CHAPTER – II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Social media and marketing has been the subject of research from diverse perspectives and there is lot of published literature. For the purpose of review, the available literature has been divided into six sections:

i.  Studies on social media marketing practices and its impact
ii. Studies on Social Media and Brand Building
iii. Studies on Social Media and Customer Engagement
iv.  Studies on Social Media and Brand Awareness
v.   Studies on E-Word of Mouth on Social Media
vi.  Studies on Brand Choice and Purchase intension on social media

Discussion on each of these categories of literature is contained here under :

2.1 Studies on Social Media Marketing Practices and its impact

Social media marketing is the process of attracting online traffic or seeking attention through social media sites. Social media marketing has been considered as a powerful method for all size and types of businesses to reach their prospects and customers. Likewise, Sharma (2002) conducted study on B2B SME’s. The research findings showed that B2B SMEs using social networking sites recognized the importance of this tool to support marketing outcomes. In contrast to a B2C context, where awareness was the most prominent reason for adopting social networking sites, awareness comes third in importance for B2B SMEs. Attracting new customers and cultivating customer relationships were considered to be the most important goals for such organizations when using social networking sites. This finding highlighted the important role of relationship marketing in a B2B setting, and was aligned with past evidence suggesting that the internet and technology could be used as tools to build relationships.

The evolution of social media marketing was determined in terms of an effective, never ending and efficient medium of interactive communication. Keller (2009) described that social media as interactive marketing communications which allowed consumers to learn from and teach others about a brand, as well as express their commitment to a brand and observe the brand loyalty of others. In this way, social media played a major role in branding.
Similarly, Weber (2009) also observed that marketing through the online social web encompasses adopting a completely new way of communicating with an audience in a digital environment. In the present times, instead of continuing as broadcasters, the marketers should become aggregators of customer communities. Present day marketers need not broadcast marketing messages to an increasingly indifferent audience. Rather, the marketers should participate into marketing to the social web, organize and encourage social networks to which people want to belong. Instead, encourage social networks to which people want to belong. Further, Weber (2009) raised the question of branding of the products and services in the social web. He conceptualized this as the conversation, brands had with the customer and claimed that the stronger the conversation was, the stronger the brand was, and vice versa. He questioned the concept of traditional marketing and branding. He described that instead of broadcasting messages to audiences and target groups, in the era of social web, branding and marketing was about participating in social networks to which people wanted to belong, where dialogue with customers and between customers could flourish.

Stokes (2008) and Miller et al (2009) described that social media as a fast, wide and low-cost medium for marketing. Palmer & Koenig-Lewis (2009) also claimed that social media facilitated social interactions and shares contents in a fast, wide, spread, viral and low-cost way. Again, Weber (2009) asserted that the task of aggregating customers on social media can be done in two ways - by providing compelling and interesting content on the website and creating easy retail environments that customers like to visit and by going out and participating in the public arena. Social web was not only meant for multinational companies, it was more effective and easier for medium and small size company, so that they could take maximum advantages of the social media. Demographics like age, gender, income, family lifestyle and education factors became less relevant, and what really matters was segmenting according to what consumers do and feel- their behaviour as well as their interests and attitude. The goal for the marketer was to identify groups of customers within the larger market that could be reached and influenced through the social media marketing. On the different way, Brown (2010) also made this point that social media enabled immediate response to customer service issues by having the chance to hear good or bad news quickly. However, Carlsson (2010) stated that when marketers analysed traditional media and social media, the social media offered an interactive communication medium among customers and brands by allowing them to communicate and share their experiences or information through the web.
Kichatov and Mihajlovski (2010) carried out case studies on social media usage as promotional tool by the political parties and various companies. They found that political parties were using social media services like Facebook and Twitter for the promotion of the party’s activities. They used social media as communication strategy to provide topics for debates and discussions. Political parties used social media for the purpose of personal selling and maintaining public relations. Twitter was mostly used to interact with journalists and send party’s messages to the public in a faster manner. Companies also used social media for public relation purposes. Companies also spread their messages to the customers on social media. They found that Facebook was the most preferred platform for branding. In this ways, social media was used a promotional tools.

Michaelidou et al. (2011) conducted research on 1000 B2B SMEs in UK to know the usage, barriers and measurement of social media marketing by B2B SMEs. Their findings showed that over a quarter of B2B SMEs in the UK were currently using social networking sites to achieve brand objectives, the most popular of which was to attract new customers. On the other hand, the most significant barrier was the lack of perceived relevance for particular sectors. Notably, the overwhelming majority of users did not adopt any metrics to assess social networking sites effectiveness. Almost half of the sample of SMEs that using social networking sites indicated their intention to increase their marketing spending on this channel, which highlighted the growing importance of social networking sites in a B2B context.

Shabnam et al. (2013) also make this point that the firms that are most effective in social media are not only experimenting with multiple channels, but also creating metrics to measure impact and using new tools to understand how to enter into a new conversation with their customers. In the times to come, effective use of social media will be led by these organizations that are able to enter into newer relationships with customers, employees, and partners. Further, Balakrishnan et al. (2014) conducted a study on undergraduate students of university of Malaysia to examine the impact of social media marketing medium toward brand loyalty and purchase intention in Generation Y. They find that online marketing communications, specifically, E-WOM, online communities and online advertisement are effective in promoting brand and product through company website and social media platforms. The respondents (students of university of Malaysia) are interested in engaging and giving their feedback on product through social media marketing medium to increase
purchase intentions. The difference of income level can be much more precise as it is one of the factors of buying powers among consumers. However, Jucaityte (2014) asserts that it is very important for organisations to have possibilities to monitor insights of customers and improve their performance based on it. This can lead to increase brand awareness, create a strong relationship with customers and supporters of the organization, to encourage the use of new communication channels, etc. The application of social media marketing gives the organisations, a possibility to communicate with large target groups, form and improve its image, maintain relations with customers and increase sales very effectively and with little costs.

