The Impact of Fan Page Engagement on Consumer Purchase Intention on Fashion Brands in Sri Lanka

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Author’s contribution

The sole author designed, analysed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Today, the world is evolving around social media and so is the business and business communication. Social media platforms mainly Facebook in which commercial and social networking elements have evolved in many ways to serve as business/marketing communication tool. Social media is recognized as an impressive form of online communication where people create friendships, communities, network which gather and share information, messages and ideas. Businesses nowadays use fan pages to provide information of their products or services to existing and potential customers with the aim of increasing the purchase intention. Hence the marketing practitioners are keen to understand the impact of the consumer purchase intention through their fan page. Accordingly, the purpose of this study is to examine and analyse the impact of fan page engagement on consumer purchase intention of fashion brands in Sri Lanka. The objective of the study is to analyse whether or not the main features of fan page engagement which are trust, EWOM (Electronic Word of Mouth) and value co-creation makes an impact on Sri Lankan fashion brand consumers. Therefore, the researcher selected quantitative research methodology adopting to the deductive research approach. A self-administered questionnaire is distributed among 120 Facebook users. Among 120 responses received, 105 completed questionnaires were finally employed for statistical analysis. Sample was selected based on non-random sampling method. Through the existing literature; trust, EWOM and value co-creation are identified as three independent variables while purchase intention is the dependent. The finding of the research revealed that the EWOM (0.335, 0.00) has a significant relationship and value co-creation (0.655, 0.00) has a significant positive relationship with the purchase intention, yet the relationship of trust (0.142, 0.150) and purchase intention was not significant.

Keywords: Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM); fashion brands; purchase intention; social media marketing; trust; value co-creation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Internet had had a major influence in today’s society. It plays a prominent role in communication, media and marketing. Embrace of internet has made a revolutionary change in life styles which led people to be defined as connected people. A
single person now is engaged with several social media accounts, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, snap chat etc. The previous studies reveal social media as a major source for product information search which finally relates to purchase [1]. Similarly, most of the business organizations also have profiles on those platforms which is called as fan page. The fan pages provide interactive two-way commination where the customers and potential customers can receive information about the product and the services and also, enables them to share opinion, experience, expectation through it.

With the revolution of industry 4.0, the web 2.0 and social media has become the marketing and communicating media which is mainly utilized [2]. Social networking sites (SNS) facilitates the business organizations to engage directly with their customers through brand messages and posts [3]. Facebook, Instagram and twitter are the leading social media platforms. The statistics of 2018 proves that Facebook leads the SN (social network) use and counts for 94%, Instagram 66% and twitter 62% [4]. As of March 2019, there are 2.38 billion active Facebook users globally [5]. According to the findings of social media marketing research of 2018, 48% of the respondents agreed to the fact that social media marketing is affective. Increased traffic and increased exposure are being recognized as the best two benefits of social media marketing [6]. Schultz, 2017 argues that besides the statistical information the scholars also found, Facebook as the mostly used SNS (social network site) [7].

Among the many features offered by Facebook for business organisations, the fan pages have become one of the most appealing to the marketing practitioners as it helps to gather the current customers and potential customers in to one common forum. Facebook fan pages have become an extremely prominent marketing channel as it supports to increase the sales [8]. It is proven that Facebook fan pages improve the web traffic which finally leads to increase of B2C communication and sales [9].

Sri Lanka is moving to the online and social media marketing and both buyers and sellers are slowly adopting to this technique. Mostly small, medium and large-scale clothing stores / fashion brands have ventured in to Facebook marketing and operating fan pages. Zigzag.lk, one of the fashion stores in Sri Lanka, started up its business only through a Facebook fan page which has 500,000 fans by now. The special discounts provided, and the door step delivery has attracted many customers in to it. Only after three years of operation they have launched their physical store. In fashion or clothing industry zigzag was a trend setter on using social media as a marketing platform which later on being followed by Odel, Kelly felder, G flock and several others.

With the increased use of Facebook and its fan page followers, it has become necessary to empirically analyse the impacts of Facebook fan pages on consumer purchase intention. The purpose here is to define the impact of Facebook fan pages on consumer fan pages of fashion brands in Sri Lanka. The previous scholars have also suggested to conduct research on this regard on country wise since their findings on similar scope cannot be generalised [10]. Although there are plenty of studies conducted in the similar manner, studies related to Sri Lankan context is limited. The study is expected to be benefitted to the companies that uses Facebook fan pages to reach to its customers to improve their communication mechanisms.

