



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***IMPACT OF MOBILE SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING AND ROLE OF
CULTURE ON BRAND EQUITY AMONG GEN-Y CONSUMERS IN
THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES***

MAJED ZAMIL HATEM AL KINDI

FEP 2017 22



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THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

By

MAJED ZAMIL HATEM AL KINDI

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra
Malaysia, in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of
Philosophy**

August 2017

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to:

Samar Abdulkareem Khalifa Aldulaimi

My wife, the source of my endless inspiration and strength

*Thank you for your unlimited support, patience, sacrifices, and encouragement,
which inspire me*

to make this endeavor possible.

My wonderful children

Maryam, Ali, Abdullah and Abdulkareem

*Thank you for your love which always inspires me to work with hope, joy, and
enthusiasm*

My beloved mother and father-in-law

Thank you for your prayers, encouragement, patience, and support.

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

IMPACT OF MOBILE SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING AND ROLE OF CULTURE ON BRAND EQUITY AMONG GEN-Y CONSUMERS IN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

By

MAJED ZAMIL HATEM AL KINDI

August 2017

Chairman : Kenny Teoh Guan Cheng, PhD
Faculty : Economics and Management

Consumers of the Generation-Y cohort, also referred to as Millennials, born between 1981-1999, include approximately 45% of the population in United Arab Emirates, who have significant purchasing power. These consumers access social media on a daily basis, but they often ignore brand advertisements that target them. This thesis aims to investigate the causes why Gen-Y ignore mobile social media advertising.

United Arab Emirates is a multicultural society; Dubai, its economic center, was chosen for this research because of its cultural diversity, and unique population, where locals represent only 20% of the total population, with expatriates comprising the other 80%. The purpose of this quantitative study of mobile social media advertising and/or marketers on brand equity in the United Arab Emirates is to determine successful strategies to engage Generation-Y on mobile social media, The choice of mobile social media advertising is because, at the time of this study, there has not been any systematic advertising technology model available for mobile social media in UAE.

The finding of the study revealed a significant positive relationship between Gen-Y attitude ($p < .05$), mobile social media advertising ($p < .05$), culture ($p < .05$) and brand equity. Moreover, the findings showed that Gen-Y attitude, mobile social media advertising, and culture are significant predictors of brand equity. However, the standardized indirect effect test based on bootstrap technique have shown that Gen-Y attitude partially mediates the relationships between mobile social media advertising, culture and brand equity. The results also indicated a significant difference in culture based on the respondent's regional distribution. Finally, the

result indicated that culture moderates the relationship between mobile social media advertising and attitude with brand equity.

This study may contribute to social change by improving the relationship between social media advertising and marketers on brand equity among Gen-Y consumers, permitting Gen-Y consumers to gain a stronger voice in marketing, and by emphasizing the need for marketers to communicate and advertise more effectively with Gen-Y.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**KESAN SOSIAL MEDIA MUDAH ALIH DAN PERANAN BUDAYA
KEPADA EKUITI JENAMA DI KALANGAN PENGGUNA GENERASI Y
DI NEGARA ARAB EMIRATES BERSATU**

Oleh

MAJED ZAMIL HATEM AL KINDI

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Pengguna Gen-Y kohort, juga dikenali sebagai Mellenials, (dilahirkan antara tahun 1981-1999) menyumbang kepada hampir 45% kepada populasi di Negara Arab Emirates Bersatu (UAE), yang mempunyai kuasa membeli yang signifikan. Pengguna ini melayari social media setiap hari, tetapi mereka selalu mengabaikan pengiklanan jenama adalah walhal, Gen-Y adalah sasaran pemasar. Tesis ini, menyiasat penyebab kenapa Gen-Y mengabaikan pengiklanan social media mudah alih.

