
Long live friendship? Relationships among friendship, trust and brand loyalty: a study of Starbucks

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Abstract: Undoubtedly, Facebook has become a rapidly emerging social media during recent decades. It has not only successfully expanded the traditional 'consumer-brand' relationship from the physical channels to the virtual ones, but also shaped complete interaction/communication model between corporate brand and consumers by aggressively build up its brand community. Though Starbucks has already been a well-known brand in Taiwan, few of social media studies has concerned with the influence of friendship and trust on fan's brand loyalty. In view of this, this study based on 340 valid fan samples from Starbucks' fan pages used structural equation modelling (SEM) to validate the research hypotheses. The empirical findings showed that friendship and trust both impact fans' brand loyalty to Starbucks while friendship also influenced trust. Besides, the moderated effect of consumer personality partially existed in our research model.

Keywords: friendship; trust; brand loyalty; Facebook fan pages; Starbucks.

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1 Introduction

During these years, the ways for people to exchange information and/or to communicate with others have significantly changed (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010). Especially on the rise of the Internet, many enterprises and organisations heavily use the social media to disseminate information. Why there has a rapid growth of social media users in the past? It is not because offers lots of entertainment, but because it permits creation and sharing of an individual's personal profiles. Therefore, social media has become one of the popular communication platform (Alarcón-del-Amo et al., 2011). Undoubtedly, Facebook has become a rapidly emerging social media during recent decades. Facebook has not only successfully expanded the traditional 'consumer-brand' relationship from physical channels to virtual ones, but shaped complete interaction/communication model between the corporate brand and consumers by aggressively build up its brand community. The Facebook fan page would significantly influence the consumer's decision-making processes, including the creation of brand value, brand image, brand

awareness, brand loyalty, brand evaluation, purchase intention or net promoter score (e.g., Dholakia and Durham, 2010; Erdogmus and Cicek, 2012).

Many brand manufacturers maintain the relationship of community interactivity by means of fan page (Laroche et al., 2013). Among extant literature, we find that the coverage of Facebook fan page includes food, clothing, housing, transportation, education and entertainment. For example, travel agencies (e.g., Sabate et al., 2014), fashion clothing (e.g., Lombardi, 2012), tea/beverage/alcohol (e.g., Mart et al., 2013), mobile communication (e.g., Al-Mu'ani et al., 2014), sports brand (e.g., Parganas et al., 2015), commercial banks (e.g., Klimis, 2010), restaurants (e.g., Kang et al., 2014), hotels (e.g., Cervellon and Galipienzo, 2015), chain store distributions (e.g., Liao et al., 2013) and NGO (e.g., Graham et al., 2009). As to its applications, it includes commodity marketing (e.g., Mart et al., 2013), relationship marketing (e.g., de Vries et al., 2012), customer satisfaction/purchase intention (e.g., Chung, 2017), consumer loyalty (e.g., Ruiz et al., 2014) and consumer engagement/usage intensity (e.g., Jahn and Kunz, 2012). To some degrees, the relationship between brand and consumers can also be seen as a relationship among people. Honestly speaking, nobody expects a long-term relation with a partner that cannot be trusted (Damtew and Pagidimarri, 2013). Once people make friends with others, they prefer to act a behaviour with trust, honesty and intimacy, thereby showing their loyalty to each other (Bell, 1981; Rawlins, 1992). So far, trust and identity are frequently seen in brand community (Sun, 2011; Algesheimer et al., 2005), but few of them focus on friendship and trust on fan's brand loyalty. On the other hand, consumer personality and life style in marketing area are determinant factors to decision-making behaviours (Sarker et al., 2013). Therefore, the main contribution of this study is not only to put the role of friendship into the brand community, but to explore the moderated effect of fan's personality on the consumer behaviour and intentions.