The paper is organized as follows, the literature review on section 2 reviews the literature on purchase intention. In the 3rd section it proposes the research methodology with the conceptual framework and the hypotheses. The 4th section is the discussion on findings which will be followed by the section 5 of recommendation with conclusion.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Purchase Intention

The definitions and drivers of consumers purchase intention (PI) were being researched for decades by the scholars and it was defined as what buyers think that they would buy and also as individual's awareness and their attempt on buying a particular brand [11]. Park, 2002 has described it in consumers perspective as “what we think we will buy”. What influences the consumers to purchase, is what the researchers, marketers and business organizations tend to understand in depth. Moon, 2008 has found that demographic factors such as age, gender, professional and educational level, cultural dimensions and the characteristics of the product such as product type and price may influence the consumers to purchase online [12]. PI was understood as the decision to act or as the psychological action that one may have towards a specific brand or product [13].
There are several different variables that influence the consumer purchase intention. According to Lu et al. the social presence and trust in sellers showed a positive impact on consumer purchase intention [14].

Different scholars have identified different variables as influential factors for consumer purchase intention. Price, quality and availability of information are the mainly argued factors. Lu et al. on their study on multi-dimensional model of social presence argue that social presence and trust in sellers has a positive impact on consumer purchase intention [14]. Chang & Chen also confirmed that trust has a moderate impact on consumer’s purchase intention when they purchase through online. According to their findings both trust and perceived risk is generated through the quality and the brand of the website which lead to the purchase intention [15]. Further, Gefen & Straub define trust as a critical factor on businesses run through e-commerce platforms [16]. It was found that institutional trust has a positive impact on the purchase intention [17].

Value is also an important aspect on the brand success. Koo & Rha (2012) and Woodside & Ko (2013) reveal that when the consumer is actively participating in brand development activities the learning and communication between brands and consumers occur.

If used correctly and efficiently there is a huge potential on developing the brand image through the word of mouth in electronic media which is called as Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM). Several scholars namely Bailey, 2004, Xia & Bechwati, 2008, Barber 1983 and all recognize and highlight positive impacts of EWOM.

2.2 Trust

“Trust is the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party” [18]. Trust generates the feeling of affirmation and affirmation is fundamental on formation of a relationship or partnership through verifying the evidences [19]. Trust is the expectation and it has a direct link to one’s purchase intention. Consumers purchase a product trusting it would satisfy their needs. It reduces the uncertainty on situations and business relationships as well [20]. Trust is when one accepts the advice of another where they depend on the others and it is an important antecedent of a behaviour [21]. Anyhow in virtual platforms the consumers cannot see or touch the product as it is in traditional purchasing scenario and yet they purchase by trusting the recommendations and judgements provided by other users who may or may not be known to them. Therefore, trust is a must when establishing interpersonal relationships, particularly in situations where consumers purchase through online which is considered as risky environment [22].

Findings of Lewis and Weigert (1985) and McAllister (1995) confirm that interpersonal trust comes through cognitive and affective methods [23,24] and when considering the networking on SNSs the trust is resulted from social interactions. Through the dynamic interactions of the fans of Facebook page organisations can improve the customer satisfaction and strengthen the customer relationship [25]. There are three components in trust as ability, integrity, and benevolence according to Gefen & Straub (2004). Ability refers to the skills and competencies that permits trustee to be perceived competent where integrity stands for the expectations that trustee has on trustee to act as per the social norms and principles. When the trustee cares and do good to the trustee, it is called as benevolence [16]. Gefen further explained that the integrity and benevolence apply to virtual communities as both those are to maintain the communication.

The previous studies have found the antecedents of trust as knowledge based, cognition based and institution-based mechanisms [16]. Further to these three Zucker (1986) has introduced personality based trust too [26]. The knowledge based mechanism is formulated through user’s accumulated knowledge or internal/external usage experience [27]. Knowledge based trust can be built through repeated interactions while cognition based trust focuses on building trust through the first impression. Institution based trust is when one relies on an institution or a third party to build trust. When the individual personalities influence on trust building, it is personality based trust.