UAE merupakan masyarakat yang pelbagai budaya; dan Dubai adalah pusat ekonomi dipilih untuk kajian ini kerana kepelbagaian budaya dan mempunyai populasi yang unik, dimana rakyat tempatan hanya 20% dari keseluruhan populasi dan 80 % dipenuhi oleh ekspatriat. Tujuan kajian kuantitatif terhadap pengiklanan sosial media ubah alih di UAE adalah untuk memilih strategi yang berjaya untuk mendapat penglibatan Gen-Y terhadap social media mudah alih. Pemilihan Pengiklanan Social Media Mudah Alih adalah kerana, semasa kajian ini dijalankan, didapati tiada model yang sistematik dalam pengiklanan teknologi yang tersedia untuk Social Media Mudah Alih di UAE.

Hasil kajian ini mendapati hubungan positif signifikan antara Sikap Gen-Y, pengiklanan Sosial Media Mudah Alih, dan Ekuiti Jenama. Lebih lagi, kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa Sikap Gen-Y, Pengiklanan Media Mudah Alih dan Budaya adalah penentu signifikan kepada Jenama Ekuiti. Walaubagaimanapun, pemeriksaan kesan penyelarasan tidak langsung berdasarkan teknik pengulangan menunjukkan bahawa Sikap Gen-Y memediasi separuh hubungan antara Pengiklanan Social Media Mudah Alih, Budaya dan Ekuiti Jenama. Hasil kajian juga menunjukkan perbezaan

signifikan dalam pengaruh Budaya berdasarkan kepada pembahagian responden serantau. Akhirnya, hasil kajian mendapati bahawa Budaya memoderasi hubungan antara Pengiklanan Social Media Mudah Alih dan Sikap Gen-Y.

Kajian ini membuktikan bahawa hubungan antara pengiklanan social media mudah alih dan Jenama Ekuiti di kalangan Gen-Y di UAE. Model kajian ini membantu pemasar untuk berkomunikasi dengan lebih efektif dengan Gen-Y.



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“May Allah grant you with his forgiveness and mercy”

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 17 August 2017 to conduct the final examination of Majed Zamil Hatem Al Kindi on his thesis entitled "Impact of Mobile Social Media Advertising and Role of Culture on Brand Equity among Gen-Y Consumers in the United Arab Emirates" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Chapter one is presented; the background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Significance of the Study, Theoretical Contribution, Practical Contribution, Research Questions, Research Objectives, Research Hypotheses, Scope of Study, Definition of Terms and organization of the research are presented in this chapter.

1.2 Background of the Study

Generation-Y (Gen-Y), the generational cohort whose members were born between 1981-1999 (Bolton et al., 2013), is the first and largest generational cohort in the United Arab Emirates and is projected to be approximately 45% of the population in 2015 (Lim, 2013). Gen-Y has become a significant target demographic for marketers because of the cohort's vast size and great purchasing power (Schewe et al., 2013). Brand loyalty affects their purchasing decisions to the same product (Huang and Huddleston, 2009; Ahmed, 2011; Martenson, 2007; Lam, 2007), especially, where they develop loyalty with their preferred product brands and stick to a famous brand names (Sun et al., 2004); in addition consumers use it for social recognition (Manrai et al., 2001). In Gen-Y brand loyalty makes a positive output of brand equity which decidedly induces brand preference over other brands (Zhang et al., 2014; Binninger, 2008; Atilgan et al., 2005; Ling, 2013; Vogel et al., 2008). Companies try to genuinely grow to the real quality of their brands, communicate this quality through to the marketing actions appropriate to affect perceived quality in a positive way. High perceived quality causes Gen-Y consumers to be influenced about buying the brand; for comparison of the brand from competition; and for the company to charge a premium price and then expand and extend the brand (Aaker, 1991). Gen-Y customer receives brand awareness via efficient marketing communication channel for example handphone, television, and online advertising as it give conviction of product quality and its credibility that helps to decrease risk in product evaluation and chosen while purchasing a product (Buil et al., 2013; Aaker, 1996; Rubio et al., 2014; Keller and Lehmann, 2003).

The United Arab Emirates' demographics show the entry of a large Gen-Y segment into the workforce and a concurrent need talented human resources hence this trend has implications for the country's continued economic growth (Luscombe et al., 2013a). Further, Gen-Y customers constitute a buying force of \$600 billion every year and they are a standout between the most desired consumer segments for businesses and marketers in the world (Howell, 2012; Nobel et al., 2009). These consumers have had a profound effect on marketers due to their regular use of and familiarity with social media (Smith, 2011).

