like to purchase Red Bull.	.83	.88
2. It is likely that I will continue purchasing Red Bull.	.82	
3. I intend to continue purchasing Red Bull in the future.	.78	

Brand community commitment was operationalised using the scale suggested by Hur et al. (2011). Finally, repurchase intention was assessed using the scale proposed by Yu-Hui et al. (2011). All the measurement scales are provided in Table 2.

Scale Assessment

First, the principle component analysis with varimax orthogonal rotation was employed in order to evaluate dimensionality of the scales. All the 30 items belonging to the eight scales (see above) were included in the analysis. The eight retained factors

explain 72% of the total variance. Kayser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (KMO) of .91 indicates relatively compact patterns of correlations which should yield reliable and distinct results of factor analysis. Indeed, the results of factor analysis (see Table 2) demonstrate that all the measures are unidimensional. Finally, the values of Cronbach's alpha vary from .83 to .88 and indicate good internal consistency of the scales. Based on the results of the factor analysis, we created summated scales in order to test the hypotheses.

4. Results

Having evaluated dimensionality and reliability of the scales, we employed multiple linear regression in order to test the hypotheses. As there is no strong theory regarding the importance of the predictors, the backward method was deemed the most appropriate for the current study. Using this method, all predictors are placed in the model and if a predictor meets a removal criterion, "it is removed from the model and the model is re-estimated for the remaining predictors" (Field, 2005, p. 161). The procedure is repeated until there are no insignificant predictors left in the model. The method is preferable "because of suppressor effects, which occur when a predictor has a significant effect but only when another variable is held constant" (Field, 2005, p. 161). As brand community commitment is a mediator (see Figure 1), the current study employs the approach suggested by Baron and Kenny in order to test whether mediation is full or partial (Baron & Kenny, 1986). However, Kenny et al. (1998) argue that not all the steps have to be met for there to be mediation. Specifically, the essential steps are 2 and
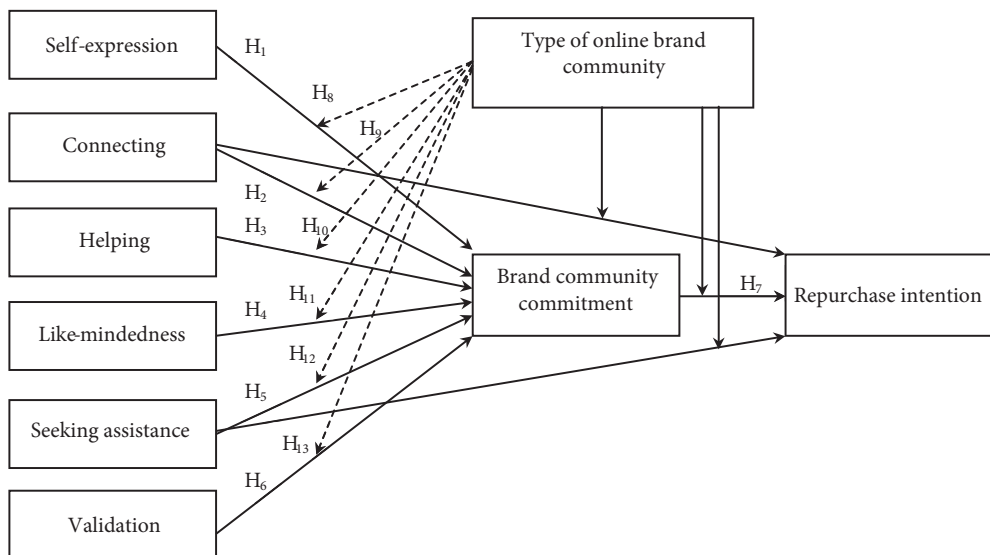

FIGURE 1. **The results of regression, mediation and moderation analysis.**

3. Step 4 has to be met only if full mediation is expected. First, we tested whether all the six predictors have effects on brand community commitment.