Vásquez and Escamilla (2014) recommend the best practices in the use of social networks as strategic marketing communication in SMEs. They observe that the marketing strategies focus on the customer, have grown rapidly in recent years and have increased the number of users of social networks. Such technological developments have even forced SMEs to consider these technological systems as tools to attract, maintain and manage customers as well as a resource for obtaining information on the behavior of the market and the consumer. The great advantage of social networks is that it can co-create publicity among those who are involved in marketing of the products. Social networks can also influence consumer behavior through information dissemination with the medium of word of mouth. Similarly, Constantinides (2014) asserts that the main strategic goals of social media marketing demand the existence of flawless and easy to access company’s web site which includes functional, trustworthy, efficient and organizationally integrated so as customer-oriented too. It is important here that company’s online corporate presence on social media platforms must communicate and present the corporate positioning, customer orientation, quality and image. Social media marketing is at the top of the integrated marketing effort. Now marketers are using social media marketing to personalize the customer’s online experience. The customization discovers the customer needs as an individual which results in customer loyalty and efficient branding.

Godey et al. (2016) study the influence of social media marketing efforts of luxury brands on brand equity and consumer behavior. They demonstrate that social media marketing efforts have significant positive effects on brand loyalty, brand preferences and price premium. Luxury brands can use social media to improve their relationships with customers. Now,
brands should take social media marketing as source to reach consumers, but as a significant as well as cost-effective brand image building tool.

Tuten and Solomon (2017) suggest to use social media marketing in overall companies marketing plan because it has many creative and unique applications. Many big companies are adopting social media marketing activities along with traditional marketing communication channels which involves audience engagement, participation and sharing contents. Social media marketing plan should be consistent with the brand-image, which in turn creates positive brand image and trust in customers.

Now various social media applications are available such as blogs, social networks, online communities, forums/bulletin boards and content aggregators. These applications can be used as marketing tools in many different ways. Interestingly, these applications are low in cost but valuable sources of online customer voice. It facilitates organizations to redesign their marketing activities. Social Media is also used as promotional tools, to maintain good public relation and to influence customers. These tools enable customers to describe their specific needs and changes related to the products/services which are used for customization or innovation in product development. Last but not least the social media provides a large number of opportunities to companies to harness the collective creativity and intelligence of the customers. Social media marketing is being used to encourage customer involvement with the brands in the form of contribution to the production and innovation process.

2.2 Studies on Social Media and Brand Building

Social Media and Brand building are essential for startup entrepreneurs and companies. One needs to design a good strategy to build and establish brand online. It is remarkable how networking and advertising on digital spaces like Facebook, LinkedIn or Youtube can transform brand position and reward with financial abundance.

Kane et al. (2009) argued that the social connections among consumers had influence on how brand messages reach consumers, how consumers respond to such messages, and eventually how firms should design their branding efforts. While the relevance of networks to branding was not limited to the online environment, social media dramatically increased the reach and visibility of consumer social networks and made it much easier to mobilize consumers. On the other hand, Lefebvre (2011) described the ideas about branding and positioning. Core strategic social marketing concerns were able to understand better and practice in developing
country settings. Social marketing in developing countries focused much more on products and services, with a interest in pricing and distribution systems. The integrative framework demanded for an expansion of social marketing to product and service development and delivery, using incentives and other behavioral economic concepts as part of the price element, and extending place as both an access and opportunity idea for behaviors, products and services.

According to Keller (2013), branding and brand management had been well-recognized management priorities and strategic aims for companies for many years. The growth of social media dramatically challenged the way firms use to manage their brands. He recognized that a well-known brand can increase value of shareholders and develop competitive advantage. Thus, brands are trying hard for strong brand building on social media. On the hand, Gensler et al. (2013) used a network-oriented approach for branding in which a consumer's relationship with a brand extended into the consumer's social connections, whether it was the consumer influencing or being influenced by such social connections about the brand. Hence, the value of a consumer to a brand is no longer restricted to the consumer's direct purchase and consumption of the brand. Instead, a consumer who does not purchase heavily from a brand may still be of substantial interest to the firm if the consumer exerts significant influence on his/her social connections. They also stressed on brand stories on social media. The consumer-generated brand stories have become central for a brand's meaning; managers need to consider coordinating their own brand stories with these consumer-generated stories. If consumers tell a lot of stories around a brand through social media, this channel might be the ‘best’ starting point for a branding campaign. Meanwhile, Sheth (2013) observed that being present on social media may help a brand to build strong brand-customer relationships, also inform and update their customers on the brands, however, just a presence on social media was not a motivating factor to purchase products from that brand. The marketers required to use their followers and fans as their brand endorsers to shape the attitude of the other users on the network.

Further, Tsimonis and Dimitriadis (2014) indicates that why companies create brand pages for brand building in social media, how they use them, what policies and strategies they follow, and what outcomes do they expect. There are several factors, internal and external, may lead a firm to getting involved with social media. The main actions of the firm are making prize competitions, announcing new products/services, interacting with fans,
providing advice and useful information, and handling customer service issues. The basic motivations are the increasing popularity of social media, corporate strategy, competitor’s presence and cost reduction pressure. Interact with customers, create as well as enhance relationships with customers, brand awareness, customer engagement, promote products/increase of sales, and the more targeted acquisition of new customers, are referred to as the main expected outcomes for companies. In this way, Schmidt and Iyera (2015) recommend that it has become more important for companies to have an online presence as well as to carefully observe what is going on social media. For this, they should observe vigilantly the brand communities. Any flaws in product or service that happen in any part of the world may not be hidden from the rest of the world. Because, customers have more power, access and many ways to express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction than ever before.