Social media advertising has become a viable means to capture the interest of this lucrative market segment (Koo et al., 2012; Carter, 2008; Keith, 2011). Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn are samples of popular social media. Social media is applied programs, platforms and on-line media (internet) with the target of facilitating the interactions, participation and content sharing (Bolton et al., 2013a). These Media have a multitude of forms including social blogs, weblogs, microblogs, Wikis, video images, photo, podcasts, grading and collecting addresses and sites. Due to their considerable potential, not only individuals but also commercial companies and state organizations join have joined into use these facilities as their communication tools (Mohammadpour et al., 2014). Nonprofit organizations, retailers, and manufacturers around the world are also using social media to market their products (Pate & Adams, 2013). Compared to traditional marketing techniques, social media can be an effective tool for marketers if given that the difficulties of engaging Gen-Y are overcome (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

The Gen-Y cohort in the United Arab Emirates comprises more than 200 different nationalities; they share experiences of life in the UAE that have molded their values and attitudes. However, it would be simplistic to expect that they are a homogenous gathering simply because they have undergone development periods together in the same time and place; While Emiratis are born and mostly raised in the UAE, the expatriates originate from diverse countries. Hence, the Gen-Y cohort in UAE is expected to show differences in life values, work attitudes and culture (Luscombe et al., 2013a). A better understanding of these differences would avail the global companies in Dubai to structure a new vision for product advertising. Lutz (1985), in his influential work, stressed those customers' attitudes toward the particular characteristics of a brand, or to a specific type of advertisement, can have important effects on their perception of; and their responses to the advertisements. Social media provides a new opportunity for marketers to embrace their customers. However, to be successful and effective, an organization must stay connected and grow by developing two-way communication with customers to create a strong sense of value (Wright et al., 2010).

1.2.1 The Novelty of This Study

Dubai is the second largest emirate of the seven that together comprise the United Arab Emirates and it is considered the country's economic center. Only 15 percent of Dubai's population are Emiratis; the other 85 percent are expatriates from everywhere throughout the world. Dubai is noted for its liberal comprehension of Islam and for being a peaceful emirate that is known for its multiculturalism. It is worth studying because of the multitude of religions and cultures currently co-existing in this emirate (Obaid, 2009).

This research is novel in that, while there is a considerable body of literature on the subject of multiculturalism in western countries, there is minimal examination concentrated on multiculturalism and diverse societies in the Middle East, particularly the investigations of multiculturalism in the Arabian Gulf countries

(Obaid, 2009). The multiculturalism in the United Arab Emirates that consists of more than 200 nationalities and especially, Dubai, has not been evaluated before. Most research has been completed in the fields of finance and business, tourism and hospitality or even in sociology concerning the labor force and different demographic studies (Maral Sotoudehnia, 2008; Alghafri, 2013; Hamad & Al, 2013; Ryan, Ninov, & Aziz, 2012). Hence, this study is new, in that it examines the effect of culture as a moderator on Gen-Y consumers who are around 45% of the UAE population in 2015 (Lim et al., 2013). With more than 200 nationalities in Dubai (Luscombe et al., 2013b), this research is expected to shed new light and vision on the impact of social media marketing among Gen-Y consumers on brand equity, and if will be a new perspective on the digital generation world.

1.2.2 Factors behind the Success of Dubai

Dubai's rapid urban development over the last three decades and the accompanying social and cultural transformations have been well documented in numerous scholarly studies (e.g. Kanna, 2011; Davidson, 2008; Elsheshtawy, 2010). In recent years, Dubai has achieved an excellent track record in the conception of physical infrastructure and has realized vast improvements and efficiencies in the delivery of public services (Jauncey & Nadkarni, 2014).

A news report dated 2 March 2014 in one of the UAE's leading English language newspapers, the "Gulf News" reported that almost around seventy-five percent of private-sector companies in Dubai plans to embrace worldwide manageability benchmarks as a guarantee to the green economy in the run-up to Expo 2020 (Jauncey & Nadkarni, 2014).

