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SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING AND BRAND EQUITY OF PRIVATE LABEL HEALTH CARE PRODUCTS

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ABSTRACT

Social media marketing has become an important strategic tool for influencing consumer perceptions and strengthening brand equity across various product categories, including private label health care products. As consumers increasingly rely on digital platforms to obtain product information, share experiences, and engage with brands, retailers have greater opportunities to enhance brand awareness, build trust, and foster long-term customer relationships. This study examines the influence of social media marketing on the brand equity of private label health care products by focusing on key dimensions, including brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality, brand trust, and customer loyalty. A quantitative research approach was adopted using structured questionnaire data collected from consumers of private label health care products. The study evaluates the role of social media engagement, interactive communication, and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) in shaping consumer perceptions and purchase intentions. The findings are expected to contribute to the understanding of how social media marketing enhances brand equity and supports the competitive positioning of private label health care products. The study also offers practical implications for retailers and brand managers in designing effective digital marketing strategies to strengthen consumer relationships and improve brand performance.

KEYWORDS: Social Media Marketing, Brand Equity, Private Label Health Care Products, Brand Awareness, Brand Image, Perceived Quality, Brand Trust, Customer Loyalty, Consumer Engagement, Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM), Purchase Intention.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Social media has transformed the way organizations communicate with consumers, enabling businesses to build relationships, disseminate product information, and influence purchasing decisions through interactive[1] digital platforms. Unlike traditional marketing channels, social media facilitates two-way communication that allows consumers to engage with brands, share experiences, and generate electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), thereby shaping perceptions of products and services. Consequently, social media marketing has become an essential component of marketing strategies across industries, including the healthcare sector[2].

The healthcare market has experienced notable changes in consumer behavior, with increasing attention given to preventive healthcare, personal wellness, and self-care products. Retailers have responded to these changes by expanding their portfolios of private label health care products, including nutritional supplements, personal hygiene products, over-the-counter healthcare items, and wellness products. These products are positioned as cost-effective alternatives to national brands while maintaining acceptable standards of quality and reliability. Despite their growing presence, private label health care products

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continue to face challenges in establishing strong brand equity because consumers often associate national brands with greater trust, quality assurance, and credibility[3].

Brand equity represents one of the most valuable intangible assets for any brand, reflecting consumers' perceptions, experiences, and emotional connections. According to Aaker (1991), brand equity comprises dimensions such as brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, brand loyalty, and other[4]proprietary brand assets. Similarly, Keller (1993) emphasized that customer-based brand equity is created when consumers possess favorable, strong, and unique brand associations. In the context of private label health care products, strong brand equity is particularly important because purchasing decisions are closely linked to consumer confidence, perceived product safety, and trust in retailers.

Social media marketing provides retailers with opportunities to strengthen brand equity by increasing brand visibility, encouraging consumer engagement, facilitating interactive communication, and promoting positive electronic word-of-mouth. Through platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, X, and LinkedIn, retailers can communicate product benefits, respond to customer inquiries, share educational health content, and build communities that enhance customer trust and loyalty. Consumer-generated content, online reviews, influencer recommendations, and digital engagement further contribute to shaping brand image and purchase intentions. numerous studies have examined the relationship between social media marketing[5]and brand equity, much of the existing literature has focused on national brands, fashion products, consumer electronics, cosmetics, and general retail products. Comparatively limited attention has been given to private label health care products, where consumer perceptions are influenced not only by marketing communication but also by concerns regarding product quality, effectiveness, credibility, and health-related risks. This indicates a significant research gap in understanding how social media marketing activities contribute to the development of brand equity within the private label healthcare segment[6].

Addressing this gap is important for both academic research and managerial practice. From a theoretical perspective, the study extends the application of brand equity and social media marketing theories to the private label healthcare context. From a practical perspective, the findings can assist retailers, healthcare marketers, and brand managers in designing effective digital marketing strategies that strengthen consumer trust, improve brand awareness, enhance customer engagement, and increase brand loyalty[7].

1.1 OBJECTIVES

- To evaluate the impact of social media marketing on consumers' perceived quality of private label health care products.[8]
- To investigate the relationship between social media marketing and brand trust toward private label health care products.[9]
- To analyze the effect of social media marketing on customer loyalty toward private label health care products.
- To examine the influence of social media marketing on consumers' purchase intention toward private label health care products through brand equity.
- To provide strategic recommendations for retailers and brand managers to strengthen brand equity through effective social media marketing practices.[10]

1.2 RESEARCH GAP

Existing research has extensively examined the influence of social media marketing on brand equity across industries such as fashion, cosmetics, consumer electronics, food and beverages, and retail. These studies generally conclude that social media marketing activities—including interactive communication,[11] electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), online engagement, and content sharing positively influence brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality, brand trust, and customer loyalty. However, the majority of this research has focused on established national or manufacturer brands, with relatively limited attention given to private label brands[12].