2 Literature review and hypotheses development

2.1 Friendship

'What is friend?' The concept of friendships in business settings has been studied by examining friendships among colleagues and between customers and service providers (e.g., Price and Arnould, 1999; Berman et al., 2002; Grayson, 2007). DiMaggio and Louch (1998) argue that friendship have often existed between consumers and firm representatives before a single transaction ever happens. In the context of social media, friendship is an interpersonal concept having extended to the consumer-brand relationship during these decades [Su et al., (2015), p.78]. Price and Arnould (1999) have identified implications of their findings for an array of industries in which commercial friendship may form. As to the dimensions of friendship, Price and Arnould (1999) and Su et al. (2015) suggest that friendship is composed of self disclosure and reciprocity. Basow (1992) refers friendship to a relationship and attitude with intimacy and care, including mutual trust, reciprocity, loyalty and inclusion. Recently, some authors refer friendship to a single-dimension variable-intimacy (e.g., Butcher et al., 2001; Han et al., 2008).

2.2 *Trust*

Moorman et al. (1993) defines trust as a willing to believe the trade partners you trust. Trust is also an essential factor to start and maintain a relationship (e.g., Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Delgado-Ballester et al. (2003) define brand trust as a feeling of security held by the consumer in his/her interaction with the brand, that it is based on the perceptions that the brand is reliable and responsible for the interests and welfare of the consumer. In brand community, trust is the key to attract its popularity, to increase its interactivity as well as to create and maintain this virtual community (Coppola et al., 2004). Trust is also a critical component to influence the strength of website activities in social media (Ulusu et al., 2011). Moreover, Nadeem et al. (2015) argue Facebook is a trustworthy platform for shopping, but it still needs another helps from the website of e-tailers to attract more engagement from consumers [Nadeem, (2016), p.71]. Many scholars strongly believe the trust is a multi-dimensional concept and should be categorised into cognitive trust and affective trust (e.g., Riegelsberger et al., 2003) or ability, benevolence, and integrity (e.g., Butler, 1991; Mayer et al., 1995). On the contrary, Selnes (1998) argues that these dimensions are antecedents of trust and cannot be part of the construct. That is trust can be seen as a one-dimensional construct and directly accessible to respondents.

2.3 *Brand loyalty*

Brand loyalty means the customers are willing to promote a company's products/or services proactively and exhibit some loyal behaviours (Kuenzel and Halliday, 2010). Jacoby and Olson (1978) define brand loyalty as a non-random behavioural reaction as well as a long-standing buying behaviour. Aaker (1991) define brand loyalty as the measure of attachment that a consumer has towards a brand. Oliver (1999, 2010) argues that loyalty as a deeply held commitment to rebuy or re-patronise a preferred product/service consistently in the future. From a Facebook perspective, Anderson et al. (2014) suggest that loyalty would impact purchase intention. As to the dimensions of brand loyalty, Oliver (1999) and Dick and Basu (1994) both propose that brand loyalty is composed of attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty. So et al. (2013) also state that brand loyalty's conception can be divided into three aspects: behavioural, attitudinal and composite. Sirohi et al. (1998) suggest that customer loyalty can be measured by repurchase intention, purchase amount and recommendation. Johnson et al. (2006) divide brand loyalty into repurchase intention and recommendation. Jahn and Kunz (2012) identify brand loyalty into brand commitment, brand WOM and purchase intention.

2.4 *Consumer personality*

Literature suggests that strong relationship outcomes not only depend on successful relationship marketing tactics, but on consumer personality (Odekerken-Schroder et al., 2003). Personality refers to the sum of an individual's psychological characteristics with tendentiousness, essence and relative stability, including consumer's interests, preferences, abilities, temperament, characters and behaviours (Peter and Olsen, 2005). Blackwell et al (2006) define personality as one's way of consistent response to the environment where he/she has coped with. Though many psychological tests have been developed to completely capture an individual's facets of personality, the big five is still

widely accepted among extant studies (e.g., McCrae and Costa, 1987, 2008; McCrae and John, 1992). Restricted to the different concerns and research scopes, there is no agreement with the categories of personality traits (Goldberg, 1993). For instance, Tellegen and Waller (1987) further proposed another Big seven model, such as positive emotionality, negative valence, positive valence, negative emotionality, dependability, agreeableness and conventionality. Odekerken-Schroder et al. (2003) identified personality traits into four parts: social affiliation, social recognition, shopping enjoyment and product category involvement while Holland (1985) divided personality traits into six categories, including realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising and conventional.