When people share experience/ information on a fan page it implies a certain level of trust, the information sharer is risking his/her privacy [28]. Trust can be understood by the level of involvement of the virtual community member,
2.3 Value Co-Creation

It was organisation centric value creation about a decade ago, but with the emerge of trending marketing strategies through social media the value creation has taken a new leap as value co-creation, where the role of consumer has converted from isolated to connected. Supporting to this concept Facebook interactive marketing approach which promotes and encourages the value co-creation. Not only the business organisation can share the information but also the viewers can make posts, share, like and comment on them. Value co-creation begins when the business organisation and the consumer create the values through interacting with each other [30]. Value comes from consumer perception whether the shopping experience is positive or met the expectations [31]. There is an emotional appeal as well as cognitive appeal on value co-creation.

The SNS and particularly the fan pages facilitate the value co-creation interaction in a greater deal. As it is a platform that enables the customers to communicate with each other, to share their experience and knowledge which makes them active partners in the process of co-creating value [30]. In SNS and particularly in Facebook the features such as ‘like’, ‘comment’ and share are value co-creation mechanisms. The features and characteristics of the posts highly impact on receiving likes, comments and shares [32].

The consumer engagement and value co-creation is interrelated. The prominent study on value co-creation is conducted by Brondie et al. (2011) He defines five main components on value co-creation. The first of them is that the consumer’s psychological state is reflected by their engagement with the product in the means of interaction, co-creation with their experience. The second component claims that the consumer engagement can only be created through a dynamic and interactive relationship while as the third they explain that there is no isolated relationships yet they are all interdependent. In the fourth component they explain that the cognitive, emotional and behavioural dimensions are being reflected by the engagement. According to the consumer engagement, value co-creation is different from person to person and situation to situation and cannot be generalised [33].

2.4 Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM)

The effects of Word-of-mouth (WOM) in marketing has been researched by both scholars and marketing practitioners to investigate its effect on their products, brands, the buying behaviour and purchase intention [34]. The latest extension of WOM is Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM) which exists in places such as blogs, reviews, discussion forums, messages and emails.

According to the definition of Henning & Thurau, 2004, “EWOM is any positive or negative statement made by a potential, actual, or former customer about a product or a company, available to a multitude of people and institutions via the internet” [35]. Ayeh, Au & Law, 2013 has described EWOM as simply as the user generated content in social media platforms [36] while Westbrook, 1987 has defined it as “all the informal communications directed at consumers through internet-based technology related to the usage or characteristics of particular goods and services, or their sellers [37].

EWOM credibility can be defined as, when the customer recognises the product information, reviews and recommendations as truthful [38]. The acceptance of EWOM depends on several features such as personal attributes and also involvement of expertise. Experts’ advice helps to improve the trust which helps to overcome the risk. Cheung et al. (2009) discloses that positive EWOM provides several benefits such as creating a positive relationship between consumer and organization, building a strong emotional trust, increasing the intention to purchase and also improving the perceived integrity and attitude [39].

Better results can be gained only if the receivers accept the EWOM and personal attributes which affect acceptance of it [40]. The customers determine the EWOM quality through their expertise knowledge and through the involvement of themselves and others [41].

Previous studies reveal that when the EWOM sender is a family member or a friend who has a close connection with the reviewer, they tend to trust it more [41]. They trust the EWOM senders if there is perceived level of similarities which can be described as rapport between the sender and receiver. The rapport can be identified through the preferences, tastes and the life style which is clearly visualised in social media platforms [42].
3. METHODOLOGY

The study analyses the main three components in fan page which are trust, value co-creation (VCC) and EWOM’s impact on consumer purchase intention. Three hypotheses are generated to serve the purpose of this study.

**H1:** Trust generated through the Facebook fan pages has a positive and direct influence on purchase intention.

**H2:** EWOM generated through the Facebook fan pages has a positive and direct influence on purchase intention.

**H3:** VCC generated through the Facebook fan pages has a positive and direct influence on purchase intention.

According to the preceding discussion, Fig. 1 represents the proposed framework of the study.

The descriptive survey using a questionnaire, was employed in this study to examine the impact of “Facebook fan page engagement on consumer purchase intention”. The section A of the questionnaire explores the use of Facebook and fan pages. Section B is designed to receive respondents view on trust, EWOM and value co-creation (VCC) on Facebook fan pages. 10 questions analyse the view on Trust and EWOM and 07 questions concentrate about VCC section. In section C, only three questions focus regarding purchase intention. Both section B and C provide 5-point scale for measurement. The final section (section D) gather demographic data of the respondents.

120 questionnaires were distributed among randomly selected employees of age between 20 to 50. Among them 105 completed questionnaires are used for the study.