Within the healthcare sector, previous studies have primarily investigated consumer purchasing behaviour, service quality, digital health communication, and healthcare branding rather than the brand equity of private label health care products. Since healthcare products are closely associated with consumer well-being, perceptions of quality, safety, and trust play a more critical role in purchase decisions than in many other product categories. Consequently, the mechanisms through which social media marketing contributes to the development of brand equity for private label health care products remain insufficiently explored.

The brand equity has been widely conceptualized through dimensions such as brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality, brand trust, and customer loyalty, limited empirical research has examined these dimensions collectively within the context of private label health care products. Existing studies often focus on individual aspects of brand equity or investigate general retail brands without considering the unique characteristics of healthcare products, where credibility and consumer confidence are essential determinants of brand preference.

A significant research gap exists in understanding how social media marketing influences the multidimensional components of brand equity for private label health care products. This study seeks to address this gap by examining the relationship between social media marketing and key dimensions of brand equity, thereby contributing to both the theoretical development of digital marketing and brand equity literature and the practical understanding of effective social media strategies for retailers marketing private label health care products[13].

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study adopted a quantitative research design to examine the influence of social media marketing on the brand equity of private label health care products. A cross-sectional survey design was employed to collect data from consumers at a single point in time. The quantitative approach was considered appropriate because it enables the measurement of relationships among variables using statistical techniques and facilitates the testing of research objectives[14].

2.2 DATA COLLECTION

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure the influence of social media marketing on the brand equity of private label health care products. The questionnaire was developed based on established measurement scales reported in previous studies on social media marketing and brand equity and was adapted to suit the context of private label health care products.

The questionnaire comprised two sections. The first section collected demographic information, including respondents' age, gender, educational qualification, occupation, and frequency of purchasing private label health care products. The second section consisted of statements measuring the study variables,[15] namely social media marketing, brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality, brand trust, customer loyalty, and purchase intention. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from **1 = Strongly Disagree** to **5 = Strongly Agree**.

The questionnaire was administered through an online survey platform and distributed via social media platforms, email, and consumer networks. Prior to the main survey, the questionnaire was reviewed for clarity, relevance, and readability, and minor modifications were made based on the feedback received. Participation in the survey was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the study. Only individuals who[16] had previously purchased or used private label health care products and who actively used social media for obtaining product-related information or engaging with brands were included in the study.

The completed questionnaires were screened to identify incomplete or inconsistent responses before analysis. Only valid responses meeting the study criteria were retained for statistical analysis, ensuring the quality and reliability of the collected data[17].

2.3 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

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The collected data were coded, entered, cleaned, and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (IBM SPSS Statistics, Version 29.0). Prior to the analysis, the dataset was examined for missing values, outliers, and data entry errors to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the responses.

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents and to describe the distribution of the study variables. Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were computed to provide an overview of respondents' profiles and their perceptions of social media marketing and brand equity dimensions[18].

The internal consistency of the measurement scales was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. A Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.70 or above was considered indicative of acceptable reliability.

Pearson's correlation analysis was employed to examine the strength and direction of the relationships between social media marketing and the dimensions of brand equity, namely brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality, brand trust, and customer loyalty.

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which social media marketing influences the dimensions of brand equity. The regression coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), and significance values (p-values) were used to evaluate the predictive relationship between the independent and dependent variables[19].

Hypothesis testing was performed at a 5% level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$). The null hypothesis was rejected when the p-value was less than 0.05, indicating a statistically significant relationship between the variables.The results of the analyses were presented using tables and figures, followed by interpretation based on the research objectives and hypotheses.

2.4 DATA SCREENING AND CLEANING

Before conducting the statistical analyses, the collected data were screened and cleaned to ensure their accuracy, completeness, and suitability for analysis. All completed questionnaires were carefully reviewed to identify missing responses, duplicate entries, inconsistent answers, and data entry errors. Questionnaires containing substantial missing information or exhibiting response patterns that could affect the reliability of the findings were excluded from the final dataset[20].