2.5 Hypotheses development

2.5.1 Friendship and brand loyalty

Friendship can be not only seen as a means of building up a long-term relationship between buyers and sellers, but a process of bilateral relationship from quantity to quality, thereby forming another higher-level relationship. The formation of friendship is conducive to consumer's satisfaction on corporate brand (Han et al., 2008) in which satisfaction is holding the key to brand loyalty (e.g., Awan and Rehman, 2014; Al-Msallam, 2015). Online friendship would enhance consumer's commitment to brand community (Zhou et al., 2016) which plays a mediating role between brand community trust and brand loyalty (Hur et al., 2011). Therefore, we propose hypothesis 1 as follows:

H1 Friendship will positively influence brand loyalty

2.5.2 Friendship and trust

Since the past studies have not directly validate the relationship between friendship and trust. Therefore, we try to explain from relationship quality. For instance, Aaker (1996) points out that the interactivity between consumer and a brand can be developed to more aggressive mutual relationship, just like a friend. Crosby et al. (1990) claimed that relationship quality is an overall evaluation of the strength of bilateral relationship between buyers and sellers, while relationship quality can be measured by trust and satisfaction (e.g., Crosby et al., 1990; Leuthesser, 1997) or trust, satisfaction and commitment (e.g., Kumar et al., 1995; Garbarino and Johnson, 1999). Price and Arnould (1999) argued that friendship could positively influence satisfaction whereas Su et al. (2015) found that friendship will influence commitment. Therefore, we propose hypothesis 2 as follows:

H2 Friendship will positively influence trust

2.5.3 Trust and brand loyalty

Trust is usually referred to an individual's propensity to rely on other people surrounding or society he/she lives (Rotter, 1967, 1980), even the level of honesty and reliability to partnership (Aulakh et al., 1996). Brand community lays heavy emphasis on trust (i.e., communication platform) of B2C as well as C2C. Many studies have believed that trust is one of the key driven-force to customer loyalty (e.g., Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001;

Ruiz et al., 2014). Harris and Goode (2004) indicate that trust built on online shopping loyalty is more important than that of offline shopping. Therefore, we propose hypothesis 3 as follows:

H3 Trust will positively influence brand loyalty

2.5.4 *The moderating effect of consumer personality*

Trust is usually referred to an individual's propensity to rely on other people surrounding or society he/she lives (Rotter, 1967, 1980), even the level of honesty and reliability to partnership (Aulakh et al., 1996). Brand community lays heavy emphasis on its role (i.e., communication platform) of B2C as well as C2C. Many studies have strongly believed that trust is one of the key driven-force to customer loyalty (e.g., Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001; Ruiz et al., 2014). Harris and Goode (2004) indicated that trust built on online shopping loyalty is more important than that of offline shopping. Therefore, we propose hypothesis 3 as follows:

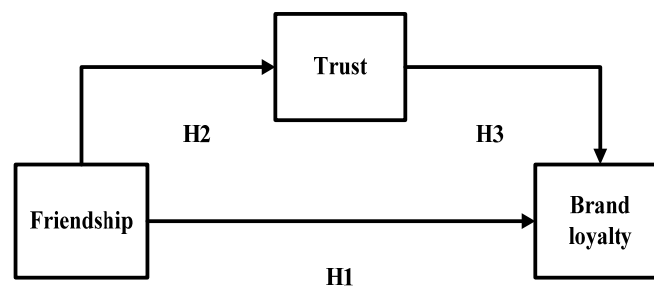
H4 Consumer personality has moderating effect on measurement model

3 Methods

3.1 *Research framework*

This paper aimed to explore the relationships among friendship, trust and brand loyalty. The research framework was drawn as Figure 1.

Figure 1 Research framework



3.2 *Operational definitions and measurement scale*

A five-point Likert scale (1 = totally disagree, 5 = totally agree) was used to measure the constructs. The definition and scale of friendship were adopted from Price and Arnould (1999) and the friendship here was a single-dimension construct with seven items. The definition of trust in this study was modified from Delgado-Ballester et al. (2003) and Moorman et al. (1993) and its scale was a single-dimensional construct with six items modified from Nadeem et al. (2015). Adopting the concept of Oliver (1999, 2010) and Aaker (1991, 1996), brand loyalty is described as a behaviour the customers delivering a good brand image to others, willing to recommend others to buy and also willing to rebuy

in the future. The brand loyalty scale comprised four items modified from Sirohi et al. (1998) and Anderson et al. (2014). As to consumer personality, we adopted the concept of Peter and Olsen (2005) and modified the measurement scale proposed by Odekerken-Schroder et al. (2003). In the nine-item scale, three items for affiliation, three items for recognition and three items for shopping enjoyment. Based on 340 valid respondents of Starbucks fan page, this study used structural equation model (SEM) to validate research hypotheses (see Figure 1).