Obaid (2009) stated that the rulers of Dubai have made a historically significant decision by marketing the city as the future driving port by welcoming Arab, Persian, Western and Eastern businesspeople and shoppers to go to their open Majlis, listening to their arrangements and suggestions without obstruction by the Āl Maktoum Sheikhs. The Āl Maktoum rulers have relied on business and exchange as their significant wellspring of income. Currently, businesses are more important than military forces or policies (Obaid, 2009).

In the 1960s, the country began to exploit its rich oil resources and started to export it. However, due to limited oil reserves, Dubai adopted a different set of commercial 'ideas' and started to invest in its own domestic infrastructure diversifying away from future dependence on oil (Davidson, 2008). Dubai is designed to become one of the world's most captivating international trade centers (Davidson, 2008, p. 106) by establishing a national economy predicated on tax-free trading and authentic real estate. Furthermore, Dubai developed a number of captivating 'pull' factors, such as employment, 'quality of life' and freedom of expression (Taylor, 1986; Stark, 1991; Katz and Stark, 1986; Messina and Lahav, 2006).

According to Golawala and McKenchie (2007), the United Arab Emirates is “The most lucrative business market in the Arabian Gulf region and by extension, the Arab world”. Dubai draws an extensive number of top global business brands, including Microsoft, Martha Stewart, Reuters, Virgin Airways, Sun, and Cisco. As it attracts corporate organizations, it becomes the business hub of the Middle East (Hamad & Al, 2013). Through oil incomes, Dubai has created a world class base which has pulled in migrants worldwide to Dubai to develop the city and the community accommodations, for example, hospitals, schools, housing business, towers, hotels, and parks, all financed through oil incomes (Obaid, 2009).

1.2.3 Dubai Nature and Geographical Location

Dubai constitutes a part of the seven emirates that make up the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Dubai is spread over a region of 4,110 square km. UAE is an Arab and Muslim nation whose official language is Arabic; at the same time, the most popular language of communication in Dubai is English. Being a part of a dominantly Muslim state, Islam values and culture basically influence the social existence of individuals in Dubai (Hamad & Al, 2013). Consequently, Islamic qualities, Arabic convention, and contemporary improvement strategies are the key impacts on the UAE society that incorporates Dubai (Abdulla, Djebarni, & Mellahi, 2011). Dubai's vital location at the intersection of exchange and business amongst West and East in the past was recognized by the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British. Dubai is in a perfect position that traverses the Middle East, Northern and Southern Africa, the Indian Subcontinent and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Besides, Dubai lies in a time zone that gives it an unparalleled favorable position in associating markets as diverse as the Far East and the USA (Hamad & Al, 2013). The topographical location of Dubai is a fundamental factor in drawing in foreigners from neighboring nations, for example, Iran, India, and Pakistan; nations which are normally constrained in their asset deployment (See Map 1.1).



Figure 1.1 : The Strategic Location of Dubai Emirate (Source: (Obaid, 2009))

1.2.4 Brand equity

According to Aaker (1992) the strength of a brand, regularly known as brand equity, consists of four primary dimensions: Brand Associations, Brand Awareness, Brand Loyalty, and Perceived Product Quality. Upon making strategic decisions that involve marketing elements, companies need to consider the possible impact on brand equity (Yoo, Donthu, & Lee, 2000). Motivation to study brand equity is frequently linked to the financial impact of a brand and the need to formulate business strategies to improve marketing productivity (Keller, 1993).