3.1 Validity and Reliability

The measurement model was assessed by reliability test using Cronbach’s Alpha (\(\alpha\)). Reliability of all the variables were greater than 0.7. For trust (TR) of Facebook fan page, the Cronbach’s Alpha scores were 0.741, EWOM was 0.723 and VCC was 0.793. Thus, all dimensions of fan page engagement on purchase intention of fashion brands were valid and reliable for further inferential analyses.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Use of Facebook and Fan Pages

Main purpose of the survey questionnaire is to analyse the uses of Facebook and fan pages. In order to achieve this, descriptive answers were gathered form respondents regarding the use of Facebook usage.

From the most commonly used social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and You tube, 74% of young professionals use Facebook mostly. Instagram is also catching up counting to 16% and LinkedIn the third with 9% and Youtube counts for 6%. The survey reveals that the majority of Facebook users use it with the purpose of entertainment which is 50% of this study. 39% of users, use it to communicate and 16% to find information. Although very few percentage use Facebook to find information, nearly 84% of respondents agreed that they can search product information through the Facebook fan pages.

![Fig. 1. The conceptual framework](image_url)
With regard to the Facebook fan pages majority of the respondents become Facebook fans after using the product (41%). Friend recommendations count for 34% and 21% said that they became fans after seeing an online advertisement. 86.7% read the customer reviews before purchasing the product. The chances of checking the Facebook fan page regularly is 57.1%. To the question of what motivates them to share the Facebook posts, 61% have responded as when the information is useful for others and 27% said when it was providing entertainment/ when the content is funny but only 12% shares the content when a celebrity is involved.

### 4.2 Demographic Profile

The demographic features of the sample are presented in Table 1. In this study the sample was dominated by female who are 68 (64.8%) as compared to male 37 (35.2%). The majority of the respondents were from the age category of 21-30, which is 57 (54.3%) followed by 31-40 range 25 (23.8%). In terms of income distribution, none of the respondents in the sample earned less than 25,000 and income of majority were above 100,000 (47.6%).

### 4.3 Descriptive Statistics

#### 4.3.1 Trust (TR)

The descriptive statistics are used to identify the factors influencing mostly on generating trust. The majority agrees that they trust the content which is shared by the close circle with mean of 3.84. Secondly, they trust the reviews of the other fan page followers. The content shared by other fan page followers stands in the third place.

#### 4.3.2 Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM)

The survey results provide evidence to say that the EWOM is best created through the references/ reviews and judgements by other users, whereas viral videos/posts and content stands on the second in the row. The celebrity involvement on the EWOM activities is the last component on EWOM on creating the PI.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Factor</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>64.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>54.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 25,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,000-50,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51,000-75,000</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75,000–100,000</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 100,000</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>47.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>59.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Manager</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Employed</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1. Demographic features of the sample**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TR01</td>
<td>Content published by the business organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TR02</td>
<td>Content shared by the close circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TR03</td>
<td>Content shared by other Facebook fan page followers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TR04</td>
<td>Reviews of the other Facebook fan page followers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TR05</td>
<td>I frequently read the posts published by the business organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average TR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2. Descriptive statistics on trust**
### Table 3. Descriptive statistics of EWOM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EWOM01</td>
<td>References/ reviews and judgements by other users</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>1.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EWOM02</td>
<td>Celebrity endorsement</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>1.046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EWOM03</td>
<td>The number of likes/ shares</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>0.837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EWOM04</td>
<td>The other users share the content</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>0.909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EWOM05</td>
<td>Viral videos/ posts/ contents</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>1.029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average EWOM</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3.27</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.671</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4. Descriptive statistics of VCC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VCC01</td>
<td>Member of a Facebook fan page</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>0.892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCC02</td>
<td>Actively engaged on fan page activities</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>0.881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCC03</td>
<td>Provide judgements and comments for other followers</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>0.820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCC04</td>
<td>Tend to share the viral videos/posts/pictures and messages</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>0.979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCC05</td>
<td>Tend to hit likes and make comments on the fan page posts</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>0.906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCC06</td>
<td>Create posts on fan page about the own experience</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>1.039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average VCC</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3.07</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.599</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 5. Descriptive statistics on purchase intention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PI01</td>
<td>Currently purchase</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>1.116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PI02</td>
<td>Will purchase in future</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>0.823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PI03</td>
<td>Will recommend to others</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>0.466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average PI</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3.63</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.672</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 6. Regression analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variable</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>Adjusted R²</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TR</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>2.107</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>0.179</td>
<td>1.452</td>
<td>0.150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EWOM</td>
<td>0.126</td>
<td>0.117</td>
<td>14.839</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.213</td>
<td>3.852</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCC</td>
<td>0.429</td>
<td>0.424</td>
<td>77.529</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.315</td>
<td>8.805</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.3.3 Value Co-Creation (VCC)