4 Results and analyses

4.1 The analysis of sample structure

Based on 340 valid respondents, we found that

- 1 male: female = 1:1.6
- 2 73.2% of the total is under 35 years old
- 3 56.5% of the total is university/college
- 4 over 80% of the total is living at the Northern Taiwan
- 5 40% of the total spending their time in the Facebook over two hours.

As to the mean of the constructs/or dimensions, we also found that friendship is the lowest (3.82) in contrast to trust (4.28) and brand loyalty (4.36). It meant that there still have rooms for Starbucks to improve the friendship with its fans, though these fans have a stable state of trust and loyalty. In addition, social affiliation (4.11) is the lowest one of consumer personality. It means that those consumers who have been visited Starbucks mostly prefer the joy of shopping (4.66) and the desires to be respected rather than just making friends with others.

4.2 Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

To clearly find the convergent validity of each construct/dimension and/or the model fit in CFA, we usually examine the relative measurement indexes, such as AGFI, CFI, NFI, RMR, RMSEA and normed χ^2 and so on. All the criteria for these indexes are shown in Table 1. Because the value of initial model of friendship and trust cannot meet the criteria for acceptance, we therefore need to further modify this construct. In CFA stage, the criteria of item deletion are based on item's value of standardised parameter and modification indices. According to the results of CFA, we find all these model fit indexes mentioned earlier are qualified for the criteria of CFA (see Table 2). From this, the model fit among friendship, trust and brand loyalty was acceptable.

4.3 Reliability and validity

The Cronbach's α value among constructs/dimensions is ranging from 0.822 to 0.893. It meant that the internal consistency of each construct/dimension here was acceptable. In addition, we further verified the convergent validity of our constructs to ensure construct

validity. All the t-values are ranging from 8.48 to 22.97, meaning each construct are significant and the convergent validity of this model is acceptable.

4.4 Correlation analysis

The value of correlation reveals the degree of relationship between two constructs. The results of correlation analysis indicate that all the correlations between factors are significant, meaning all these constructs are positively correlated with each other.

Table 1 The criteria of CFA

<i>Index</i>	<i>Criteria for acceptance</i>	<i>Sources</i>
AGFI	≥ 0.9 is better	Joreskog and Sorbom (1996)
Adjusted goodness of fit index		
CFI	≥ 0.95 is better	Bentler (1995)
Comparative fit index		
NFI	≥ 0.9 is better	Bentler and Bonnett (1980)
Normed fit index		
RMR	≤ 0.08 is better	Hu and Bentler (1999)
Root mean square residual		
RMSEA	≤ 0.05 is better	McDonald and Ho (2002)
Root mean square error of approximation	Ranging from 0.05 to 0.08 is acceptable	Brown and Cudeck (1993)
	≥ 0.1 is worse	
Normed χ^2	≤ 3 is better	Anderson and Gerbing (1988)
Normed Chi-square		

Table 2 Confirmatory factor analysis

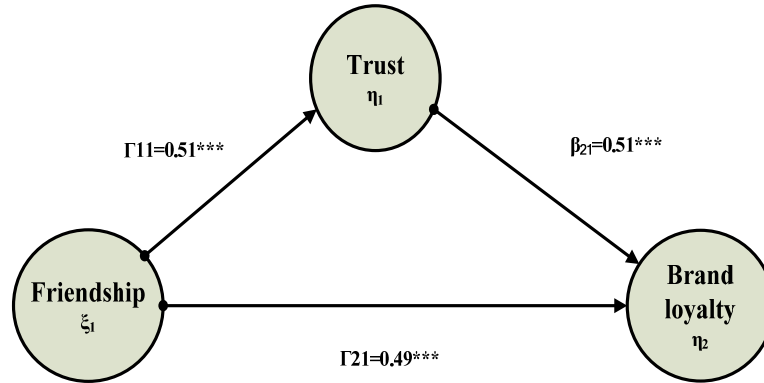
<i>Indices</i>	<i>Friendship</i>		<i>Trust</i>		<i>Brand loyalty</i>
	<i>Initial</i>	<i>Adjusted</i>	<i>Initial</i>	<i>Adjusted</i>	
χ^2/df	20.73	1.57	19.26	1.75	2.85
RMSEA	0.241	0.041	0.232	0.047	0.075
RMR	0.17	0.046	0.100	0.026	0.038
AGFI	0.61	0.98	0.66	0.97	0.94
CFI	0.92	0.99	0.94	0.99	0.99
NFI	0.92	0.99	0.94	0.99	0.99