However, there are so many various types of platforms available on social media and there is a heavy competition on all of them. So, it has become very difficult to set a brand differently in the minds of the customers or users and carve out a distinctive place on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other major social networking sites. One should choose the right combination of social networks. Every social network might not be the right fit for your company. The brand should use visual aspects carefully, as it helps people to recognize a brand. Now, brands should interact regularly within their brand communities and should be consistent with their topics of discussions. Irregular posting can kill social media branding. There are many social media publishing and analytic tools available. The publishing tools will allow you to schedule posts to be sent out when the followers are most active. A company can start building awareness for its brand on social media by engaging and interacting with other users. It’s as simple as replying to Tweets and commenting on Facebook and Instagram posts. Customer engagement is must for all brands.

2.3 Studies on Social Media and Customer Brand Engagement

Social media brand engagement is essentially like a long-term relationship. As soon as customers decide to engage with a brand on social media, they are actually putting trust into brand to solve their problem. Whenever, they have specific questions increases brand loyalty and even sparks the chance of a future purchase. All it takes is a bit of timely communication. According to Moorthi (2002) engagement among customers and a brand had positive effects on service quality and customer satisfaction by getting customers’ feedback. Also, this interactive media enhanced message credibility and a sense of involvement. Similarly, Weber
(2009) described that in this time of social web, “branding is the medium to have communication with the existing as well as potential customers. The stronger the dialogue, the stronger the brand; the weaker the dialogue, the weaker the brand. All thanks to the internet, the dialogues are active for 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.” It includes both the conversations between a brand and their customers and the interactions between the customers themselves—all related to the strength of the brand.

Haven et al. (2007) described that engagement consisted of four components which individual could experience with a brand over time as the following involvement, interaction, intimacy, and influence. Meanwhile, Plummer et al. (2007) found high level social media engagement among people and brands. As an example, around 70% of U.S. online adults were involved in commenting on product reviews sites or blogs, participating online discussion boards/forums. It was found that engaged users and brands became members of a community or group who shared their interest with each other. Memorability of the brand which was maximized if the amounts of cognitive effort people spent during the processing were maximized. Consequently, the chance of remembering a brand later on was maximized too, in the form of recall or recognition.

Li (2007) also indicated that 37% of the respondents with age group of 18-26 year olds and 31% of the respondents with age group of 27-40 year like to view advertiser’s profiles and share them with others. It was showing customer-brand engagement. Further, Haven et al. (2007) designed a funnel that provided capabilities for contributors to create brand awareness and engagement. For instance, an individual customer, who might not buy a lot, but always liked to rates and makes reviews, could influence many other potential or existing buyers. Hence, marketers required new perspective to the brand awareness characterized by social media, which was referred as engagement. They proposed a new metric of engagement that included four components: interaction, involvement, influence and intimacy. Each of these was built from data collected from online and offline data sources. Engagement presented a more holistic appreciation of customers’ actions and it also recognized the value of communication between brands and their customers. Brand followers also influenced others to take an action in buying process. Thus, once engagement takes hold of marketing, marketing messages will become conversations, and dollars will shift from media buying to customer understanding.
Thackeray et al. (2008) found that ‘as acceptance, availability and use of Web 2.0 social media increases, its potential to transform social marketing promotion may increase proportionately’. There were several reasons why Web 2.0 social media had such potential. Firstly, Web 2.0 social media enabled social marketers to directly engage their consumers in the creative process. In this paradigm, customers became creators or co-creators with the agency or organization. The customers were an active participant instead of a passive recipient. The customer was always at the heart of the social marketing process. Furthermore, Calder et al. (2009) conducted a study to examine the effect of online media engagement on advertising. The results identified that both personal and social-interactive engagement affect reactions to the banner ads. The results of a regression model included both types of engagement which indicated that social-interactive engagement affected reactions to ads after controlling for Personal Engagement. The online media involved a distinct form of engagement and that this engagement had its own impact on advertising effectiveness. However, Manning-Schaffel (2009) found that when a brand shared a picture, video or updating its status, the fans quickly started to think and talk about them, so brands involved their customer easily and quickly.

Bond et al. (2010) applied the Use-and-Gratification theory (U&G theory) to describe the precedents and outcomes of brand engagement in social media, which improved its credibility for investigating and analysing the consumer behaviors in social media context. The author found a conceptual model for customer engagement with different brands on social media and outcomes of engagement such as brand awareness. The results of the investigation suggested that consumers had significant perceived differences between brands that use social media purely to engage with consumers in direct relationship building conversation and those brands which use social media for promotion and publicity. When some brands achieved a strong and successful position in the social media space, then it became essential that those brands not only maintain an attractive presence on social media, but they must also interact directly with consumers and it should be two-way communication, such as responding immediately to consumer-generated content.

