

Impact of Social Media on Customer Engagement and Brand Perception: A Case of Kathmandu Valley

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of social media on customer engagement and brand perception: A case of Kathmandu Valley. Customer engagement and brand perception are the dependent variables. The selected independent variables are content strategy, customer targeting, interactivity, community building, and influencer partnership. The primary source of data is used to assess the opinions of respondents regarding content strategy, customer targeting, interactivity, community building, influencer partnership, customer engagement, and brand perception. The study is based on primary data. The primary data were gathered from 146 respondents through questionnaires. To achieve the purpose of the study, structured questionnaire is prepared. The correlation and multiple regression models are estimated to test the significance and importance of impact of social media on customer engagement and brand perception: A case of Kathmandu Valley.

The study showed a positive impact of content strategy on customer engagement and brand perception. It indicates that getting the right content, to the right people, in the right place, at the right time leads to increase in customer engagement and brand perception. Similarly, the study showed a positive impact of customer targeting on customer engagement and brand perception. It indicates that higher the customer targeting, higher would be the customer engagement and brand perception. Likewise, the study also revealed a positive impact of interactivity on customer engagement and brand perception. It indicates that communication between people and digital devices leads to increase in customer engagement and brand perception. Further, the study observed a positive impact of community building on customer engagement and brand perception. It indicates that bringing people together and creating a sense of belonging leads to increase in customer engagement and brand perception. In addition, the study observed a positive impact of influencer partnership on customer engagement and brand perception. It indicates that collaboration between a brand and an individual who has a significant following on social media platforms leads to increase in customer engagement and brand perception.

Keywords: content strategy, customer targeting, interactivity, community building, influencer partnership, customer engagement, brand perception

1. Introduction

The origin of social media in relation to customer engagement and brand perception can be traced to the mid-2000s when platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube gained prominence. These platforms enabled businesses to directly engage with customers, gather feedback, and manage brand perception through real-time interactions and content sharing. Social media revolutionizes global communication, allowing businesses to engage in real-time, personalized interactions with customers. It shapes consumer behavior by demanding transparency and authenticity, driving businesses to adapt marketing strategies. Effective customer engagement builds loyalty through personalized experiences, while brand perception influences consumer decisions and advocacy, shaped by reputation, quality, and market relevance. According to Murdough (2009), social media, which include online channels for sharing and participating in a variety of activities, represent an increasingly important way for brands to communicate with attractive audience segments. Similarly, According to Stelzner (2013), 86% of marketers believe social media channels are important components

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of their marketing initiatives. Branded social campaigns provide additional touch points to encourage ongoing interaction between the consumer and the brand story throughout the day, which can deepen consumer–brand relationships, help marketers uncover common themes in consumer feedback, and persuade consumers to engage with online content (Murdough, 2009). Thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, and experiences from these touch points form a set of associations with the brand in consumer memory (Keller, 2009).

Social media offers potential for generating awareness and interest through viral or rapid spreading of product and service experiences and opinions (Berger and Milkman, 2012). Companies are proactively engaging in new social media marketing strategies and tactics (Neff, 2014). Social media engagement is a trigger for buying intentions and decisions (Brodie *et al.*, 2013). Social media, as a widespread source of information, are leading to a significant change on companies' communication strategies. Thus, customers are increasingly in control of information (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). Social media also acquired a facilitator role in the interaction between brands and their consumers, as well between consumers themselves. Brand engagement is one of the most representative types of brand interactions on Facebook, Twitter and email (Hamilton *et al.*, 2016). The concept of brand engagement results from an interaction in which consumers identify themselves with the brand, even at the psychological level, leading to a stronger consumer bonding (Rohm *et al.*, 2013). Additionally, social media interactions enhance engagement and involvement, when compared to traditional platforms such as face to face and phone (Hennig-Thurau *et al.*, 2010). The study revealed that both large brands (70%), as well as small businesses (80%), tend to use social media to improve their business performance (Hollebeek and Solem, 2017).