The results demonstrate that self-expression ($\beta = .11$, t = 3.81, p < .05), connecting ($\beta = .20$, t = 3.81, p < .001), helping ($\beta = .20$, t = 3.81, p < .001), like-minded discssions ($\beta = .19$, t = 3.81, p < .001), seeking assistance ($\beta = .11$, t = 3.81, p < .05), and validation ($\beta = .18$, t = 3.81, p < .05) have effects on the mediator. Consequently, hypotheses H_1 through H_6 are corroborated. The six predictors explain 49% of the variance in the outcome (adjusted R^2=.49). Second, repurchase intention was regressed against the mediator and all the independent variables. This was done in order to control the causal variables in establishing the effect of the mediator on the outcome. The results indicate that connecting ($\beta = .21$, t = 3.81, p < .001), assistance ($\beta = .16$, t = 3.12, p < .05), and brand community commitment ($\beta = .39$, t = 7.02, p < .001) have effects on the repurchase intention when the independent variables are controlled. Hence, hypothesis H_7 is accepted. Connecting and assistance explain 39% of the variance in brand community commitment (adjusted R^2=.39). Consequently, brand community commitment fully mediates the effects of self-expression, helping, like-mindedness, seeking assistance, and validation. The effects of connecting and assistance on the outcome are partially mediated by brand community commitment. As suggested by Preacher and Kelley (2011), the completely standardized indirect effects of self-expression (.04), connecting (.08), helping (.08), like-mindedness (.07), seeking assistance (.04), and validation (.07) were calculated as the product of the two standardised betas. Finally, as suggested by Field (2005), we evaluated the assumptions of linear regression: absence of perfect multicollinearity, homoscedasticity, independence of errors, linearity, and normal distribution of standardised residuals. All the regression models meet the five assumptions. As the hypotheses H_8 through H_{12} involve moderation effects, the Process tool developed by Hayes (2013) was employed to test moderation. The analysis demonstrates that in all the cases moderation is insignificant. Consequently, hypotheses H_8 through H_{13} are rejected. Additionally, we decided to test if the type of online brand community moderates the relationship between community commitment and repurchase intention. The analysis demonstrates that the interaction term of online brand community type and brand community commitment is highly significant (β=-.29, 95% CI [-.54, -.05], t=-2.34, p<.05) indicating that the relationship between commitment and repurchase intention is moderated by online brand community type. In order to determine how the moderator influences the relationship, we explored conditional effects of online brand community commitment on repurchase intention at the two values of moderator. When the respondents belong to the online brand community created by the marketer, brand community commitment has a positive effect on repurchase intention (β=.71, 95% CI [.55, .86], t=9.04, p<.001). However, when the respondents belong to the consumer-created online brand community, the effect of brand community commitment on repurchase intention decreases to .41 (β=.41, 95% CI [.22, .61], t=4.14, p<.001).

Finally, as connecting and seeking assistance have both direct and indirect effects on repurchase intention, we decided to test if online community membership moderates the direct links. Interestingly, the interaction of connecting and repurchase intention is highly significant (β=-.25, 95% CI [-.47, -.02], t=-2.15, p<.05) indicating that the relationship between connecting and repurchase intention is moderated by online brand community type. Connecting has a positive effect on repurchase intention when the respondents belong to the online brand community created by the marketer (β=.55, 95% CI [.42, .68], t=8.10, p<.001). However, in the customer-created community, the effect of connecting on the outcome decreases to .30 (β=.30, 95% CI [.12, .48], t=3.25, p<.05).

5. Conclusions

The current study demonstrates that online brand community commitment mediates the effects of all the six motivational engagements (self-expression, connecting, helping, like-minded discussions, seeking assistance, and validation) on repurchase intention. Consequently, the six motivations have direct positive effects on the mediator which fully mediates the effects of all the motivations except connecting and seeking assistance. The effects of connecting and seeking assistance are mediated partially. The type of online brand community does not moderate any relationships between social motivational engagements and brand community commitment as expected. However, the current study demonstrates that the moderator affects the link between brand community commitment and repurchase intention, indicating moderated mediation. In other words, the relationship between the two constructs becomes stronger in the marketer-generated online brand community. Consequently, the type of online brand community affects the links between the six social motivations and repurchase intention. Specifically, the effects of the six motivations on repurchase intention become stronger in the marketer-generated online community.

6. Managerial implications

The results of this research are very useful since it will have multiple beneficial implications for the companies which are trying to establish long-term relationships with customers through virtual environment. First of all, until now the vast majority of online brand communities have referred to high involvement products. From the current research perspective, it is already clear that brand community interactions have a power to influence community participants' repurchase intentions on low involvement products as well. Therefore, this research will help companies to recognize the value and important role of customer engagement in virtual platform and they can start building and managing online brand communities related to fast-moving consumer goods.

Secondly, the results of the current study give new insights for customer relationship management in online brand communities by focusing on increasing the social moti-

vational engagements. The research showed that people with such motivations are actively involved in discussions and brand community interactions. Herewith, they have willingness of long-term engagement with the brand and they are active consumers of the company's product. The current study has identified all 6 social motivational engagements and clarified that each of these motivational engagements leads to stronger linkage with the brand. Therefore, by focusing on increasing the strength of social motivational engagements, companies can get valuable contributions in terms of establishing effective customer relationships. In turn, it will generate higher profits, because as research results demonstrated, such kind of interactions lead to stronger repurchase intention.

Thirdly, the current research proved that socially related interactions in online brand communities lead to stronger community commitment. From marketing perspective it means that companies have great possibility to keep in touch with their enthusiastic customers, easily spread information about innovations of the company, use word of mouth technique, get extremely important feedback from the community members and maintain product innovation.

All in all, if utilized, such findings will make companies more competitive and increase their marketing effectiveness. Therefore, the results of this research will have multiple positive effects on businesses which realize the value of customer engagement.

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