Hollebeek (2011) defined customer engagement with a brand as ‘a mixture of intellectual and emotional interactions characterizing customer’s contextual and brand-related state of mind.’ On the other hand, Frady (2011) conducted study on students to measure personal connections with brands on social media. It was found that there was positive correlation
between reading and sharing messages on social media and students desired to continue their relationship with the brands they interacted with. Likewise, Kang (2011) also made a point that there was a significant impact of community participation on brand commitment and brand trust. He conducted a study on hotels brand engagement on social media. He found that the marketers of hotel brands pages must focus on two way communication to create good relationships between the hotel brand and consumers, whereas marketers of restaurant brands page required considering a way to strengthen their relationships with current members. Now, the major role of demographic characteristics to influence consumer behavior became invalid due to increasing use of social media. Marketers were gathering information through brand pages. This enormous information became the most influential element to attract potential consumers to join brands Facebook pages and to motivate current members to visit the page frequently. In this way, hotel brands got the knowledge about their customers and customer also did not hesitate to ask questions or enquiries related to their travel and brand pages tried to resolve their queries as well.

Shabnam et al. (2013) described that big companies of the world are the traditional way of communication with their customers. The faster the company responds the better will be the brand image of company. Now, brands have become social. A socially devoted brand has to respond to its customers immediately, especially brands that offer services from the airlines, telecom, automobile and electronics industries should have a high response rate towards their consumers or fans and minimum response time. It also establishes direct contact with the customers without any communication intermediary to influence their thinking of customers. This is one significant and huge opportunity to use social media platforms for marketers.

Kumar et al. (2016) observe that customers, who are tech savvy, like to seek more information online and get motivated to socialize online. They also like to use social media to be a part of brand/firm’s page. They also find that there is positive correlation between spending habit, social media participation and cross-buying. Their results suggest that firm generated content on social media are used to promote products and to influence customers to buy high-margin products online, which leads to increased customer profitability. Social media hand over control to customers in the form of comments and likes; this makes firm generated content more effective. Likewise, Maecker et al. (2016) indicate that the customer engagement with brands on social result in developing their customer relationship. They find that as the customer interactions with the brands on social media increases, the propensity of
upselling behaviour also increases. Post-purchase interactions also have positive and significant influence on consumer relationship management. Customer’s interactions on brand page also increase customer loyalty towards brands.

Abuljadail (2017) performs a study to find out consumer engagement with global and local brands on Facebook. He finds that global brands prefer to use more association message than local brands which focus on individualism. Global brands use a standardised regional strategy on social media such as a different customized Facebook page for a different region that is more effective for audience. Whereas, local brands prefer to post regarding availability and specification about their brands. Further, global brands take help of hedonic motives to attract the online consumers such as they include gaming and socializing content in their posts, whereas, local brands use utilitarian elements to attract the consumers that’s why their posts consist of more informative content. In this study, it is apparent that global brands post availability and price related information in their posts that generate more likes. In comparison to global brands, local brands like to post more cues regarding availability and price that generate more likes as well as shares. Local brands also post cues regarding to performance which generate more comments but it doesn’t mean that comments are always positive, it may be negative. Local brands also use appeal messages in their contents that generate high consumer interest. Consumers are more likely to see content on social media that is adjusted as per their local cultural values since social media is about interacting and socializing with others.

García (2018) defines the eight role of participation on social media such as citizens, consumers, fans, collaborators, players, benefactors, commentators and activists. The online social networks facilitate a huge opportunities to engage public online, by commenting, sharing, promoting, criticizing campaigns, as well as showcasing their own content and brands or getting involved in the production, design or distribution of content. Commentators and Followers tend to raise criticisms about campaign or advertisement content, thus they show a better picture of the audience and interests. Collaborators are the users who are evolved as a source of additional online content generated. At the same time, some of the users are benefactors who demonstrate more social interests and they get easily involved in a committed way with certain social causes. On the other hand, activists are the consumers who play an active role in criticising content. The broadcasters are trying hard to reach a wide interaction with the most active members of the audience which would satisfy their demands.
But if social media marketers want to establish a better online communication with their audience, then, they need to create more transparent tools for audience participation and provide an improved space of opinion exchange between users and program managers. Inspite of many activities to engage public, there is a lack of information regarding how broadcasters manage the contributions of the audience.

Lee et al. (2018) find that content of advertising on social media has influence over customer engagement. Inclusion of humor and emotion on social media content by the brands leads to higher level of customer brand engagement such as more likes and comments on messages. On the other hand, there are some direct informative messages on social media such as information related to price and other deals leads to lower level of customer engagement when this information are included in isolation, whereas, if social media marketers included price and deals or promotion related messages along with brand personality or personality attributes, it creates higher level of customer engagement. Their results suggest many opportunities for content engineering, such as informative characteristics should combine with brand personality–related content that helps in maintaining future reach and branding on the social media site (via improved engagement).

Customer engagement has become a necessity for any brand on social media platforms. Brand should understand the value to develop a big and dedicated fan base as social media community. This can significantly make a strong customer–firm relationship which result in positive impact on the firm’s revenues and profits as well customer loyalty. The content should be innovative, interesting and updated that has power to attract online user and to convert them fan of their firm’s brand page. The more level of engagement leads to more strong customer relationship. Now companies want to interact and engage by enhancing and personalizing their consumers’ online experience. A two-conversation is a dialogue, where brands try to talk and listen to their audience, respond directly to their needs and wants. Engaging in conversation, depicts that brand is not showcase itself just as cold organization which remain disconnected from their buyers; rather brand tries to listen, understand, and care about concerns on a human level. Two-way conversation on social media also helps show brand personality. Conversing, monitoring and engaging on social are great ways for brands to learn not only, about what their customers like about their company, but also about their frustrations which helps to take action to satisfy their customers. This gives the ability to
the companies to use social media as a platform for customer service, responding directly to concerns or gaining insight to improve.