Considering the implication of brand equity and its impact on an organization's financial and business strategies requires more insight on channels of communication that influence consumer behavior. Marketing products and accommodations to consumers play a paramount position in the overall scheme of an organization's business strategy. Without a sure marketing strategy in place, many organizations would fail to magnetize consumer interest, thus failing to sustain a competitive advantage. Hongcharu and Eiamkanchanalai (2009) have argued that through the course of marketing products and accommodations, consumers often form auspicious or inauspicious postures toward brands. Percy and Rossiter (1992) have contended that the brand is the initial influencer of consumer perceptions toward the relevance and desirability of the product advertised. For this reason, marketers and organizations must devise marketing strategies that influence consumer perceptions concerning the usefulness and relevance of their brands.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Social media is one of the most effective mediums that organizations have been adopted as an expedient to communicate products to consumers (Pelau & Zegreanu, 2010). The advantages of this unique mediums is that it enables organizations to provide consumers with timely, ubiquitous, and pertinent information (Roach, 2009)

Gen-Y consumer's direct access to social media affects marketer's strategic use of social media (Smith, 2011). Social media consumers from 18 to 34 years old are more likely than older age groups to prefer Social media for interactions with friends, family, and acquaintances; they are also more liable to value others' opinions in Social media, and to feel important when they provide feedback about products or brands they utilize (Bolton et al., 2013). Gen-Y consumers will probably have the purchasing power of around \$1.2 trillion by 2015 (Williams et al., 2012). Consumers in the UAE have become more with the convenience of shopping on the internet, with 52 percent of the respondents have stated that it is comfortable to shop online in 2009 versus 47 percent in 2008 (Madichie & Blythe, 2011).

The value of mobile communications for product advertisement purposes is complex and not readily apparent (Peters et al., 2007). The void of knowledge in this area of expertise is a gap in the literature that requires more research. The benefits of research conducted on the uses and impact of mobile social media advertising strategies permit a greater understanding of the factors that influence consumer behavior and organization sustainability (Wang et al., 2006; Teresa, Melo, Tiago, & Cristóvão Veríssimo, 2014).

Organizations have the fact to become increasingly more aware of the importance of the use of mobile data services (Jayawardhena et al., 2009). Advances in wireless technology, along with the increased demand for mobile devices have rapidly sparked the interest in mobile data services, thus promoting a host of new opportunities for marketing and advertising purposes (Wang et al., 2006; Bamba & Barnes, 2007). On other hand, Pookulangara & Koesler (2011) stated that culture will influence usage of social networks and social media has given rise to the "culture of sharing" with individuals providing input on product and services for everyone to see. Given that culture may impact the way people behave and interact, it is imperative to examine cultures' influence in social networking websites where much of the information is usually user generated. Epps & Demangeot, (2013) have argued for a multicultural approach to marketing to United Arab Emirates consumers, providing evidence from UAE marketing practitioners and academics about the value of such an approach. Knowledge about the value of mobile social media advertising and how it impacts consumers and their background is lacking; consequently, create an opportunity for more research in this area of expertise.

Be that as it may, accomplishing online advertising goals has turned out to be problematic because of media discontinuity and the expanding number of everyday media exposures (Lapido, Nwagwu, & Alarpe, 2013). As a result, Gen-Y consumers regularly pay less attention to social media advertisements and frequently deliberately try to avoid advertisements that hinder their enjoyment of web content (Yeu, Yoon, Taylor, & Lee, 2013). Consequently, advertising to Gen-Y consumers on social media has become problematic especially in relation to building brand equity. Additionally, there is a paucity of data on the impact of mobile social media services and its relationship between consumers and brand equity in Dubai, UAE. Further, organizations often use multiple channels of communication to reach consumers (Keller, 2010). Such communication allows organizations to link their brands with consumers in multiple ways. For this reason, the link between mobile social media advertising services as a channel of communication for marketing product and services and its relationship to brand equity among Gen-Y is examined in this study.

Furthermore, United Arab Emirates population comprises 20% Emiratis whilst a large proportion (80%) of the people living in the UAE are from different parts of the world; comprising other Arabs, South-Eastern, Southern Asians, Europeans and Americans (Suliman, 2006; Epps & Demangeot, 2013). Moreover, Abdella (2009) states that the Dubai population contains more than 80 per cent foreigners, typically temporary residents and working expatriates bound by current immigration laws. Cultural diversity is a prevalent characteristic of Gen-Y consumers in the UAE and these consumers' perceptions of social media advertisements might vary according to their ethnic background (Abdulla et al., 2011; Noble et al., 2009; Koo et al., 2012; Reynolds et al., 2008; U.S. Census Bureau, 2012).