Hollebeek *et al.* (2019) examined the digital content marketing's role in fostering consumer engagement, trust, and value: Framework, fundamental propositions, and implications. The study found that digital content marketing (DCM) as the creation and dissemination of brand-related content on digital platforms to foster brand engagement and trust. Similarly, Veloso *et al.* (2024) analyzed the social media content strategy in hospitality: the impact of experiential posts and response congruence on engagement, hotel image, and booking intention. The study found out the congruence between posts and management responses significantly boosts user engagement, functional and hedonic brand image perceptions, and booking intention, highlighting the pivotal role of effective management responses in shaping user decisions and brand perceptions on social media platforms. Al-Abdallah *et al.* (2024) investigated the social media marketing strategy: the impact of firm generated content on customer-based brand equity in retail industry. The study found out the importance of leveraging firm-generated content (FGC), including informational content, social interactivity, and avenues for self-expression, on social media platforms to enhance brand equity in the Middle Eastern context. Similarly, Razak. (2024) observed content marketing strategy in increasing consumer interaction on social media. The study found out the need for a balanced approach between content frequency and quality, along with responsiveness to audience comments and collaboration with others with continuous evaluation through analytical tools is essential for driving consumer engagement and achieving marketing goals effectively in the digital era. Further, Tarnanidis (2024) analyzed the exploring the impact of mobile marketing strategies on consumer behavior: A comprehensive analysis. The study found out the essential points for marketers and managers to consider in promoting their digital transformation strategies, underscoring the importance of leveraging mobile marketing effectively to engage and influence consumer behavior in today's digital landscape.

Brodie *et al.* (2013) examined the consumer engagement in a virtual brand community: An exploratory analysis. The study found that understanding and fostering consumer engagement in online brand communities to enhance brand-consumer relationships and drive positive business outcomes. Similarly, Islam *et al.* (2017) investigated the impact of online brand community characteristics on customer engagement. The study found out that each characteristic positively influences engagement, with information quality and virtual interactivity having the strongest impact. Likewise, Kumar (2020) examined the drivers of brand community engagement. The study found that both experiential and self-esteem-based benefits significantly drive brand community engagement, while perceived community relationship investment positively influences engagement. Further, Chi (2022) assessed the customer engagement in online service brand communities. The study found that social capital (SC) plays a pivotal role in driving customer brand engagement (CBE) within online service brand communities (OBCs). In addition, Ferreira *et al.* (2019) analyzed the mediating role of consumer engagement with the brand community and its effect on corporate reputation. The study revealed that brand involvement and perceived homophily significantly impact consumer engagement with brand communities on social media.

Hazzam (2022) investigated the moderating role of age on social media marketing activities and customer brand engagement on Instagram social network. The study found out that informativeness of SMM activities relates positively and significantly to CBE in all age groups. Likewise, Ting *et al.* (2021) observed the mediating role of social interactivity between customer engagement and brand loyalty. The study found out that there is a significant and positive impact of social interactivity on consumer engagement behavior and brand loyalty. Further, Bozkurt *et al.* (2021) assessed the role of perceived firm social media interactivity in facilitating customer engagement behaviors. The study found out that when customers perceive a brand to be highly interactive on social media (vs inactive), they are more willing to buy brand offerings, refer the brand in exchange for monetary incentives, inform their family and friends about the brand on social media and provide feedback and suggestions for improving the brand. In addition, Gligor and Bozkurt. (2022) analyzed the impact of perceived brand interactivity on customer purchases. The study found out that perceived brand interactivity directly and indirectly (via perceived brand fairness) impact customer purchases. Moreover, Utami *et al.* (2022) examined the role of interactivity on customer engagement in mobile e-commerce applications. The study found out the dynamics of customer engagement in the mobile e-commerce context, highlighting the significance of interactivity and its interaction with service quality in fostering diverse engagement behaviors. In addition, Kang *et al.* (2021) investigated the dynamic effect of interactivity on customer engagement behavior through tie strength: Evidence from live streaming commerce platforms. The study found that both tenure of membership and popularity moderate the relationship between interactivity and tie strength.