### 2.4 Studies on Social Media and Brand Awareness

While traditional advertising such as print, radio and billboards have always been important methods for brand awareness, today it is the web and the content that companies are putting their efforts on it. Now, social media has become fastest and quickest methods for any brand to get customers’ exposure and awareness. The reason is, people like to spend more and more time on social networking sites than on any other medium or activity. That’s why, the creation of brand awareness is the first step in building brand equity (Aaker, 1991). Brand Awareness is all about communication. This is how Aaker (1991) explained the awareness and recall of a name as “a name is like a special file folder in the mind which can be filled with name related facts and feelings. Without such a file readily accessible in memory, the facts and feelings become misfiled and cannot be readily accessed when needed.” Specifically, brand awareness refers to “the ability of a potential buyer to recognize or recall that a brand is a member of a certain product category”.

According to Aaker (1991), brand awareness depends on both the level of achieved awareness and situation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand Unaware of Brand</th>
<th>Brand Recognition</th>
<th>Brand Recall</th>
<th>Top of Mind</th>
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Exhibit 2.1 Levels of Brand Awareness  
(Source : Aaker , 1991, P 62)

1. **Brand Recognition**: This is first stage of brand awareness. It is when consumer can recognize a specific brand among others; “aided recall”. Aided recall can also be explained as a situation where a set of given brand names from a given product class is shown. The task is then to identify the recognized names. Brand recognition is major when consumers face the buying procedure.

2. **Brand Recall**: This is upon the consumers to name the trademark in a product class. Apart from level one, this is an “unaided recall” since there are not given any examples of specific brands. The role of brand recall can also be vital regularly purchased products, for which brand decisions usually are made prior going to store.
3. **Top of mind**: A brand that is a “Top of mind” is the first brand that consumers think of within a given product class.

Keller (1993) also represented brand awareness as the “customers’ ability to identify a brand in the memory and also increases the likelihood of that brand name coming to mind with or without outside aids”. Managers and marketers are striving to earn and maintain customers’ brand awareness so as to influence their brand choices. In situations in which customers have little information about a brand, their familiarity with the brand name will be sufficient to trigger a positive response.

Further, Aaker (1996) conceptualized brand equity as a set of five assets – a) brand awareness, b) perceived quality, c) brand loyalty, d) brand association and e) other proprietary assets. Brand awareness was very important element of brand equity, it dealt with the presence of brand in consumer’s mind. It was predicted by Aaker that with the massive amount of new media that had developed and that were likely to develop in near future, it was constantly becoming more problematic and challenging task to create the brand awareness, and the real winner in the battle of creating and raising brand awareness would be those who were able to communicate and transfer their branding message through all media.

For brand awareness, one needs to understand brand recognition and recall. Keller (2003) described that the brand awareness included recall and recognition. Brand awareness was also a part of brand knowledge. To measure awareness about a brand, it was very important to know in which situation or level most of decisions were made. If most of decisions were taken at the point of purchase, then brand recognition measure would be important where the logo, brand, packaging etc were noticeable. But if the consumer was away from the point of purchase and purchase decision was made, then brand recall measure would become more important. On the same way, brand awareness and social media walk hand-in-hand for every type of organization or business both small and large. Carlsson (2010) claimed that social media could be very valuable for building brand awareness and creating as well as maintaining long term relations. There were a variety of social media activities that could be initiated to build brand awareness. For example creating a company blog provided the possibility to spread the corporate objectives as well as philosophy and also to show the soul of the company. It facilitated the possibility for their fans to further spread the message. Facebook, Youtube, Twitter and many other social media sites may be used in the same way. On the other hand, Johansson (2010) conducted a case study to analyse the brand awareness
of fast moving consumer goods on social media. The companies adopted social media in their marketing communication strategy. He found that companies used social media as a tool to interact to their consumers and also to influence them to know about their products/services. Companies could earn good reputation through social media marketing and brand engagement. But contents should be interesting, attractive and should provide desired right amount of information to the audience.

Xu and Chan (2010) conducted their study on hotel industry. They elaborated that advertising arouses brand awareness and imparts both search and experiential brand image. They studied hotel industry. In the hotel industry, advertising efforts were also reflected by online advertising, because the function of hotel web sites was to transmit tangible and intangible information about services and the hotel brand. It was suggested that hotel companies should invest in advertising efforts by either frequently communicating with potential hotel guests to raise their brand name awareness. On the other hand, O’Flynn (2012) found that social media had established and raised brand awareness. Social media tools enabled firms to access and get information about millions of people. Since a huge number of people were already visiting social media, thus, presence of a brand name all over those networks could help to inform people about it and become familiar with the firm, creating brand awareness. Further, Haque et al. (2013) identify that consumers are more attracted towards customised and relevant information. The advertiser can customize their message and present it to specific target audience through Facebook and other social media. They can also promote their products as per the specific choice of the concerned group on social media like fan pages, communities etc. The marketing efforts and word of mouth on social media create brand awareness comprehensively. Similarly, Berreda et al. (2015) also describe the significant positive relationship between brand awareness and electronic word of mouth. Many successful brands allow their users to interact with each other, post reviews, receive latest updates, to receive reward for their online activities and to receive rich information related to their brand experience. This is the opportunity for marketers to generate strong brand awareness.