The UAE had a GDP per head in 2011 of \$27,137, it has the highest per capita retail space and withal "boasts" the most immense colossal ecological footprint in the world. In other words, the region exhibits highly unorthodox characteristics in terms of its population commix, and human and economic development characteristics. Multiculturalism in the UAE is a shared, lived experience where being different is the norm, rather than a politicized ideology. The notion of a cross-cultural approach that divides consumers into different segments depending on their culture and surmised culture-driven predilections, presents a number of challenges in the UAE. Therefore, the study explores the gap in the literature to examine the influences of culture in the generation research. Specifically, this study inspects the effect of Gen-Y multicultural differences on social media advertising perceptions in the UAE.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Nowadays, the online session as we know it is over - we no longer "go online", we live online; always on, always connected, mobile contrivances has made it very convenient to find, to do, to watch or to buy what we want, when we want. The increased advancements made in the development of mobile communications have encouraged organizations to use mobile technologies as a way to stimulate consumer

value particularly for devising successful marketing strategies. Therefore, it is imperative that marketers and organizations become more knowledgeable about the impact of mobile social media advertising strategies and how consumers perceive such strategies.

To create a competitive advantage, Nysveen et al, (2005) argue that the influence of online environments, for example, the use of wireless data services, creates an opportunity for organizations to build stronger consumer-brand relationships. The convergence of online advertising and wireless technology has begun to challenge how organizations market products and services (Sultan & Rohm, 2005). Consequently, Percy and Rossiter (1992) argued that it is important to understand the dynamics involved in generating brand awareness through a practical and theoretical perspective in particular as it relates to brand equity.

1.4.1 Theoretical Contribution

Marketing is the promotion of products or services to satisfy consumers' desires or unmet needs. Obviously then, marketing efficiency is dependent on knowing consumer-buying behavior. Hence, Investigations of consumer buying behavior and psychological characteristics in consumption-related situations are a fundamental component of marketing research (Borden, 1984; Khosla, 2010; Kotler, 1965; Wienchlaw, 2008). This study theoretically contributes to the application of the mobile advertising model and practically contributes influential factors for effective advertising to marketers and advertisers.

A number of theories and models will be used to relate Gen-Y attitude towards mobile social media advertising, culture and brand equity to better understand the consumers' attitude (Woo, 2013). There are several theoretical contributions from this study. First, the study reveals that advertising value plays an important role in helping Gen-Y customers with flow experience when receiving mobile social media advertisements and forming Gen-Y attitude to brand equity.

Although Liu et al. (2012) addressed the importance of advertising value by examining effect on attitude, previous studies have not paid attention in examining the relationships between advertising value, attitude, and brand equity. Thus, the results of this study extend the current literature on mobile advertising value. Second, this study is first to offer empirical evidence that flow experience is affected by cognitive, affective, and economic factors. Very few studies from a mobile social media advertising context have investigated the role of flow culture in customer behavior.

The study also provides empirical evidence about the mediating effects of Gen-Y attitude and affective factors and the relationships between mobile social media, advertising value, and brand equity. The study of Xu et al. (2008) and Ünal et al.

(2011) demonstrated that attitude toward mobile advertising is affected by personalization. However, there is a failure to explain why brand equity contributes in forming a favorable to Gen-Y attitude toward mobile social media advertising.

Advertising values theory underpin the theoretical framework of the study. Hofstede's model and Aaker's model are used to supplement the theoretical framework. The study aim to explain how beliefs and attitudes about advertising maybe associated with Generation's perceptions, examine the relationship between Gen-Y consumers' attitude toward social media advertising and their behavioral response by the moderating effect of culture.