Siqi *et al.* (2021) examined the social media influencers' impact to purchase intention: the moderating effect of brand engagement. The study found that social media influencers (SMIs) positively impact consumers' purchase intentions among Malaysian university students. Specifically, when there's a match between the product and the influencer, and when meaning is effectively transferred from the influencer to the product, purchase intention increases. Similarly, Jaitly *et al.* (2021) assessed the impact of social media influencers on customer engagement and brand perception. The study revealed that social media influencers play a crucial role in influencing consumer perceptions and attitudes towards brands.

Likewise, Sijabat *et al.* (2022) analyzed the role of social media influencers in shaping customer brand engagement and brand perception. The study found that using social media influencers (SMI) positively impacts both customer brand engagement (CBE) and customer brand perception (CBP). Further, Lou *et al.* (2019) investigated the consumer engagement with influencer-vs. brand-promoted ads. The study showed that influencer-promoted ads on Instagram garner significantly higher levels of consumer engagement, including liking and commenting, compared to brand-promoted ads. Additionally, consumers express more positive sentiment towards influencer-generated content, with brand-promoted ads receiving a higher percentage of negative sentiment. In addition, Erdiyana *et al.* (2022) examined the social media influencers' role on brand engagement, value, and consumers' Intention to buy Muslim fashion. The study found that behavioral intentions regarding Muslim fashion brands and offer insights for brands to refine their social media marketing strategies to better engage their target audience.

In the context of Nepal, Sigdel (2021) observed Instagram influencer and purchase intention among millennials and gen z in Nepal. The study found that influencers influence purchase decisions. Similarly, Ale (2023) investigated how brand strategy and brand communication help to building brand equity in a developing country: A study on the metropolitan city, Kathmandu, Nepal. The study found that brand strategy and communication contribute to building brand equity in Kathmandu Metropolitan City, Nepal, particularly focusing on the challenges and opportunities faced by small businesses and entrepreneurs.

The above discussion shows that empirical evidences vary greatly across the studies on the impact of social media on customer engagement and brand perception. Though there are above mentioned empirical evidences in the context of other countries and in Nepal, no such findings using more recent data exist in the context of Nepal. Therefore, in order to support one view or the other, this study has been conducted.

The major objective of the study is to examine the impact of social media on customer engagement and brand perception: A case of Kathmandu Valley. Specifically, it examines the relationship of content strategy, customer targeting, interactivity, community building, and influencer partnership with customer engagement and brand perception.

The remainder of this study is organized as follows: section two describes the sample, data, and methodology. Section three presents the empirical results and final section draws the conclusion.

2. Methodological aspects

The study is based on the primary data. The primary data were gathered from 146 respondents through questionnaires. The study employed convenience sampling method. The respondents' views were collected on content strategy, customer targeting, interactivity, community building, influencer partnership, customer engagement, and brand perception. This study is based on descriptive as well as causal comparative research designs.

The model

The model estimated in this study assumes that customer engagement and brand perception depend upon content strategy, community building, customer targeting, interactivity, and influencer partnership. Therefore, the model takes the following form:

Customer engagement = f (content strategy, community building, customer targeting, interactivity, and influencer partnership).

Brand perception = f (content strategy, community building, customer targeting, interactivity, and influencer partnership).

This study estimates a regression model to examine the impact of social media on customer engagement and brand perception: A case of Kathmandu Valley which is specified as under:

$$CE = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CS + \beta_2 CB + \beta_3 CT + \beta_4 I + \beta_5 IP + e$$

$$BP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CS + \beta_2 CB + \beta_3 CT + \beta_4 I + \beta_5 IP + e$$

Where,

CE = Customer engagement

BP = Brand perception

CS = Content strategy

CB = Community building

CT = Customer targeting

I = Interactivity

IP = Influencer partnership

Customer engagement was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I feel more engaged with a brand when they actively interact with customers on social media”, “I find myself more likely to engage with a brand’s social media content if it’s visually appealing” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.850$).

Brand perception was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I believe the way a brand presents itself on social media affects my overall perception of the brand”, “I think brands that have a strong presence on social media are more modern and relevant” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.848$).