Schivinski and Dabrowski (2016) find that the communication managers aim at to attract and encourage their consumers to generate content that reflects positive image for products and brands of their companies. The main objective of firm-created content on social media is to increase consumers’ brand awareness as well as brand attitudes. Individuals perceive firm-
created communication on social media as advertising that arouse their brand awareness and also brand perception. Similarly, Ahmad et al. (2016) describe that content marketing on social media platform plays an important role to disseminate information to attract the consumers as well as induce them to engage with brands. Marketers are now using social media content to create brand awareness and also to promote their brands among masses. They also find brand health as an indicator to measure brand awareness among online consumers. It is determined by the number as well as nature of interactions and responses between brand and consumers. Content marketing contribute a good role in increasing high brand health score which leads to strong brand awareness.

To sum up, one of the primary goals of new businesses is to raise brand awareness, and the world of social media presents the perfect platform to achieve it. In the increasingly competitive global marketplace, the success of businesses rests on their adopting various forms of digital marketing in order to stand out from the crowd and increase their visibility. As the digital age, brands can now enjoy greater exposure than those relying on expensive methods such as publishing ads on TV, radio and printed media. Every day, millions of posts on Facebook, Twitter and other platforms are posted by users and they share product reviews, discount coupons, etc. The customers are becoming brand ambassadors. Content marketing is also playing significant role in creating strong brand awareness among consumers. With the skillful use of right tools and generating the right content, a brand can create an instant connection with people, bringing in a sense of curiosity which leads to brand awareness.

2.5 Studies on E-Word of Mouth on Social Media

The emergence of social media has developed variable communication ways enabling consumers to connect, create, publish, share their contents through media such as Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, Instagram, etc. This reveals how much people can get influenced by social media and the review of others and this phenomenon known as Word-of-Mouth. Subramani and Rajagopalan, (2003) found that there were various online platforms, which facilitated WOM such as online discussion boards, forums and other online communication tools. These platforms were also increasingly being recognized for how they influenced the adoption and use of products and services.

Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) defined online Word of Mouth as, any positive or negative statement made by actual, former or potential customers about the brand, company or product
which is made available to massive number of people through internet. Now consumers are using increasingly the internet as well as social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Blog, Flickr, and so on. Whereas, Domingos (2005) asserted that it must be remembered that a person’s online social network might not just end with their immediate network, but messages generally passed from one network to another based on members who were common to two or more networks. Meanwhile, Urban (2005) argued that customer advocacy should be at the main priority of marketing strategy. Consumers found the sources of information provided by technologies, to use it as aid in decision making process. As a result, the control was going to increase in the hands of the consumer. Urban (2005) also reported that, traditionally, if consumers were dissatisfied, they surely would tell a few of friends those close to them, and at worst, a company would lose only a small number of customers. However, the internet enabled dissatisfied customers to tell their experiences to numerous online friends, the effects of which could be harmful for a company. Positive word of mouth resulted in potential advantages and also provided many opportunities for a company to reach their consumers. It was stated that it was a time to a move away from the traditional forms of marketing and to provide ‘honest, open and complete information’ to consumers. Rather than just pushing messages onto consumers, it involved a dialogue between a consumer and a company based on trust. This was the future of marketing. Meanwhile, East et al. (2005) reported in a review of 23 service categories that WOM had greater impact on brand choice than advertising or personal search.

Weber (2009) described in his book that today, however, because of the internet, customers were playing a role of transmitters of a brand conversation. They started to discuss about any products with their friends online and on brand forums or pages on social media. Whatever potential customers and customers talked about was deeply connected to a brand’s reputation and position as a brand in the social media world. Likewise, Cheung et al. (2008) observed that more and more consumers started to use Web 2.0 tools such as consumer review sites, weblogs, online discussion forums and social network sites to exchange product related information. Online word of mouth provided the opportunity to consumers to read other consumers’ consumption opinions and experiences as well as write contributions by themselves. In this way, consumers have become powerful to express their brand experiences freely.

Rust & Oliver (1994), Lewis & Bridger (2004) and Clarke (2008) discussed that information technology became the main source to the development of a consumer–producer
collaborative relationship. The authors highlighted that as consumers became less trusting of companies, the remaining trust would be invested in those companies that collaborated with them regarding products and services. No one could ignore the value of consumer’s social network and their subsequent potential to pass on messages to numerous individuals. On the other way, Eccleston and Griseri (2008) found that consumer like to trust on one another. Social networking sites were gaining potential as a word-of-mouth communications medium regarding products and services. The question facing marketers and companies was how to create this trust and dialogue with members and encourage them to become those connectors proposed by and pass on company messages and recommendations to one another. Similarly, Thackeray (2008) identified that Web 2.0 social media technology enabled marketers to develop interactive web sites that made it virtually effortless for users to engage in viral marketing by encouraging the user to share feedback, provide comments, rate products, provide reviews, and download items for sharing with friends.

Furthermore, Jansen et al. (2009) investigated microblogging site Twitter as a form of electronic word-of-mouth for sharing consumer opinions related to various brands. They analyzed more than 150,000 Tweets postings which contained branding sentiments, comments and opinions. They also investigated the overall structure of these microblog postings, the kinds of expressions, nature of tweets and the movement of negative or positive sentiment. They compared automated methods of classifying sentiments in these microblogs with the help of manual coding. They used a case study approach, they analyzed the frequency, range, timings and content of tweets in a corporate account. Findings of the research show that 19% of microblogs contain mention of a brand and out of the branding microblogs, nearly 20% contain some expression of brand sentiments. Of these, more than 50% were positive and 33% were critical of the firm or product. Microblogging emerges as an online tool for customer word of mouth communications and discusses the implications for corporations using microblogging (Tweets) as part of their overall marketing strategy.