1.4.2 Practical Contribution

Social media is becoming an important part of the lives of hundreds of millions of people across the world, and marketers are working to increment their cognizance of how to utilize social media to engage with Internet users (Akar & Topcu, 2011). Generation-Y consumers are a paramount demographic for social media marketers because they are linked to social networking and they place great value on the opinions of their peers on social media (Pate & Adams, 2013). From a practical perspective, marketers and advertisers will gain insight on how mobile social media advertisements contribute to forming Gen-Y customer on brand equity. This study prepare a model provide some strategic and managerial guidelines to marketers, advertisers, and mobile social media advertising platform providers. Some of the elements to success include mobile advertisements that play on the differentiated features of mobile gadgets that will make sure customers perceive social media advertisements to be useful, valuable, and important, and experience flow while engaging in viewing social media advertisements. Marketers and advertisers are better off to deliver more enjoyable, credible, and informative mobile advertisements to customers while giving up a spray advertising approach that causes irritation of customers. Marketers would have an advantage from a better understanding of how to best benefit by advertising to the Internet population i.e. Gen-Y (Hadija et al., 2012). This study provides an increased understanding of cultural effects and how to develop brand equity with Generation-Y, and capitalize on their social media advertising usage.

The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore and investigate what mobile social media marketers need to engage Gen-Y consumers on brand equity. The value of the study lies in developing and exploring advertising strategies for marketers when advertising to Gen-Y consumers who have significant future purchasing power (Noble et al., 2009).

1.5 Research Questions

The use of mobile advertising for marketing must leverage the unique features associated with wireless communications (Jih, 2007). In fact, Okazaki, Katsukura,

and Nishiyama (2007) have shown that an organization's goal toward the uses of mobile advertising should focus on the formation of attitudes toward brands.

To help examine the impact of mobile advertising strategies on consumer behavior the following research questions have been developed:

1. What is the influence of mobile social media advertising on Gen-Y Attitude?
2. What are the relationships between Gen-Y attitude and Brand Equity?
3. Does Gen-Y Attitude mediate the relationship between Mobile Social Media Advertising and Brand Equity?
4. Does Culture moderate the relationship between Mobile Social Media Advertising and Gen-Y attitude on Brand Equity?

1.6 Research Objectives

The main objective of this research is to understand the determinants of Gen-Y consumers' attitude towards mobile social media advertising and its impact on brand equity through culture. In order to facilitate the investigation and collecting of necessary information, this research highlights four research objectives that need to be achieved.

The research objectives are as follows:

1. To investigate the relationship of mobile social media advertising on Gen-Y Attitude.
2. To explore the relationships between Gen Y attitude and Brand Equity.
3. To determine the mediating effect of Gen-Y and Attitude between Mobile Social Media Advertising and Brand Equity.
4. To determine the moderating effect of Culture between Mobile Social Media Advertising and Gen Y attitude on brand equity.

1.7 Research Hypotheses

The study examines Gen-Y attitude into the effect of social media advertising on brand equity and the influence of culture. As such this study hypothesized the following:

- H1:** There is a significant relationship between Mobile Social media advertisement and Gen-Y attitude.
- H2:** There is a positive relationship between the Gen-Y Attitude and Brand Equity.
- H3:** There is a positive relationship between Mobile Social media advertisement and brand equity.
- H4:** The relationship between Mobile Social media advertisement and brand equity is moderated by the Culture.

H5: The relationship between Mobile Social media advertisement and brand equity is mediated by Gen-Y Attitude.

1.8 Scope of Study

The focus of this study is the mobile social media advertising residing in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Dubai's rapid urban growth over the last three decades and the accompanying social and cultural transformations have been well documented in numerous scholarly studies (e.g. Davidson, 2008; Elsheshtawy, 2010; Kanna, 2011). These changes have resulted, inter alia, in a fragmentary urban form, which appears to promote social exclusion along ethnic and socio-economic lines. One of the reasons behind the choice of Dubai is the wide range of nationalities from Generation-Y, from the lower level until the higher level education and income; from student to general workers to professionals, and from novices to IT experts (Chung, et al., 2009; Mastor, Said, & Marzuki, 2012a, 2012b). The choice of mobile social media is because at the time of this study there has not been any systematic advertising technology model available for mobile social media. This study provides a potential framework for the social media advertising strategy that may improve brand equity among Gen-Y.

1.9 Definition of Terms

The definition of the constructs that have been selected for this study are set out below:

Social Media:

Social media, defined as the process that empowers individuals to promote their websites, products, or services through online social channels and tap into a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional channels (Weinberg, 2009, Eren Erdoğan & Çiçek, 2012).