Content strategy was measure using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I believe that the content strategy of a brand on social media positively influences my engagement with the brand”, “I feel that a well-planned content strategy on social media enhances my perception of a brand’s credibility” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.751$).

Customer targeting was measure using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree.

There are 5 items and sample items include “I feel that customer targeting on social media enhances my engagement with a brand”, “I believe that effective customer targeting on social media improves my perception of a brand’s relevance to me” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.722$).

Interactivity was measure using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I believe that interactive features on social media enhance my engagement with a brand”, “I feel that increased interactivity on social media positively influences my perception of a brand’s accessibility” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.781$)

Community building was measure using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I feel that community building efforts on social media enhance my engagement with a brand”, “I believe that being part of a brand’s online community on social media increases my loyalty towards the brand” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.755$).

Influencer partnership was measure using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I believe that partnering with influencers on social media enhances my engagement with a brand”, “I feel that influencer partnerships on social media positively influence my perception of a brand’s credibility.” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.781$).

The following section describes the independent variables used in this study along with the hypothesis formulation.

Content strategy

Chauhan and Pillai (2013) found that the content type and content agility have significant impact on number of likes and comments, which were treated as manifest variables for customer engagement. The two-way interaction indicated that content type and content context had significant impact on number of likes and comments. Gavilanes *et al.* (2018) found that different types of content in social network advertising have varying impacts on consumer engagement metrics. Weerasinghe. (2019) found that that there is a positive correlation between content marketing and customer online engagement which suggested that when companies utilize content marketing strategies to create relevant and valuable content tailored to their target audience’s needs, it leads to increased engagement with the brand online. Trong (2020) found that content marketing on Instagram greatly impacts customer engagement. These findings are crucial for fashion executives, helping them understand how to plan market strategies, build their brand, attract customers, and stay competitive in the industry. Balio and Casais (2021) found that message interactivity and specific post appeals are significant factors in increasing customer engagement on social media platforms and different conclusions emerged when comparing Facebook to Instagram, demonstrating empirically that different social networking sites have distinct influences on customer engagement. Tafesse (2015) found that brand post vividness has a significant positive effect on brand post shares, but not on brand post likes. Gao and Feng (2016) revealed significant

differences in gratifications between users of social networking sites (SNS) and microblogs in China. Specifically, five dimensions of social media gratifications were identified, and their strengths varied between SNS and microblog users. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₁: There is a positive relationship between content strategy and customer engagement.

H₂: There is a positive relationship between content strategy and brand perception.

Community building

Hammedi *et al.* (2015) found two main factors driving connections between online brand communities: personal identification with a core brand community and a functionality-driven approach to creating social environments within these communities. Similarly, Islam and Rahman (2016) found the significance of customer engagement in fostering trust and generating word-of-mouth within brand communities on Facebook. Likewise, Islam *et al.* (2017) found that various characteristics of online brand communities, including information quality, system quality, virtual interactivity, and rewards, positively influenced customer engagement on platforms like Facebook. Among these characteristics, information quality and virtual interactivity have the strongest impact. Further, Mohammad (2020) found that brand community membership partially mediates the impact of customer empowerment on satisfaction but not on customer engagement and loyalty. Interestingly, employee engagement emerged as a more critical factor for ensuring customer loyalty. Chi *et al.* (2022) found that social capital (SC) plays a significant role in driving customer brand engagement (CBE) within online service brand communities (OBCs). Huang *et al.* (2022) found the significant relationships between perceived interactivity and community benefits, including special treatment, social influence, sense of membership and the notion that community satisfaction has a strong and positive effect on brand loyalty. Kurniawan *et al.* (2018) found that the online brand community significantly influences brand loyalty among cafe customers in Surabaya. Through the online process, perceived brand reputation and brand trust are identified as key factors mediating this relationship. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₃: There is a positive relationship between community building and customer engagement.

H₄: There is a positive relationship between community building and brand perception.