4.5 Model testing

The testing for mediation here was carried out using the 4 step procedure suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). The result of mediation test can be also examined by path analysis (see Figure 2). The figure showed that the t-values of friendship \rightarrow brand loyalty ($\gamma_{12} = 0.49$, t-value = 8.23, $P < 0.001$), friendship \rightarrow trust ($\gamma_{11} = 0.51$, t-value = 8.86,

$P < 0.001$) and trust \rightarrow brand loyalty ($\beta_{21} = 0.51$, $t\text{-value} = 8.34$, $P < 0.001$) are significant, that is all of the hypothesised paths were significant.

Figure 2 Path analysis (see online version for colours)



4.6 Moderating effects

Based on Brockman and Morgan (2006), this section is to measure the moderating effect of consumer personality on theoretical model. To determine whether there was equivalence between two groups, most of multi-group testing in the past made use of chi-square difference ($\Delta\chi^2$) as an index (Bollen, 1989). From Table 3 to Table 8, we found that the moderating effects of consumer personality were partially existed.

4.6.1 Social affiliation

From Table 3, the differences of social affiliation among these paths are significant ($\Delta\chi^2 > 3.84$). The results of Table 4 showed that the moderating effect of higher social affiliation group would occur among all research paths, whereas the moderating effect of lower social affiliation group would occur in two of the total excluding friendship \rightarrow brand loyalty. It indicated that a consumer easily making friends with others in Starbucks fan page was expected to strengthen the impacts of friendship on trust; a consumer who was hardly make friends with others in Starbucks fan page was apt to weaken the impacts of trust on brand loyalty; a consumer in the group of higher social affiliation will eventually strengthen the impact of friendship with Starbucks on brand loyalty.

Table 3 The moderated analysis of social affiliation

Path	Chi-square	d.f	$\Delta\chi^2$
Unrestricted	432.28	104	--
Friendship \rightarrow trust	436.18	105	3.9*
Trust \rightarrow brand loyalty	442.26	105	9.98***
Friendship \rightarrow brand loyalty	450.36	105	18.08***

Note: * stands for $P < 0.05$, *** stands for $P < 0.005$.

Table 4 The multi-group analysis of social affiliation

<i>Path</i>		<i>High social affiliation (N = 155)</i>		<i>Low social affiliation (N = 185)</i>	
<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>t value</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>t value</i>
Friendship	Trust	0.43	4.64***	0.25	3.07**
Trust	Brand loyalty	0.22	2.61**	0.60	6.62***
Friendship	Brand loyalty	0.45	4.82***	0.00	0.04

Note: * stands for $P < 0.05$, *** stands for $P < 0.005$.

4.6.2 Social recognition

From Table 5, the differences of social recognition are significant ($\Delta\chi^2 > 3.84$) excluding trust \rightarrow brand loyalty. In the multi-group analysis (see Table 6), the moderating effect of higher social recognition group would occur in friendship \rightarrow trust and friendship \rightarrow brand loyalty, whereas the moderating effect of lower social recognition group would only occur in friendship \rightarrow brand loyalty. It meant that only a consumer seriously longing for a respect in Starbucks fan page was expected to strengthen the impacts of friendship on trust.

Table 5 The moderated analysis of social recognition

<i>Path</i>	<i>Chi-square</i>	<i>df</i>	$\Delta\chi^2$
Unrestricted	400.53	104	--
Friendship \rightarrow trust	405.23	105	4.7*
Trust \rightarrow brand loyalty	402.41	105	1.88
Friendship \rightarrow brand loyalty	430.57	105	30.04***

Note: * stands for $P < 0.05$, *** stands for $P < 0.005$.