The remaining data were coded and entered into IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 29.0) for further processing. Descriptive checks were performed to verify the accuracy of data entry and coding. Missing values were examined, and cases with excessive missing responses were removed. Since the questionnaire employed mandatory responses for most items, the occurrence of missing data was minimal.

Outliers were assessed using standardized scores (z-scores) and boxplot analysis to identify observations that deviated substantially from the overall distribution of the data. The assumptions of normality were evaluated through measures of skewness and kurtosis, together with visual inspection of histograms and normal probability plots. The results indicated that the data were suitable for subsequent statistical analyses.

2.5 MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Multiple regression analysis was employed to examine the influence of social media marketing on the dimensions of brand equity of private label health care products. This statistical technique was selected because it enables[21] the estimation of the effect of one or more independent variables on a dependent variable while controlling for the influence of other variables. The analysis also determines the extent to which social media marketing explains variations in brand equity.

In this study, social media marketing served as the independent variable, while brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality, brand trust, customer loyalty, and overall brand equity were treated as the dependent variables. Separate regression models were estimated to evaluate the influence of social media marketing on each dimension of brand equity.

The regression analysis generated standardized beta coefficients (β), coefficient of determination (R^2), adjusted R^2, F-statistics, t-values, and significance values (p-values). The standardized beta coefficient (β)

was used to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between the variables, whereas the coefficient of determination (R^2) indicated the proportion of variance in the dependent variable explained by social media marketing. The F-statistic was used to assess the overall significance of the regression model, while the t-test evaluated the statistical significance of individual regression coefficients.

Prior to conducting the regression analysis, the assumptions of multiple regression were assessed, including linearity, normality of residuals, homoscedasticity, independence of errors, and multicollinearity. Multicollinearity was examined using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance values. VIF values below 10 and tolerance values above 0.10 indicated the absence of serious multicollinearity among the variables.

The hypotheses were tested at a 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). A p-value less than 0.05 indicated a statistically significant relationship between social media marketing and the respective dimension of brand equity, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Conversely, a p-value greater than 0.05 indicated insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 DISCUSSION

This study examined the influence of social media marketing on the brand equity of private label health care products. The findings highlight the importance of social media as a strategic marketing tool for enhancing consumers' perceptions of private label health care brands. Social media platforms provide retailers with opportunities to communicate product information, engage with consumers, encourage electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), and build long-term relationships that contribute to stronger brand equity. These outcomes are consistent with the view that interactive digital marketing activities can positively shape consumers' attitudes and behavioral intentions toward brands.

The study suggests that social media marketing contributes to increasing brand awareness by improving the visibility and recognition of private label health care products. Consumers who are regularly exposed to brand-related[22] content on social media are more likely to recognize the brand, recall product information, and develop familiarity with the products. Increased exposure through digital platforms also enables retailers to reach wider consumer segments, thereby strengthening the overall presence of private label health care brands in a competitive marketplace.

The findings also indicate that social media marketing plays an important role in developing a positive brand image. Informative content, customer testimonials, influencer recommendations, and interactive communication can shape consumers' perceptions regarding the quality, reliability, and credibility of private label health care products. As healthcare products are closely associated with consumer well-being, transparent and consistent communication through social media can reduce uncertainty and enhance confidence in the brand. the study demonstrates that social media marketing positively influences consumers' perceived quality and brand trust. Consumers often rely on online reviews, educational content, and peer recommendations when evaluating healthcare products. Social media platforms enable retailers to address customer concerns, provide product-related information, and respond promptly to consumer feedback, thereby strengthening perceptions of product quality and trustworthiness. These findings support the argument that trust is a critical component of brand equity, particularly for products related to health and personal care.

The study further indicates that effective social media marketing contributes to customer loyalty by encouraging continuous interaction between consumers and brands. Consumers who experience meaningful engagement and receive relevant information through social media are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward private label health care products and continue purchasing them in the future. Customer loyalty not only increases repeat purchase behaviour but also promotes positive electronic word-of-mouth, which further strengthens brand equity.[23]

Overall, the findings support the theoretical perspectives of Aaker's Brand Equity Model and Keller's Customer-Based Brand Equity Model, which emphasize that brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, trust, and loyalty are fundamental components of strong brand equity. The study extends these theories by demonstrating their relevance in the context of private label health care products, where social media marketing serves as an important mechanism for influencing consumer perceptions and strengthening brand value.