According to the study, Sri Lankan consumers co-create value, best by providing judgements and comments for the other followers. Further they hit likes and post comments on fan pages on the products they use to make those popular. Thirdly they create value through becoming members of fan page and also by actively engaging on the fan page activities. Anyhow their motive on creating posts about their own experience is very less and the mean value is 2.91.

### 4.3.4 Purchase Intention (PI)

In the three questions of PI, majority of respondents agreed to recommend the products to others and then to purchase. The respondents purchase intention in future stands second with mean of 3.77.

### 4.4 Bivariate Analysis

PI is correlated with EWOM and VCC. EWOM (0.335, 0.00) shows a significant relationship between PI and EWOM which is positive and moderate. VCC (0.655, 0.00) the correlation is significant at 0.01 level while the correlation of TR (0.142, 0.150) and PI is not significant.

### 4.5 Regression Analysis

As presented in Table 6, the regression results of PI and TR, R² is .02 and adjusted is 0.011 therefor 2% of variability of PI is explained by the
model and it is weak. Moreover, the f statistic is equal to 2.107 and the significant is 0.15 therefore it is less than 0.05 Hence it can be concluded that the relationship is not significant between the PI and trust. In EWOM the $R^2$ is 0.126 and adjusted is 0.117 therefore 12.6% of variability of PI is explained by the model and it is weak. The F stat is 14.839 and significance is 0.000. Therefore, it is less than 0.05.

5. CONCLUSION

Hence it can be concluded as there is a significant relationship between the PI and EWOM. The numbers of VCC come as 0.426 of $R^2$ and 0.424 of adjusted $R^2$. 42.9% of variability of PI is expressed by the model. F stat is 77.529 and the significance is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. Thus, the relationship among PI and EWOM is significant. Hence hypotheses 1 is rejected and 2 and 3 are accepted.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The study examines the impact of Facebook fan page engagement on consumer purchase intention. Research objectives and hypotheses were developed to meet the main purpose of this study and results were derived through appropriate procedure to reach the conclusions. Findings indicate that EWOM and value co-creation generate purchase intention. Specific results and corresponding implications are as follow.

First step of Facebook fan page activities is to gather fans to their page. Since it was identified that the majority of Facebook users use it for entertainment purpose, it is advisable for the marketing practitioners to provide entertainment activities on their fan page in order to receive consumer attention. Since majority of the respondents become Facebook fans after using the product and followed by a friend recommendation, the business organisation can encourage the consumer to become a fan of the product when they purchase and also to recommend it to their friends.

‘Sharing the posts’ creates all major components of fan page engagement; trust, EWOM and VCC. According to the results people tend to share the posts which they think are informative, hence important to others and when the post provides entertainment. Therefore, the practitioners should create content which provides information and entertainment which will inspire the fans to share. Since the respondents frequently check the fan pages, it would be ideal to generate posts on daily basis to keep the customer active.

Surprisingly celebrity endorsement has very less impact on creating trust as well as on creating the intention to share the post. Accordingly, in local context the business organisations could decrease the celebrity involvement on Facebook fan page related activities.

Since 84% of the respondents stated that they read the reviews and judgements, the consumers co-create value best by providing judgements and comments for the other followers. Therefore, by motivating the current consumers to provide reviews and comments would lead to better purchase intention.

The authors have identified few limitations and they have given four suggestions for future researchers to overcome those limitations. The study was conducted among Sri Lankan consumers, so the results cannot be generalised for other nationalities with different cultures and backgrounds. Hence, we suggest the future researchers to conduct studies on similar nature for other different cultures too. Secondly, the study concentrates only three aspects of Facebook fan page which are trust, EWOM and value co-creation but many other aspects such as fan page credibility and reputation are there to investigate further. Also, the researchers can study on other marketing activities such as advertisements on social media and other social media platforms such as Instagram and YouTube too. Further it is visible that the three components of trust, EWOM and value co-creation is inter-related, where the researchers can study the interrelationship of those aspects and its impact on final purchase intention.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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