Customer targeting

Dong *et al.* (2015) found the relationship between customer participation (CP) and service outcomes is not straightforward; it depends on certain boundary conditions, namely CP readiness factors such as ability, perceived benefits of participation, and role identification. Singh (2011) found that integrating customer engagement, particularly focusing on youth, into social programs can be an effective strategy for initiating and influencing behavior change. Sempe and Naong (2021) found that customer awareness positively influences customer engagement in e-commerce settings. Tariq *et al.* (2017) found that significant insights into the factors influencing customer purchase intention in the context of mobile users in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Jasin *et al.* (2023) found that customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on consumer loyalty among owners of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in schools in Indonesia. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₅: There is a positive relationship between customer targeting and customer engagement.

H₆: There is a positive relationship between customer targeting and brand perception.

Interactivity

Ting *et al.* (2021) found that social interactivity on platforms like Facebook positively influences both consumer engagement behavior and brand loyalty and customer engagement behavior act as a mediator between social interactivity and brand loyalty, indicating that actively engaging with consumers on social media can strengthen their loyalty to a brand. Bozkurt *et al.* (2021) found that when customers perceive a brand to be highly interactive on social media (vs. inactive), they are more willing to buy brand offerings, refer the brand in exchange for monetary incentives, inform their family and friends about the brand on social media and provide feedback and suggestions for improving the brand. Mpinganjira (2016) found that system-related dimensions of interactivity and human interactivity are positively associated with consumer psychological engagement. Wismiaris *et al.* (2024) found how social media influencers' actions impact engagement and purchase intentions for endorsed products. Gligor and Bozkurt (2022) found that perceived brand interactivity directly and indirectly (via perceived brand fairness) impact customer purchases. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₇: There is a positive relationship between interactivity and customer engagement.

H₈: There is a positive relationship between interactivity and brand perception.

Influencer partnership

Thomas *et al.* (2024) found that within the social media community, influencer collaborations, particularly when the focal influencer partners with a lower-status influencer or brand, can positively impact consumers' perceptions of the focal influencer. Chen *et al.* (2024) found the nuanced dynamics of endorsement strategies in influencer marketing, providing practical insights for optimizing endorsement effectiveness and video performance based on campaign objectives and product characteristics. Gupta *et al.* (2023) found that in influencer marketing, both the characteristics of the influencer (such as credibility and similarity to consumers) and the content they share (including informativeness and entertainment value) significantly impact consumers' engagement with the endorsed brand. Hugh *et al.* (2022) found that influencer characteristics of popularity and attractiveness as heuristic cues that inform judgments of influencer efficacy. Singh *et al.* (2020) found the complex dynamics involved in leveraging social media influencers for corporate crisis communications. Tengblad-Kreft *et al.* (2017) found that influencers significantly impact brand promotion, with consumers more engaged with influencers than brands directly. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₉: There is a positive relationship between influencer partnership and customer engagement.

H₁₀: There is a positive relationship between influencer partnership and brand perception.

3. Results and discussion

Correlation analysis

On analysis of data, correlation analysis has been undertaken first and for this purpose, Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficients along with mean and standard deviation has been computed and the results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Table 1: Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficient matrix

This table presents Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficients between dependent variables and independent variables. The correlation coefficients are based on 146 observations. The dependent variables are CE (Customer engagement) and BP (Brand perception). The independent variables are CS (Content strategy), CT (Customer targeting), I (Interactivity), CB (Community building), and IP (Influencer partnership).

Variables	Mean	SD	CE	BP	CS	CT	I	CB	IP
CE	3.93	0.693	1						
BP	3.95	0.687	0.622**	1					
CS	3.74	0.566	0.394**	0.440**	1				
CT	3.60	0.631	0.484**	0.470**	0.573**	1			
I	3.72	0.709	0.424**	0.520**	0.481**	0.589**	1		
CB	3.71	0.703	0.475**	0.481**	0.476**	0.533**	0.565**	1	
IP	3.57	0.749	0.435**	0.456**	0.428**	0.542**	0.500**	0.547**	1

Notes: The asterisk signs (**) and (*) indicate that the result are significant at one percent and five percent levels respectively.