Mobile Advertising:

Mobile marketing as any marketing activity conducted through a ubiquitous network to which consumers are constantly connected using a personal mobile device (Kaplan, 2012).

Gen-Y:

Gen-Y defined as all people born between 1981 and 1999 – regardless of their circumstances, consumers who have grown up with digital technology and have become technologically perceptive and more visually sophisticated than previous generations (Williams et al., 2012).

Attitude:

Attitudes are mostly considered an individual's predisposition to respond to specific situations, specific objects or ideas, including positive or negative reactions to commercial messages (Chowdhury, Parvin, Weitenberner, & Becker, 2006; Chakrabarty & Yelkur, 2005).

Perceived Quality:

Perceived quality is not the actual quality of the product; it varies among individuals because the criteria that individual consumers use to make judgments about the quality of a product differ (Aaker, 1991).

Brand Awareness:

Brand awareness is how consumers associate the brand with the particular product that they have the ambition to own: or the ability to identify a brand under different conditions, brand awareness is vital for the communications process to emerge (Macdonald and Sharp, 2003; Keller, 2003; Netemeyer et al., 2004).

Brand Association:

Brand association is cognate to information on what is in the customer's mind about the brand, whichever positive or negative and it is connected to the node of the brain memory and also is acts as an information accumulating implement to execute brand differentiation and brand extension (Emari et al., 2012; Osselaer and Janiszewski, 2001).

Brand Loyalty:

Brand loyalty is related to the users' repetitive buying behavior over time with a positively biased emotive, evaluative and/or behavioral tendency towards a branded, labelled or graded alternative or product choice (Punj and Hillyer, 2004; Jagdish and Sheth, 1974).

Brand Equity:

The strength of a brand, otherwise known as brand equity, contains four primary dimensions: brand associations, brand awareness, brand loyalty, and perceived product (Aaker, 1992).

Culture:

Cultural orientation affects people's choices, individualism, and collectivism—it affects specific consumer behavior in the context of destination branding (Mooij & Hofstede, 2011).

Power Distance (PD)

The power distance dimension can be defined as the extent to which less powerful members of a society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally (Woo, 2013).

Uncertainty Avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance can be defined as the extent to which people feel threatened by uncertainty and ambiguity and try to avoid these situations (Woo, 2013).

Individualism / Collectivism

Individualism/collectivism can be defined as people looking after themselves and their immediate family only, versus people belonging to in-groups that look after them in exchange for loyalty (Woo, 2013).

Masculinity / Femininity

The masculinity/femininity dimension can be defined as the dominant values in a masculine society are achievement and success; the dominant values in a feminine society are caring for others and quality of life. In masculine societies, achievement and performance are significant; achievement must be confirmed, so status brands or products are substantial to show one's success (De Mooij & Hofstede 2002; De Mooij 2010).

Long-Term / Short-Term Orientation

Long- versus short-term orientation is defined as the extent to which a society exhibits a pragmatic future-oriented perspective rather than a conventional historic or short-term point of view. Values indicated in long-term orientation are perseverance, arranging relationships by status, thrift, and having a sense of shame (de Mooij & Hofstede, 2010).

1.10 Organization of the Study

This study consists of six chapters. Chapter One gives a brief introduction as well as the background of the study. Chapter Two reviews the literature. Chapter Three presents the research conceptual model, while Chapter Four discusses the research methodology. A discussion of the results is presented in chapter five and Chapter Six presents discussions, conclusions, and suggestions related to the major findings of this study, followed by the research contribution and implications.

1.11 Chapter Summary

Chapter 1 is an introduction to this study and its purposes. The researcher in this chapter explained the need, the purpose, and the significance of the study. This study examines factors affecting Gen-Y consumers' perceived advertising value by mobile social media advertising and also emphasizes the importance of developing new brand equity measurement models. The researcher also described the research questions and hypotheses in detail. In addition, the theoretical framework on which the study relies was provided. Finally, the researcher defined the operational definition of this study.

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