Table 6 The multi-group analysis of social recognition

<i>Path</i>		<i>High social recognition (N = 172)</i>		<i>Low social recognition (N = 168)</i>	
<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>t value</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>t value</i>
Friendship	Trust	0.55	6.14***	0.34	4.09***
Friendship	Brand loyalty	0.59	5.77***	0.00	0.04

Note: *** stands for $P < 0.005$.

4.6.3 Shopping enjoyment

From Table 7, the differences of shopping enjoyment among these paths are significant ($\Delta\chi^2 > 3.84$). The results of Table 8 showed that the moderating effect of higher shopping enjoyment group would occur among all research paths, whereas the moderating effect of lower shopping enjoyment group would occur in two of the total excluding friendship \rightarrow brand loyalty. It meant that a consumer with higher shopping enjoyment in Starbucks fan page was apt to strengthen the impacts of friendship on trust; a consumer with less shopping enjoyment in Starbucks fan page was tending to weaken the impacts of trust on

brand loyalty; a consumer in the group of higher shopping enjoyment will eventually strengthen the impact of friendship with Starbucks on brand loyalty.

Table 7 The moderated analysis of shopping enjoyment

<i>Path</i>	<i>Chi-square</i>	<i>df</i>	$\Delta\chi^2$
Unrestricted	413.49	104	--
Friendship → trust	420.21	105	6.72**
Trust → brand loyalty	423.58	105	10.09**
Friendship → brand loyalty	426.25	105	12.76***

Note: ** stands for $P < 0.01$, *** stands for $P < 0.005$.

Table 8 The multi-group analysis of shopping enjoyment

<i>Path</i>		<i>High shopping enjoyment</i> (<i>N</i> = 176)		<i>Low shopping enjoyment</i> (<i>N</i> = 164)	
<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>t value</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>t value</i>
Friendship	Trust	0.50	5.68***	0.31	3.62***
Trust	Brand loyalty	0.29	3.59***	0.61	6.03***
Friendship	Brand loyalty	0.37	4.31***	−0.03	−0.33

Note: *** stands for $P < 0.005$.

5 Discussions, managerial implications and suggestions

5.1 Discussions

First, friendship can influence brand loyalty, meaning a consumer will enhance his/her loyalty to Starbucks whenever he/she feels like a friend as well as satisfied in these interactions with Starbucks fan page. This is consistent with most of service literature (e.g., Han et al., 2008). Second, we find that friendship can influence trust, meaning the friendship deeply rooted in the brand community will strengthen the fan's loyalty/or commitment to Starbucks. Such a result is similar with past studies (e.g., Crosby et al., 1990; Price and Arnould, 1999; Su et al., 2015). Finally, this study also suggests that trust can influence brand loyalty, meaning the better the relationship quality between fans and Starbucks, the higher level of brand loyalty. This finding is consistent with most of brand literature (e.g., Ercis et al., 2012; Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001; Ruiz et al., 2014).

5.2 Managerial implications

This paper presents several managerial implications. First, this paper showed that trust was acting a partial mediator between friendship and brand loyalty. It means that consumers who are willing to make friends with others (e.g., *pinning the post*, *leaving comments* or *giving someone a thumbs-up*) in the fan page of Starbucks are apt to have higher brand loyalty. However, Starbucks can achieve the same objective by improving the relationship quality with its consumers, especially the trust and the commitment. After all, a better relationship quality has been proven to directly lead to higher brand

loyalty (e.g., Rauyruen and Miller, 2007; Rahmani-Nejad et al., 2014). This is also consistent with Singh and Sirdeshmukh (2000) who suggest trust is an important mediating factor between customer behaviour before/and after purchasing a product which can lead to long-term loyalty and strengthen the relationship between the two parties.

Second, if Starbucks wants to get the excellent market performance, it must not only rely on its existing chain stores and culture, but a success of fan page operations. Therefore, the Starbucks must make use of the infrastructure of fan page to increase the close interactions with consumers following the *friends-fans-followers* phrases gradually. Third, the findings indicated that consumer personality had partial moderation effects. It is consistent with Yu et al. (2014) who suggest that friendship and relationship quality will change along with personality. Just like a proverb says 'one's meat is another's poison', everyone has his/or her own value, attitude and behaviour. Therefore, consumers with different personality in the real world would totally form different ways of behaviours (Sarker et al., 2013). Finally, lots of thumbs-ups are often seen in the fan page of Starbucks, but few of them pin the post or leave comments. Apparently, the friendship/or relationship quality between consumers and Starbucks is not quite steady. Therefore, it reminds that Starbucks needs to manage the fan page to win back consumer's passions and identity.