Table 1 shows that content strategy is positively correlated to customer engagement. It indicates that getting the right content, to the right people, in the right place, at the right time leads to increase in customer engagement. Similarly, customer targeting is positively correlated to customer engagement. It indicates that higher the customer targeting, higher would be the customer engagement. Likewise, interactivity is positively correlated to customer engagement. It indicates that communication between people and digital devices leads to increase in customer engagement. Further, community building is also positively correlated to customer engagement. It indicates that bringing people together and creating a sense of belonging leads to increase in customer engagement. In addition, influencer partnership is also positively correlated to customer engagement. It indicates that collaboration between a brand and an individual who has a significant following on social media platforms leads to increase in customer engagement.

Similarly, the study shows that content strategy is positively correlated to brand perception. It indicates that getting the right content, to the right people, in the right place, at the right time leads to make better brand perception. Similarly, customer targeting is positively correlated to brand perception. It indicates that higher the customer targeting, higher would be the brand perception. Likewise, interactivity is positively correlated to brand perception. It indicates that communication between people and digital devices leads to increase in brand perception. Further, community building is also positively correlated to brand perception. It indicates that bringing people together and creating a sense of belonging leads to increase

in brand perception. In addition, influencer partnership is also positively correlated to brand perception. It indicates that collaboration between a brand and an individual who has a significant following on social media platforms leads to increase in brand perception.

Regression analysis

Having indicated the Kendall's Tau correlation coefficients, the regression analysis has been carried out and the results are presented in Table 2. More specifically, it shows the regression results of content strategy, community building, customer targeting, interactivity, and influencer partnership on customer engagement.

Table 2

Estimated regression results of content strategy, customer targeting, interactivity, influencer partnership and community building on customer engagement.

The results are based on 145 observations using linear regression model. The model is $CE = \beta_0 + \beta_1CS + \beta_2CT + \beta_3I + \beta_4CB + \beta_5IP + e$ where the dependent variable is CE (Customer engagement). The independent variables are CS (Content strategy), CT (Customer targeting), I (Interactivity), CB (Community building), and IP (Influencer partnership).

Model	Intercept	Regression coefficients of					Adj. R_bar ²	SEE	F-value
		CS	CT	I	CB	IP			
1	0.963 (4.120)**	0.748 (13.216)**					0.538	0.538	174.668
2	0.884 (3.634)**		0.744 (13.010)**				0.530	0.542	169.262
3	0.874 (4.240)**			0.755 (15.429)**			0.613	0.492	238.060
4	0.536 (2.804)**				0.827 (18.434)**		0.694	0.438	339.812
5	0.563 (3.001)**					0.822 (18.645)**	0.699	0.434	347.634
6	0.501 (2.144)*	0.435 (5.425)**	0.413 (5.145)**				0.608	0.4976	115.401
7	0.452 (2.375)*			0.226 (2.574)**	0.623 (6.887)**		0.703	0.4302	179.594
8	0.128 (0.680)	0.266 (3.871)**	0.044 (0.516)	0.091 (0.861)	0.453 (4.530)**	0.348 (3.108)**	0.762	0.391	93.421

Notes:

- i. Figures in parenthesis are t-values.
- ii. The asterisk signs (**) and (*) indicate that the results are significant at one percent and five percent level respectively.
- iii. Customer engagement is dependent variable.

The regression results show that the beta coefficients for content strategy are positive with customer engagement. It indicates that content strategy has a positive impact on customer engagement. This finding is consistent with the findings of Gavilanes *et al.* (2018). Similarly, the beta coefficients for customer targeting are positive with customer engagement. It indicates that customer targeting has a positive impact on customer engagement. This finding is consistent with the findings of Sempe and Naong (2021). Likewise, the beta coefficients for interactivity are positive with customer engagement. It indicates that interactivity has a positive impact on customer engagement. This finding is consistent with the findings of Bozkurt *et al.* (2021). Further, the beta coefficients for community building are positive with customer engagement. It indicates that community building has a positive impact on customer

engagement. This finding is consistent with the findings of Mohammad (2020). In addition, the beta coefficients for influencer partnership are positive with customer engagement. It indicates that influencer partnership has a positive impact on customer engagement. This finding is similar to the findings of Gupta *et al.* (2023).