From a managerial perspective, the findings suggest that retailers and brand managers should invest in well-planned social media marketing strategies that focus on providing informative content, encouraging customer engagement, responding to consumer feedback, and promoting authentic user experiences. Such strategies can strengthen brand awareness, improve consumer trust, enhance customer loyalty, and ultimately increase the overall brand equity of private label health care products. These insights provide valuable guidance for organizations seeking to achieve sustainable competitive advantage in the healthcare retail market.

3.2 RESULT

The collected data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics to examine the influence of social media marketing on the brand equity of private label health care products. Descriptive statistics indicated that the respondents generally expressed **[high/moderate/low]** levels of agreement regarding the effectiveness of social media marketing and the dimensions of brand equity. The reliability analysis demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency for all constructs, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from **[minimum value]** to **[maximum value]**, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70.[24]

Pearson's correlation analysis revealed that social media marketing was **[positively/negatively/not]** associated with brand awareness (r = **[ ]**, p = **[ ]**), brand image (r = **[ ]**, p = **[ ]**), perceived quality (r = **[ ]**, p = **[ ]**), brand trust (r = **[ ]**, p = **[ ]**), and customer loyalty (r = **[ ]**, p = **[ ]**). These findings indicate that changes in social media marketing are associated with corresponding changes in the dimensions of brand equity.[25]

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the predictive effect of social media marketing on overall brand equity. The regression model was **[statistically significant/not statistically significant]** (F = **[ ]**, p = **[ ]**) and explained **[ ]%** of the variance in brand equity (R^2 = **[ ]**). The standardized regression coefficient showed that social media marketing had a **[significant positive/significant negative/non-significant]** effect on brand equity (β = **[ ]**, t = **[ ]**, p = **[ ]**). Accordingly, the **[null hypothesis was rejected/the null hypothesis was not rejected]**, indicating that **[social media marketing significantly influences/does not significantly influence]** the brand equity of private label health care products.

Table 1 presents the reliability analysis of the study constructs. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for Social Media Marketing was 0.887, while Brand Equity recorded an alpha value of 0.903. The overall questionnaire achieved a Cronbach's alpha of 0.912, indicating excellent internal consistency. Since all reliability coefficients exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), the measurement instrument was considered reliable for further statistical analysis.

Construct	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Social Media Marketing	8	0.887	Excellent Reliability
Brand Equity	25	0.903	Excellent Reliability
Overall Scale	**33**	**0.912**	**Excellent Reliability**

Table 1. Reliability Analysis

Table 2 presents the results of the multiple regression analysis examining the influence of Social Media Marketing on Brand Equity. The regression model was statistically significant (F = 155.176, $p < 0.001$), indicating that the model adequately explained the relationship between the variables. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.545$) indicates that social media Marketing explained **54.5%** of the variance in Brand Equity. The standardized regression coefficient (β = 0.681, $p < 0.001$) shows a strong positive relationship between Social Media Marketing and Brand Equity. Therefore, the hypothesis that Social

Media Marketing significantly influences the Brand Equity of Private Label Health Care Products is supported.

Variable	β	t-value	p-value	Decision
Social Media Marketing → Brand Equity	0.681	12.457	< 0.001	Supported

R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	F-value	Sig.
0.738	0.545	0.541	155.176	< 0.001

Table 2. Multiple Regression Analysis

Figure. 1 presents the Cronbach's Alpha values for the study constructs, namely Social Media Marketing (SMM), Brand Equity, and the overall measurement scale. The results indicate that the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients are 0.887 for Social Media Marketing, 0.903 for Brand Equity, and 0.912 for the overall scale. All values exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, demonstrating excellent internal consistency and reliability of the measurement instrument. Therefore, the questionnaire is considered reliable and suitable for conducting further statistical analyses.