A study by Integrating Marketing Communications Model (Kotler & Keller, 2009) for building brand equity and the extended model by Xu and Chan (2010) found that WOM (e-WOM) has a direct relationship to brand awareness. When a person has strong knowledge concerning to a brand or a product, social media allows him to communicate and transfer his thoughts from a few people to the whole world (broad spread) very quickly. Trusov, Bucklin and Pauwels (2009) found that E-WOM referrals have a strong effect on new customer
acquisition. They further found that the elasticity for WOM is approximately 20 times higher than that for marketing events and 30 times that of media appearances. Again, Weber (2009) suggested in his research that E-WOM can be a powerful tool to promote a brand, which can be used as one of the important advertising tools such as suggesting a brand from the fan page of a brand to others who may be unaware of the brand. On the other hand, Shabnam et al. (2013) suggested that even though social media is magnifying the impact of consumer-to-consumer conversations having in the marketplace, methods for shaping those conversations have not yet been articulated.

According to Lopez and Sicilia (2014) word of mouth played a vital role with regards to sources of information and at the same time was more trusted, credible and persuasive than commercial information. When using technology it is much easier for the consumer to share information related to the brand, product or service and this is how the information goes viral. On the other way, Severi, Ling and Nasermoadeli (2014) found that electronic word of mouth significantly has impact over brand loyalty and brand image. They also found that brand loyalty acts as a mediator between the mediating relationship of brand image and electronic word of mouth.

It is interesting that there is a relationship between brand awareness and electronic word of mouth. Well crafted messages and high quality content on social media will increase the brand awareness and in return brand awareness positively will influence E-WOM which leads to the consumer intention to try the brand (Berreda et al., 2015).

Erkan and Evan (2016) find that there is a positive impact of E-WOM information on consumers’ purchase intentions. They further demonstrate that the influence of E-WOM information on social media not only depends on credibility and quality of online information, but it also depends on the consumers’ behaviour towards E-WOM information on social media. The results validate that quality, usefulness, credibility, adoption of information as well as need of information and also the attitude towards information are the key factors of electronic word of mouth on social media that influence online consumers’ purchase intentions.

Dahl (2018) describes that EWOM is effective at influencing purchase behavior, the magnitude of word of mouth is dependent on distinct aspects of the situations in which WOM can occur. He finds that positive E-word of mouth which is generated by friends on social media platforms has a positive effect on brand equity and brand attitude which in turn
influences the purchase intention of the consumers. Similarly, after purchasing the brands, E-WOM creates a ‘ripple effect’.

Jenkins et al. (2018) terms social media as spreadable media through which people are playing more active role in shaping the flow of information in a this social networked culture. They believe in spreading the word or information to others which you think to be interesting as well as speak out against which you don’t like. Through spreadability of social media platforms, marketers have recognized the power of social connections. They can measure how frequently their campaign travels. Meanwhile, they should actively listen to the way their content is taken up by the audience and how their content is circulating. It may create interest among the audience as well as become the matter of criticism. Thus, brand managers must take audience interactions spreadablity carefully.

Social media interactivity leads to the increase of the credibility of e-WOM because of high transparency of the information which causes higher credibility of social media in comparison to traditional media. E-WOM in compare to other types of marketing communication mix is faster, broader, and easier with exponential progress. E-WOM assists and encourages customers to pass the message of the marketers or products’ information.

2.6 Studies on Brand Choice and Purchase intension on social media

With the rapid development of information technology, global competition is increasingly furious and the consumer-oriented market will be more complex and changeable, which has brought unprecedented challenges to the survival and development of enterprises. Enterprises are increasingly aware that only deeply understand consumers can a competitive brand be created. Therefore, the study of consumer brand choice behavior has gradually become the hot spot of consumer behavior research.

Tallis (1988) found that advertising had a moderate effect on brand choice, on the other hand advertising had interactive effect on brand loyalty which lead to volume of purchase. Advertising had a stronger effect for reinforcing intensity of brand preference.

Similarly, Bornmark et al. (2005) identified six factors affecting brand choice. These were quality, brand loyalty, influence by others, price, consumer as innovator, advertising and culture. Brand awareness was the most important factors among all other factors while first purchase. Secondly, quality, price and advertisements were imperative aspects while choosing known brands. While considering culture aspect, the importance of these three factors were different. But if culture factor was excluded then all factors had same effect on brand choice. On the other hand East et al. (2005) found that WOM had a strong influence on Consumer’s choice, particularly in the acquisition of services where pre-purchase experience was limited.

Social media plays an important role while influencing customer’s choice in selecting various products or services based on the customers’ reviews or feedback which posted on web sites, blogs, online boards and forums as user-generated content.

Kim and Ko (2012) identified the relationships among those perceived activities, value equity, relationship equity, brand equity, customer equity, and purchase intention through a structural equation model. It was found that purchase intention, value equity and relationship equity had significant positive effects, while relationship equity had no significant influence. Finally, the relationship between purchase intention and customer equity had significance. The findings of this study could enable luxury brands to forecast the future purchasing behavior of their customers more accurately. On the other hand, Mohaidin (2012) analysed matching analysis, maximisation analysis and relative demand analysis derived from behavioural economics approach to explain more on brand choice specifically related to the consumer’s sensitivity towards price changes. The maximization and matching were found in most of the products. It was found that consumers maximised not only utilitarian but also informational reinforcement. The brands had substitutes and consumers would mostly choose the cheapest brand within their range of brand. Now, most of consumers liked to purchase multi-brand, because there was advantage of a wide range of brands, of which the quality and price range from the lowest to the highest. Therefore, consumers could easily shift their preference one brand to another, which consumer perceived brands as equal in terms of utility.
outcomes and price. Meanwhile, Kim and Ko (2012) asserted that purchase intention was a combination of consumers' interest in and possibility of buying a product. As a result of the study, it strongly related to attitude and preference toward a brand or a product so that measuring purchase intention assumed consumers' future behavior based on their attitudes. Purchase intention was an attitudinal variable for measuring customers' future contributions to a brand. On the other side, Naylor et al. (2012) found that consumers expressed greater liking for a brand and willingness to interact with that brand on social media when brands showed their mere virtual presence. Consumers expressed their choice towards a brand on social media.