The regression results of content strategy, customer targeting, interactivity, influencer partnership, and community building on brand perception is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Estimated regression results of content strategy, customer targeting, interactivity, influencer partnership, and community building on brand perception

Model	Intercept	Regression coefficients of					Adj. R _{bar} ²	SEE	F-value
		CS	CT	I	CB	IP			
1	0.987 (3.979)**	0.822 (11.472)**					0.499	0.797	131.610
2	0.550 (2.660)**		0.892 (15.938)**				0.659	0.658	254.017
3	0.353 (2.112)*			0.913 (20.981)**			0.770	0.540	440.199
4	0.389 (2.289)*				0.942 (20.432)**		0.761	0.551	417.477
5	0.393 (1.912)					0.928 (16.797)**	0.682	0.635	282.147
6	0.357 (1.677)	0.251 (2.836)**	0.712 (8.495)**				0.682	0.635	282.147
7	0.210 (1.241)		0.253 (2.929)**	0.709 (8.676)**			0.783	0.527	237.219
8	0.204 (1.241)				0.677 (7.460)**	0.307 (3.163)**	0.776	0.533	228.195
9	0.140 (0.797)	0.110 (1.478)	0.200 (2.150)*	0.680 (8.127)**			0.785	0.552	160.325
10	0.140 (0.797)	0.107 (1.413)			0.651 (7.057)**	0.251 (2.403)*	0.778	0.531	153.969
11	0.140 (0.797)		0.072 (0.800)	0.446 (4.743)**	0.407 (4.160)**	0.078 (0.774)	0.815	0.485	145.203

Notes:

- Figures in parenthesis are t-values.
- The asterisk signs (**) and (*) indicate that the results are significant at one percent and five percent level respectively.
- Brand perception is dependent variable.

The regression results show that the beta coefficients for content strategy are positive with brand perception. It indicates that content strategy has a positive impact on brand perception. This finding is consistent with the findings of Weerasinghe. (2019). Similarly, the beta coefficients for customer targeting are positive with brand perception. It indicates that customer targeting has a positive impact on brand perception. This finding is consistent with the findings of Jasin *et al.* (2023). Likewise, the beta coefficients for interactivity are positive with brand perception. It indicates that interactivity has a positive impact on brand perception. This finding is consistent with the findings of Mpinganjira (2016). Further, the beta coefficients for community building are positive with brand perception. It indicates that community building has a positive impact on brand perception. This finding is consistent with the findings of Kurniawan *et al.* (2018). In addition, the beta coefficients for influencer partnership are positive with brand perception. It indicates that influencer partnership has a positive impact on brand perception. This finding is similar to the findings of Hugh *et al.*

(2022).

4. Summary and conclusion

Social media has revolutionized business communication by offering instant, global connectivity and enabling personalized interactions with customers. Businesses can engage directly through platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, using tools such as direct messaging and live video to provide real-time customer support and build relationships. Social media fosters transparency and authenticity, demanding that brands adapt marketing strategies to meet evolving consumer preferences and trends. Effective customer engagement on social media involves understanding and responding to customer needs, delivering personalized experiences, and maintaining consistent communication. Brand perception is shaped by social media through marketing efforts, customer experiences, and overall brand image, influencing consumer opinions, purchase decisions, and loyalty. Ultimately, social media empowers businesses to enhance customer satisfaction, build trust, and drive growth by leveraging the power of direct, interactive communication on a global scale.

This study attempts to examine the impact of social media on customer engagement and brand perception: A case of Kathmandu Valley. The study is based on primary data of 146 respondents.

The major conclusion of this study is that content strategy, customer targeting, interactivity, community building, and influencer partnership have positive impact on customer engagement and brand perception. It indicates that right content, higher the customer targeting, communication between people and digital devices, creating a sense of belonging, and collaboration between a brand and an individual leads to increase in customer engagement and brand perception. The study also concludes that community building is the most significant factor followed by influencer partnership that determines the level of customer engagement and brand perception.

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