5.3 Limitations and future works

5.3.1 Other substitutions and additions

As fan page is a brand avatar. Therefore, another brand variable is required. For example, brand image (e.g., Dobni and Zinkhan, 1990), interactivity (e.g., Fiore et al., 2005), engagement (e.g., Jahn and Kunz, 2012), satisfaction (e.g., Jin and Park, 2006) and brand love (e.g., Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). Besides, Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) argued that any positive/or negative comment on a product/or a brand exposed by the Internet would easily convince many customers and institutes. Therefore, using e-WOM to replace the WOM in the future is necessary. Most importantly, consumer behaviour refers to a function of the congruence between consumer and brand personality in which consumers can use these brands to extend their own personality (Ahmad and Thyagaraj, 2015). However, a little concern was paid on the brand personality in any brand community of durable goods, consumption goods, hedonic goods and high-end goods (e.g., Kumar et al., 2006; Chang, 2014). Therefore, future works focused on another brand are expected.

5.3.2 Comparative analysis between different attributions of brand communities

This study chooses the Facebook fan page of Starbucks as our target. However, there are many industries/or brands have been using fan page in Facebook, for instance, MacDonald, Lativ, Nike, Samsung, Coca Cola, BMW or 7-11 and so on. Therefore, a cross-industrial analysis on brand community, even just focusing on player/celebrity or NGO in the future is expected.

5.3.3 Trust and other moderating effects

As trust is not only a state of psychology (Rousseau et al., 1998), but a contextual variable. Therefore, taking the moderating effect of trust into account in the future is necessary. Of course, other variables including loyalty (e.g., Chung, 2017), motivation (e.g., Anderson et al., 2014), usage intensity (e.g., Jahn and Kunz, 2012) and user's involvement (e.g., Greve, 2014) are also noteworthy. In our study, the measurement scale of consumer personality was modified from Odekerken-Schroder et al. (2003). Therefore, another scale of personality, for example, big five (McCrae and Costa, 1987, 2008; McCrae and John, 1992) or big seven (Tellegen and Waller, 1987) is expected. Besides, the life style is to reflect the way how a consumer to live (Arnould et al., 2002), therefore, the life style is another choice is necessary.

5.3.4 Another validation of existed models

Jahn and Kunz (2012, p.345) claimed that social media has become very popular online services and offers users to communicate with others. However, empirical research on fan pages is still in its infancy and is not so intensive presently. More importantly, Jahn and Kunz (2012, p.351) further integrated the theory of *use and gratification*, *customer engagement* and *involvement* into a measurement model to empirically examine several hypotheses developed from 12 existed fan page of international brands. Therefore, an introduction of Jahn and Kunz (2012) to domestic brands is expected.

5.3.5 Others

In contrast to Jahn and Kunz (2012), friendship and trust are the extension of relationship quality holding the key to customer relationship management. Moreover, the technology, product innovation and network marketing embedded in a brand community would effectively attract consumers to come over and make friends with them. Therefore, an examination of the impacts of these capabilities on the performance of a brand community is expected. To be directly accessible to respondents, friendship, trust and brand loyalty here are used as single-dimensional constructs. For the purpose of accurate validity and explanation, the measurement scale of these constructs can be used as multi-dimensional ones as possible is required. Most interestingly, the more friends we have in virtual community does not mean we will become happier from now on. Instead, the sense of society alienation increases. That is most of the users indulging in Facebook are not happy and dissatisfied with their quality of living. Therefore, the future works focus on fan page user's happiness/or alienation derived from the usage of brand community is expected.

6 Conclusions

Based on 340 valid respondents of Starbucks Facebook fan page, the empirical findings indicate that the friendship and the trust both can influence fan's loyalty toward Starbucks, while the friendship will affect the fan's trust on Starbucks. In addition, the hypotheses of moderating effects of consumer personality on our measurement model are partially supported.

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