Lee (2013) described how consumer behavior has changed with the existence of social media. Now consumers have ample amount of information through social media and in this way, they analyse information with different aspects. Social media offers them transparent and easy accessibility of information. Potential consumers can get customer experiences which helps in decision making. He found that essence of consumer behavior is still same in existence of social media. Further, Ioanăs and Stoica (2014) identified social media as a medium to influence the consumer behavior and observe that the degree of exposure of the message is high on virtual environment. The firms improve the details of their products and it helps in making strong relationship with the potential buyers who regularly follow them on social networks. Before purchase, consumers collect information about products from company’s websites, facebook profiles, online forums and reviews given by other users.

Musil (2015) performs a case study on two different brands of mobile device and by using SEM models a chain of factors influencing the consumer purchase intent and purchasing. His study describes that advertising can be used to directly drive demand but it has more impact in driving positive word-of-mouth in the marketplace, which in turn can change brand perceptions, leading to brand choice. Study also provides valuable insight into which specific brand perceptions are the strongest drivers of increased demand for both the brand of interest and for competitors – important information to drive future campaign messaging and brand positioning. Brands with strong campaigns and relevant messages have great potential to have major impact competitive brands. Similarly, Erkan and Evan (2016) also claim that there is a positive influence of E-WOM on social media on consumers' purchase intentions. People are now like to share their experiences related with products or services they have used on social media with their friends that has a great impact on customers’ choices related
to various brands which leads to purchase intention. Whereas, Schivinski and Dabrowski (2016) suggest that marketing heads should focus their efforts towards creating positive brand associations and exploring brand related characteristics that influence positively the consumer’s attitude towards brand. They find that effect of brand attitude is almost twice as strong as the effect of brand equity on consumer purchasing decisions. User-generated content have positive influence on consumer’s perception of brands. It affects both brand attitude and brand equity. Brand attitude and brand equity both have almost equal effect on consumers’ brand purchase intention. Thus, brand managers should focus user-generated and firm-generated contents as action programs of marketing strategy to create strong brand attitude and brand equity which in turn influence brand choice and purchase intention of the consumers.

Liu and Lopez (2016) show that consumer brand exposure to electronic word of mouth on social networking sites can influence consumer purchasing behavior. Further, consumers’ conversations about brands have a significant impact on their brand preference. Their results show that a firm should monitor e-word of mouth on social media with diligently and firm should encourage more conversation about their brands with the customers. The success of a campaign on social media leads to brand exposure and awareness among consumers which generates viral effect on social media, this result in greater chances of a brand being chosen by consumer. Actually, customer brand engagement indicates their preferences regarding product characteristics.

2.7 Discussion

The literature shows that social media has been of interest of the researchers and it has been studied from various perspectives. Social media is a cost effective way of disseminating the information to a large number of the audience. It can be targeted to the specific user groups and this strong feature can help marketers to have a focused communication with the audience. Studies show that social media can serve as an extended means of brand building. It can help the users in brand recognition and recall and can greatly augment the effectiveness of marketing communication. Several firms are resorting to using social media for brand building. Traditional media has the limitation of being a one-way communication. Social media can be a two-way communication with the users and can be a medium of customer engagement. Increased customer engagement with the brands helps in brand building and ultimately positively influences the purchase decision. Very cost effective reminders of
brands can be given through the social media and the users are reminded of the same several times a day, without the risk of generating negative perception due to excessive exposure. Moreover, user engagement can also be built through the contests, endorsements, etc., which can serve as subtle reminders of the brands. Social media is not just a communication from the marketers to the users and vice versa, but also serves as a platform where a user can get endorsements about a particular brand from his own social network. Such an endorsement is highly effective media of brand awareness, recognition and recall and even influences the purchase decision making. Peer endorsement is a very potent feature of social media and the users become co-creators with the agency or organization. The users become an active participant instead of a passive recipient.

However, this extensive literature on a variety of themes needs to be studied in the Indian context as well. Presently, India is one of the biggest users of social media. The younger generation is highly active on social media and in highly influences by the same. With online marketing becoming very popular, the younger generation can be the likely target audience for the marketers for brand building and purchase decision. Interestingly, this active usage of social media is also gaining popularity into other segments as well, such as the house wives, the middle aged people, and even the older generation. In light of such a vast potential of this medium of marketing communication, there is a need to study the potential of social media for brand building and purchase behavior of the users in India.

Review of literature shows that the effect of social media on several aspects of consumer behaviour has been studied. Studies show that being an effective stimuli for repeated recall, social media creates brand awareness and influences brand recognition, brand recall. There are studies on impact of social media on the variables such as brand recall, recognition and purchase intention. However, brand choice is an intermediate variable between the brand recall/ recognition and purchase intention. There is a research gap as there is dearth of published literature to study the effect of the cues facilitated by social media - brand recall, brand recognition, customer engagement and E-WOM on brand choice. Very limited studies have been published on these variables in the Indian context, which is highly influenced by the social media in making purchase decisions. In light of the vast potential of social media in being an effective tool of marketing communication, there is a need for study on these variables encompassing social media and its effects.