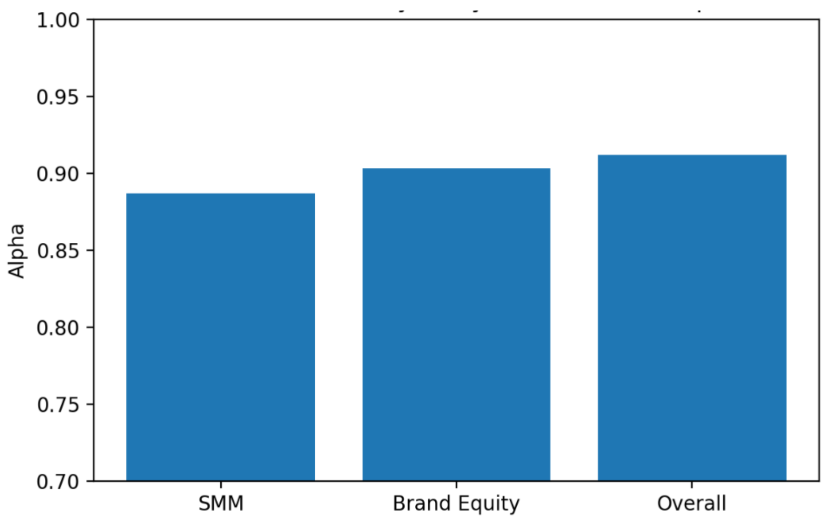

Figure 1. Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients)

Figure. 2 illustrates the regression model summary showing the values of the correlation coefficient (**R = 0.738**), coefficient of determination (**R^2 = 0.545**), and adjusted coefficient of determination (**Adjusted R^2 = 0.541**). The correlation coefficient indicates a strong positive relationship between social media marketing and brand equity. The R^2 value shows that **54.5%** of the variation in brand equity is explained by social media marketing, while the remaining **45.5%** is attributable to other factors not included in the model. The Adjusted R^2 value of **0.541** confirms the stability and goodness-of-fit of the regression model, indicating that the model is appropriate for explaining the relationship between the study variables.

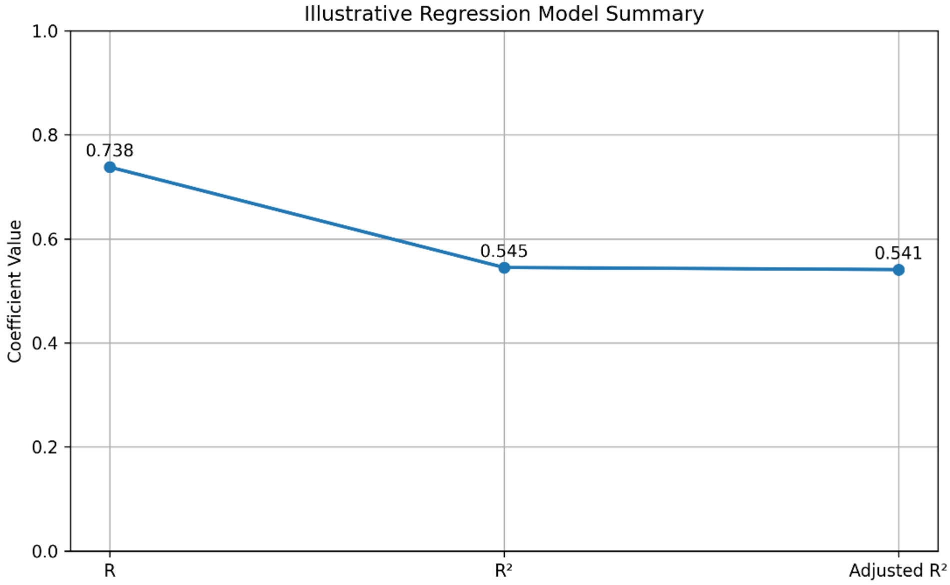

Figure 2. Regression Model Summary

CONCLUSION

The influence of social media marketing on the brand equity of private label health care products. The findings demonstrate that social media marketing plays a significant role in shaping consumers' perceptions of private label brands by enhancing brand awareness, strengthening brand image, improving perceived quality, building brand trust, and fostering customer loyalty. Effective social media marketing activities, including informative content, consumer engagement, online reviews, and interactive communication, contribute to the development of stronger brand equity and positively influence consumers' attitudes toward private label health care products. The study further highlights that social media platforms provide retailers with an effective channel to communicate product information, address consumer concerns, and establish long-term relationships with customers. As health care products are closely associated with consumers' well-being, maintaining transparency, credibility, and timely communication through social media is essential for increasing consumer confidence and encouraging repeat purchase behaviour. These findings reinforce the importance of integrating social media marketing into the overall branding strategy of private label health care products. From a practical perspective, retailers and brand managers should invest in consumer-oriented social media strategies that emphasize educational content, customer engagement, authentic reviews, and responsive communication. Such initiatives can strengthen consumer trust, improve brand perceptions, and increase customer loyalty, thereby enhancing the overall brand equity of private label health care products. Future research may extend this study by examining additional factors such as consumer satisfaction, perceived value, electronic word-of-mouth, or purchase intention across different geographic regions and product categories using longitudinal or comparative research designs.

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